

ILLUSTRATED POLICE NEWS 1880 to 1890

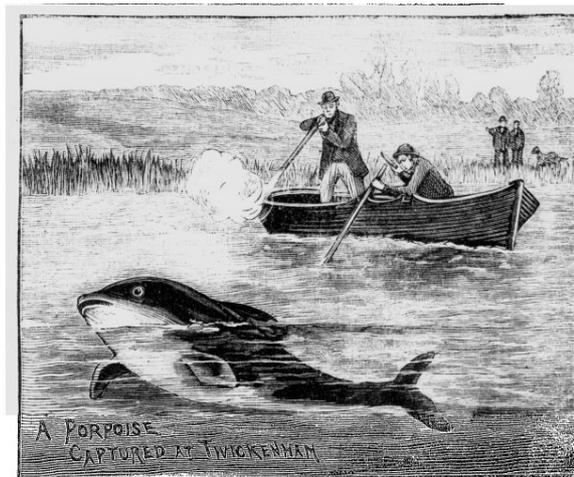
1 January 17 1880

CLERKENWELL

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE Kate Dowling, aged twenty four, a boxmaker of 9 George Street, Caledonian Road, was charged with attempting to commit suicide by throwing herself into the Regent's Canal at Muriel Street, Islington. On the previous afternoon the defendant was seen to rush down Tunnel Hill on to the banks of the canal, and throw herself into the water, which at that spot is about 10 feet in depth. A boatman of the name of **Edward Mindey** at once procured a boat hook, and with some difficulty got her out. When she was given into the custody of Police-constable Isaac Moore 395Y, she said she was tired of her life, and that the reason why she had attempted suicide was that the persons lodging in the same house were in the habit of annoying her, but what for she could not say, as she gave them no provocation. She was, however, now sorry for what she had done, and if she was let go she would never do the like again. Mr Barstow remanded the defendant.

2 February 21 1880

A PORPOISE CAPTURED AT TWICKENHAM A large porpoise was discovered just below Richmond Railway Bridge on Thursday morning by a waterman named **Thomas McKinnon**, who followed it to Twickenham and, with the assistance of Joseph Glover, managed to shoot it. On being brought to shore, it was found to weigh 2 cwt and measured 5 ft 2 1/2 in. It was taken to the



Kings' Arms Hotel, where it was seen by a great number of the inhabitants. It is the first time in nearly twenty years that a porpoise has been seen so high up the river.

3 March 20 1880

COMMON PLEAS DIVISION (Sittings before Mr Justice Lindley and a Common Jury)

Summers v Clarke and wife The plaintiff in this case was a printer and lithographer living at Hackney, and the defendant was a barge owner at Brentford. The action was to recover a sum of money under somewhat peculiar circumstances. In 1868 Mr **Richard Mulcock**, a barge owner at Hounslow, died, and left his property between his two daughters. The personalty was sworn under £6,000. In 1873, the plaintiff was smoking a pipe at Hounslow, when he got into conversation with Mr Harvey, a stranger, who talked of the death of Mr Mulcock, of his habits, and of the probability of his having left money behind him which had not been found. After some time the plaintiff looked into the matter, and it was at length found that the testator had £926 upon deposit at the Union Bank. In July 1878, the money was received from the bank, and subsequently the plaintiff received 15 per cent upon one half share of it, and he now sued the defendants and alleged that there was an agreement with them that he should be paid one third of the sum that they recovered. The defendants paid £46 into court. The defence was that the whole negotiation went upon the footing

that it referred only to money that was to come from Australia, and no such ever came. The amount also to be paid to the plaintiff was one sixth of the sum recovered. The agreement itself had been destroyed by the defendants according to one account, while according to another contention, no agreement at all had ever been concluded. The jury, after hearing a good deal of evidence on one side and the other, at once found a verdict for the plaintiff for the full amount claimed, £108 beyond the sum paid into court.

4 April 3 1880

FIVE PERSONS DROWNED Three young men, employed by the South Western Railway Company, were returning in a small boat from witnessing the University Boat Race, when their craft was capsized by running foul of a barge off Rotherhithe. Two were drowned.

On Sunday week, two brothers, James and Joe Walton, aged fourteen and thirteen, and William Povah, labourer, Sutton, four miles from Runcorn, were drowned in Sutton Dock. It appears that on Sunday the dock is deserted by the owners of the various flats, and people are in the habit of taking boats out on short journeys. The three deceased got into a boat, and started to row the boat about the dock, when they found the boat rapidly filling. They became dreadfully alarmed, fearing it would sink, jumped out into the dock and made for the side. Several youths were watching, and one named William Walton, seeing that they were likely to drown, jumped into the water with the object of rescuing them. He narrowly escaped drowning himself, and was only rescued just in time by John Nixon, watchman employed at the Runcorn Bone Works, who heard screams and ran to the spot. The bodies were recovered by Policeman Speed and others. The same afternoon, the officer had warned two of the drowned persons away, and sent them to Sunday School.

5 April 10 1880

UNHEALTHY CARGOES On Saturday Mr Langham held a lengthened investigation at the Sessions House, Westminster, into the cause of the death of **Alfred Stokes**, 36, captain of the barge "*Emily*", who was alleged to have died from the effects of carbonic acid gas, inhaled from a cargo of tar lime from the Brentford Gas Works. Evidence was given that the deceased told his wife he was afraid to sail in the barge with the foul lime, but as his employers relied upon him to do his duty, he must do so even at the risk of his life. When he quitted home at Brentford he was in perfectly good health and made no complaint, and he found his barge and proceeded down the river. He complained to **Alfred Locke**, the apprentice, of the effect of the stench from the cargo, and Locke himself was also ill, and upon arriving off Pimlico, symptoms of serious illness manifested themselves so strongly that the barge was anchored and Locke went ashore for assistance ; but three constables in succession refused to interfere, and Locke purchased some brandy and administered to to the dying man. He rallied a little, but becoming worse Locke again went ashore and saw a doctor, who refused, however, to board a barge, and when at length Dr Pearce, the divisional surgeon of police, went aboard the craft, he found that the captain was dead. This gentleman subsequently made a post mortem, and found the lungs in a high state of congestion, but said that although the foul lime might have accelerated the death, he found no such lividity of the body as to warrant him in saying that the carbonic acid gas had actually killed him. The jury returned a verdict of death from congestion of the lungs, and some of the jurors expressed an opinion that such a horrible compound should not be sent down the river in open barges.

6 July 31 1880

WORTH MORE DEAD THAN ALIVE A live dog, according to the proverb, is better than a dead lion, but if the evidence given at a coroner's inquest in St Pancras on Tuesday is correct, human bodies are more valuable dead than alive. A little boy tumbled into the Regent's Canal the other day. A passer by jumped in after him, and asked a bargeman who was coming up to help him in rescuing the child, but the bargeman refused to alter his course, and almost ran down the couple. A second bargeman was as callous, and when at last the child was hooked out by a policeman, he was found to have been already poisoned by the foul water into which he had fallen. The answer given

to the coroner's inquiry as to the behaviour of the boatmen is sufficiently appalling. "If they rescue a boy alive, they get no reward, but if they pull out a dead body, they receive a fee of five shillings". For the credit of our (????) civilisation and the greater regard for human life we are supposed to have, at least as high reward should be offered in the one case as in the other.

7 August 28 1880

On Friday afternoon, shortly before one o'clock, a man named **James Smith**, living at 217 Cator Street, Peckham, was brought into the police station in the custody of three constables, charged with assaulting **Edwin Davis**, whose head was bandaged. Both men are known as "brickies", their employment being to unload barges as they arrive alongside the Surrey Canal bank laden with bricks. Some of the contractors pay 5s a day, while others pay 7s, and Davis was one of those willing to work for the smaller remuneration, much to the annoyance of Smith. On Friday morning at a little before nine o'clock, Smith observed Davis working on a barge, and getting on board the craft asked him, "what he meant by working at a less price than others?" On Davis ordering him off the vessel, Smith picked up a brick and dealt him a fearful blow on the head, rendering him for a short time insensible. Davis having been conveyed to a doctor's, the police were apprised of the affair, and Sergeant Young sent four constables in quest of Smith who, after a search, they ultimately found on another barge. He was requested by the officers to come ashore, which he refused to do, and they were about to reach him by means of a plank when Smith leapt into the canal, the water being nearly up to his neck. He remained in this position for some time – in fact he kept the police at bay for nearly an hour – much to the amusement of a large crowd of persons but, at length, finding the officers were determined to wait for him, he came out of the water and surrendered himself.

8 September 25 1880

INTERFERING WITH A BOAT RACE At the Hammersmith Police Court on Friday, **Charles Thomas Waight** was summoned for a breach of the 6th bye law of the Conservation of the River Thames. **Mr Richard Lord**, the superintendent of the river, deposed that, on the occasion of Barnes Regatta on the 7th ult, he saw the defendant in charge of the steam tug "*Growler*", which was proceeding down the river with a barge of coke behind it. At that time the boats of the four oared race for the Challenge Cup were in position. He called to the defendant and waved a flag for him to ease speed and pass on to the Surrey shore, out of the way of the race. Defendant went on in mid stream, not taking the slightest notice. Ultimately he stopped, but went on again at the same speed. Witness was surprised the boats were not capsized as the tug steamed between them. The start of the race was delayed. After a time, the defendant eased the speed and went to the Surrey shore. The defendant said the "*Growler*" made a great noise, which prevented him from hearing. Mr Paget pointed out to him that he was able to see a flag. The defendant said he eased the boat as soon as he saw the flag. This was denied by Mr Lord. Mr Paget said it was most important for the protection of life that the orders of the officers should be obeyed. He fined the defendant 40s with 2s costs. The defendant asked for time to pay the money. Mr Paget said it would be recovered by duress.

9 November 13 1880

A COWARDLY HOMICIDE LIGHTLY PUNISHED At Bristol Assizes, a young man named **Ames** was indicted for the murder of a boy named Miles who, while fishing in a lock on the Kennet Canal near Bath, fell in. Two boys jumped in, held him above water, and cried to the prisoner for help, but he closed the lock gates and lifted the hatchway. The rush of water carried deceased to the bottom, and the rescuers barely saved themselves. Prisoner was found guilty of manslaughter. Mr Justice (?????) started a subscription in the court for the two lads, each of whom received three pounds. This reprobate, who might have destroyed two other lives so far more valuable than his own, has been sentenced only to seven years penal servitude, in consequence, as the Judge stated, of his employer having given him a "good character" - to wit, that he was of rather a sluggish nature, and was a good bargee, something like the "good bargee" on the river Lea lately, who let a boy

drown because a boatman on that river gets nothing for saving life, but receives 5s for each dead body they fish up. Humanity does not come at a premium with the conservators of rivers and canals in England.

10 November 20 1880

A MAN ROASTED ALIVE On Saturday afternoon Mr William Carter was informed of the death of a man who was found literally roasted alive. It appears that about half past five o'clock on Friday evening the attention of William King, living at 48 Hatfield Street, was called to the coke ovens at Corry's Wharf, Commercial Road, Lambeth, through a strong smell of burning flesh. On entering, he was alarmed by noticing the charred remains of a person lying on top of one of the coke ovens. A doctor was sent for, but his services were of no avail, the man being quite dead. His remains were at once placed in the police ambulance van, and ultimately removed to the New Lambeth mortuary to await an inquest. The body has since been identified as **Thomas Barrow**, aged 47 years, a lighterman of no fixed abode or address. On Friday morning, deceased was seen by King near Corry's Wharf, but no notice was taken of him, as he was known to be in the habit of sleeping on barges. The coke fires were lit in the morning, and it is supposed that deceased lay down on the top of the oven for the purpose of warmth and, falling asleep, he became suffocated by the fumes from the coke. One side of the unfortunate man's body is entirely consumed.

11 November 20 1880

CHARGE OF SCUTTLING A BARGE At the Queenborough Police Court on Saturday, before Mr Josiah Hall, the mayor, and other magistrates, **James Arthur Taylor**, aged 18, the youth who gave himself into the custody of the police at Liverpool, was brought up and charged, in accordance with his own confession, with scuttling the barge "*Maria and Eliza*" belonging to **Mr Robert Page** of Milton-next-Sittingbourne, in the river Swale at Queenborough in August 1879. It appeared from the evidence that the barge was laden with a cargo of bricks, and the master, a man named **Woolley**, anchored her off Queenborough on account of stress of weather, and then went ashore to go to his home, leaving the prisoner in charge of the craft. On the day following, on his return, he found that the barge had sunk, but the cause was a mystery until after the vessel had been raised, when it was discovered that the plugs had all been pulled out. Meanwhile the prisoner, who is an orphan and has no friends living, had absconded, and he was not heard of again until he gave himself into the hands of the police at Liverpool. The prisoner was committed for trial at the Assizes in January next.

12 December 25 1880

A BARGEMAN DROWNED On Saturday Dr Diplock held an inquiry at the "London Apprentice" Inn, Church Street, Isleworth, concerning the death of **William Ralph**, aged 21, who was employed on the barge "*Richmond*". The evidence showed that **William Thomas**, who had charge of the vessel, went down in the cabin on Thursday afternoon to have his dinner, leaving the deceased to steer. The barge was then being towed by a steam tug. After dinner Thomas went on deck. He noticed that deceased was absent from the helm, and that the tiller lines and tiller pin were gone. He then looked overboard, and saw the deceased in the water. Drags were obtained, as the deceased almost directly sank, but the body was not rescued until half an hour after. **Edward Finn**, a lighterman, stated, in reply to the Coroner, that the drags, which belonged to the Royal Humane Society, were in a worn out condition and quite unfit for use. A verdict of accidental death was returned, the jury remarking that the deceased had apparently lost his life by pulling the tiller lines in the wrong direction, causing the tiller pin to slip out.

13 January 8 1881

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE OF A YOUNG WOMAN Jane Orpin, domestic servant, was charged at Richmond Petty Sessions on Saturday with attempting to commit suicide. She was observed by an inspector of police to throw herself into the River Thames near Richmond Bridge. The tide carried

her down the river for a considerable distance, and she was about to sink when a waterman named **Redknap** went to her rescue and brought her to shore in an insensible condition. She was taken to the police station on a stretcher, and subsequently to the Richmond Hospital, where she remained an inmate for several days. The evidence elicited the fact that a young man had played her false and robbed her of her money. Upon her promise not to repeat the act, she was handed over to the care of her brother.

14 February 12 1881

THE POLICE ATTACKED BY RIVER PIRATES John Cooper, a young fellow belonging to a gang of thieves infesting the Thames, was charged with being concerned with another escaped from custody in stealing two sacks of flour from the barge "*Pera*" lying at Fountain Stairs, Bermondsey, the property of Messrs J Coombe and Co. John Casey, detective officer of the Thames Police, said that about ten o'clock at night he was on duty near Fountain Stairs, Bermondsey, when he saw a number of young fellows loitering about a public house at the corner leading to the stairs. Knowing them to be suspected persons, he concealed himself and watched their actions. In a short time he saw the prisoner and another young fellow come from the stairs, each carrying a sack of flour. He seized hold of the other man, who dropped the sack and tried to get away. Witness was immediately surrounded by a number of roughs, the prisoner's companions, who struck and kicked him, and he was compelled to let his prisoner go. Witness being overpowered sent for assistance, when the men ran away. Shortly after that, in company with Sergeant Brien, he proceeded to a low public house in the neighbourhood of the stairs and apprehended the prisoner. On the way to the station, they were assaulted by a number of his companions. Mr Bridge remanded prisoner for a week to enable the police to make further inquiries. James Scott, 22, one of the prisoner's companions, was also remanded for a similar period, on a charge of assaulting the police and with attempting a rescue.

15 April 2 1881

ATTEMPTED MURDER AT A WORKHOUSE On Friday morning, shortly before daybreak, a murderous attack which, it is feared, will have a fatal consequence, was made at the Greenwich Workhouse, the victim being the assistant master, William Prowse, aged 29. About a year ago, a man named Howlett, who had suffered seven years penal servitude, was charged at the Southwark Police Court with breaking into the Greenwich Workhouse and stealing tools from the carpenters' shop, and sentenced at the Old Bailey to 12 months hard labour. On that occasion Mr Prowse was one of the principal witnesses against him. Howlett's term of imprisonment expired a day or two since, and he appears at once to have taken steps for a terrible vengeance on Prowse. According to his own statement when secured, he broke into the workhouse by climbing the high gates and several others, and entered the building through one of the windows of the dining hall. Having some four years ago been an inmate, he knew the interior of the institution so well that he found his way to the cupboard where the knives and choppers were kept, and with a chopper in his hand he went to the bedroom occupied by Prowse. The assistant master was sleeping at the time, and the intending murderer struck him several blows on the head with the chopper. Prowse sprang up, and was then struck on the back, but by this time the noise had aroused the storekeeper, Hughes, who slept in an adjoining room, on whose entry into the room Howlett offered no further violence. Mr Kilby, the master of the Union, was called up, and Prowse was as soon as possible medically attended. He was found in an almost insensible state and much cut about. Howlett was taken to the police station, where he volunteered a statement that after the life he had been leading he did not care what became of him. He added that he had been treated like a dog, but that Mr Prowse and Mr Kilby were very kind to him when he was in the workhouse, and he did not know what made him commit this act. In the course of Friday, **Alfred William Howlett**, aged 39, described as a lighterman of no home, was brought up at the Greenwich Police Court, charged with burglariously breaking and entering the Greenwich Union Workhouse and attempting to murder William Prowse, assistant master, by striking him several times on the head with a chopper, with intent to murder. Henry Kilby, sworn, said : I am master of the Greenwich Workhouse. At about a quarter to four this

morning, in consequence of information from my storekeeper, I went to his room, where I found my assistant master had been fearfully knocked about ; he was bleeding very much from wounds in the head. I found the prisoner in the bedroom, kneeling down by the bedstead, with his head stuffed into the bedclothes. He was not an inmate of the house, but had been for eighteen months some years ago. I gave him into the custody of the police. He said he could not tell what had induced him to do what he had done. He had no boots on at the time. A large chopper, covered with blood, was produced and identified by the witness as belonging to the workhouse. Mr Kilby added : I hear it is very doubtful whether Prowse will recover. Some time ago, the prisoner broke into our carpenters shop, and in the examination before the magistrate, Prowse, as well as myself, gave evidence against him. Mr Marsham remanded the prisoner.

16 May 14 1881

THE “PRINCESS ALICE” CASE The Government has intimated its intention of supporting the motion which stands upon the orders of the House of Commons, in the name of Baron H de Worms, for leave to introduce the Thames River Interment Bill, including a retrospective clause to cover the loss sustained by the parish of Woolwich in recovering and burying the bodies of persons drowned in the wreck of the “*Princess Alice*”. It is believed that no opposition will be offered to the motion ; but, with the view of promoting unanimity upon the part of the county representatives, it was proposed that a deputation should confer with them at Westminster, such deputation representing the Local Board and overseers of Woolwich, and the jury at the “*Princess Alice*” inquest. Mr E A Carttar, Coroner for West Kent, who has warmly taken up the effort promoted by his late father for the settlement of the matter, was engaged on Saturday in making arrangements for the proposed interview. The present defective state of the law, as revealed by the result of the “*Princess Alice*” appeal, has placed the authorities of riverside parishes in a serious dilemma, as there appears to be no fund upon which they can legally charge the expense of removing from the water the remains of the dead. It has been decided that the responsibility of the county only extends to those cast on shore by the sea, and the Poor Law Guardians are of opinion that they cannot incur the costs of burial of strangers unless they be “destitute wayfarers, wanderers or foundlings”. The watermen and others employed on the river have therefore resolved not to trouble themselves until the difficulty is disposed of.

17 June 18 1881

TWO BARGES DESTROYED BY FIRE IN THE THAMES On Sunday morning at half past three o'clock, a fire was discovered by a policeman on duty to have broken out on board the sailing barge “*Yalton*”, lying off the King's Arms Wharf, Belvedere Road, Lambeth. The Fire Brigade at Kennington Lane were communicated with, and a steamer was soon on the spot. The intimation was also conveyed to the floating station lying off Lambeth Bridge, and several deliveries from this source were quickly brought to bear upon the fire, which had already assumed a serious aspect. The barge was loaded with some twenty loads of straw, which burnt up rapidly, and it was soon observed that an adjoining barge, the “*George and Susannah*” had also been attacked, while the sailing barge “*Two Brothers*” was in extreme danger. The Fire Brigade were engaged until nearly one o'clock in the afternoon in their endeavours to extinguish the fire, at which time the two first named barges had burnt to the water's edge and were sunk.

18 June 25 1881

FATAL SHIPPING COLLISIONS Lloyd's agent at Sheerness telegraphed on Saturday morning that the Zeeland Steamship Company's passenger steamer, “*Princess Elizabeth*” from Queenborough for Flushing, ran down and sank a barge at 10.30 pm the previous evening about half a mile outside Garrison Point. The crew of the barge (the name is not known at present) are supposed to have been drowned. The “*Princess Elizabeth*” afterwards ran ashore on Camp Edge, but got off at nine o'clock, and after repairing an injured plate proceeded to Flushing.

19 July 9 1881

A SUICIDAL MANIA A foolish young waterman named **Wickens** attempted to commit suicide on Saturday in the underground passage at the railway station, Sittingbourne. This is the ninth or tenth similar case in the Faversham police division (which includes Sittingbourne and Sheerness) within a month. In two instances the result was fatal. Wickens's rash act appears to have been prompted by love and drink. He was found covered in blood with a knife in his hand, talking in a delirious way of having lost the girl he loved, and of his intention to pursue and murder. He had begun to cut his throat, and had stopped to sharpen the knife when apprehended.

20 July 23 1881

A STRUGGLE IN THE RIVER George Hamblin, a stonemason, was brought before Mr Paget, charged with attempting to commit suicide by throwing himself into the river off Hammersmith Bridge. It appeared that the prisoner was seen in the river, and **George Palmer**, a waterman, said he went into the river to rescue him, but he struggled violently and pulled him twice under the water. The prisoner inquired of the witness if the water was deep. The witness replied that there was enough water to drown both of them. **Henry Thomas Wood**, another waterman, said he jumped in and assisted Palmer. The prisoner had jumped into a clay hole, where there was 16 feet of water. He would have been killed at any other place. Mr Paget remanded the prisoner, and rewarded each waterman with a sovereign.

21 August 13 1881

A distressing case of suicide occurred at Rochester on Saturday. **Mr Frederick Thompson**, barge and steam tug owner of Chatham, left his home in the morning to collect some accounts ; but a few hours afterwards he was found lying under a hopbine sack in terrible agony. He was conscious, and in reply to questions put to him, he said, "I have been fool enough to take poison. It was rat poison. I took it about an hour and a half ago. I have lost all the use of my limbs. Pray fetch a doctor". The man who found him hurried off for a doctor, but by the time Dr Brown reached him the man was dead. At the inquest, evidence was given to show that the deceased had been desponding lately in consequence of pains in his side, the effects of an injury received some years ago. The night before the occurrence he was very incoherent in his talk. A verdict of temporary insanity was returned.

22 August 27 1881

Shortly after five o'clock on Saturday morning, as a man named **Robert McNeill**, boatman in the employ of the Regent's Canal Dock Company, was about proceeding to his duties, he noticed the body of a young woman floating in the Lambeth basin of the dock. He at once procured some drags, and with assistance got the body to the shore and sent for a constable, who had the corpse conveyed to the mortuary of St George's-in-the-East. On examining the clothes, it was noticed that they bore a resemblance to those of the woman who was said to have been thrown over Westminster Bridge on Wednesday morning by John Evans, a private in the 2nd Battalion Scots Guards, who stands remanded on a charge of murdering her. The police of the A division were at once communicated with, and a constable was sent from the King Street station with a person that knew the missing woman well. This person at once identified the body as that of a young woman named Emily Mortimer, aged twenty six, who had been keeping company with Evans, and who had not been seen by her friends since the night of the 16th instant. The corpse is bruised in various places, but these marks of violence are supposed to have been caused by its coming into contact with the barges and shipping on the river. It seems a mystery how the corpse could have got into the basin where it was found without being noticed, but probably when the gates of the lock had been opened, it has been forced in by the swell of the water under the bottom of the ship or barge that was being admitted.

23 September 3 1881

MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF SURGEON GENERAL BEST The body of Surgeon General Best, late of the British army, of 6 Great Western Terrace, Westbourne Park, was found in the River Thames on Sunday near Chiswick by a waterman named **Lewis**. Deceased who, it is said, had appeared somewhat disturbed in his mind of late, had been missing from home since the 24th ult. The body, on which were found watch chain &c and a small sum of money, has been identified by deceased's son-in-law, Mr J Alexander.

24 September 10 1881

ROBBERY BY A WATCHMAN At the Thames Police Court on Monday, **Arthur Smith**, a watchman, was charged with stealing six tins of preserved meat, and assaulting Henry Wilson, a Thames police-constable, No 42. The defendant was left in charge of the barge *Childs*, loaded with tins of preserved meat, at New Sun Wharf, Ratcliff, and he had to keep watch until six o'clock on Monday morning. At five o'clock, Constable Wilson saw the prisoner about to leave the barge, but catching sight of him he ran back into the cabin, followed by the constable. He took two tins from his outside coat pockets and threw them down. Wilson took him into custody, when he kicked him savagely about the legs. A case had been broken open on board the barge *Childs*, and six tins were missing. Mr Saunders sentenced the prisoner to a month's imprisonment with hard labour.

25 September 23 1881

At Rowley the other afternoon, **James Moreton**, boatman, was charged with maliciously wounding a heifer belonging to Mr Wilkes, farmer. On Sunday morning the prisoner went into a stable and skinned a heifer's tail, and afterwards inflicted other shocking injuries on the animal. The prisoner admitted the offence, and said he committed it when drunk. The magistrates characterised the offence as being the most cruel they ever heard of, and sentenced the accused to three months imprisonment.

26 December 3 1881

CORONERS' INQUESTS Dr Diplock held an inquiry at the "Wellesley Arms", Robert Street, Chelsea, touching the death of **Thomas Taylor**, a bargeman living at Brentford, who was found drowned in the Chelsea Creek, near the Fulham Gas Works, under suspicious circumstances, on Tuesday morning week. Mr Inspector Jones, Criminal Investigation Department, watched the case. It appeared from the evidence of two bargemen that between one and two o'clock on Tuesday morning the deceased, who was in charge of a "monkey" barge, was navigating it along the creek, his intention being to moor alongside the gas factory works. **George Miller**, a mariner of Harwich, Essex, said he was captain of a barge which was moored on the morning in question off Eastwood Wharf, Chelsea. The deceased passed him, and was lost to sight, but at ten minutes to two o'clock he heard three cries of "Murder!" in a loud voice. The last cry was very loud. The cries came from the direction of the Gas Works dock. Next morning he saw the body of the deceased in the mud. **Henry Sampson**, mate aboard the same barge, gave similar evidence. Mr Daniell, divisional surgeon of the T Division of Police, said that there were no marks of violence on the body of the deceased. The jury returned the following verdict :- That the deceased was found drowned, but there was not sufficient evidence to show how he came into the water

27 December 24 1881

ALLEGED MANSLAUGHTER Richard Heap, aged twenty, was charged at Burnley on Friday morning with killing his father, **Kemp Heap**, a boatman aged fifty three, on Saturday last. The prisoner brought his father home on the day in question from a public house in Gannam Lane, and kicked him on the way. On arriving at the house, he kicked him in the chest and broke his ribs, causing his death. The prisoner was committed for trial on the charge of manslaughter.

28 December 31 1881

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Payne held an inquest at Guy's Hospital on the body of John Quinlan, aged 13, residing at 1 Lovegrove Street, Old Kent Road. The evidence showed that on Thursday week the deceased got upon a barge on the Surrey Canal to see it loaded with axle-tree bars from the Horse Shoe Iron Wharf, near the canal bridge, Old Kent Road. One of the men carrying the iron bars asked the deceased to take them from his shoulder, and in doing so the boy slipped and fell back into the hold of the barge, the full force of the iron bars striking him across the face and crushing the bones of his nose into the skull. Mr W T Crewe, house surgeon, deposed to the shocking character of the injuries, and said death ensued from their effects on Tuesday last. A verdict of accidental death was returned.

29 February 4 1882

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr William Carter, coroner for the Eastern Division of Surrey, held an inquiry at the Five Bells Tavern, Bermondsey Square, Long Lane, into the circumstances attending to the death of George Dixon, aged 35 years, a seaman belonging to the steamship *Gertrude*, late residing at Church Street, Whitby, who was drowned in the Thames. It appeared from the evidence of **Joseph William Allen**, a waterman, residing at 70 1/2 Lower Thames Street, and William Harper of 1 East Lane, Bermondsey, that on Monday morning, shortly before twelve o'clock, the *Gertrude*, after discharging her cargo at Cotton's wharf, proceeded to Battle Bridge Pier. At the time the tide was within an hour of high water. Allen and the deceased were in a boat for the purpose of securing her moorings when the deceased, in stepping on to a barge, slipped, fell backwards and was drowned. The witness Allen was recalled, and in answer to the coroner, he said that the atmosphere was hazy at the time deceased fell, and he did not observe him rise to the surface of the water. The coroner remarked that in cases of drowning the sudden immersion often brought on an attack of apoplexy. The jury returned a verdict of accidentally drowned in the Thames.

30 May 20 1882

BODIES FOUND IN THE THAMES The body of Mr Evelyn Hungerford Helsham, 18, son of Mr Gustavus Helsham, St Mary's Hall, Lynn, Norfolk, and a student of Darlington House, Isleworth, who was drowned at Twickenham Ferry on Saturday week, was found on Saturday morning off Richmond Bridge by **Bowles**, a waterman, who receives the award which had been offered. The decomposed remains of William Pilkington, a boy accidentally drowned at Richmond several weeks ago, was also recovered at Isleworth Ferry, making the fifth body found in the Thames between Richmond and Kingston during the past week.

31 May 27 1882

CORONERS' INQUESTS Mr Carttar, West Kent coroner, held an inquest at the George and Dragon, Swanscombe, Galley Hill, on Saturday, on the body of **James Brice**, aged 51, mate of the ketch *Nellie* of Guernsey. The evidence showed that on Wednesday the deceased left his vessel, which was lying off White's Wharf, Swanscombe, rather the worse for liquor. A midnight, he was seen by some men three quarters of a mile from the wharf, to which they directed him. At five o'clock on Thursday morning the master of the barge *William and Ann*, named **Alfred Hall**, the tide having run down, saw the arm of a man protruding from under the keel of the ketch *Heather Bell*, which was lying in the berth occupied on the previous day by the *Nellie*, which had put off into the river. It is supposed that deceased was trying to get on board the vessel, fell, and was drowned, the body drifting under the *Heather Bell*, which settled on it as the tide receded, the keel being upon his chest. The body was with some difficulty got from under the vessel by means of ropes. The coroner summed up in favour of an open verdict, there being no evidence to show how deceased got into the water, but the verdict of the jury was accidentally drowned.

32 July 1 1882

Shortly before five o'clock on Sunday evening, Mr Henry Houghton, landlord of the Beaufort Arms,

Chelsea, hired a boat and went sailing down the river in company with a waterman named **Frampton**. All went well until off Pimlico Pier, when the steamship *Citizen "C"*, also going down the river, ran them down, upsetting the boat and throwing the occupants into the water. Mr Houghton immediately sank and was drowned before any assistance could be given, although a gentleman who had witnessed the occurrence from the pier gallantly jumped in to save him. The waterman, Frampton, succeeded in catching hold of the chain round the steamboat, and thus saved himself. The drags were at once brought into requisition, and at half past seven two men in the employ of the Steamboat Company succeeded in hooking the body of Mr Houghton. It was then taken to the mortuary to await an inquest. The deceased was only 22 years of age.

33 July 29 1882

SAD ACCIDENT OFF NORTHFLEET About four o'clock on Sunday morning last, a sad accident, which resulted in the loss of two lives, occurred in Northfleet Hope. From the particulars furnished to the Gravesend police by Charles Goodwin, aged 16, of 30 Albion Road, Gravesend, it appears that he, accompanied by Joseph Reed, aged 19, of London and Richard Lightfoot, aged 17, of 64 Edwin Street, Gravesend, proceeded in a small boat called a barge dinghy, belonging to **Mr Fletcher's** barge *Aaron*, for a trip up the river, having previously ballasted the little craft with a large stone. When they reached Northfleet Hope, finding that the ballast was too heavy, they endeavoured to throw the stone overboard, and while in the act of doing so, the boat capsized, precipitating the unfortunate occupants into the water. Assistance was promptly rendered by a passing steamer, and Goodwin was saved, but Reed and Lightfoot were drowned before aid could reach them. Goodwin, who was landed at Gravesend, states that he was so confused that he did not inquire the name of the steamer. The boat, with the body of Joseph Reed clinging to it, was found on Monday morning off Greenhithe.

34 August 5 1882

A lighterman named **Jacob Judge**, 45 years of age, while engaged in taking a barge down the river, slipped and fell into the water, and was drowned.

35 August 12 1882

SMUGGLING BY A LIGHTERMAN **Charles Cooper Gester**, 42, lighterman, has been charged at Southwark with having in his possession 22 lb of foreign manufactured tobacco, with intent to defraud her Majesty's Revenue. Police-constable 274M said that between twelve and one o'clock on the morning of Thursday the 27th ult, he saw the prisoner in East Lane, Bermondsey, carrying a heavy bag from the waterside. As soon as he saw witness approaching him, he ran, and tried to escape down a court. Witness pursued him, and saw him drop the bag, and he managed to escape. He returned and picked up the bag, which he found to contain 22 lb of tobacco. On Saturday the 29th he met the prisoner in Bermondsey and apprehended him. Mr Bordman, on behalf of the prisoner, contended that it was a case of mistaken identity. He called three witnesses, all of whom resided in the same neighbourhood, and they said that the prisoner was at home a little after twelve on the night in question. The magistrate said he had no doubt the constable was right. He therefore convicted the prisoner, and ordered him to pay £17 12s or undergo two months imprisonment.

36 August 19 1882

ACCIDENTS ON THE THAMES A lamentable boat accident occurred off Horseshoe Wharf, Bankside, Southwark, on Sunday week, which resulted in the loss of three lives. It appears that a youth named John Jacobs, aged 16, residing at 67 Lower Thames Street, started from Custom House Quay after dinner on the day named, for a row up the river in a boat belonging to his employers, and was joined by a man named Johnson, a barge watchman. They crossed over to London Bridge stairs and went ashore to get something to drink. They had made the acquaintance of three girls, who pressed them to take them for a row. They all went as far as Battersea, and after remaining there some time returned on the ebb tide. All went well until they reached the Horseshoe

Wharf, between Cannon Street and Southwark Bridge. Johnson was then lying in the stern of the boat and the lad Jacobs was plying the oars, when in some way – probably owing to the darkness – the boat ran foul of a number of barges, and began to overturn. Johnson leaped up and succeeded in getting on the barges with one of the girls, but the others were sucked down together with the boat and drowned.

When the steamer *Glen Ross* was off the Lobster, Gravesend, on Sunday week last, on her return from Clacton on Sea, one of her floats got loose. At the time a lady was sitting on one of the paddle boxes, and when the float struck the flaps, she was precipitated into the river. Being a good swimmer, although injured on the head, she managed to keep afloat until one of the male passengers jumped overboard. A boat was then put off to their rescue, and both were saved.

A sad death occurred to an excursionist named Robert Clayton, aged 24, of 42 Luke Street, Norfolk Terrace, Millwall, off Rosherville, on Bank Holiday. The unfortunate man was sitting on the side rail of the passenger steamer *Princess of Wales*, when through some unexpected cause he overbalanced himself, fell overboard, and was drowned, all efforts to save him being of no avail.

37 September 2 1882

A shocking accident occurred off the Dundee Wharf, Wapping, in the early part of last week, by which four persons lost their lives. It appears that about the time in question a large skiff was proceeding down the stream in the rear of a sailing barge. In the skiff was a man named **Hunt**, a lighterman, his wife, **Fanny Hunt**, and their young daughter, **Florence Hunt**, together with a person named Siggers, and her two grown up daughters, Mary Ann and Louisa Siggers ; the three last named were friends of the Hunt family, and had been with them for a day's excursion up the river. All went well with the party throughout the day, but on the return journey they were somewhat belated, and as it came on to rain and blow pretty heavily, Hunt sought and obtained permission to throw a line aboard a sailing barge which was proceeding down stream, and it was whilst being towed rapidly along, as the tide was running very strong at the time, that the accident happened. When the barge arrived nearly opposite the Dundee Wharf, Wapping, she encountered the steam tug *Traveller*, which was making her way up river with two Dutch eel-schuyts in tow. The barge backed a little to avoid them, and at the same moment a gust of wind caught the boat and swung her right under the stern of the nearest eel vessel, which cut the frail skiff in two, and precipitated the whole of the occupants into the water. A Thames police galley, with the help of the pilot of the eel boats, managed to save Mr Hunt and his little girl – Mrs Hunt, her friend Mrs Siggers and her two daughters being drowned.

38 September 9 1882

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL To all who have at heart the honour and independence of the Empire, it must be a matter of felicitation that the schemes of the tunnelists who would fain destroy our insular position have been, if not defeated, at least deferred. In such a case delay may mean defeat, and if so all the better. Sea sickness is a horrible malady, truly ; but exemption from that affliction would be purchased rather too dearly at the cost of our national security. Mr Nathan Hughes, the leader of the anti tunnel movement, frankly admits that he would have nothing to say against the proposed enterprise if we had already reached the Millennium ; but he sees no satisfactory proof of our having attained that blissful era.

The *Evening Standard* of Saturday says that the violent language used by the tunnelists forms a striking contrast to the temperate utterances of those opposed to the tunnel, and is a presumptive proof of the weakness of their case, being reduced to sarcasm and bluster in default of logical fact, and that the Anti Channel Tunnel Party represent the enormous majority of the nation. Mr Nathan C Hughes, as the leader of such a party, may well congratulate himself on his foresight. In fact we know that to the prompt support which Sir Garnet Wolesley gave the ideas in Mr Hughes's pamphlet, through Lord Dunsany, in the *Nineteenth Century*, and the moral support of the Duke of Cambridge, is entirely owing the awakening of this nation to this military danger, and to these three gentlemen this country will find itself deeply indebted on due consideration.

At the British Association of the whole of the sections at Southampton, Sir F Bramwell said, "Jumbo was gone, &c, when up started some writer (Mr Nathan C Hughes?) who, by talking of the silver streak, raised a feeling in the public mind about danger from the French that would never have occurred to them twelve years ago".

Sir W Armstrong said that "the national aspect of this question ought not to be pooh-poohed. Anything that impaired the advantages which nature had given us in the way of natural defence ought to be regarded with the greatest jealousy".

Deputations from the half million of people who live by foreign shipping &c on the Thames have represented to Mr Hughes that the tunnel would deprive them and their children of their daily bread, and they place themselves at the disposition of the Anti Channel Tunnel Society accordingly ; and, as soon as the necessary funds can be raised, great meetings will be held, and resolutions proposed against the construction of the tunnel – at which the leader will speak, as well as presidents of clubs, societies &c, including the Amalgamated Societies of Watermen and Lightermen on the Thames, who are resolved to maintain order for the due discussion of this vital question. The opinion of Mr Hughes is now adopted by his party – namely that "the French have no right to sap our "silver streak" or "main defence" as they are doing, without our consent", as national security sets aside all laws to the contrary. On Thursday last, at the French Embassy, the founder of the Anti Channel Tunnel Society had about an hour's exchange of views regarding the tunnel and, in answer to questions, Mr Hughes moderately claimed a half or two thirds of the British public at present as objecting to the tunnel, but expressed the opinion that they would rapidly increase as the tunnel was believed to approach completion. He also said that, in the opinion of many of the association, it would ultimately turn out quite as great a misfortune for France as for England to make this tunnel, which would probably convulse Europe and disturb the balance of power. It transpired that the utmost divergence of opinion between the French and the Anti Channel Tunnel Society existed, and that there was no intention on the part of our neighbours to do otherwise than bore as suited themselves, professing to be persuaded that the "fait accompli" would reconcile us to it quietly. Mr Hughes replied that the Anti Channel Tunnel Association would never do that – that they believed the French were sapping our main defence against our wish, to the danger of our security as a nation, and they were determined that the tunnel should not be bored.

39 September 23 1882

On Saturday, Dr Diplock held an inquiry at the Hope Tavern, Arthur Street, Chelsea, relative to the death of a man who met his death from jumping off a steamboat on Thursday evening. Mr Bram



Stoker said he lived at 27 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, and was acting manager at the Lyceum Theatre. On Thursday evening he was on a steamer, which was going from Chelsea to London. He saw the deceased, who was also on the boat, deliberately jump off into the water. Witness threw off his coat and jumped overboard after the deceased. He grappled with him, and eventually brought the man to the steamer. The deceased, who appeared to have some life in him, was placed on the deck, and means were taken to resuscitate him, but to no effect. **Harry Trumfield**, a waterman, said he was

left in charge of the steamer *Twilight* on Thursday. He noticed the deceased, who was standing aft, get over the rails of the vessel and jump into the river. He thought the deceased was only in the water five minutes. Police-sergeant George Ross, 5T, said a description of the deceased had been circulated but no one had claimed the body. He appeared to have been a soldier, as he was branded with a "D". His age was between sixty and seventy. He had lost one finger, and was bald. In reply to the Coroner, the sergeant said that Mr Stoker had the body of the deceased taken to his house at Cheyne Walk, and called medical aid. The jury, in returning a verdict that the deceased committed suicide, but that there was no evidence to show his state of mind, wished to publicly recognise the gallant conduct of Mr Stoker in attempting to save life. A juryman remarked that to jump from a boat when the tide was strong was a very brave act. The Coroner said it was undoubtedly an act of heroism. At the request of the jury, the coroner promised to write to the Royal Humane Society and point out Mr Stoker's gallantry.

40 September 30 1882

CORONERS' INQUESTS Dr Danford Thomas has held an inquest on the body of Mary Regan, who was found drowned in the canal at Paddington under circumstances leading to the belief that she had been murdered. The deceased, who was only twenty six years of age, had for some time been living with a boatman named **Franklin** as his wife. Of late the man seems to have made endeavours to keep the deceased from coming to his boat or to see him at any time. He stated that she was continually annoying him, and had been bound over by the magistrates to keep the peace in consequence. An endeavour was made to connect Franklin with the death of the deceased, but in the end the jury returned an open verdict and left the matter in the hands of the police for further investigation.

41 October 7 1882

Martha Smith, the wife of a boatman, was remanded on Saturday at Manchester for attempting to commit suicide, and also with attempting to murder her child, four years old. It was alleged that prisoner, while intoxicated, threw herself and the child into the Rochdale Canal at Manchester. When rescued the child was nearly dead, but the prisoner appeared none the worse for her immersion.

42 October 14 1882

EXTRAORDINARY ALLEGATIONS At the Manchester City Police Court, **Martha Smith**, the wife of a canal boatman, has been charged with attempting to commit suicide by jumping into the canal, and also attempting to murder her child, **Ellen**, aged four years, by taking her into the canal with her. Constables Read and Vean saw the prisoner, with the child in her arms, deliberately jump into the water. She was drunk at the time, and very much excited. With the assistance of some other persons, both the mother and child were rescued and removed to the Infirmary. The woman was first seen walking on the tow-path by some young men, who informed the police, and it was as they were returning with the officers that the woman jumped into the canal. Mr Bentcliffe, who appeared for the prisoner, said his client had been with her husband into Ancoats, and it was not true that she was in drink. Only half an hour previously she had left her husband, who was going back to their boat by the towing-path, when some of the witnesses stopped her and attempted to assault her. It was in trying to get away from them that she accidentally fell into the water. In trying to save herself, she caught the child as she fell, and knocked it into the canal. The police officers, recalled, said that the prisoner, when got out of the canal, made no complaint as to the conduct of any of the witnesses, but cursed them (the officers) as they were removing her to the Infirmary. Inspector Pigott also stated that when the woman was brought to the station she made no complaint, nor did she when she was sober the following morning. Alderman Bennett, on finding that Mr Bentcliffe had no evidence to corroborate his statement, said the magistrates were of opinion that he had acted very improperly. As a professional man, he ought not to have made such charges unless he was prepared to support them. It seemed to the magistrates that if it had not been for the

witnesses, the woman would have lost her life, and the child too. Prisoner, who reserved her defence, was committed for trial at the Assizes on charges of attempted suicide and attempted murder.

43 October 14 1882

A HORSE FLOGGED TO DEATH At Wolverhampton, a boatman named **Maddox**, in the employ of Messrs Ward, ironmasters of Priestfield, in his eagerness to reach a lock before a rival boatman, beat his horse with a thick rope until the exhausted animal fell dead. Maddox was brought before the magistrates and fined 20s and costs.

44 October 21 1882

WARNING TO LONDON "SPORTSMEN" At the Grays Petty Sessions on Saturday, a man named Charles Pinfold, a gas fitter of 153 Philip Street, Shoreditch, was brought up in custody charged on remand with shooting six tame ducks, the property of **Mr Ambrose Ellis**, a barge owner of Stanford-le-Hope. It appeared from the evidence that gangs of men were in the habit of coming down from London to shoot anything that came in their way on the marshes. They had an idea that the sea wall was open to all comers, and in several instances had threatened the lives of persons who interfered with them. In answer to the charge, defendant stated that he thought the ducks were wild ones, or he should not have shot them. He found them in the River Thames, and he intended to forward them on to the coastguard ship at Tilbury. The magistrates expressed an opinion that they were determined to deal severely with these London "sportsmen" and would put a stop to their Sunday practices. The sea wall was private property and they had no right there ; they hoped the sentence they were about to pass on the prisoner, who bore an excellent character, would have the desired effect. Prisoner was then sentenced to three months hard labour at Holloway, without the option of a fine.

45 February 3 1883

CONVICTIONS FOR SMUGGLING At the Southwark Police Court, **Arthur Creek alias Thompson**, 37, a well known waterman, has been charged with having in his possession 24 lbs weight of foreign manufactured tobacco with intent to defraud her Majesty's Revenue. Samuel Howard, a detective sergeant of the Thames Division, said that on Thursday week he was passing along Cherry Garden Street, Bermondsey, when he saw the prisoner coming from the waterside with his coat hanging on his left arm. Perceiving that it looked rather bulky, he stopped him and asked him what he had in the coat, when he replied, "Only a little tobacco". Witness told him he must go to the station and see what he had got. When they arrived at the latter place, he found concealed in different parts of the coat twenty two packets of tobacco, each weighing one pound, and in his pockets two pounds more. In defence, the prisoner said that he found the tobacco in his boat, and he thought he might as well have it as anybody else. Mr Slade fined prisoner £19 14s, or one months imprisonment.

46 February 10 1883

SUSPECTED MURDER NEAR BRISTOL – MYSTERIOUS CASE Dr E M Grace, coroner for the Western Division of Gloucestershire, commenced an inquest on Tuesday evening week at the Waggon and Horses Inn, Crew's Hole, St George's, on the body of William Dowling. Mr T D Sibly (Messrs Sibly and Dickinson, solicitors, Bristol) was present at the inquiry to watch the proceedings on behalf of the friends of the deceased.

The jury having viewed the body, the following evidence was taken : William Henry Dowling, son of the deceased, residing now at Brightville, Sommerville Road, stated that his sister came to him on Sunday the 31st December 1882 and stated that his father had not returned home on the previous night as he had promised. Witness at once gave information to the police in Somersetshire and Gloucestershire and also in the city. When deceased went away on Saturday 30th December, he said he should return the same night. Witness's inquiries in Bristol respecting the deceased being futile,

he went to Bath and Keynsham, and afterwards on the North Somerset line, endeavouring to trace his father, but all his exertions were without avail. His father had said he was going to Keynsham. Replying to the jury, witness said he did not know of anything that would call his father to Keynsham – indeed, deceased had not been to that place for years. By the Coroner : His father was very hot headed, and in moments of anger he had heard him say he wished he was dead and out of the world ; but not for a moment did he think that his father would commit suicide. By the jury : These were ordinary remarks. Replying to Mr Sibly, witness said he formerly lived at 13 Redcliff Crescent, but he went to reside at Brightville, Sommerville Road, after the disappearance of his father, to look after his sisters. By Dr Barton : He never heard his father express fear of anyone. Answering a juryman, witness said his father was not in the habit of remaining out at night – indeed he was too much attached to his home to remain out even at the solicitation of friends. Annie Hippisley Dowling said that she had lived with her sister at Brightville, Sommerville Road, Bishopston. Her father had resided there with them. They had been there three years. Her father left home on Saturday 30th December at 2.30. When he went away, she asked him if he was going to St George's, and he replied that he was going to Keynsham to see someone, but he did not say whom. He gave her the house-keeping money, and observed that he had only 2s in his pocket. Deceased left at home his purse and watch. He wore an overcoat, but no undercoat, as the weather was very mild. She asked him what time he would return, and he replied that he did not know, but that if it were wet he should not go and would therefore be home to tea. That night she remained up



until half past two o'clock, thinking her father had missed the train. At this hour, believing he had been detained by friends, she went upstairs and lay on the bed until nine o'clock the next morning. During Sunday 31st December she stayed at home and, as her father did not come back, at five o'clock she went to inform her brother. By Dr Barton : Her father was very cheerful when he left home. He had previously suffered from rheumatism, but he was much better on the previous Sunday. In reply to the jury, witness said for two or three weeks before, he had intimated that he wanted to go to St George's to see a Mr Thatcher. **John Honeyfield**, living at Crew's Hole, said he was a bargeman. On Sunday afternoon, about five o'clock, a woman came from the dam near the Chemical Works at Crew's Hole and told him there was a body in the water. He, Joseph Tozer and George Ashmead went there, recovered the body and placed it in a boat, and informed Inspector Bird. The body was removed to that house. The body was attired in trousers and waistcoat, but no coat. The trousers appeared as if they had been cut off at the top of the thighs, the lining being

intact. There was a very severe wound beside the right eye. The boots and stockings and collar were on. Witness should think that the body had been in the water a month. He was well acquainted with the river from Bristol to Bath, and there was nothing in the water that would tear anyone's clothes as deceased's clothes were torn. A jurymen : It is an extraordinary thing for both legs of the trousers to be torn off at the same place. The Coroner : And how did his coat come off? William Bird said he was an inspector in the Gloucestershire police force, and was stationed at St George's. On Sunday evening at 7.30, he received information from the last witness, and went to the Feeder lock ; he there saw the body of the deceased in a boat. He had the body conveyed to that house, where he examined it. The trousers which the deceased wore appeared as if they had been cut off just below the waist. There was no coat or hat on the body. Witness discovered nothing at all in the pockets. He gave information to the Bristol police and, it having appeared in the newspapers, the deceased's son identified the body. In reply to the jury, Mr Bird said the waistcoat was unbuttoned. The lining of the trousers was complete, but the trousers were apparently cut off just above the fork. Mr John Barton, residing at Cloudshell House, St George's, surgeon, deposed that on that day he made a *post mortem* examination on the body of the deceased. It was the body of a well formed man, apparently between fifty and sixty years of age. It was attired just as Mr Bird had described. The body was in an advanced state of decomposition, it evidently having been in the water for some weeks. Over the right eye, in the line of the eyebrow, was a longitudinal incised wound, extending down to the bone. There was an abrasion on the eyelid on the same side. The wound must have been inflicted before death, but not very long before, as there was no surrounding inflammation. On cutting through the skin on the same side of the head he found a mass of effused blood, the muscle having been crushed. This also must have been inflicted before death, but very shortly before. The lungs he examined, and found them full of blood and containing no water. They were not distended at all – rather the reverse, and they did not cover the heart in front. In the air passages leading from the mouth to the lungs there was no water. The stomach was almost empty ; it contained a little grumous material, but no water. He next examined the brain, and found no evidence of effusion or of fracture anywhere. The heart and other organs were healthy. These appearances pointed to the fact that the deceased was not drowned, and that he had made no effort to breathe whilst in the water. He believed the cause of death was the wound on the forehead and the bruise on the right side of the head. It seemed to be hardly sufficient to account for death, but as there was no other cause he attributed death to these injuries. Deceased must have been dead before he got into the water, however he met with his death. By the jury : A fall against a sharp stone might cause the injuries on the head. By the Coroner : A violent blow must have been given to cause the effusion, and the blow would be sufficient to stun the deceased. By Mr Sibly : The wound might have been caused by a sharp instrument. In all probability it was. The cut was sharp, and could not have been self inflicted. If deceased had fallen on a stone and then slipped into the water he should have expected to find different conditions. The presence of blood in the lungs was probably due to suffocation. Deceased might first have had a blow, then he might have been suffocated by a hand being placed over the mouth, and afterwards thrown into the water. That would account for the state of the lungs and the blow on the head. This was in fact his theory as to the cause of death. Replying to the jury : The body must have been placed in the water almost immediately after the blows were inflicted, or else he should have found signs of inflammation. He noticed the trousers, which appeared to have been cut or else cleanly torn. The son of the deceased here stated that he had thoroughly examined the remains of the trousers on the body of his father, and was positive that they had been cut. The lining was entire, and the edge of the cloth was quite clean and not ravelled. Mr Barton, replying to Mr Sibly, said if a blow had been inflicted it was probable that blood would flow on to the coat and trousers, and this might account for those articles being removed. This was all the evidence taken. The Coroner observed that he considered it necessary for them to adjourn under the circumstances, and it was perhaps better that the adjournment should be for a considerable time, in order that Inspector Bird might have an opportunity of making inquiries and, if possible, finding out more about the case. He did not think a shorter adjournment than a fortnight would give sufficient time for the matter to be cleared up. A

juryman observed that he thought the deceased could surely be traced. Inspector Bird observed that the police had had no time yet. The Coroner remarked that he suggested such a long adjournment for that purpose. Inspector Bird thought a fortnight would be ample time. He had some little information, which he believed would tend to clear up the case. The inquiry was then adjourned until February 14th. The son of the deceased observed that he believed he could trace the perpetrator of the deed if there had been foul play.

47 February 17 1883

A CURIOUS CASE On Monday at the Southwark Police Court, **Mr William Balchin**, barge owner and lighterman, Fenchurch Buildings, Fenchurch Street, was summoned by the Watermen's Company for unlawfully causing the barge *J Greenwood* to be navigated on the River Thames without having the name of her owner and number of the craft painted thereon, as required by the Watermen's Act and bye laws. **G Dukes**, an inspector of the Watermen's Company, said that on January 29 he saw the barge in question leave the Custom House Wharf, navigated by two lightermen, and proceed across the river towards Horsleydown. He perceived that there was no name or number on the stern, as required by the Watermen's Act. Witness, however, recognised the barge, and having ascertained who was the owner, he was instructed to take the present proceedings. The defendant's manager attended, and said that the name "*J Greenwood*" and the number was chalked on the stern. The inspector said that was not sufficient. The Act of Parliament set forth that they must be painted on the barge. He saw some letters in chalk on the barge, but they were not recognisable, as a portion of it had been washed off. He reminded his worship that it was of the utmost importance that the Act should be strictly obeyed. The manager said they had no idea of evading the law. They only recently purchased the barge, and had directed a person to paint the name and number thereon, but he had neglected to do so. Requiring the use of the barge on an emergency, he sent the barge out, after seeing the name and number chalked on in large letters. On promising to have them painted on immediately, a penalty of 10s and costs was imposed.

48 March 3 1883

POLLUTING THE THAMES At the Southwark Police Court recently, **George Hale**, watchman in the employ of Messrs **Elmore and Scott**, lightermen, was charged with unlawfully throwing gas refuse into the River Thames off Bankside. Mr Payne prosecuted on behalf of the Thames Conservancy, and called Inspector Long, Thames Division, who said that at a quarter to two in the morning he was on duty in the police galley, when he noticed a fearful stench near Bankside, and perceived some dark fluid floating on the surface. He proceeded towards Ward's Wharf, where he saw defendant on board the barge *Maria*, belonging to Messrs Elmore and Scott, pumping some liquid from the barge into the river. The barge was laden with gas refuse. Witness took some of the liquid flowing from the barge and consigned it to the office of the Conservancy Board. In answer to Mr Bridge, he said he examined the barge and found it laden with spent lime, brought from the gasworks at Vauxhall. There was no water in the barge. He added that serious complaints had come from the authorities of St Thomas's Hospital respecting noisome smells floating past, and the police had received orders to keep a sharp look out. The defendant said he was night watchman in the employ of Messrs Elmore and Scott, and it was his duty to look after the barges and keep them from sinking. There was a great deal of water in the fore-sheets, and he was pumping it out. Mr Payne said he had a sample of the fluid which had been pumped out, which had been analysed. Mr G W Wigner, analytical chemist, Plough Court, Lombard Street, said he had received a sample of the fluid from Inspector Long of the Thames Division. He found it to be the drainage from spent lime. It had a very offensive smell, contained two ounces of ammonia to the gallon, and a large quantity of sulphuric acid. It was very injurious to health. The foreman employed by Messrs Elmore and Scott now came forward, and informed his worship that the spent lime (a dry substance) came from the South Metropolitan Gasworks at Bankside, to be put on the land, but unfortunately it rained very hard and filled the forepart of the boat and got among the cargo. Mr Bridge observed that, even if it were so, the water, or liquid, should have been pumped into another barge and not

into the river. As a caution to the defendant and others, he inflicted a nominal penalty of 5s and costs, but if the offence was repeated he should pass a heavy sentence.

49 March 17 1883

BURIAL OF ONE OF KING WILLIAM'S WATERMEN In presence of a large number of the Queen's watermen, the remains were buried on Friday, in the Isleworth churchyard, of **Samuel Style**, aged 82, the last but one now living of King William's watermen. He had been tenant for fifty years of the Isleworth Ferries, and had taken part in several of the King William boating excursions, especially during the visits of Royalty from abroad.

50 March 17 1883

SUICIDE OF AN OFFICER OF THE ROYAL HORSE GUARDS On Tuesday afternoon last week, Dr George Danford Thomas held an inquiry at the Buffalo's Head Tavern, Marylebone Road, into the circumstances attending the death of William Gordon, aged 36, quarter-master of the Royal Horse Guards, whose body was found in the Regent's Canal on Sunday. Mrs Rose Gordon, widow of the deceased, deposed that she lived at the Albany Street Barracks. The deceased for some time



past had been in a desponding state of mind, and had pains in his head. On February 1st, he suddenly disappeared, and inquiries were made as to his whereabouts, but they were unable to gain any tidings of him. On Sunday evening she was asked to view the body of a man that had been found in the Regent's Canal, and she identified it as that of her husband. Robert Weir stated that he was riding master at Albany Street Barracks, and he knew the deceased as quarter-master. He had noticed that there was an alteration in the general conduct of the latter and he was strange in his manner. On February 1st the deceased went away after doing his duty. The coroner said that he had received a letter from Colonel Milne Holme giving the deceased an excellent character, and stating that he had of late complained of severe pains in the head. **James Goodenough**, a bargeman, deposed to finding the body, and the jury returned a verdict of suicide while of unsound mind.

51 March 24 1883

EXTRAORDINARY CHARGE OF HOUSE BREAKING At the Brentford Petty Sessions on Saturday, **William Ganey**, bargeman, Poplar, was charged with breaking and entering the house of Mrs Rutter, New Road, Brentford, and stealing various articles. Mrs Rutter received an invitation to spend a day with her daughter at Shepherd's Bush, and locked up her house. On returning she found the back door broken open, the lock being wrenched aside. A chest of drawers was placed outside one of the rooms, to prevent anyone going in. All the contents of the room were strewn about the floor. A silk jacket was missed from the bedroom, eight yards of silk from a drawer, and a

gold ring from a bag hanging up in the passage. It was also found that the curtains, both up and down stairs, were closely pinned, so as to prevent anyone looking into the rooms. Detective Ward discovered that the same evening a man, resembling prisoner, went to the Shepherd's Bush Post Office and handed in a telegram addressed to Mrs Rutter, saying, "Your daughter has met with an accident, and she requires your attendance at Shepherd's Bush". When apprehended a knife was found on the prisoner, which opened the lock of the house door. He was also seen in the neighbourhood on the evening in question. Mr Woodbridge said he could prove the prisoner was on his own barge at Richmond at the time. The case was remanded for the police to make inquiries, bail being refused.

52 March 31 1883

A THAMES WATERMAN FROZEN TO DEATH At an early hour on Friday morning a barge was found in the Commercial Dock, Rotherhithe, in which the figure of a man was seen lying stretched upon the deck, apparently asleep. On the barge, which appeared to be under no control, being boarded by the river police, it was discovered that the figure they had seen upon the deck was the frozen corpse of a waterman named **Matthew Weed**, who had succumbed to the bitter cold of the previous night. All efforts were at once applied to restore animation, but without avail. It subsequently transpired that the poor man who had thus met his death had lived at 91 Park Street, Southwark, and was known to be with a lighterman named **Hunt**. They had overnight been engaged in shifting petroleum casks at Erith, and it had been their intention to proceed to London by train, owing to the non arrival of the tug which was to have towed the barges to Commercial Docks. They had proceeded as far as the South Eastern Railway Station to purchase tickets, when they learned that it was possible for their barges to be moved to London that night. They returned, and when the barges had been taken to the entrance of the Lavender Dock they were cast adrift, and Hunt, having moored his, went ashore. This is the last he saw of Weed, who was engaged in getting his barge into dock. Previous to leaving Erith, the deceased, who appeared to have been in excellent health, had partaken freely of a hearty supper. It is stated that since the year 1814, when a severe frost caused the Thames to be firmly ice bound, such a case is not on record.

53 April 21 1883

On Monday Mr Langham held an inquest at Guy's Hospital on the body of a child, name unknown, which was found in the river off Horselydown Stairs. **Patrick Corfield**, a waterman, said he was dredging the river on Saturday, and at the spot indicated, came across something wrapped up in a piece of brown paper and tied with a piece of string. On unwrapping it, he found that it contained the body of a newly born child which had evidently not been in the water more than two or three days. He took it to the parish mortuary. Mr John Gillens, surgeon of Horselydown, said the body was that of a full term male child. There were no external marks of violence, and it had certainly not been in the water long. He had made a *post mortem* examination, and found that the child had lived, but probably only for a short time. There were no indications of death from drowning, and he believed it was dead before it was put in the water. There was, however, nothing to prevent the child living had proper care been bestowed upon it. The jury returned an open verdict of found in the river.

54 April 21 1883

A THAMES MYSTERY At half past six on Thursday morning, a lighterman named **Jeffery Abbott** saw off Cherry Garden Pier, Bermondsey, the body of a man floating in the Thames, and having secured it, he towed it ashore. On the body being examined, it was found that the throat was cut almost from ear to ear, there was a scar on the right temple, and several teeth were missing. The body was much decomposed and, it is conjectured, must have been in the water several weeks. The deceased appears to have been between fifty and sixty years of age. He was 5 ft 9 in high, had dark hair, was bald on top of the head, and had only one leg. He was dressed in a diagonal cut away coat, diagonal vest, and black cloth trousers, sidespring boot, blue stripe cotton shirt, lavender

striped sock and black silk cravat.

On Friday afternoon Mr W Carter held an inquest at the Five Bells, Bermondsey Square, on the body of Charles Panons Girdler, aged 36, a cook of private means, whose residence lately was at Farmer's Road, Camberwell, and whose body was found in the river Thames, with the throat cut, on Thursday morning week, by a lighterman. James Colman, the coroner's officer, deposed to conveying the body to the mortuary and searching it, when he found a number of pawn tickets and the remains of a piece of tissue paper, containing the following words in pencil :- "Dear William – if I am found", and on other parts of the paper, "Dear Father", "Dear Sister". The action of the water had washed away the remainder. The body appeared to have been in the water six or seven weeks. The throat was severely cut, and there was a scar on the right temple as of a blow. The deceased had lost one of his legs, and the wooden stump was missing from the socket. Robert Henry Girdler, a stationer's assistant, identified the body as that of his brother. He used to drink a great deal, and had done nothing since a sum of money was left him five years ago. He had never been under medical restraint. Witness thought from the writing that the deceased must have been contemplating destroying himself. A sister-in-law of the deceased stated that the latter had often suffered from *delirium tremens*, and it also transpired that he had £15 or £20 upon him when last seen by his friends. Dr Burgess would not express an opinion as to whether the wound in the throat was self inflicted. The jury thought there was no need for a *post mortem* examination, and returned a verdict of suicide during mental derangement caused by drink.

55 April 28 1883

NEGLECTING A WIFE On Monday at the Southwark Police Court, **Alfred Roberts**, 29, lighterman, was charged with neglecting to maintain his wife and child, leaving them chargeable to the St Olave's Union. Henry Ward, one of the relieving officers, said that on Thursday last, the 19th inst, **Caroline Roberts**, prisoner's wife, applied to him in a destitute condition, stating that for some time her husband had deserted her, and she was in actual want. He proceeded to her lodgings, very clean but poorly furnished, and finding she had neither food nor firing, he relieved her. She was in a very bad state, suffering from want and rheumatism, and the child was very sickly. They both had the attendance of the parish doctor, and were supplied with nourishing food and medicine. Mr Slade asked what occupation the prisoner followed. Witness replied that he was a lighterman employed at the Depot, Tooley Street, and could earn £2 a week. The wife told witness that he had neglected her and the child for a long time. The prisoner said that he did not earn £2 a week. He was only jobbing about the depot, and only worked three days last week. As for his wife, he could not live with her. She threatened to smash his brains out. He was quite willing to maintain her. Sergeant Biggs, 12M, said he heard the prisoner's wife was in great distress, and acquainted the relieving officer that he had deserted her. Witness accompanied Mr Ward to the house, and found neither food nor firing. He knew the prisoner had constant work at the Depot Wharf. Mr Slade told the prisoner that his conduct towards his wife and child was very cruel, as from the evidence it was clear that he was able to maintain her and her child in comfort. He sentenced him to one month's hard labour.

56 May 12 1883

EXTENSIVE ROBBERIES OF WOOL At the Central Criminal Court on Saturday, John Martin, wool dealer, Bow : Alexander Nicholls, foreman at the Foundry Wharf ; and **Thomas Henry** and **Joshua Bentley**, lightermen's apprentices, were indicted for stealing twelve bales of wool valued at £250, the property of Messrs **Bond** and **Storey**, lightermen. Mr Poland and Mr Montagu Williams prosecuted for the Public Prosecutor ; Mr Willis QC and Mr Avory defended Martin ; and the other prisoners were defended by Mr Thorne Cole, Mr Geoghegan and Mr Blackwell. On the night of January 30 the wool was stolen from a lighter called the *Petrel*, moored alongside the ship *Sperber*, on board which the wool was to have been placed. The following morning at five o'clock it was loaded into a van at the Foundry Wharf, and taken to Martin's premises. After the marks on the bales had been obliterated, it was forwarded the same afternoon to Halifax, to a Mr Hazelden. No

invoice or advice note was sent with it, but Martin arrived the same evening in Halifax and sold the wool to Hazelden for £200. On Martin's premises were found a large number of shirts, 200 pairs of trousers, and other articles which were the subject of other charges. It was denied, in defence, that the prisoners, and particularly Martin who, it was urged, carried on a large and legitimate business, had any knowledge that the wool had been stolen. Martin was convicted of receiving the property, and the other prisoners of stealing it. The Recorder said the offence was a very mischievous one. Only last year he was informed that a single firm had lost £11,000 worth of goods in this way. He sentenced Martin to seven years, and the other prisoners to five years penal servitude each.

57 June 16 1883

A CHINAMAN'S OATH **James Lewes**, 20, a lighterman, a powerfully built young man, was indicted for having assaulted and beaten Nee-hop-nghang. The evidence was interpreted by M Albert and a Chinese interpreter. The prosecutor who, as his name shows, is a native of the Celestial Empire, was engaged in painting his outside door when the prisoner and others who were with him asked him to supply them with a pennyworth of tobacco. He told them that he did not sell the article, whereupon the prisoner forced his way into the passage, which had just been freshly painted. He then struck the prosecutor with a piece of brick, and so injured him that for a time he partly lost his eyesight. There were two Chinamen who gave evidence, and the following oath was administered to them by Mr Smith, the crier of the court :- "You shall speak the truth ; if you do not speak the truth, you will be lost like this saucer, and scattered like the salt it contains". Each witness then dashed down a saucer containing salt. The prisoner was convicted and sentenced to two months hard labour.

58 June 30 1883

MANSION HOUSE Sidney Vass, an officer of Customs, **Frederick Baldock**, a lighterman, and **Alfred Henry Littleboy**, also a lighterman, who surrendered to his recognisances, underwent a further examination, charged with being concerned with others not in custody in breaking open a number of cases on the lighter *Pegu*, lying off All Hallows Pier, and stealing five shirts of the value of 25s and some wine. Mr Hare submitted that there was not a sufficient removal of goods to amount to a theft in point of law, but the Lord Mayor, differing in opinion, overruled the objection, and committed the prisoners Vass and Baldock for trial. Littleboy was discharged.

59 June 30 1883

CORONERS' INQUESTS Dr Danford Thomas held an inquest on Saturday afternoon at the St Pancras Coroner's Court into the circumstances attending the death of Joseph French, aged 9 years, who lived with his parents at 29 Stanmore Street, York Road. **Thomas Ward**, a lighterman, stated that as he was navigating his barge on the Regent's Canal, near the St Pancras lock, on Tuesday evening, his attention was drawn to a little boy running along the towing path, who told him his brother was in the water. He went to the spot pointed out, and after a short time brought the body of the deceased to the surface. Albert French, aged 11, brother of deceased, said that he and his brother went to the canal fishing on Tuesday, and as his brother was trying to catch a fish he fell into the water, and he only saw a cap and some bubbles afterwards. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

60 August 11 1883

FATAL COLLISION IN THE THAMES On Thursday, at the Wreck Commissioner's Court, Westminster, Mr Rothery and nautical assessors resumed and concluded the official inquiry into the circumstances attending the collision of the *Navarino* with two sailing barges in the Thames on March 4 last, resulting in loss of life. The *Navarino* was a large iron screw steamship belonging to the British India Steam Navigation Association. She was of 3356 tons, and was fitted with engines of 350 horse power. She left the Royal Albert Docks on March 4 last for Colombo with a crew of 120 hands and a general cargo. While proceeding down the river in charge of a pilot, she came

upon some groups of barges, which were also going down the river. After passing the first group, and while in the act of passing the second, the port chain of the steering gear broke, and she came into collision with the barge *Spring*, turning it over and throwing the two hands into the water, the master being rescued, but the mate was drowned. Afterwards the *Navarino* came into collision with the barge *Beaconsfield*, doing considerable damage. At Gravesend the steering gear was connected, and the vessel proceeded on her journey. Mr Commissioner Rothery came to the conclusion that the speed of the vessel was not excessive, and that the course taken was a proper one, but at the time of the casualty the port chain of the steering gear could not have been in a good and proper condition. No blame could be attached to the pilot.

61 September 8 1883

ILLEGAL FISHING At Brentford Petty Sessions, **John Armitage**, waterman, was charged with taking fish in the Thames near Kew of prohibited size. The boat occupied by defendant was searched by George Myers of the Thames Conservancy, and it was found he had a bushel and a half of small fish, mostly dace, in the boat, and two bushels and a half in another boat, or altogether about ten thousand fish, mostly of a size smaller than that stipulated. This was very prejudicial to the enjoyment of the rights of anglers. Defendant said members of the Thames Angling Association often took great quantities of small fish with rod and line, and did not return them to the river, keeping them for bait, and they ought to be prosecuted if he was. Fined 40s or one month. Defendant was also charged with using a boat without his name on it. It appeared that he had painted on the boat the name of Solomon Armitage, a well known Thames poacher, now dead. For this offence, a fine of 5s was inflicted.

62 September 29 1883

A CAPTAIN DROWNED On Friday Sir John Humphreys held an inquest at the Eagle Tavern, East India Road, Poplar, on the body of **Benjamin Barton**, aged 24, a ship's captain. **Charles Fowler** stated that he was mate of the ship *Canterbury*, and the deceased was captain of the same vessel. He last saw him alive about eight o'clock on the previous evening, when he was dressing. Some time afterwards he missed the deceased, and then he was told that whilst going on shore he slipped and fell overboard. He afterwards saw deceased lying on the deck of a barge, and a doctor was sent for, who tried every means in his power to restore animation, but could not. Deceased was a sober man. George Davall stated that hearing that deceased was in the water, he procured the drags and recovered the body. Mr W H Crosse, surgeon, stated that he was called to the deceased, who had just been taken out of the water, and he tried every means to restore him, but life was extinct. In the absence of further evidence, the jury returned a verdict of found drowned.

63 October 6 1883

STRANGE DEATH OF AN APPRENTICE On Friday Mr George Collier held an inquest at the Watermen's Arms, High Street, Wapping, on the body of **Henry Jordan Peaper**, aged 18, a lighterman's apprentice. **Charles Peaper**, a lockman living at 6 Church Street, Wapping, stated that the deceased was his son, and he last saw him alive on Tuesday at the London Docks when he was navigating a barge. Deceased was a sober and steady young man, and had only been apprenticed three months. The same evening, his younger son brought him news that the deceased had fallen overboard and had been taken to the Turk's Head public house. Witness went there, and found a doctor trying to revive deceased, but after some time he was pronounced dead. **Henry Self**, a lighterman's apprentice, stated that whilst standing on Brewer's Wharf he was told that someone had fallen overboard. He went to the place indicated, and saw the body of the deceased recovered, after it had been in the water for about five minutes. He knew nothing of the circumstances of the case. Thames Police-constable James Hayes stated that he had made inquiries into the matter, and was told by the captain of the *Black Eagle* barge that about seven o'clock on Thursday evening he heard a splash in the water, and with assistance brought the body of the deceased to the surface. He was put in a barge, and afterwards taken to the Turk's Head, where he died. In the absence of further

evidence, the jury returned a verdict of found drowned.

64 November 3 1883

THE MAINTENANCE OF A LUNATIC WIFE On Friday week at the West Ham Police Court, **Edward Boughtflower** of 101 Lansdowne Road, Canning Town, was summoned, at the instance of the West Ham Board of Guardians, to show cause why an order should not be made on him to contribute to the support of his wife, who is detained at the Northampton Asylum, chargeable to the West Ham Union. The evidence showed that on February 3rd 1874, the prisoner's wife was admitted into the Essex Asylum at Brentwood, and was ultimately transferred to the Northampton Asylum, but was still chargeable to the West Ham Union. The defendant had paid at the rate of 3s 6d a week very irregularly. The cost of Mrs Boughtflower was 10s a week, 6s of which was paid out of the Consolidated Fund, the remainder being contributed out of the rates. Defendant said that all the time he had earned the money he had paid it. During the time he had been paying for his wife's support, he had paid about £100, and he handed up his receipt book to his worship. Mr Phillips intimated that since July last, the defendant had only paid 7s. In reply to his worship, the defendant said he earned only 25s a week, having just got a job as a boatman. He was living with a woman, and had two children, the youngest being one year and four months, and the other about twelve months older. It was close on ten years since his wife was sent away. Mr Phillips said the liability as to the defendant's wife was incurred before those other liabilities. He must maintain his wife – there was no help for that. He must try and keep up the payment of 3s 6d a week, an order for the payment of which he would make. Mr Phillips then made the order, remarking that it was a very sad case.

65 November 3 1883

A DISORDERLY WATERMAN At the Stratford Petty Sessions on Friday, **Richard Wills**, 34, waterman, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Beckton Road, East Ham. Police-constable Elliott, 354K, said that at about half past five o'clock in the evening he was on duty at the entrance of the Beckton Gasworks, when the prisoner and three other men came up, having with them a box containing a few sprats. As the men came from their work, the prisoner called out, "Fine shrimps, penny a bunch", and a lot of people gathered around, only to discover that the men had but a few sprats. Witness requested the men to be quiet, when they became abusive, and the prisoner endeavoured three times to push himself into the works. Each time he was asked to go away home, but he refused; and at last, as a crowd had collected, he was taken into custody. Then one of his companions attempted to release the prisoner, but did not succeed. The Bench imposed a fine of 10s, the default being fourteen days imprisonment.

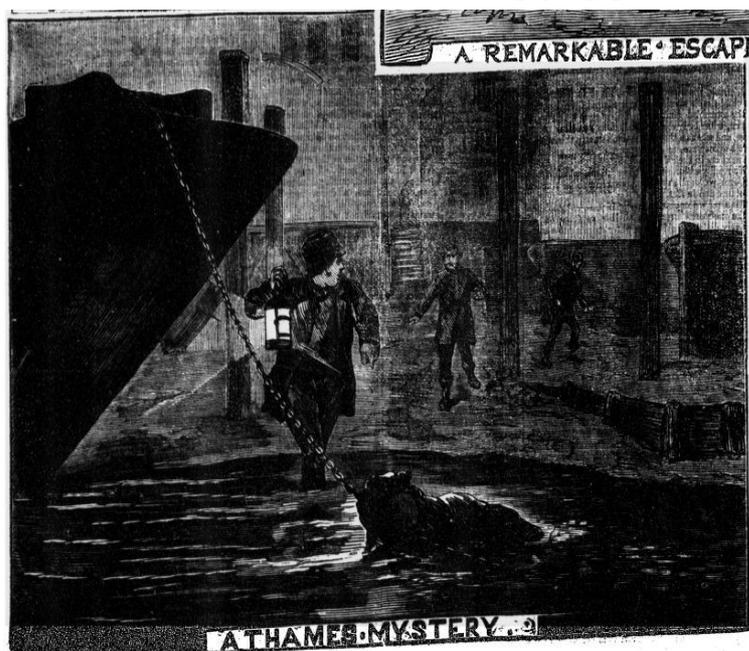
66 November 17 1883

SUICIDE NEAR REGENT'S PARK On Saturday last week, George Danford Thomas, the Coroner for Central Middlesex, held an inquest at the Railway Mission Hall, Goldington Crescent, Camden Town, into the circumstances attending the death of Charlotte Wilmott, aged 30, who committed suicide under the following distressing circumstances :- According to the evidence, it appeared that the deceased's friends and relations reside at Bristol, and that when fourteen years of age she came to London and stayed with an aunt for some time, but after the aunt beat her for stopping out late at night, she left her aunt's house and was not heard of for some three years afterwards, when she went and informed her aunt that she was married and living at Holloway, her husband being a respectable mechanic. Very little was heard of the deceased until two years ago when, in consequence of her husband having deserted her and her two children, she communicated with her mother, and the mother had the two children sent to her, and had kept them since. The deceased became in a low and desponding state of mind, and used to worry very much about her husband having deserted her, which compelled her to gain her living by washing and ironing. On the 15th of last month the mother received a letter from the deceased, in which she stated that she had sent all her clothes. because where she was going to, all her clothing would be found her, and

asked her to kiss her children and say goodbye to them for her, and that she hoped God would bless her and them. The mother received a box containing clothes and other things, some of which the deceased requested might be given to her children. The mother, fearing something wrong was about to occur, there being no address on the letter, came to London and informed the police of the case. On Monday morning, as a bargeman named **John Hall** was towing his barge along the Regent's Canal, he, when nearing the St Mark's Bridge, Regent's Park Road, noticed something floating in the water, which he with difficulty got out, and found it was the body of a woman, much decomposed. It had been in the water for about a fortnight, and was removed to the mortuary, where it was identified. A juror said that there were during a year many suicides at this place from St Mark's Bridge, and this was owing, he thought, to the parapet of the bridge being low. The coroner said that this matter had been brought before the court on other occasions, and the reason given why it was so low was because the inhabitants objected to their view of the park being taken away. Much might be said for and against such a question, for persons if they were determined to commit suicide would do it, no matter what difficulties had to be overcome. The jury returned a verdict that the deceased committed suicide whilst of unsound mind.

67 November 24 1883

A THAMES MYSTERY On Monday morning, shortly before two o'clock, as a boatman named **Anderson** was proceeding to his work, he heard sounds of moaning proceeding from the direction of Alderman Stairs, Lower East Smithfield, which is a plying place for watermen who take off



passengers to the Continental boats when they are lying in the stream. Anderson summoned assistance, and lights having been procured, a search was commenced round about the stairs. Nothing could be seen there, but as it was low water Anderson and his companions continued their investigations along the shore, and presently, a little way out, they came upon the body of a well dressed young woman, apparently about twenty years of age. She was lying in about a foot and a half of mud, her head resting upon the chain of a barge, her clothing being completely saturated with mud, presenting the appearance of having been rolled in it. There was a gash across the forehead, as if from a heavy blow from some blunt instrument. Her nose and lips were cut, as if from a second blow, and there were also other marks of violence about her body. She was quite insensible. The ambulance from an adjoining police station was procured, and the young woman placed upon it and conveyed to the London Hospital, where she remains. A description of her was circulated, and a few hours later she was identified by Mr Lechmere, a licensed victualler, as Sarah Binns, a domestic servant in his employ. The girl, who is described by her master as highly respectable, went out on Sunday afternoon about three o'clock, and in the ordinary course should

have been home about ten at night. She had no business at all near where she was found, and how she got there is at present a mystery.

68 December 22 1883

RECORDS OF THE PAST

THE FROST FAIR ON THE THAMES The fair on the Thames was preceded by a remarkable severe frost, which commenced December 27 1813, accompanied by an unusual thick fog, that continued many days, and was succeeded by a tremendous fall of snow, which prevented all communication with the northern and western roads for several days. The Thames presented a complete field of ice between London and Blackfriars Bridges on Monday the 31st of January 1814.

“A fair is this day (February 4 1814) held, and the whole space between the two bridges covered with spectators”.

Another,
FROST FAIR

“Amidst the arts which on the Thames appear,
To tell the wonders of this icy year ;
Printing claims prior place, which at one view,
Erects a monument to Frost and you.

Printed on the River Thames, February 4, in the fifty fourth year of the reign of King George the Third ; Anno Domini 1814”.

Another,

“This was printed on the River Thames on Friday the 4th of February 1814, opposite Queenhithe”.

Every vendor of the different commodities gave his customer some token printed for the occasion. On Thursday the 3rd, a sheep was roasted, or rather burnt, nearest to Bankside, over a charcoal fire in a large iron pan. The admission to the booth where this culinary skill was displayed was sixpence each. There was also two swings on the ice, which met with a few customers ; there was a barge almost on one side, near the centre arch of London Bridge, fixed in the ice ; it was taken possession of by a party with a fiddler. They hoisted a flag and made merry ; others did the same, but the ice being so rugged and dangerous nearer to the bridge few ventured to the edge ; some, however, did, and even got on the starlings of the centre arch, although it was covered with ice like glass. Two of them, however, paid for their temerity by slipping off, and were with much difficulty saved. After this, others ventured on the same expedition to write their names and date under the arch. Skating was impossible, it was so very rough. Here and there a small slide was made, but the masses which had been united were composed of large lumps of snow frozen together. In many places they had only joined at the top, and when they were broken through were really dreadful to look at. On this day (the third), a plumber named Davis, attempting to cross near Blackfriars Bridge with some lead in his hand, sunk between two masses as above described and rose no more. Every hour increasing the numbers of visitants and amusements, on the 5th the newspapers began to warn the people of the danger of a sudden thaw, upon the then state of the tide, and the Lord Mayor also issued orders for all booths to be struck on the Saturday evening. In consequence, many had withdrawn, though several remained to a very late hour.

On Sunday morning, February the 6th, at two o'clock in the morning on the flowing of the tide, a dreadful explosion took place, and those who had not paid attention to the Lord Mayor's orders, or the caution given by others, shared a fate that few pitied, although, as fortune would have it, not a single person was lost ; nothing could describe the crush ; in a moment everything flew the same way as if a sudden blast of gunpowder had exploded. Barges, lighters, wherries and every kind of vessel on the Thames was dashed to pieces ; several barges lying off Queenhithe, St Paul's Wharf, and the Three Cranes were broken in two, their sides crushed in, and the immense large piles, full

eighteen inches square, that they were fastened to, were snapped as short as a match and splintered to bits. Mr Lawrence of the Feathers in Timber Street had erected a booth opposite Broken Wharf for the accommodation of the curious. At nine o'clock at night, he left it to the care of two men, taking away all the spirits and liquors, except what little he left for the two men for their own use. When the explosion took place at two o'clock, the booth was hurried along with the quickness of lightning towards Blackfriars Bridge. There were seven men in the booth at the time, and in their alarm at the violence of their progress, they neglected the fire and candles, which communicated with the covering, which had cost £40 being a very large tarpaulin, and set it instantly on fire. They succeeded in getting into a lighter which had broken from its moorings ; but immediately after this it was dashed to pieces against the arches of Blackfriars Bridge. The poor fellows with difficulty saved themselves by getting hold of the balustrade ; five of them reached Puddle Dock and the other two a barge, after being nearly lost. The Thames at nine o'clock resembled the desolate prospect of the northern seas, wrecks and masses of ice floating and driving about in the greatest fury ; everything left of the fair had vanished.

Among the casualties on the river on Friday was one in which the interposition of Providence was most strikingly manifested. About five o'clock, three persons, an old man and two lads, having ventured on a piece of ice above London Bridge, it suddenly detached itself from the main body, and was carried by the tide through one of the arches. The persons on the ice, who laid themselves down for safety, were observed by the boatmen at Billingsgate who, with laudable activity, put off to their assistance, and rescued them from their impending danger. One of them was able to walk, but the other two were carried in a state of insensibility to a public house, where they received every attention their situation required.

On Friday a fair was held on the ice at Chiswick. A great number of booths and shows of every description was splendidly fitted up on the Thames.

On Saturday, a fisherman's boy of the name of Carter incautiously ventured, at low water, on a large sheet of ice near Westminster Bridge which, from the turning of the tide and the thaw, suddenly separated from the middle of the river towards Millbank, where his cries attracted the notice of the watermen, who put off to his assistance, and fortunately by the application of oars, relieved him from his perilous position.

We shall endeavour to give the whole number of frosts that have ever frozen the Thames over from the earliest period.

The first that appears on record was in the year 250 ; the Thames was frozen over nine weeks.

In 695 the Thames was frozen for six weeks, and booths built upon it.

In 923 the Thames was frozen over for thirteen weeks.

In 998 the Thames was frozen for five weeks.

In 1083 the Thames was frozen for fourteen weeks.

In 1434 the Thames was frozen from November 24th to February 10th ; it was frozen below bridge to Gravesend.

Hollinshead informs us "that in 1655, the one and twentyth of December, began a frost, which continued so extremlie that on new year's even, people went over and amongst the Thames on the ice from London Bridge to Westminster. Some plaied at the football as boldlie there as if it had been on the drie land ; diverse of the court shot daily at pricks set upon the Thames, and the people, both men and women, went on the Thames in greater numbers than in anie street of the citie of London. On the 31 daie of Januarie, at night, it began to thaw, and on the fifth daie was no ice to be seen between London Bridge and Lambeth, which sudden thaw caused great floods and high waters, that bare down bridges and houses and drowned manie people in England, especially in Yorkshire Owes bridge was borne away with others".

In 1698-9 there was a severe frost, and the Thames was frozen over ; but it did not last longer at that time than the tide ran down, but the ice was so thick it stopped at London Bridge, and reached as far as the Temple, where people passed over it ; it lasted from December to March.

In 1715-16 there was a great frost, in which the Thames was frozen over for several miles, when booths and streets were made on the ice, and an ox roasted &c.

In 1739-40 a severe frost commenced December 2nd and continued for nine weeks, or 103 days, when a great many booths were erected on the Thames, and multitudes of people dwelt on it.

In 1762-3 the frost set in on the 25th of December, and continued with little intermission till the 29th of January. The Thames was so frozen as to bear carriages.

In 1788-9 there was a severe frost, in which there was a fair on the Thames, and crossings made opposite the Custom House, the Tower, Execution Dock, Putney, Brentford, &c, and lasted from November 1788 to January 1789.

69 January 5 1884

TWO MEN FOUND DROWNED AT CHELSEA Mr Diplock held two inquests on Saturday, at the Wellesley Arms, Robert Street, Chelsea, on the bodies of **George Sutton**, aged 29, and Adolph Edgar Wornast, 21 years of age, who were found drowned in the Thames off Chelsea. In the case of Sutton, the body was identified by Stephen How, a carpenter living at Lock's Yard, Sevenoaks, Kent, who stated that the deceased was his grandson, and was captain of a barge. Witness knew nothing of the young man's death beyond what he had heard from the mate of the vessel, who told him that on November 30, while the barge was going under Battersea Bridge, the tiller struck the deceased and knocked him overboard. Sutton sank at once, and nothing was seen of the body until Thursday, when it was taken from the river at Chelsea. In answer to the jury, the witness stated that at the time of the accident there were only the deceased and the mate on board. The mate was now at Sittingbourne. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death ; and with respect to Wornast, the mother, Eliza Wornast of 22 Latchmere Road, Battersea, stated that deceased was a pastry cook. He was last seen alive about three weeks ago, when he left Battersea in company with a young woman to whom he was engaged, and saw her to her home near Edgware Road. The deceased and the girl had not had any words, and witness was not aware anyone in the Battersea Park Road had a grudge against her son. The body of the deceased was recovered on Friday. The jury returned an open verdict of found drowned, the coroner remarking that the police would no doubt make some further inquiries.

70 January 26 1884

William Rogers was charged at the Thames Police Court with violently assaulting **Charles Crawford**, a lighterman of 63 Park Street, Poplar. At half past twelve o'clock on Sunday morning, the prosecutor heard a disturbance outside his house, and on going to the door he found his son struggling with the prisoner, and went to his assistance. The prisoner then abused him, struck him on the nose, knocked him down and kicked him. Mr Saunders bound the prisoner over to keep the peace for six months.

71 February 2 1884

CHARGES OF STEALING At the West Ham Police Court, Abdool Kermle, a powerful looking coloured seaman engaged on board the P and O steamer *Indus*, was charged with carrying and conveying 1 3/4 lb of tobacco, single value and duty 11s 3d, with intent to defraud her Majesty's Customs. **George Russell**, a Customs waterman, said that on Sunday afternoon he saw the prisoner leave the *Indus*, and asked him if he had any tobacco. He said, "No, Sahib", but upon being asked to go into the Customs Office, he became very violent and a desperate struggle ensued, during which the prisoner threw nine sticks of tobacco away. When he was got into the office, a pound and three quarters was found on the prisoner. The vessel was then searched, and in the post office, in a false drawer, 23 lb of similar tobacco was found, but no one on the vessel would own it. The prisoner denied that he used any violence, and as to the tobacco said he had bought it for his own consumption. Mr Phillips said, taking into consideration the extraordinary violence of the prisoner, he should impose the full penalty – treble value and duty, £1 13s 9d, the default being one month's imprisonment.

72 March 29 1884

On Saturday afternoon **Richard Pearce** and **T Turton**, watermen, discovered floating near one of the piers of Kew Bridge the body of **Mr Henry Messum**, a member of the well known barge and boat building firm of Richmond. The features were much bruised and swollen, but the body was but little decomposed. The deceased's gold scarf pin, watch and chain were found upon him. It is conjectured that in the dark the unfortunate man may have slipped from the boat (????) attached to his premises and have become entangled in the gear, the body having evidently been a long time immersed. Messum a few years ago was a sculler of no mean degree of merit. He won Doggett's Coat and Badge, a Putney coat and badge, and numerous other distinctions, his reputation being considerable amongst up river oarsmen. He was about 33 years of age.

73 April 26 1884

THE STABBING CASE AT GRAVESEND At the Gravesend Borough Quarter Sessions on Friday, before Mr S G Grady, the Recorder, **John Spiers**, a waterman, was indicted for unlawfully wounding George West, a cooper of 13 Bath Street, by stabbing him with a knife on the night of March 24. The evidence showed that the prosecutor met the prisoner's wife accidentally in a public house, and entered into conversation with her and another woman, when the prisoner shortly afterwards came into the bar the worse for drink, and seemed jealous of his wife. Subsequently the prosecutor again saw the parties in Brewhouse Yard quarrelling, and the prisoner then held a knife in his hand threatening his wife, but as soon as he caught sight of the prosecutor he turned to him, saying, "I mean to settle you", and he then stabbed him just below the ear. On attempting to stab him the second time, the prosecutor caught hold of the knife and cut his hand. Both the wounds were of a slight character. The prisoner now pleaded guilty, and said that he did it under great provocation. The Recorder said that nothing would justify a person using a knife, and he sentenced him to a month's hard labour.

74 April 26 1884

ASSAULT CASES **Richard Brain**, lighterman, was charged with violently assaulting his wife, **Alice Brain**, at 12 Baker Street, Commercial Road, by biting her lip. Both parties appeared to be living together on most unhappy terms. A judicial separation had been granted, but it had not the effect of keeping them apart, and they were living together up till the time of the assault. At five o'clock on Saturday evening a quarrel occurred between them over tea, when she alleged the prisoner rushed at her, and said, "I'll disfigure you for life", at the same time biting her savagely in the lip. Her cries brought Henry Fraser, 413K, to the house, and he took the prisoner into custody. Mr Saunders sentenced him to one month's hard labour.

75 May 17 1884

RESCUED BY POLICEMEN When Police-sergeant Hambling and Police-constable Lamshear



were patrolling the side of the river at Strand-on-the-Green, Chiswick, on Tuesday morning, they heard cries of "Police!" and "Help!" from the direction of the water. They afterwards saw in the water a man, who proved to be a bargeman named **Henry Richardson**. Both policemen rushed into the water to his rescue ; one of them, although a strong ebb tide was flowing at the time, waded in till the water reached almost to his neck, holding the outstretched hand of his comrade, who was up to the waist in the water. They succeeded in rescuing the man, who was in an exhausted state. It appears that he had fallen from a barge while in mid stream.

76 June 28 1884

SHOCKING INHUMANITY AT WEST BROMWICH On Friday last week, Mr E Hooper, coroner, held an inquest at the Britannia Inn, Dial Lane, Hill Top, West Bromwich, respecting the death of Enoch Corbett, ten, of Brickhouse Lane, Hill Top, who was drowned on the 14th inst whilst bathing in the Birmingham Canal at Gold's Green. James Corbett, labourer, identified the body, and stated that he took the boy to Messrs Solly's works with him, where he was employed, and about



eleven o'clock he heard that he was drowned in the canal. Thomas Rowlands, nine, said he met deceased in Solly's works, and went with him to the "Long Bridge", where he got into the canal. He (deceased) dived into the water and swam to the other side. He came back, but could not catch hold of the bar alongside of the canal, and he attempted to get back, but sank. There were two men and a young man present. As he came up, the young man tried to reach him, but could not, and they all three walked away. The Coroner : Then they did not try to get him out? Witness : No, sir. The Coroner : What did you do? Witness : I called them back again. The Coroner : Did they come back? Witness : Yes, sir. Deceased put his leg up, and then I did not see him again, and the men went away. Witness then took his clothes to the works of his father. **George Thomas**, boatman, said that he heard that the boy was in the canal, and he got in and fetched him out, but he was quite dead. The water was deep. The Coroner (to the officer in charge of the case) : Have you taken any steps to get these men here? The Officer : Yes, sir, we have, but we cannot find them. The Coroner : I am sorry that we cannot get them here, for I should certainly give them a severe reprimand, for their conduct seems anything but humane. The jury returned a verdict of accidentally drowned.

77 July 12 1884

BOW STREET **James Thomas Hitchcock**, a waterman, was charged with stealing flowers from the Embankment Gardens. Mr J Coltman, from the office of the Board of Works, prosecuted, and said that there was no desire to unduly press the charge against the defendant, but a conviction was asked for, in order that other persons might be deterred from committing a similar offence. On Friday night, the prisoner was seen to pick a small bunch of flowers, and when remonstrated with by one of the gardeners, he declared that he was a ratepayer and had as much right to gather the flowers as anyone. He now said that he plucked them in order to give them to his children, who lived in the neighbourhood of Harbour Square. Mr Flowers fined the defendant 20s, or in default fourteen days imprisonment.

78 July 12 1884

On Friday morning, Mr W Carter held an inquest at the Five Bells, Bermondsey, on the body of **Benjamin Broad**, aged 34, a waterside labourer, late of 28 Bermondsey New Road. On the 23rd ult, the deceased was engaged assisting in loading a barge with sacks of jute from the ship *Lord John Russell*, lying off Fenner's Wharf, Tooley Street, and in attempting to hook one of the sacks, the hook did not hold fast, and deceased overbalanced himself and fell into the water and was drowned. A verdict of accidental death was returned.

79 September 6 1884

At the Mansion House Police Court on Monday, Samuel Smith, a clerk, was charged with embezzling the money of his employer, **Mr Dards**, a lighterman of Lower Thames Street. The prisoner had been for twelve months in the service of the prosecutor as clerk, part of his duty being to receive moneys, for which he had to account immediately to his master. It was alleged that he had embezzled, at different times, sums amounting in all to £8 odd. The prosecutor stated that he had no wish to press the case harshly, and Sir Andrew Lusk, taking that into consideration, sentenced the prisoner to six weeks hard labour.

80 October 4 1884

A man named **Fosher**, a boatman, performed a gallant act on Saturday in rescuing a child from drowning in the River Medway. The child was playing with others along the river banks when he fell into the water. His playmates screamed for help, and just as the child was in the act of sinking for the last time, Fosher came up, and without waiting to divest himself of any of his clothing, he plunged into the water. After considerable difficulty he succeeded in bringing the boy to shore. Fosher has on several occasions rescued persons who were drowning.

81 November 1 1884

On Saturday night two children, aged five and two years respectively, were suffocated with chlorine gas at Runcorn. They were on board a barge which was moored in the canal near the bleaching powder department of the Runcorn Soap and Alkali Company's Works, when an escape of gas took place which filled the cabin where the children and their parents were asleep, causing almost instant death to the children. The mother is in a hopeless condition.

82 November 8 1884

THE PRIZE RING

FATAL FIGHT BETWEEN DEAF BURKE AND BYRNE **Deaf Burke**, the champion pugilist, was born in London on December 8th 1809. He stood five feet eight and a quarter inches in height, and trained in condition he weighed one hundred and seventy four pounds. He was, in his early days, a bargeman on the river Thames and, at the age of fifteen, demonstrated that he possessed all of the essential points necessary to become a champion pugilist. Burke's first battle was for £14, with Ned Murphy, February 5th 1828, and it ended in a draw, after fifty rounds had been fought in just as many minutes.

Hands, the butcher, was then pitted against the Deaf 'un. The fight was decided at Old Oak Common on August 14th 1828, and Burke fairly butchered Hands in ten rounds lasting seven minutes. "Sambo" (the black) was then matched to fight Burke, and on August 16th 1828, he polished off the African with comparative ease, which made his friends look upon him as a first class fighter. Berridge, a pugilist of some notoriety, was then found ready to tackle Burke, who was just as ready to mill. The pugilists fought at Leicester, March 10th 1829. Burke's star was again shining with lustre, for he gave Berridge a sound walloping in eleven rounds lasting twenty two minutes. Bill Cousins was the next customer Deaf Burke had to tackle. They fought at Whetstone on August 25 1829 ; but Burke, thinking to catch Cousins's backers for a larger stake, cut it, and Cousins was declared the winner. Burke was eager to try again, but Cousins did not care about playing the game the second time. Burke decided not to throw away any more chances. He whipped Girdier at North Chapel on December 1st 1829, in seventeen rounds, and then beat Gow, a tough customer, in twenty rounds at Temple Mills, October 4th 1830 ; beat Bob Hampson, for £50, at Harpenden Common, October 26th 1830. This was a severe battle, forty one rounds being fought in forty four minutes, before Hampson would give in. Burke's friends now began to think he was a fighter in earnest, and they matched him to fight the famous Tim Crawley for £50. The fight was brought off at Whetstone on November 16th, and Burke captured the verdict and the stakes after a capital mill that lasted through thirty four rounds, fought in thirty minutes. Burke was next matched to fight Davis for £100, and won in twelve rounds, fought in twenty four minutes. The fight was decided at Shepperton Range, February 22nd 1831. He then beat Bissett at Colney Heath, May 24th 1831, winning £50 ; nineteen rounds were fought in forty two minutes. Burke was now beginning to earn for himself a great name, and he was matched to fight Jack Carter, a pugilist who was looked upon as a good second rater. The battle was fought in the Barge House, Woolwich, on May 8th 1832. Burke won in eleven rounds lasting twenty five minutes. Burke's victory made him a hero, and for a first class trial horse, Macome, a pugilist who stood six feet four inches and



DEAF BURKE GIVES THE IRISH CHAMPION THE FATAL BLOW.

weighed two hundred and fifteen pounds, was pitted against him. Macome was known to be a tremendous hitter, and was backed heavily to defeat the plucky Burke. The battle was fought at (?Lacking Bottom?), January 8th 1833. It was a desperate mill, and Burke, in spite of the tremendous blows Macome delivered, pluckily faced the music and won in fifty nine rounds, lasting one hour and thirty three minutes. Burke's name was now famous, and the praises he received for his pluck and stamina were general. Flushed with victory, he challenged any man in England to fight him for £100 a side and the championship. Simon Byrnes, the champion of Ireland, picked up the gauntlet, and a match was arranged for £200. Ned O'Neale, Tom Spring and Jem Ward backed

the Irish champion. The battle was fought at St Albans on May 30th 1833. Byrne weighed one hundred and eighty two pounds, Burke one hundred and seventy two pounds, on May 29th, the night before the battle. Dick Curtis, the pet of the fancy and Tom Gaynor (a great pugilist in his time) seconded Burke, while Tom Spring and Jem Ward seconded Byrne. Burke cut up many antics in the ring before the fight began, and when he finished one of his clown acts, Byrne exclaimed that he was going to fight a crazy man, for he did not think he was in his right senses. The fight was stubbornly contested, and the pugilists fought with varied success up to the thirty seventh round, when Byrne had the lead in the fighting, Burke being evidently sick from the tremendous blows he had received in the stomach. Tom Cannon, the famous pugilist, who had backed Burke heavily, followed by a gang of friends, jumped into the ring to urge Burke on. One of Byrne's friends struck Cannon, and a free fight ensued. Burke, taking advantage of the situation, rushed at Byrne and fought him through the ropes ; and, in attempting to "cross-buttock" Byrne, threw himself outside the ropes. In the next round, Burke turned the tables and outfought Byrne, who was hoisting signals of distress, and Burke became the favourite, On went the struggle, and Byrne refused to lower his colours, although he was frightfully punished. Round after round was fought, and it was still anybody's fight. One minute it was expected that Burke would win, and the next round it appeared that he was beaten. The seconds of the pugilists worked hard, and brought the men to the scratch, although they were past fighting and suffered terribly from the severe punishment they had received. In the ninetieth round the sponge was actually thrown up to announce the Irish champion's victory, as Burke lay almost in a state of stupor ; but, to the surprise of all, Curtis bit the Deaf 'un's ear and again brought his plucky protege to the scratch, and he renewed the contest with unshaken courage. Byrne's hands were puffed, his knuckles "knocked up", and they were next to useless, so severe had been the force of the blows he had delivered ; and he was, therefore, unable to administer a finishing blow, which would have settled all of the Deaf 'un's prospects of winning. In the ninety first round, Byrne gave Burke a terrible cross-buttock, threw him and fell on top of him, and it was considered that the Deaf un's chances of winning were past. Still he pluckily continued to come up to the call of time, and each round that followed was a splendid exhibition of science and desperate milling on both sides. In the ninety third round Byrne again exhibited such symptoms of exhaustion that Curtis urged Burke to go in and finish the Irish champion. Burke, urged on by the cheers of his friends, rushed wildly at Byrne and threw him, falling heavily on top of him. Byrne was picked up in a helpless condition, and his friends supposed the great fight was over. But, although scarcely able to stand, the plucky Irish champion again came to the scratch, and faced the battery of blows, but only to be fought or knocked down. During the next six rounds, although Byrne came up groggy, and continued to fight all he knew how, and refused to lower his colours, Burke proved to have the more stamina, and fought strictly by the directions of Dick Curtis. Byrne fought until he had to succumb to exhausted nature, and fell like a log senseless in the ring, battered out of all semblance of humanity. Tom Spring, who had backed him heavily, and Jem Ward picked him up ; but he was unable to hold up his head. Burke, who was in the last stage of exhaustion himself, was immediately hailed the winner. The battle lasted exactly three hours and six minutes, and Burke was set up as the champion of England. He was so terribly punished that he was hardly able to walk, while Byrne had to be carried to his vehicle by his seconds. Both pugilists were put to bed. Byrne was bled by a surgeon, but it was a long time before he could speak. Burke only remained in bed a few hours, and then joined his friends. Byrne never recovered, and died on the Sunday following the fight.

On the Monday after the battle an inquest was held on Byrne, and the jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against Deaf Burke in the first degree, and Dick Curtis, Tom Gaynor, Tom Spring and John Ward, and the umpires and referees, as principals, in the second degree. All the parties were discharged at the Hertford Assizes, on July 11th 1833. After the news reached Ireland that Byrne, the champion, had been defeated, Sam O'Rourke challenged Deaf Burke to fight him at the Curragh of Kildare, Ireland, for £100 a side and the championship of England. Burke refused to fight O'Rourke in Ireland, but agreed to fight him in England. Jem Ward agreed to fight O'Rourke in Ireland, but he refused to meet Ward and in 1834 left for New York. Deaf Burke also decided to

visit America, and he followed O'Rourke to that country. Burke, on his arrival, challenged O'Rourke to fight him. The latter accepted the challenge, and the pugilists made a match. The battle was fought near New Orleans, La, on May 30th 1837. The fight between the champion of England and the champion of Ireland, for Burke had fairly won that distinctive honour by defeating Simon Byrne, while O'Rourke claimed that title by being ready to fight any pugilist in Erin's Isle, was fought on the win, tie and wrangle principle. Burke was outfighting O'Rourke, when the latter's partisans became so excited that they broke into the ring, and with knives and revolvers threatened to kill Burke. This was a new wrinkle for the Deaf 'un ; but he was not slow to learn, and he quickly jumped out of the ring, pursued by an angry mob.

83 November 8 1884

FATAL ACCIDENT THROUGH ORANGE PEEL Mr George Collier, the deputy coroner, had under his notice a very peculiar case at the City Arms, Rose Lane, Ratcliff. The subject of the inquiry was **Eleanor Augusta Spencer**, aged 39 years, the wife of a lighterman of 6 Ohren's Court, Ratcliff. About eight months ago, she was out marketing, when she trod upon a piece of orange peel and fell, shaking herself so severely that she injured the optic nerve of the left eye. She suffered for a little while, then got better, but three months ago she complained of pains in the head and in the eye, and had since then attended at the Tower Hamlets Dispensary under Dr Comer, who found the deceased to be suffering from irritation of the brain, the result of an abscess which was set up on account of the injury to the optic nerve. On Wednesday she got out of bed, had several fits, then seemed tranquil and went to sleep, but next morning was found dead in bed. The result of the medical examination showed that death was due to syncope consequent upon an abscess in the brain, the result of a fall. A verdict of accidental death was recorded.

84 November 8 1884

At the Dartford Petty Sessions on Saturday, **Benjamin Brown** of Lambeth and **Robert Cox** of Charlton were charged on remand with stealing between October 4th and 14th the whole of the portable contents, including sails, furniture, clothing, utensils, &c from the yacht *Rover*, whilst lying off Greenhithe. It appears that the owner of the yacht, Mr Hobden of Islington, left the vessel in charge of the captain, Charles Hanner, and that the latter, going ashore on October 4th, left everything safe, but on his return on the 14th he found that the hatchway had been broken away and an entrance by this means obtained into the cabin. The articles and other stolen property were found on the barge *Jem Beckett*, which was in charge of the prisoners. Brown stated that he alone was the guilty party, but the Bench, in committing both prisoners, refused to admit Cox to bail.

85 November 22 1884

ACCIDENT TO A THAMES STEAMBOAT On Saturday morning at eleven o'clock, the London steamboat *Thistle* sustained an injury to her paddle wheel through striking a floating balk of timber on her way to London Bridge, off Millbank Prison. Her engines were powerless to move her in consequence of the injury to the paddle wheel. The anchor was speedily dropped, as she was drifting towards the bridge. By this means she was secured, and the passengers, who were evidently much alarmed, became pacified. Her engineers tried to repair the damage ; but after waiting half an hour in mid stream, at anchor, the passengers were taken off by the steamboat *Rose*, and conveyed to their destinations. A laden coal barge grazed her side, but injury was prevented by the efforts of the steamboat crew.

86 November 29 1884

At the Grays (Essex) Petty Sessions, a pilot of Gravesend named **T J Cotterell** was summoned for navigating the steam vessel *Dundee* on the River Thames without proper care and caution, and with damaging a boat on June 4th at Grays. Defendant was further charged with a similar offence on July 2nd. Mr Craustonn, barrister, prosecuted on behalf of Mr Bevan, barge owner of Northfleet. Mr J A Farnfield appeared for the defendant, who was not present, and said this was the first case under the

Conservancy bye laws that had ever been taken up by a private individual. The Bench were of opinion that both cases had been proved, and inflicted a fine of £10 and £4 4s costs.

87 December 20 1884

STARTLING DISCOVERY ON THE THAMES At seven o'clock on Thursday morning, a startling discovery was made off East Lane Stairs, Bermondsey. During a part of the night a lighterman named **Daniel White** had been employed in carrying a number of workmen to and from a vessel lying out in the river, on which some urgent work was being done. He was last seen alive rowing back from the ship towards the shore. At seven am he was seen sitting upright in his boat floating down the river with only one oar, and that not in use. A waterman, suspecting something was the matter, rowed after him, and called out to him, but received no answer. He then got alongside, and was startled to find the man was dead. He lived in East Lane – a street not many yards from the stairs off which he was discovered.

88 December 20 1884

On Thursday afternoon a fatal accident occurred at New Cross Station (South Eastern Railway) to a man named **Freshwater**, a lighterman of Deptford. Deceased had been to London to give evidence in the case of a collision in the Thames, and alighted at New Cross with a friend named Johnson. He had proceeded some little distance up the platform, when he suddenly staggered and fell under the train, which had just started. He was killed instantaneously. The body was removed to the mortuary.

89 February 7 1885

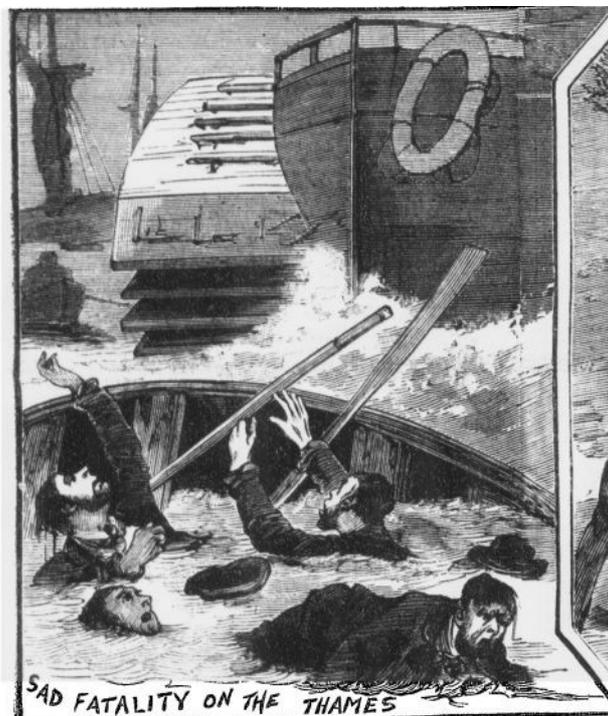
SAD FATALITY ON THE THAMES On Monday afternoon last week, Mr C C Lewis, the coroner for South Essex, held an inquiry at the Liverpool Arms, Barking Road, E, into the circumstances attending the death of **Walter Carvell**, a waterman. **Edward Boutflower**, a licensed waterman, said that on the evening of the 26th December he, with the deceased, a man named **John Lewis** (who was also drowned) and **George Morgan**, all in the employ of Messrs Cory and Co of the Victoria Docks, were in a small boat, and were crossing the river from the Victoria Dock in order to get on board the coaling ship *Atlas*. When about mid stream, the tug *Middlesex* came up the river and ran into the boat in which witness was sitting. The boat was turned over, keel uppermost, and the deceased and John Lewis were drowned. Witness and Morgan held on to the boat's bottom, and a boat belonging to the tug picked them up. The *Middlesex* had her three lights burning. Witness and Morgan were rowing, and the two men who were drowned were sitting on the aft of the boat. The other body had not yet been found. In answer to questions put by Mr Atkinson (solicitor for the friends of the deceased) witness said that if the steamer had reversed her engines the accident would not have happened. The night was very light, and the river was clear of craft. All four in the boat were thrown into the water. James Morgan of Davis Street, Barking Road, gave corroborative evidence. **James Haslitt** of Gravesend, a Trinity House pilot, deposed that he was on the tug *Middlesex* as a passenger. When witness saw the boat, the tug was 400 feet away, and he heard the captain give orders to the man at the wheel to port helm. As they were nearing the boat, witness heard the captain shout out to the boat to back their sculls. The boat failed to clear, and was struck by the paddle box and capsized.

After other evidence, the captain of the *Middlesex* was examined. He deposed that as soon as the boat was seen in their course, he immediately gave orders to stop the engines, which was done. He first shouted out to the men in the boat, asking them where they were coming to. His first orders were, "Stop her", and "Full speed astern". These orders were promptly carried out, but the boat was struck before they could clear. The men in the boat must have changed their course, as the boat had once cleared the bows of the *Middlesex*. William Charles Couves, the mate of the tug ; Samuel Clarry, the engineer ; and William Seanes, shipwright, who gave evidence as to making a survey of the boat after the collision, were examined at considerable length. The jury were three quarters of an hour considering their verdict, and ultimately found that "There must have been some accidental

error in the tug's navigation ; that Walter Carvell met his death by drowning, and that this was caused by the *Middlesex* running the boat down in which the deceased was, through some error of the ship's crew". The Coroner said that he heartily concurred in the verdict which was, of course, one of accidental death.

90 February 14 1885

WESTMINSTER Messrs **W Cory** and Sons, coal merchants and barge owners of Lambeth, were summoned for causing a barge to be navigated by a person not licensed as a waterman, and **Horace Bacon**, an apprentice in their employ, was summoned for acting as a licensed lighterman. The prosecution was instituted by **Mr P R Fairburn**, a waterman and secretary of the Watermen's and Lightermen's Defence League. The case had been adjourned for the judgement of the Court, the facts having been deposed to at previous hearings. It appeared that the apprentice Bacon, on a day in last October, was in sole charge of Messrs Cory's barge *Idea*, which was being towed with other craft off Millbank. The real question at issue was whether an apprentice by the terms of his indenture was not prohibited from working away from his master without the express licence and



authority of the Watermen's Court. In this case Bacon was the apprentice of a man named **Rolls**, and both worked for Messrs Cory, often independently. Mr D'Eyncourt said he did not think the complainant had selected a strong case to decide the point he had raised, and on the facts he must dismiss the summons. On the application of Mr Farnfield the magistrates allowed a guinea costs. Mr Fairburn intimated that he should appeal.

91 February 21 1885

FATAL FIGHT AT SITTINGBOURNE A man named **Richard Honey**, master of a barge, was arrested at Sittingbourne on Sunday morning at two o'clock, on the charge of having caused the death of **James Hornden**, a bargeman belonging to the same town. Honey went to the police station voluntarily with two other men named **Rouse** and **Luckhurst** to report the circumstances to police-superintendent Mayne. The prisoner stated that he and the deceased had been drinking in the Prince of Wales beerhouse at the Wall, Sittingbourne, on Saturday night, and left together at closing time, viz eleven o'clock. After they got out of the house, deceased remarked to prisoner, "You have been pretty big since you have been captain of the barge *Sprig*." Prisoner replied, "No such thing ; but I suppose you are grieved because you are not her mate". Deceased thereupon struck prisoner upon the nose, prisoner returned the blow, and they both fell together. Prisoner was undermost, and

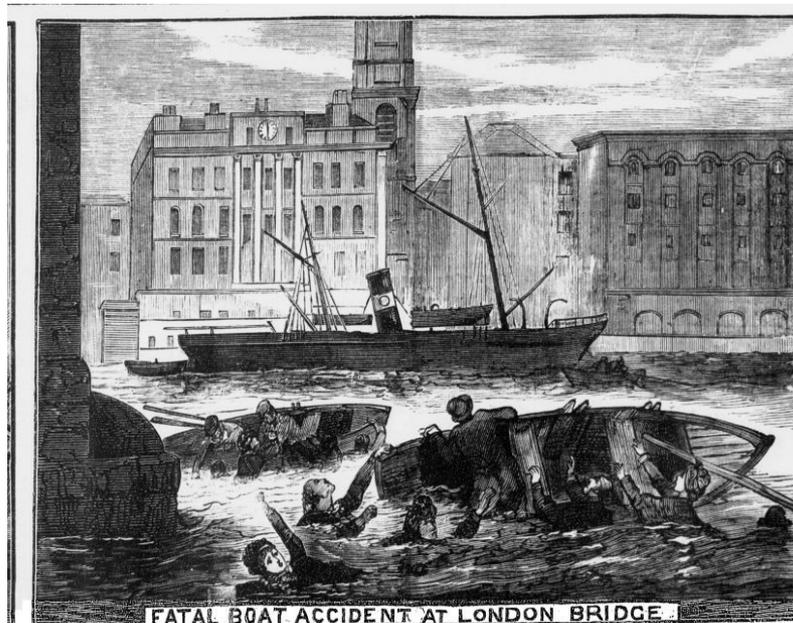
said to Hornden, "Let me get up, and we will have a fair "go".” Both men then pulled off their jackets, and had several "ups and downs". The prisoner did not strike deceased any particularly heavy blows, but seemed to direct his energies more to throwing him. At length, deceased said, "I have had enough", and the fighting ceased, though for a minute or two afterwards deceased was very quarrelsome. Soon the deceased began to show symptoms of "coming over funny", as the witnesses described it. It was arranged by the bargemen present that he should be taken on board the barge *Claude*, which was lying at Mr E Lloyd's wharf. Prisoner, Rouse and Luckhurst carried him on board the barge and placed him in the forecabin, and were about to leave him for the night when they noticed that his appearance was strange. They therefore went to Sittingbourne for a doctor, and it was found that the unfortunate young man had expired, death having apparently been caused by concussion of the brain.

92 March 14 1885

An extraordinary circumstance occurred early on Saturday morning in the Blisworth Tunnel, through which the Grand Junction Canal passes, four or five miles from Northampton. A man named **Smith** was working a boat for **Mr W E Clark**, wharfinger of Fenny Stratford, and it was, as usual, being drawn through the tunnel by a steam tug. When near the end the man noticed an unaccountable jerking of the boat and, on returning along the path to ascertain the cause, found that the man Smith was dead, and quite black. Death was caused, it is supposed, by suffocation, the atmosphere in the tunnel being exceedingly dense, particularly during the early hours of the morning, and this density is intensified by the smoke from the tug. Later in the morning, and farther along the canal towards Northampton, a boatman found the dead body of a young child, unknown.

93 March 28 1885

FATAL BOAT ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES On Sunday evening last week, at about half past ten o'clock, a deplorable boat accident occurred just below London Bridge. It seems that a party of six young men and four young women hired a boat of Mr C Eagre at Chelsea Bridge about 4 pm, and started for a row on the ebb tide, intending to go to Greenwich and back. Two or three of the young men could row a little, and consequently did not secure the services of a waterman to go with them. The rowers took the fore part of the boat, the females sat in the centre, and the remainder of the party in the stern. They got down to London Bridge safely, and passed through the centre arch, the most dangerous, it is said by men familiar with the river, in consequence of the very strong undercurrent, and then encountered a considerable swell. Some of the water got into the boat and, according to the account given by one of the saved (a young man named George Thurwood, who with two men and a female were taken to Guy's Hospital), the women got alarmed and started up, clutching each other. At the same moment the boat swung round towards the bridge again, and at once capsized, throwing the whole ten persons into the water. A number of people who saw the occurrence from the bridge began shouting and this, together with the shrieks and cries of those



struggling in the water, attracted the attention of two sailors on board a vessel, and a lighterman, who put off in boats and succeeded in rescuing three of the men and one of the women, who were landed at Horselydown and Pickle Herring Stairs, and conveyed to Guy's Hospital in a very exhausted condition. Their names are Horace Charles Gudgeon, of 78 Hanover Street, Pimlico ; Alfred Bellworthy, 9 Shillington Street, Chelsea ; Lizzie Kidd, address not stated ; and George Thurwood, 11 Rolls Street, Battersea Fields. In none of these cases are fatal consequences expected by the hospital authorities, that of Gudgeon alone being considered serious. Thurwood, who could swim, further states that one of the party, named William Flay, of Hanover Street, Chelsea, slipped from his grasp while he was trying to hold him up, and he saw him go down, but he did not see what became of the others. The other five were Sarah Haylock and Harriet Haylock, both of Henley Street, Battersea Fields ; Catherine Cockle, of Carpenter Street, Chelsea ; William Peck, Hanover Street, Chelsea ; and a man named Harry Lothian. A report was current on the City side that two females and a man had been landed on that side, but nothing was known of it at Seething Lane Police Station, close to the Custom House, where it was said they were put ashore. The ten occupants of the boat were all under twenty five years of age, three of the young women being only seventeen years old.

CORONER'S INQUEST On Friday Mr W Carter held an inquest at the Bell public house, Rotherhithe, on the body of Harriet Haylock, daughter of a greengrocer, of 24 Henley Street, Battersea Park Road, who was drowned in connection with the upsetting of a pleasure boat at London Bridge on Sunday evening. Sarah Haylock stated that the deceased was her sister, with whom she left home on the above day, being also accompanied by Caroline (*sic*) Cockells, for the purpose of going out in a boat, and were subsequently joined by a girl named Kidd. They met William Peck, Horace Gudgeon, Alfred Bellworthy and others at William IV steps, Grosvenor Road, Pimlico. They procured a boat at Mr Eagre's and all got in, and proceeded for a row in the direction of Putney, but as the tide was against them they agreed to return. Horace Gudgeon and George Thurwood rowed the boat, and Henry Lothian steered. They rowed down the river and arrived at London Bridge in safety, and passed through the middle arch. William Peck then told Lothian to keep the boat ahead, but a wave came and swamped them, and they were precipitated into the water. Witness rose, as did others, and was saved by two young men. They were all sober. William Peck, a sailor, deposed that he engaged the boat with two other young men. The boat, which was a large one, was capable of holding more than ten persons. The boat was turned over sideways by the force of the tide, which caused it to fill, and three of the party were drowned. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death from drowning.

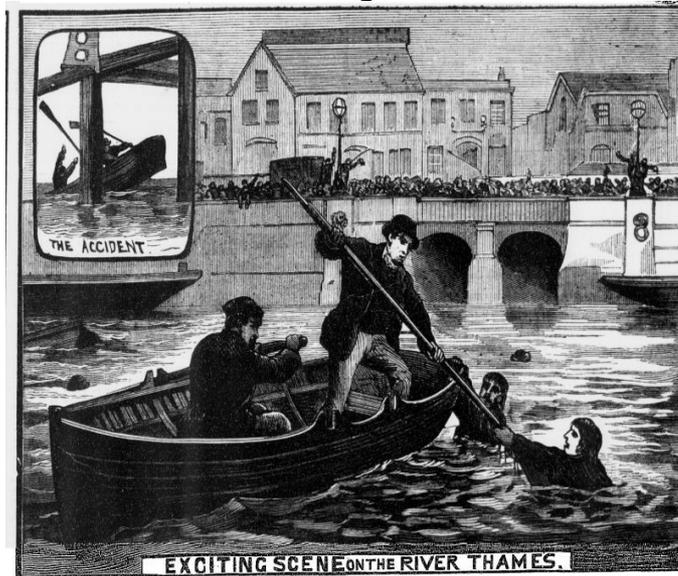
94 March 28 1885

FIRES IN THE METROPOLIS Early on Saturday morning the barge *Nares*, belonging to Messrs McDougal and Bonthron of 72 Mark Lane, City, and which was lying off Fresh Wharf, Lower Thames Street, was discovered to be on fire. Immediate steps were taken to subdue the flames, but they had obtained such a strong hold of the barge that in less than an hour it sank. The barge contained about four hundred and fifty bales of jute, which were totally destroyed.

95 April 18 1885

EXCITING SCENE ON THE THAMES On Monday afternoon last week, shortly before four o'clock, two middle aged men, having hired a pleasure boat at Waterloo Bridge, proceeded to row up the river on the flood tide. On arriving at Lambeth they attempted to pass beneath the gangway leading to the pier, but in consequence of the strong current the head of the boat veered round and ran on a crossbeam of the framework in connection with the pier. The occupants of the craft attempted to push her off and, in so doing, caused her to capsize, and they themselves were precipitated into the water and carried away with the tide. Mr Henry Hayward, boat proprietor of Lambeth Raft, who had witnessed the occurrence, immediately entered the boat with a waterman named **Lewis** and rowed to the men's assistance, and succeeded in overtaking them off Doulton's

dry dock. By this time one of the men had disappeared, but Mr Hayward dipped his oar into the water where the man had gone down, and the latter succeeded in clutching hold of it, and after a great deal of difficulty the half drowned man was hauled into the boat. In the meantime, the second man had managed to hold fast to the boat, and was also saved. The rescue was witnessed by hundreds of persons from the Albert Embankment, and the utmost excitement prevailed. Through the kindness of the rector of Lambeth Church (the Hon and Rev Mr Pelham), the two unfortunate men were taken into the Rectory and received every attention. After some time had elapsed they proceeded home, none the worse for their ducking.



96 June 6 1885

On Saturday morning a boy belonging to a barge lying off Whitstable rowed ashore to the Coastguard station and reported that the captain, **William Usher**, had attempted to throw him overboard, and failing in this, jumped overboard himself, but got back again. An officer of the coastguard put off to the barge, and on boarding it found the captain pacing the deck as though raving mad. With assistance the poor fellow was secured and brought ashore, and upon the certificate of a county magistrate he has been removed to a lunatic asylum.

97 June 13 1885

Early on Saturday morning a boatman named **Jones** was coming down in his barge down Glamorgan Canal from Llandaff, Cardiff, when he observed the body of a woman floating in the canal near North Road Lock. It proved to be that of a young woman named Susan Pearce, of Richmond Villa. She left home on Wednesday and was not heard of until the body was found. She was subject to fits of melancholia.

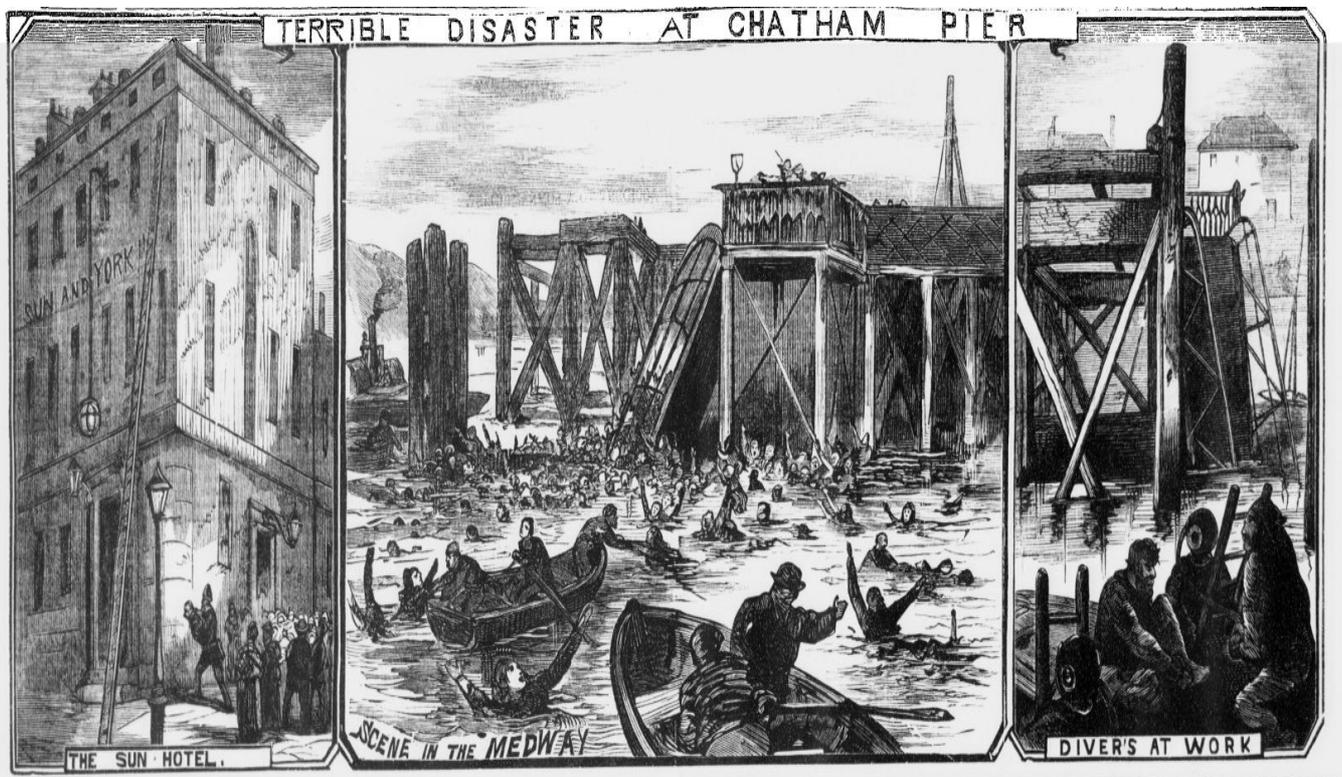
98 August 1 1885

CHARGE OF UNLAWFUL POSSESSION **Thomas Kirby**, 44, master of the barge *Lucy*, and **Thomas Kirby jun**, mate of that craft, were, at the Brentford Petty Sessions on Saturday. Mr F H N Glossop in the chair, charged with having stolen seven and a half bags of "Long John" flour, the property of Messrs Elliott, Laurie and Dunford of Newcastle-on-Tyne, owners of the steamship *Longhurst*, from which the prisoners had, it was alleged, taken five hundred sacks of American flour for delivery at Wenham Mill, Uxbridge. The evidence showed that some time after the five hundred bags of "Long John" had been duly delivered at Wenham Mill, Sergeant Francis, an officer of the Thames police, boarded the *Lucy* on the Grand Junction Canal at Brentford, and found the property mentioned in the charge, and also one and a half sacks of wheat and half a sack of maize and wheat. The elder prisoner said the sacks were "overs", and he and his son were apprehended and charged with the unlawful possession of the property. Subsequently the men admitted having obtained the

seven and a half sacks of "Long John" from the *Longhurst*. After some witnesses had been examined, the Bench decided to commit the prisoners for trial, but they were formally remanded for a week for the completion of the depositions.

99 August 1 1885

FALL OF CHATHAM PIER On Sunday afternoon, shortly after four o'clock, when more than three hundred persons were upon the new pier at Chatham, not yet completed, the long "brow" leading from the upper portion of the structure to the barge or stage, alongside which the Medway Steam Packet Company's boats come to disembark and embark passengers, suddenly oscillated violently, and ultimately twisted over in a most extraordinary manner, precipitating fully fifty persons - awaiting to go by steamer - into the river. The panic amongst hundreds standing on the upper portion and the piercing shrieks and strugglings of those in the water were perfectly indescribable. But the prompt action taken by **Mr Whitfield**, the pier master, assisted by watermen and others, enabled the whole of the persons immersed, it is believed, to be brought safely to land. Fears were at first expressed that some might have been drowned, but careful search led to the confident belief that all had been picked up. No one was reported as missing. Inquiries are being made into the cause of the accident, which might have resulted in the loss of very many lives. The pier had been tested for strength, so that no apprehension had been felt as to the result of its



being used for the summer traffic of passenger steamboats. The occurrence occasioned intense excitement throughout the town, and it is probable that a Board of Trade inquiry will be held upon the matter. The resident engineer and contractor, sub-contractor and Pier Committee of the local board were upon the spot immediately after the accident, and every precaution taken to prevent any further mishap. Great inconvenience was caused in the landing of passengers from the steam boats, and many persons preferred to be taken on to Strood rather than risk a landing. Many persons were injured in the struggles, each one being for him or herself to be among the first rescued, and one - Mr W Letley, of the Belle Vue Inn, Borstal, Rochester - sustained a fracture of three ribs. Several other persons were taken to St Bartholomew's Hospital by their friends.

Another correspondent, telegraphing on Sunday evening from Chatham, says : A shocking accident occurred here this afternoon, by which it is feared several lives have been lost. It appears that shortly after three o'clock, a steamboat which plies between Strood and Southend called at Chatham Pier on its way down the river. As is usual, when the weather on Sundays is fine, a large number of

excursionists were waiting on the pier head for the arrival of the steamer, and as soon as the vessel was moored alongside the "dummy", a stream of passengers passed through the barrier to descend to the lower tier of the pier by means of an iron structure known as a "brow", when, without a second's warning, and at a moment when some seventy or eighty persons were on the brow, it collapsed, precipitating its human freight into the river. An indescribable scene of excitement followed, as a large proportion of the intending passengers were women who, in many instances, were accompanied by children, and it was only by the exercise of considerable promptitude and skill that the boatmen at the pier head managed to thread their boats through the entanglement of the broken iron and woodwork, and rescue any persons from the struggling mass. A large number of those who were saved sustained fractures by falling on wooden piles &c, and several women were taken to the Sun Hotel close by in a half drowned and unconscious condition. If it had not been for the extraordinary efforts of Mr Whitfield, assisted by two boatmen named **Adams** and **Moore**, the loss of life would have been terrible. Up to 5 pm no bodies had been recovered, though a large force of boatmen with grappling irons, assisted by divers, were doing their utmost. The pier had been in course of reconstruction. The catastrophe has cast a deep gloom over the town, and the boat service is suspended.

100 August 15 1885

SHOOTING A BOY ON THE RIVER At the Hammersmith Police Court on Monday, **William Galloway Wingfield**, a lighterman, was charged with shooting Frederick Noad, a little boy six years of age, with intent to do him some grievous bodily harm. The little boy was called forward to give evidence, and the magistrate asked him what was the matter with his face. He said a big boy shot him. It appeared that on Saturday afternoon the complainant with three other little boys were sitting on the rudder of a barge at the riverside, Hammersmith, when the prisoner, who was on another barge, called out, "If you don't get off, I'll shoot you". He had a gun with him, and it went off, and the boy was shot in the face. The prisoner jumped off the barge and ran away. Mr William Barrett, house surgeon at the West London Hospital, said he examined the boy when he was brought in. He had two small punctured wounds on the left cheek, one about half an inch in depth and the other more superficial. There was not any danger. Police-constable West said he arrested the prisoner on Saturday afternoon at the house of the boy's father. He asked him what he meant by shooting the boy. He said it was done accidentally. He asked him what he had done with the gun. He said he dropped it into the cabin. Witness searched the cabin, but he could not find the gun. Mr Farman, who defended, said the answer to the charge was that the occurrence was purely accidental. Mr Shell remanded the prisoner and accepted bail.

101 August 22 1885

At the Hammersmith Police Court on Monday, **William Calloway Wingfield**, lighterman, was charged with shooting Frederick Wood (*sic*), aged 6 years, while he was on a barge with other boys in the Hammersmith Dock. The father of the boy came forward and said he had seen the doctor, who stated that there was not any danger. Walter Henry Whitford, a carman, said on Saturday week he was on a barge, when he heard someone call out, "If you don't get off, I'll shoot you". A man was about thirty yards off with a gun. One boy called out, "The gun won't carry so far as this". The man levelled the gun apparently to shoot over the heads of the boys to frighten them. He fired, and witness saw a little boy fall off the rudder. There were four or five boys on the barge. The boy got up and put his hand to his face, which was bleeding. The man put down the gun and ran away. The gun was produced by George Goodrich, cousin to the prisoner, and he stated that he found it in the mud on Sunday morning. He (the witness) added that he loaded the gun about eight days before to shoot a duck. There were six shots and two pieces of coal in the gun. He believed the prisoner did not know the gun was loaded. Mr Shell committed the prisoner for trial, and accepted bail for his appearance.

102 September 6 1885

SINGULAR BIGAMY PROSECUTION Edward Howell, 27, butcher of Wennington Road, Bethnal Green, was brought up at Worship Street Police Court on Saturday, on a warrant, charged with having feloniously intermarried with Jessie Sarah Parsons, his wife, Eliza Howell, being then and still alive. The warrant had been obtained by the second wife, and was executed by Detective Hill, K Division. Formal evidence was adduced, and documents were produced showing that the prisoner married **Eliza Billson**, daughter of a lighterman of Roupell Street, Lambeth, at the church of St John's, Waterloo Road, on September 10th 1878. The second and, as alleged, bigamous marriage, was with Jessie Parsons, daughter of a saw sharpener, at the district registrar's office at Bethnal Green, on August 3rd last. Prisoner there declared himself to be a bachelor. It appeared that some unpleasantness occurred between the newly married pair, and a prosecution was set on foot. The prisoner, when apprehended, made the following statement :- I saw Jessie Parsons on the Friday before the Bank Holiday. She came to see me, and we had some drink together and made arrangements to meet again in the evening. I then took her to a music hall, and when we left we took a cab and went to her home, improprieties taking place on the way thither. We got home late, and she was afraid to knock, so we went to the house of her sister, a widow, where we stayed for the night. We had some words with the sister as to our conduct. The sister fetched some beer at 5 am, and we drank together. She threatened me that if I did not marry Jessie she would follow me all over the market. I gave her 50s to get a licence, and after that we all went to the mother's house in a cab. I stayed with them drinking until the Monday, Bank Holiday, when I bought a ring and went to the registry office to get married. After it was over, I said to Jessie, "What will be the result of all this?" She said, "I wish we were going abroad". I lived with her a fortnight, when she wanted £4 to go to Bournemouth, and as I could not give her the money I left her. My wife met me and asked me to go home, and I did so, and told her all I had done. Jessie knew all the time I was a married man, and she had known it for three years. I have arranged to allow her so much a week". Jessie Parsons, who looked very young, was called forward by the magistrate, who asked her if she knew at the time she married the prisoner that he was already married. She prevaricated a little, and then replied, "Not from his own words. He never said he was married, to me, or that he had five children". The woman Parsons was again pressed to answer the question, and merely repeated, "Not from himself" ; but she would say no further, although several women in court exclaimed, "Yes, she did". Ultimately the case was sent for trial at the Central Criminal Court, and bail was refused.

103 September 12 1885

ASSAULT UPON AN OLD MAN On Monday afternoon, before Mr Partridge at the Westminster Police Court, William Mansfield, 36, lamplighter living at Lott's Road, Chelsea, was charged with being disorderly on the Thames Embankment. He was further charged with assaulting an old man, 70 years of age, named Jonathan Ray. Complainant, a watchman living at Crescent Place, Chelsea, deposed that he was in charge of a portion of the road which was under repair on the Chelsea Embankment. At nine o'clock on Saturday, the prisoner came along the embankment in company with a man named Barnet. Complainant remonstrated with the last named for leaving a ladder in a dangerous position, whereupon the prisoner interfered and struck the witness a violent blow in the mouth, making it bleed. **Charles Barnet**, lighterman's assistant, Sleybourne Street, Chelsea, said he and complainant had an altercation about a ladder. Prisoner interfered, and struck the old man. Police-constable 37TR said complainant asked him to protect him from prisoner. The old man was bruised and bleeding from the mouth. There was a large crowd. The bystanders said, "He is a coward to strike an old man". Prisoner went away, but returned and threatened to further assault the old man. The prisoner called Jas Cork, a corn chandler, who gave the former a good character. In reply to the charge, prisoner said he had been a lamplighter in the service of the gas company for fifteen years, previous to which he had served eight years on the railway. He had never been in trouble before. Mr Partridge said the prisoner had been guilty of a very cowardly assault in attacking an old man of complainant's years. He should take into account his previous good

character, but prisoner would have to pay a fine of £3 or go to gaol for one month. Prisoner's application for time to pay the fine was refused, and he was removed to the cells apparently very much astonished.

104 October 3 1885

DEATH FROM DROWNING On Saturday evening Mr W J Harris, coroner, held an inquest at Hollow Shore, near Faversham, touching the death of **J W Inge**, 60, mate of a barge. The vessel was off Minster-in-Sheppey, when a violent storm set in from the north, and the barge was suddenly thrown on her beam ends. Deceased, who was holding on to the windlass wheel, was knocked down by the heavy sea which broke over the vessel, and he then seemed to lose his presence of mind, for although the captain called to him several times to get into the boat, he neither moved nor spoke. The captain, who was deceased's son, tried to row to the other side of the barge to get his father off, but the sea was too heavy, and he nearly capsized in the attempt. The barge foundered a few minutes afterwards, and deceased went down with her. The captain reached the shore in a half drowned condition. The body of deceased was recovered on Friday. A verdict of accidentally drowned was returned.

105 October 25 1885

Benjamin Millward, a canal boatman, died on Thursday evening at his home in Birmingham under peculiar circumstances. He came from a voyage recently, and told his daughter he had been in a drunken row, but did not say when and where. Someone kicked him, but it was in the dark, and he could not say who it was. He lingered till Thursday, when he died without divulging anything further as to how he was injured.

106 October 30 1885

In the City of London Court, before Mr Commissioner Kerr, the case of **Hollick** v The London Steamboat Company has been disposed of. Mr Farnfield appeared for the plaintiff and, in opening the case, said that his client was the master of the steam tug *Florence*, and was proceeding down the Thames off Greenwich Pier, when the company's steamboat *Nile* came in collision with a barge the plaintiff's tug had in tow, damaging it to a considerable extent. The plaintiff was called, and corroborated the opening statement. The defence was that the plaintiff ought to have starboarded his helm. His Honour said that there was no doubt that the defendants were to blame, and he should find a verdict for the plaintiff for £7.

107 November 21 1885

At an inquest at Faversham on Friday on the body of **Charles Grote**, a bargeman, it transpired that his body was found in an upright position in the creek, he having slipped off a plank and apparently stuck in the mud.

108 December 5 1885

CORONERS' INQUESTS On Friday Sir John Humphreys, coroner for East Middlesex, held an inquest at Poplar on the body of **Arthur William Woller**, aged 15, a lighterman's apprentice. The evidence showed that some three or four weeks since, the deceased was seen fighting in front of the Ironbridge Tavern, Millwall, and it was alleged that the man with whom he was fighting afterwards beat him about the head with a large stone. No direct evidence, however, could be ascertained on this point, and it was also stated the deceased got injured about the head on the 5th ult. Dr William Skelly stated that when he was called to the deceased he found him suffering from head symptoms, and he was in a semi-conscious condition. Since death he had made a *post mortem* examination. He found three abscesses in the brain, and the cause of death was meningitis, consequent on injuries to the brain. The jury returned an open verdict.

109 January 9 1886

TERRIBLE ACCIDENT AT A WHARF On Saturday morning at half past seven o'clock, a terrible accident occurred at Stubb's Wharf, Commercial Road, Stamford Street. The wharf is tenanted by the Clerkenwell Vestry. At the time in question a gang of men were engaged in lifting ballast from some barges moored alongside the vestry wharf, by means of a steam crane. The engine driver lowered the cradle into the hold of the barge. It was filled with over half a ton of rubbish, and in lifting the weight the iron band of the shear legs broke, and the whole structure, including the engine and boiler, fell on to the barges beneath. The engine driver fortunately jumped from the platform, and his life was saved. Several labourers who were at work in the barge *Industry* also escaped. A young labourer was buried beneath the debris. A gang of men set to work, and with difficulty the man was extracted from under the shear legs. He was fearfully injured, and was removed in a semi comatose state to St Thomas's Hospital. The bones of one hand were literally smashed, and the hand was eventually amputated. In the afternoon, the injured man rallied sufficiently to give his name as **William Balding**, aged 23 years, lodging at Mrs Wright's, 6 Cottage Place, Webber Street.

110 February 20 1886

On Saturday at the Three Compasses, Hornsey Village, Dr Danford Thomas held an inquiry respecting the death of William Rogers, aged 49, of Lyndhurst Villa, Woodberry Down, a commercial man, manager to Messrs Harper Twelvetrees and Co. **Jesse Green**, waterman to the New River Company, said that on Tuesday he was going his rounds when he saw the body of the deceased at the bottom of the river at a point near Northumberland Bridge, Finsbury Park. Dr Frederick Reynolds, MD, Limehurst, Stapleton Hall Road, N, said that he had attended the deceased for about fourteen years. He was suffering from an advanced stage of Bright's disease ; his eyes were consequently affected with amaurosis. Witness thought that a sudden fit of melancholia seized him and made him temporarily insane. He died from asphyxia from drowning. A verdict of suicide while temporarily insane was recorded.

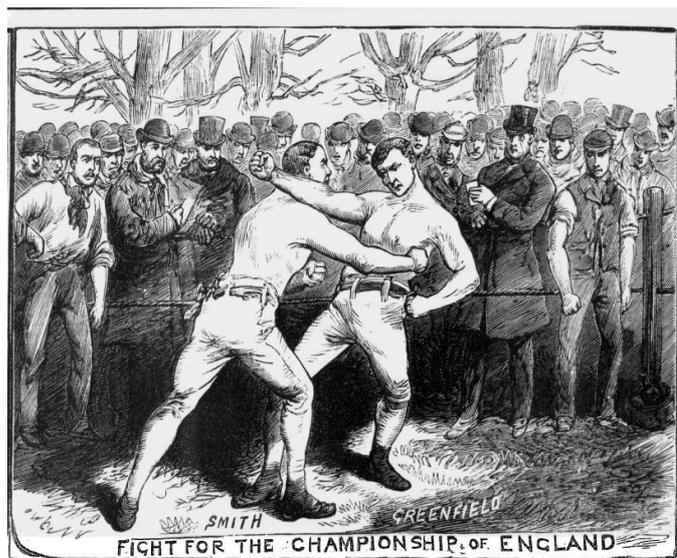
111 February 20 1886

On Saturday Mr Baxter held an inquiry at St John's Vestry Hall, Fair Street, Horselydown, on the body of a female child, name unknown. **William Honngman**, a waterman, deposed that on Friday morning he was in his boat near the St George's Stairs, Horselydown, when he saw a brown paper parcel floating in the water. He secured it, and on opening the paper parcel he discovered the body of a new born female child, wrapped up in a white cloth. Dr Fitzrayne deposed that death was due to suffocation by drowning. A verdict of wilful murder against some person or persons unknown was returned.

112 February 27 1886

PRIZE FIGHT FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP A contest for the pugilistic championship of England and for stakes of £300 a side, between James Smith and **Alfred Greenfield**, took place on Tuesday in the immediate vicinity of Paris. The combatants are well known sporting characters. Greenfield is from Northampton. He first came into public notice as a pugilist about nine years ago, his occupation previously being that of a canal lighterman at Birmingham. James Smith was born in St Luke's, Clerkenwell, and is of Irish descent on his mother's side, while his father was Scotch. A prize fight with Jack Davis of Birmingham, for £100 last December at Godstone, gave him the title of Champion of England. Tuesday's fight commenced at half past eight in the morning. A late champion of England – Mace – was selected as referee, and two well known boxers on both sides, who were of sufficiently powerful calibre to lift their respective champions, acted as seconds. Many well known sporting gentlemen were present, including the backers and supporters of the men, and a number of Englishmen who specially journeyed to see this fight for the championship of England, together with a few Parisians, the French and English at the finish of the fight numbering in all about 150. The first round was claimed by the Smithites as a "knock down". In the second

Smith went down ; but this could hardly be called a clean knock down, as Smith caught his spiked shoes in the grass. This was Greenfield's best fought round, and his principal backers offered to bet 1,000 even on him. Rounds three to eleven inclusive produced much blood and bruises, Smith driving Greenfield close to the latter's corner close to the rope nearly every time. The generalship shown by Smith was remarkable, and worthy of a veteran. He was perfectly cool, waiting on Greenfield as though to wear him out by patience, and reserving himself should his opponent get weaker. Signs of this were not wanting, and must have been noticed by Greenfield's friends, as a handkerchief was more than once put near the ropes with the intention of cutting them. This was finally done amid great shouting, and the ring was encroached on amidst threats and menaces from one side especially. The opposite side called the referee's attention to this conduct, but the order was "Fight on". In the twelfth round Greenfield was evidently becoming shaky and groggy, and when the men closed and fell in the struggle Smith was uppermost. In the thirteenth and last round the din was deafening. Greenfield attempted a vicious right hander on Smith's ribs, but missed. He then tried his left, but was stopped well by Smith. Greenfield landed slightly on the chest, but his blows lacked force. Smith, still cautious, followed him to his corner as usual, although begged by his supporters to keep away. After a short struggle for the fall, in which Greenfield was uppermost, a perfect melee took place. The Birmingham men broke into the ring, and in the most threatening way attacked the other side. The referee, perfectly helpless, called on them to retire, and a disgraceful scene occurred. Several efforts were made to injure Smith, who avers that his most severe blow was from a kick in the jaw when down. The duration of the fight was one hour and five minutes. It was stated on the return of the party to Paris that the referee had declared it a drawn battle, but the following letter has since appeared.



Sir – I beg to say that my decision in the fight between Smith and Greenfield was they should meet and fight it out. Messrs Ball and Saville, their backers, said they wished it a draw, and really decided it themselves. - Yours &c, JAMES MACE.

113 March 13 1886

The chief constable of Cheshire (Captain Hamersley) is engaged in investigating the circumstances attending the discovery of a body in the River Dee at Weston, Cheshire, which point to foul play. A waterman named **Bostock** was walking along the river bank near Weston when he came across the dead body of a young man in seaman's attire, which had evidently been washed up by the tide. The body was removed to the Weaver Hotel, where an examination revealed two severe wounds on the forehead and one on the skull which, it is believed, caused death. The Cheshire coroner was at once apprised of the circumstances, but adjourned the inquiry without taking evidence, in order to afford the police time to continue their investigation. The deceased, who is unknown has, it is thought possible, been murdered and thrown overboard from a vessel on the river.

114 March 20 1886

Samuel Mountford, a boatman, was charged on Monday at Dudley upon suspicion of being implicated in the murder of Police-constable Hine at Fenny Compton. It was alleged that the prisoner admitted to a woman named Corbett that he was implicated in the murder of the policeman. The prisoner now denied all knowledge of the matter and was discharged.

115 April 10 1886

SUSPECTED MURDER OF AN AMERICAN GENTLEMAN On Tuesday, a waterman named **George Windle**, residing at 12 Greenway's Court, Mayo Road, Southwark, found the dead body of a gentleman floating in the Thames near Battle Bridge Stairs. The body was conveyed to the Horselydown Mortuary, and on examination was found to be that of a fine built well dressed man.

On Wednesday, an inquest was held before Mr Wynne Baxter at the Vestry Hall. George Windle, the waterman, gave evidence as to the finding of the body. Inspector Pritchard of the Thames Police stated that the man was unknown, and there was no clue to lead to identification. Mr W Allen Fitz Rayne, surgeon, residing at 10 Freeschool Street, Horselydown, said that he was called to see the body as soon as it was brought in. It was that of a well built man from 45 to 55 years of age, with rather broad shoulders. The hair was of a brown colour, with beard and whiskers round the face, and a slight moustache. He had not made a *post mortem* examination, but he observed a great bruise extending nearly all over the face on the left cheek. It seemed to him to be the result of a severe blow inflicted during life. The tongue was partly protruding between the teeth and both hands were clenched. In reply to the coroner, he said he was quite sure it was no mark received after death. It appeared to be the result of great violence. The deceased seemed to have died from asphyxia by drowning, and in his opinion he had been ill treated first and thrown into the water alive. He considered that the body had been in the water somewhere about a month. Inspector Pritchard said the police had not received any information of any such person missing. The jury, who said perhaps it might be the body of some stranger in London, then returned a verdict of Found drowned, but as to who the deceased was, or how he got into the water, there was no evidence to show.

A brief report of the inquest appeared in an evening paper, and a few hours afterwards Captain Stead, a gentleman residing at the Langham Hotel, sent a telegram to Dr Fitz Rayne as follows :- "Have friend missing, 6 ft high, square built, brown hair, full beard and moustache, fair complexion. Does the body found correspond with this description? Please reply to Captain Stroud, Langham Hotel". The doctor immediately communicated with the coroner's officer, and was just in time to prevent the body from being sent off in a parish shell to be buried in Woking Cemetery.

On making further inquiries, our special reporter discovered that a wealthy American gentleman has been missing for a month past. Mr Frederick Russell Nourse, a member of one of the best families in New York, it appears, being slightly out of health, determined to take a trip to England. He arrived in London on February 21st, and was in constant correspondence with his wife, whom he left at New York with two children. On the morning of March 3rd he went to Euston Station for the purpose of going to Liverpool, having engaged his berth on board the *Asiatic*, which was to start the following day. His portmanteau arrived at Liverpool, but not Mr Nourse, and from that time he has not been heard of. His friends offered a reward of £100 for his discovery.

The body found in the Thames was dressed in a white shirt and two pairs of trousers. The under ones were made of black cloth, and the pockets in them were fairly intact. Over these there was a second pair of trousers, both pockets of which were ripped down, as if done with great force, and partly turned inside out. In one there were two bronze halfpence. A good narrow black satin scarf was round the neck, and over that a large full black satin one loose. The rest of the dress consisted of brown and grey mixture tweed vest ; black diagonal ribbed frock coat ; white socks, and springside boots recently clumped. The buttons on some of the clothes were stamped "Hill Bros, 3 and 4 Old Bond Street, tailors by special appointment to her Majesty". Some of the buttons were shown to Messrs Hill's manager and identified by him. He stated that the firm had made clothes for several gentlemen staying at the Langham. It is believed that the body may be identified by the

clothes, as the manager states they have special places between the linings where they always put the names of their customers.

The interment of the body has now been delayed for the purpose of further inquiries.

Considerable surprise, not unmixed with indignation, is naturally felt at the hasty manner in which the coroner appears to have shut up the inquest, the body having been found one day, the inquest held the next, the order given for burial in a parish shell the next, with no time or means allowed for public inquiry whatever.

On Sunday night, Captain Stead and Mr Nourse, a brother of the missing man, went to see the body of the gentleman found in the Thames, but on their return stated they could give no opinion as to identity at present. Communications have, however, been opened up with the coroner, and a further examination is to be made by the doctor.

Lloyd's News

116 April 24 1886

The *Governor* (barge) of Rochester, laden with bricks, when proceeding up the river on Sunday morning, off Wapping, collided with the *Rambler*, steamer of Glasgow, lying at anchor in mid stream. The former sank.

117 April 24 1886

On Friday afternoon in Barking Pool, a boy of 13 was noticed playing in a boat, and fell overboard into about twenty feet of water. The tide carried the boy away past the town quay, on which about a hundred persons stood to look at the drowning lad, and not one endeavoured to rescue him. But fortunately a barge, the *Daphne*, lying along the flour mills, had on board **David Matheson**, the mate, who, on hearing the commotion, came out of his cabin. Seeing the drowning lad, he immediately sprang overboard, and after a severe struggle grasped the boy and brought him safely to shore amid the cheers of those on the quay.

118 April 24 1886

At the Gravesend Police Court on Friday, **John Penney**, waterman, was charged on remand with smuggling two hundred and nine pounds of cigars and tobacco, with intent to defraud the customs, Mr Macklin, barrister, prosecuting. The accused was fined in the treble value and duty (£432 18s 6d), in default six months imprisonment. **Robert Miller**, waterman, pleaded guilty to the possession of six hundred and eleven pounds of Cavendish tobacco, with a like intent, and was fined £62 10s 6d, or three months.

119 May 1 1886

Walter Scott of Mulberry Row, Bromley-by-Bow, has been summoned, at the Southwark Police Court, under the 74th section of the Thames Conservancy Act of 1864, with unlawfully throwing rubbish from the barge *Susan* into the Thames, contrary to the statute. Mr W E Elmslie attended from the Conservancy Board. Defendant declared that it was the other man who ought to have been summoned. Mr Snell said that great precautions were now being taken against the pollution of rivers and their tributaries, as calculated to disseminate disease. The defendant had rendered himself liable to a penalty of £20, and must exercise greater care in future, as the offence was a very serious one. The magistrate then imposed a penalty of 40s and costs.

120 May 1 1886

TWO WOMEN CLAIMING A DEAD BODY On Thursday Mr Carttar held an inquest at the Wellington, Wellington Street, Deptford on the body of **Richard Dewar**, aged 36, lighterman of 28 Hardinge Street, Commercial Road East. On Tuesday, deceased was missed from a barge of which he had charge at Deadman's Dock, Deptford, and on Wednesday morning his body was found buried in mud of the dock by Inspector Brown of the Thames Police. The body was handed over to Police-constable Woodings, 91R, the coroner's officer, who found the deceased's address on his licence, and on going to 28 Hardinge Street, a young woman, after looking at the body, claimed it as

that of her husband ; but afterwards another woman, named **Jane Dewar**, said the body was that of her husband, whom she had not seen for three years. The young woman, when before the jury, admitted that her name was **Sarah Johnson**, and that she was the wife of a second mate of a vessel, but had lived with deceased as his wife for five years, and that she last saw him alive when he went to work on Tuesday morning. The coroner's officer said when deceased left his wife, Jane Dewar (who had claimed the body and identified it at the inquest), he took with him his marriage certificate. Mrs Johnson had it, and refused to give it up. Mrs Johnson was a drunken woman, and a short time since inflicted with some instrument a cut visible behind the deceased's ear. He had every reason to believe Jane Dewar was the widow of the deceased. Mrs Johnson denied having the certificate ; and after some further evidence the jury returned a verdict of found drowned.

121 May 15 1886

On Saturday Mr Braxton Hicks, coroner for Mid Surrey, received information of the discovery of the body in the River Thames off Kew, of **John Everett**, aged 26, mate of the barge *Elstow*, late of 5 Howley Place, Belvedere Road, Lambeth, who was drowned by the capsizing of a boat.

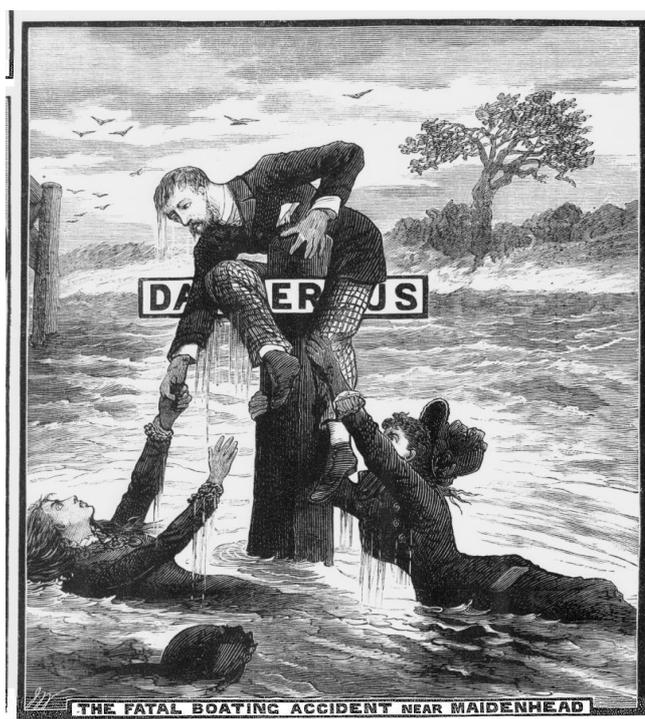
122 May 29 1886

THE FATAL BOATING ACCIDENT NEAR MAIDENHEAD A shocking boating accident occurred at Bray on Saturday afternoon, the 15th inst. Three gentlemen and three ladies hired a boat at Henley, with the intention of rowing to Windsor. Near Bray Lock, the strong current carried them against the danger post near the weir, capsizing the boat and throwing all the occupants into the water. The lock-keeper, **Morris**, saw the accident, and a punt was quickly pushed off to render assistance. Further help was obtained, and efforts were made to rescue all the members of the party. Three of them were, however, drowned. The party lunched under the Cliveden Woods, and passed safely through Boulter's Lock about 4.15. The first intimation of danger came from a cabin boy on board the barge *Homeside*, close to Bray Lock. He shouted, "Look out, they'll all be in the water". Morris, the lock-keeper, his son **William** and daughter **Ada**, were instantly on the scene, and they found that the boat, at the entrance to the lock cut, had caught athwart the "danger" post, one of four or five stout piles driven into the river as a guide into the lock. To this, two of the ladies and one of the men were clinging. The boat, strange to say, did not capsize but swung round into the weir stream, which the recent extraordinary rains had rendered very fierce and rapid. As it drifted, young Morris put out in a dinghy secured to the bank, and succeeded in catching the painter, the boat being stern first. He had his head and arms submerged by the strength of the current, and was forced to let go his hold. Then the occupants, seeing all hope was gone, stood up, and the craft, three parts full of water, turned over. Morris, standing at the weir stage, grasped at the lady's head as she approached. He failed to hold her. He turned to the other side as she went under the stage, with a like result. Then she was forced by the rush of water through the (?rymers?) and went over the weir into the seething mass of broken water below. Some embanking operations are going on, and large lighters twelve or fifteen feet from the bank are secured by heavy iron chains. Across one of these the lady was thrown, and with great presence of mind, managed to draw herself up so that her head and shoulders were kept out of the stream. Morris, seizing a heavy hitcher, went down the steep and slippery bank and plunged into the boiling treacherous eddying water, many feet in depth. He was at once dragged under, but struggling to the surface, he supported himself on a floating pile, and after one or two vain efforts managed to hook the drowning girl by her shoulder, and get near enough to the bank to enable Ada Morris, with some assistance, to get her ashore. Ada, who for a young girl of seventeen, appears to have shown wonderful coolness and resource, succeeded in getting her up the dangerous bank and into the lock cottage, where, after receiving every attention, the lady speedily recovered.

Meanwhile the two other ladies who had clung to the danger post were forced to relinquish their hold, and were both drowned. One being also taken across a lighter chain, some feet further out, clung to it tenaciously for a time, then threw up her arms and met her death. The eddy enabled the body to be recovered within a very few minutes. One of the gentlemen was saved at the weir

staging, the other was rescued from the post to which he was clinging. The third gentleman was carried over the weir and lost. Morris, while still struggling in the water to escape with his own life after he had saved another's, burst into tears because he had not been able to rescue the helpless lady, who, within six or eight feet of him, he saw grasping at the chain and then swept away. His conduct, that of his son William, and especially that of his courageous young daughter, Ada, is worthy of the highest admiration. The names of the unfortunate deceased are Miss Hettie Slack (of Walthamstow), Miss Florence Gregor, 19, (a young lady on a visit from Wales) and Mr Arthur Nicholas.

On Tuesday Mr Weedon, coroner for Berks, held an inquest at Bray, near Maidenhead. John Morgan, builder of Aberdare, identified the deceased, who was the daughter of a timber merchant there. William Russell Slack, a clerk of Grove House, Walthamstow, said he engaged a boat on Saturday at Henley, intending to row to Windsor. Besides himself, there were his sisters Hettie and Nellie, Florence Gregor, Arthur Nicholas and Ernest Hicks. They left Henley, and all went right till they reached Bray. His sister was steering, and could not see which way to go. They stopped rowing, and afterwards pulled to the left, but the strong stream took them on to the post, and the boat was smashed. They did not sink at once, being jammed into the post. Mr Hicks climbed up, and he helped his sister and Miss Gregor. Witness (W Russell Slack) was ultimately washed away, and saw nothing more of the deceased. He attributed the accident to the post not pointing down either stream but to the land, and to the fact that it simply bore a faint notice "To the lock". There was no actual danger board. **Edward Morris**, keeper at Bray Lock, gave it as his opinion that a board should be placed on the Berks shore about one hundred yards from the weir stream, warning persons to keep that side for the lock. Ernest William Hicks, clerk of Walthamstow, said he was rowing stroke, and when they struck there was a big rent and the boat began to settle. He clung to the post and Miss Gregor had hold of him, but they commenced slipping down, and the boat floated away. He thought that the boat and those left on it were at the weir before Miss Gregor was off the post. He afterwards saw the deceased floating down stream. The jury, after some discussion, returned a verdict of accidentally drowned, and the coroner was requested and promised to bring the need of greater precautions being taken by the Thames Conservancy before the proper authority. One of the gentlemen who were saved describes the calamity in the following words :- When almost in sight of our destination – we had got to Bray Lock – Hetty Slack (drowned) said, "Stop rowing a minute ; I can't tell which way the danger post is pointing". We stopped, and turned around in the boat to see, and saw at once which was the lock way ; but the current was too strong



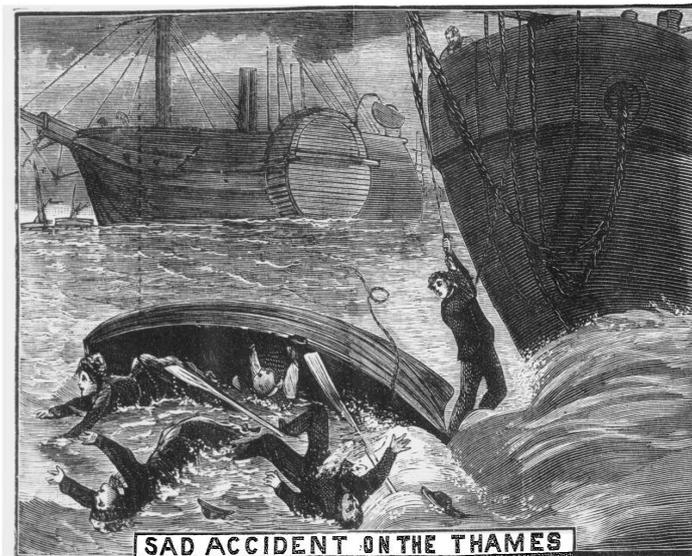
for us, though we pulled for life across the river. We were dashed against the danger post. The boat smashed. None of us lost our heads. Mr Hicks climbed up the post, and I helped Florrie Gregor (drowned) and Hetty up to him. Then, thinking they were quite safe, as I was sure a boat would put off to them (we were only a few yards from the shore), I swam after Nellie Slack and Arthur Nicholas (drowned). When I found I could touch ground, I shouted out to Florrie, and seeing Arthur and Nellie were too far down for me to do anything, I started trying to walk to Florrie and Hetty to hold them up. But the current was too strong, and swept me down to the weir. Just as I was being hurled over the weir I threw up my arms and caught a plank bridge, and so saved my life. Arthur and Nellie were, as I thought, swept through, and how Nellie has come out alive is nothing short of a miracle. Arthur was not seen again ; he died saving Nellie. Directly I was saved I tried to get a boat off to the post, but someone went from the other side of the river, and found only Mr Hicks. He was nearly dead with the awful five minutes he had spent. He held on as hard as he could, but felt Florrie and Hetty's grasp slowly relaxing, and he could do nothing to save them.

123 May 29 1886

A COURAGEOUS CONSTABLE On Saturday Mr William Carter held an inquest at Rotherhithe on the body of Emma Bailey, aged 26 years, a single woman, whose body was found in the River Thames. **Joseph Church**, a lighterman, proved finding the body on Thursday off Mills Stairs, Bermondsey. John Bailey, a police-constable, identified the deceased as his sister, who had been engaged in the kitchen as servant in many noblemen's families. Of late she had given way to habits of intemperance, and the family had tried to reform her, but without avail. Witness last saw her alive six weeks ago, when she came on a visit to him and his wife. Police-constable Furby Wilson, 182L, deposed that about a quarter past four o'clock on the morning of the 11th inst he was on duty on the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge, when he saw a woman, whom he now identified as the deceased, walk down the steps leading to the water. As she did not return, he went down the steps and found her standing in the water, which was up to her armpits. He shouted to her, but she threw herself backwards and was carried away by the tide. He jumped after her, and was being also carried away when, in consequence of not being able to swim and having his greatcoat on, he clung to an anchored boat some distance away from the bridge and so saved himself. The deceased sank and was not seen again. The Coroner, addressing the witness, said that he had acted in a very praiseworthy manner, and he (the coroner) trusted that his gallant conduct would be brought before the Royal Humane Society. The jury returned a verdict of suicide while in a state of unsound mind through drink, and added a rider embodying the comments of the magistrate on the conduct of the constable.

124 June 5 1886

DOUBLE EXECUTION AT WINCHESTER A double execution took place on Monday morning at Winchester. The culprits were **Albert Edward Brown**, waterman, Greenwich, for murdering a youth named Parker near Winchester ; and James Whelan, seaman, Nova Scotia, for murdering the second mate of a vessel on the high seas. The execution took place at eight o'clock, Berry being the hangman. It is some years since an execution took place in this city. A newly designed scaffold sent from the Home Office was used. The men both passed the night well and partook of breakfast. They submitted to the pinioning with great firmness, walked to the scaffold, and took their places upon the drop without the least show of fear. Brown, the lighter man, was given a drop of six feet six inches, and Whelan one of four feet. In the case of Brown death was instantaneous, but there was a slight twitching of Whelan's body for a few seconds. On the scaffold, Brown said, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul", and Whelan, who is a Roman Catholic, kissed the crucifix. Both men are said to have died penitent, and Brown admitted the justice of his doom. Three representatives of the press were present. The usual inquest was afterwards held, and the bodies interred in the gaol.



SAD BOAT ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES The Woolwich police and watermen were on Thursday actively engaged in trying to recover the bodies of the following four persons who were drowned the previous evening by the foundering of a pleasure boat :- Agnes Hogben, 17, of 144 Robert Street, Plumstead ; Harriet Brown, 17, of 10 Majendie Road, Plumstead ; George Whitehead, 22, of 3 Charlton Vale, Charlton ; and Edwin Backer, 18, of 35 Leaver's Cottages, New Charlton. It appears that they, and a young man named Arthur Webb of 21 Charlotte Street, Charlton, went for a row to Erith, where they remained a short time and had refreshments. They started perfectly sober, and with a view of making the trip back easier, passed a rope on to a large steamer going up the river. On arriving on the spot where the *Princess Alice* foundered, the steamer stopped her engines preparatory to entering the Royal Albert Docks. This caused a whirlpool, and the occupants of the boat being in danger, Webb shouted to the steamer to loose the rope, which was instantly done. Webb sprang into the chains of the steamer, and the other four occupants immediately went down.

126 June 26 1886

At Windsor, a young Thames boatman named **John Allen** has been charged with stealing a gold watch and chain and silver match box, worth about £40, under singular circumstances. On May 30th, Captain Graves, a resident, dropped the valuables into the river. A diver was employed to search for them, but failing to find them, the loss was reported to Superintendent Hayes of the Windsor Police. Sergeant Fleet was sent to London, and discovered that the watch had been pawned in Oxford Street and the chain in Tottenham Court Road. The accused has been remanded.

127 July 31 1886

DROWNED IN THE THAMES On Saturday Mr William Carter held an inquest at the Albion Tavern, Rotherhithe, on the body of **James Joseph Baigent**, aged 11 years, the son of a waterman residing at 5 Nelson Street, Rotherhithe. On Sunday evening the 18th inst, the deceased and a number of his companions were playing in some barges moored off Hanover Stairs, Rotherhithe Wall, when the former, in jumping from one barge to another, missed his footing and fell into the river. He was sucked beneath the barges, and was not seen again until Thursday afternoon, when his dead body was found floating off the Lavender entrance of the Surrey Commercial Docks. The Coroner, in addressing the jury, remarked on the large number of boys who lost their lives through playing on barges and other craft, and observed that it was a great pity parents could not prevent their children going to the river side. The deceased's mother stepped forward and informed the coroner that she had tried her best to do so, but directly her back was turned the deceased would go to the river side. The Coroner said that he was not finding fault with her, as he quite appreciated the difficulty of parents preventing it, but it really did seem a great pity that some means were not

devised to prevent such repeated occurrences. Eventually the jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

128 August 21 1886

DEATHS BY DROWNING An inquest was held at Woolwich on Saturday on the body of a young sailor, who was drowned through the barge, in which he was, being sunk by a Dutch steamer. The deceased's mother stated that her husband and another son had been drowned in the Thames, and she begged the deceased not to take to a seafaring life. He apprenticed himself on a barge, however, and was drowned the first voyage.

129 August 21 1886

HAMMERSMITH **George Palmer**, a lighterman, was summoned for assaulting an old man named **Thomas Blanchard**. There was a dispute in the Hammersmith drawdock about the mooring of a barge. The defendant jumped on to the barge, and pulled the complainant's nose. Mr Norman, who defended, admitted that his client pulled the complainant's nose, but said he was under great provocation. Mr Paget ordered the defendant to be imprisoned for one month. Mr Norman pleaded for an alternative to the sentence, and said the defendant only pulled the complainant's nose. Mr Paget thought it was a more serious offence to pull a man's nose than striking him. It was not the degree of pain the complainant suffered from having his nose pulled, but it was the insult which made it serious. Eventually, the magistrate inflicted a penalty of £5 with the alternative of one month's imprisonment.

130 August 28 1886

SERIOUS CONFLICT BETWEEN BARGEMEN AND THE POLICE **William Wright**, fifty, captain of the barge *Milton* of Faversham, and giving an address in Priory Road in that town, was charged at the Westminster Police Court on Saturday, before Mr Partridge, with assaulting Constable Sandles, 170B, and Mr George Johnson, a marine store dealer. The police officer deposed that shortly before one o'clock on Saturday morning two young men complained of being assaulted by bargemen in King's Road, Chelsea. Proceeding there, he found the prisoner and twelve or fourteen other bargemen quarrelling and fighting, and all seemingly more or less drunk. Prisoner appeared to be the ringleader of the disturbance, and, as he continued to act in a disorderly way, was taken into custody. He was rescued, however, by five or six of his companions, who pushed him into the Kensington Vestry Wharf and barred the doors. Witness sent to the police station for assistance, and on the arrival of a sergeant and five constables, the bargemen, led by the prisoner, commenced throwing missiles of every description. A block of wood, which was taken up from the road, struck witness on the head, and another block, likewise aimed by the prisoner, knocked Mr Johnson senseless. Bricks, stones and pieces of iron were freely thrown by the bargemen. Mr Partridge : And how many took part in this riotous act? Witness : Twelve or thirteen, your worship, and all escaped to their barges on the foreshore of the river and got into their cabins, but after great difficulties the police boarded the barges. Prisoner was found in a cabin and was most violent, taking six constables to convey him to the station. Mr George Johnson, a marine store dealer of 7 Lackland Terrace, Chelsea, stated that he assisted the police, as he saw they were being stoned from a wall by a great number of bargemen. Prisoner threw a heavy block of wood, which struck him in the ribs and knocked him senseless. He was still suffering great pain. Inspector Ross, B Division, stated that there were three other constables prepared to give evidence. Another officer was badly injured. Prisoner said he took no part in the disturbance and was sober. Mr Partridge : You are sworn to by all the witnesses, and this appears to be a very serious matter. You are remanded in custody. Prisoner : I hope you will inflict a fine. My barge is loading today. Mr Partridge : Certainly not. The prisoner was removed in custody.

131 September 18 1886

About half past three o'clock on Sunday afternoon, an elderly lady named Elizabeth Coombes,

residing at No 2 Admiral Terrace, Edinburgh Road, North Kensington, made a desperate attempt to commit suicide by leaping into the river from Westminster Bridge. At the time mentioned Mrs Coombes suddenly mounted the balustrade and jumped into the river. At that moment a young waterman named **Charles Taylor**, living at 34 Felix Street, Westminster Bridge Road, was rowing by, and went to the would be suicide's rescue. As soon as she rose to the surface he seized her, but so determined was the wretched woman to die that she used her failing strength to drag her rescuer into the river, but fortunately was unsuccessful. She was got out of the river, and now lies in the hospital in a precarious state.

132 October 2 1886

ALLEGED OUTRAGE ON AN IMBECILE At the Westminster Police Court, William Carter, 18, labourer of Cavendish Buildings, (?Church?) Street, Chelsea, was charged with being concerned with five others not in custody in an outrage on Sarah Ann King, an imbecile aged 23, and with stealing from her the sum of 17s, on board a barge. Dr Stephen Henry Moore, medical superintendent of the Chelsea Workhouse Infirmary, said the girl had been an inmate of that institution since the 13th ult. He examined her in consequence of what he was informed, and found a bruise on the right knee and indications that she had been subjected to a very gross outrage. The woman was quite an imbecile, and it was only with difficulty and by putting many questions that any information could be elicited from her. She said that the prisoner met her at the Chelsea Embankment and conveyed her to a barge, where she saw other men. The prosecutrix was examined as a witness, and said that on the 9th ult she was living with her parents in Guthrie Street, Chelsea. She went out for a walk and sat on a seat on the Chelsea Embankment. She met the prisoner there, and he asked her to go for a row on the water. She entered a small boat with him, and he rowed to a barge. She was taken to the cabin, and the prisoner first assaulted her. He took hold of her throat and said, "I will kill you". He then took 17s from her pocket. Mr D'Eyncourt questioned the young woman, and elicited that she was held by four men, each of whom assaulted her. She also said that she was taken again on the barge on the Monday following, and again ill-treated in the same manner by the prisoner and the men she had seen before. Mr D'Eyncourt said he hoped that some further evidence could be obtained. The young woman had better be taken back to the Infirmary, and not talked to on the subject of her evidence. Dr Moore said that she would be well taken care of. She was certified for admission to Caterham Asylum, and had been kept back for the prosecution. Mr D'Eyncourt remanded the prisoner in custody.

133 October 2 1886

ASSAULTING A TRAM CONDUCTOR On Monday at the Southwark Police Court, **Joseph Andrews**, 32, lighterman, a powerfully built man, was charged before Mr Slade with violently assaulting Alfred Ireland, a tram conductor, badge 3100, in the service of the Southwark and Deptford Tramways Company. The conductor stated that he was in charge of a tramcar going to the Lion, Rotherhithe. He had his full complement of passengers when the defendant jumped on the car. Witness told him to get off as the car was full. The prisoner refused, and made use of bad language, following it up by striking the conductor a violent blow on the face which knocked him off the car into the road. He then caught him by the throat and tried to strangle him. Some of the passengers, however, came to his assistance, but not before the prisoner had very severely maltreated him. A constable having arrived, prisoner was given into custody. Mr John Wright, a corn dealer in Southwark Park Road, who witnessed the assault, corroborated the evidence of the conductor, and said the prisoner behaved in a most infuriated manner. William Henry Patchell, one of the company's inspectors, identified the prisoner as a man who had refused to pay his fare a few weeks ago, and when summoned it was found that he (the prisoner) had given a false name and address. He added that the company's servants had great trouble almost nightly with the lightermen of the neighbourhood, who clubbed together to pay the fines of their comrades whenever they got into trouble. The prisoner said there were other persons on the tram who ought to have been turned off before him, as they followed him on to the car – a statement the conductor denied. Mr Slade

fined the prisoner £5, or in default a months hard labour.

134 November 6 1886

TRAGIC TERMINATION TO A REGATTA **John Robert Devey**, a lighterman of 2 Rygate Street, St George's-in-the-East, was charged at the Thames Police Court on Tuesday last week with causing the death of Jeremiah Kerhane, a lad 14 years of age, by shooting him with a cannon on Monday afternoon, on the occasion of Mr Murphy's annual regatta held on the river Thames. Inspector John Quinn, H Division, deposed that between five and six o'clock on Monday afternoon he was informed that a lad had been shot. He went to the East London Hospital for Children, and there saw the body of Jeremiah Kerhane, aged about 14, of St John Street, Limehouse. After leaving the hospital he went on board a barge which was lying off Pelican Stairs, Shadwell, and took possession of a cannon, the muzzle of which was facing the shore. There were several barges moored between that barge and the shore. Witness saw the accused standing on the Pelican Stairs. He told witness that it was he who fired the last shot, and on explaining the charge to him he replied, "Very good, sir, or rather very bad". He was perfectly sober. Harry Morel, a vocalist of 21 Star Street, Shadwell, said he was on board the barge and standing by the accused when he fired the shot at the final heat. He did not see the deceased struck – in fact, did not see anything whatever of the lad. Daniel Sandringham, a labourer of Old Gravel Lane, said he heard the report of the cannon, and then saw the lad lying on the head sheets of the next barge. It was dusk at the time. He went up to the lad, and saw a piece of paper burning in his chest. He pulled out the paper, when the blood spurted all over his hands. A lot of lads were about the place at the time. The gun could not be fired towards the river, as a number of people were on the water. Mr James Scott Battams, resident medical officer at the Children's Hospital, Shadwell, said between a quarter and half past five on Monday afternoon the deceased lad was brought to the hospital. He was dead, and the body was covered with blood. The upper part of the chest bone was driven in, and there was a wound as large as a man's fist in the chest. The face was "peppered" all over with powder. Witness took a quantity of wadding and paper from the wound. Death must have been instantaneous. Mr Saunders remanded the accused for a week, and accepted his recognisance to appear on that day to answer the charge.

135 November 13 1886

ACTION AGAINST A MARQUIS On Friday in the Bow County Court, the case of **Clark v Londonderry** was tried before Judge Prentice and a jury. The plaintiff, a lighterman under the age of 21, claimed through his nearest friend, **Matthew Claydon**, also a lighterman of Burdett Street, Bow, the sum of £100, of Charles S Vane Tempest Stewart, the Marquis of Londonderry and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The action had been remitted from the Court of Queen's Bench. Damages were claimed for personal injuries and loss of a watch and chain and clothing, caused by the defendant or his servants' negligent navigation of the steamship *Seaham Harbour*, on the Thames on October 27th 1885. Mr J M Braun, barrister, appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr Pike was counsel for the defendant. Mr Braun, in opening the case, said on the night of October 27th of last year, shortly after midnight, the plaintiff, who was then the mate of the barge the *Three Brothers*, was asleep in the cabin of the boat when it was run down and sunk by the *Seaham Harbour*. Plaintiff was awakened by the concussion, and running on deck he saw that his only chance of saving his life was to leave the boat, and he accordingly jumped overboard. He was sucked under by the sinking barge, and when he came up his head struck against some hard object, and he was considerably injured. He was picked up in an insensible condition and taken on board the *Seaham Harbour*. Plaintiff lost two suits of clothes, a watch and chain, a bed, some cooking utensils and other property of the value of £17 17s 6d. It appeared that the Marquis of Londonderry, when the case was put before him, paid Messrs **Fuller**, the owners of the *Three Brothers* for the loss of the barge, and it appeared that in that amount £3 was included as compensation for the plaintiff. The noble marquis stated that Messrs Fuller claimed £5 for the plaintiff, and he paid it, but the plaintiff never authorised Messrs Fuller to make any claim for him. The money had not been paid, and Messrs Fuller had been joined

in the action. An important witness for the plaintiff, as well as his first solicitor in the case, had died since the case was commenced. His Honour having struck out the claim for personal damages, Mr Pike, for the defence, asked the jury to remember that he appeared for the Marquis of Londonderry and not for Messrs Fuller. In the result, the jury found that Messrs Fuller were empowered to act for the plaintiff, and that the £3 15s 9d was as much as plaintiff was entitled to. His Honour said there would be a verdict for the defendant, and expressed an opinion that it was a very improper action to bring. The plaintiff had better have the £3 15s paid into court, and he was sure the Marquis of Londonderry would not wish to make the plaintiff pay costs. Judgement was then entered for the defendant, without costs, and judgement for the plaintiff for £3 15s 9d against Fuller, also without costs.

136 December 11 1886

The War Department has received information that the barge *Sultan* has been sunk off Tilbury with 1,000,000 pounds of ammunition for shipment on board the steamer *Duke of Buccleuch* for India. The loss is about £7,000.

137 January 8 1887

Information has been received by the Preston coroner of the death by drowning of a boatman named **Barrow**, at Wrightington near Chorley. The deceased, who was 67 years of age, went to the house of a friend with a gallon of beer, which was drunk by three of them. Coming home, Barrow fell into the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, his companions being too drunk to rescue him. The body was afterwards recovered.

138 February 17 1887

At the Marylebone Police Court on Monday, **Edwin Price** was charged with assaulting **John Willis**. Both are boatmen working on barges on the Grand Junction Canal. The evidence was that at one o'clock on Sunday morning the prisoner and eight others went on board the boat of which prosecutor had charge at Paddington, and asked what they had in the stern of the barge where the food was stored. He refused to answer the question and ordered them off, when the prisoner struck him, and then knocked him down, kicked him and tried to strangle him. Another boatman named **Fisher** went to prosecutor's assistance, and when the prisoner's companions saw him coming, they took off their belts and threatened what they would do to him if he interfered. A constable was called and the prisoner given into custody. Mr De Rutzen sentenced the prisoner to fourteen days imprisonment.

139 February 17 1887

An inquest was held at Sittingbourne on Saturday by Mr W J Harris, one of the county coroners, on the body of a bargeman's mate, **Elias George Ditcher**, who lost his life during the gale of December 8th. On that occasion the deceased, together with his captain **Philip Batchelor**, were engaged in taking the barge *Fanny*, with a cargo of flints, from Sittingbourne to London, but when in Egypt Bay, Sea Reach, at the mouth of the Thames, large volumes of water washed over the barge, and it is believed that some water got under the hatchways and caused the flints to roll, for the *Fanny* was afterwards seen to roll over and founder, the two men being carried underneath with her. The barge was afterwards raised, and strenuous efforts made to recover the bodies, but without success. Rewards were subsequently offered for their recovery, but it was not until Thursday that Ditcher's body was washed ashore at Cliffe. Batchelor's body is still missing. A verdict of accidentally drowned was returned. Both were young married men with families, and public sympathy on behalf of their widows and little ones has been considerably aroused, while a concert is also announced to be given by amateurs for their assistance.

140 April 9 1887

About six o'clock on Saturday evening, while a dredger man was at work dragging for coals in a

small boat off Battle Bridge Stairs, Tooley Street, Southwark, his apparatus brought up the body of a young man, which on being conveyed to the Horselydown mortuary and searched by the police, led to the belief that it was the body of one of the three men drowned close to the spot (Battle Bridge Stairs) while returning from the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race, the boat having come into collision with a barge and overturned. One man named James Ward was rescued at the time and taken to Guy's Hospital. The body recovered has been identified as that of Frederick Ward, aged 21, the brother of the person just referred to, who resides at Redcross Street, Borough.

[Note : [Report of the accident appears on April 16th, article number 142.](#)]

141 April 16 1887

TRAGIC OCCURRENCE AT BLACKFRIARS Mary Ann Hathaway, 45, a married woman, who gave an address in Camberwell, was charged before Alderman Sir Thomas Owden at the Mansion House on Saturday with attempting to murder Frances May, a girl of seven, her daughter, by throwing her over Blackfriars Bridge. The prisoner seemed in a dazed condition, and paid little heed to the proceedings. Evan Evans, a City policeman, said that between three and four o'clock on Friday afternoon he was on duty on Blackfriars Bridge, and saw the prisoner looking over the parapet. He asked her what she was looking at, and she stated incoherently that her little girl had gone down on a barge. He inquired if she threw the child over, and she replied that it fell from her arms. He saw a child lying in an injured state at the bottom of an empty barge which had been passing at the time, and the Thames police, who were signalled, removed the child and took her to Guy's Hospital. Witness took the prisoner, who was quite calm and collected, to the police station. **Benjamin Noyes**, a lighterman in charge of the barge, said that he heard a cry from his apprentice, and looking up to the bridge saw the prisoner deliberately push the child over. The child fell into the hold of the barge. The affair was not accidental but deliberate. Police-sergeant Watson said he had seen the girl at the hospital. She was suffering from internal injuries, and there was little hope of her recovery. She told him her mother had asked her to go with her on the bridge, and then she pushed her over the parapet. The husband of the prisoner informed the Court that she had been twice confined in a lunatic asylum, and had recently been very strange in her manner. Sir Thomas Owden remanded her.

142 April 16 1887

THREE MEN DROWNED IN THE THAMES A deplorable boating accident, by which three men lost their lives and a fourth had a narrow escape, occurred on the Thames, close by London Bridge on Saturday night. It appears that the men hired a pleasure boat at Blackfriars Bridge on Saturday forenoon, in which they went up the river. On making their return journey, it is stated that they lost their way in the darkness and mistook Blackfriars Bridge for Westminster Bridge but, discovering their error as they passed under London Bridge, they attempted to bring the boat's head round. As she came round, she collided with some barge moorage and overturned immediately. The four men were thrown into the river. Shortly before half past eight, a couple of lightermen heard loud cries of, "Help!" coming from the middle of the stream as they lay in their boat off Battle Bridge Stairs, Horselydown, and quickly rowing to the spot found a man struggling in the water, holding on to the keel of a boat. They pulled the exhausted man into their boat, and on landing took him to Guy's Hospital, where he was promptly attended to. On regaining consciousness, he stated that his name was James Ward, and that his brother Frederick, a man named "Big Jack", and another man whose name he was not acquainted with, were in the boat at the time of the accident, and they had been drowned.

143 April 23 1887

CORONERS' INQUESTS On Saturday evening Mr Wynne E Baxter held an inquiry at the Mermaid Tavern, Mare Street, Hackney, concerning the death of John Boyes Grant, 52 years old, a boot machinist lately living at 6 Hayes Cottages, Duncan Road, South Hackney, who was found drowned in the river Lea on Wednesday. Mary Grant, the widow, deposed that on Sunday the 21st

March, the deceased returned home from the Haggerston Club the worse for liquor. He quarrelled with witness, and requested her to go and fetch some beer. He took up the poker and threatened to kill witness. As he was about to strike her, she ran out of the house. He ran after her, and said he would "pink" her. At four o'clock he was missed from the house, and witness did not again see him alive. On Wednesday his body was found in the river Lea. By the Coroner : Deceased suffered from *delirium tremens*, and on two occasions she had cut him down when attempting to hang himself. **John Carter**, a boatman, stated that he was at work at Wick's boathouse, when he saw the body of deceased floating on the water. It presented a shocking appearance, the features being nearly eaten away. The body was got out with a boat hook and taken to the mortuary. Police-constable Barnett gave confirmatory evidence, and stated that the wife said, after she heard the body had been found, "Oh, what a blessing he is dead". John B Grant, a son, said that he often had to separate his mother and father when they were quarrelling. The jury returned an open verdict of found drowned.

144 April 30 1887

FATAL PLEASURE BOAT ACCIDENT On Saturday morning Mr William Carter held an inquiry at Rotherhithe into the circumstances attending the death of Robert Alexander Clayton, aged 24 years, a carpenter lately residing at No 203 Stanhope Buildings, Borough. **John William Hawkins**, a waterman, said that on Thursday morning, while in his boat off the King and Queen Stairs, Rotherhithe, he was hailed by a man who said there was a dark object floating between a buoy and a loaded barge. Witness rowed to the spot and found the deceased. He secured the body and towed it to the shore. Mrs Isabella Clayton identified the deceased as her late husband. On the 26th ult the deceased, after giving the witness some money, said he was going to the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. On the following morning, she was informed that an accident had occurred near London Bridge, and that her husband was drowned with two other young men. William Ward, a shoemaker of Bird Street, Lambeth, said that on the 26th ult witness met the deceased and his brother Frederick (who was also drowned) and J Howard. They proceeded to Blackfriars Bridge, where they hired a boat and rowed to Millbank. They intended going to Putney, but as the deceased could only use the sculls, they returned, intending calling at Blackfriars. They were all sober, but mistook Blackfriars for Waterloo Bridge, and proceeded to London Bridge, where they found out their error, and in rounding they fouled a barge and their boat capsized. Witness and his three friends were thrown into the Thames and, with the exception of himself, were all drowned. The jury eventually returned a verdict of accidental death.

145 May 21 1887

HORRIBLE DISCOVERY On Saturday morning Mr C C Lewis, the coroner for South Essex, opened an inquiry at the Phoenix Hotel, Rainham, Essex, on the remains of a woman which were found in the Thames on Wednesday. The inquiry created considerable sensation in the neighbourhood and, indeed, the whole country, the case being precisely similar to the notorious Waterloo mystery, the remains having been enclosed in a bag after being cut in pieces. Superintendent Dobson of Brentwood, and Inspector Allen, watched the case on the part of the police authorities. The jury, having been sworn, proceeded to view the corpse, which lay in the shed adjoining the hotel, and presented a very horrible appearance, there being only a portion of the body, and that in an advanced state of decomposition. **Edward Hughes**, a licensed lighterman of 6 Pickford Terrace, Victoria Docks, was the first witness called, and then deposed that at about half past eleven o'clock on Wednesday morning he was aboard his barge at Rainham Ferry, when he saw a bundle washed up by the tide, which was flowing at the time. He picked it up and brought it ashore and, having opened it, discovered some human remains, probably those of a woman. He gave up possession to another man, whom he did not know, and asked him to call the attention of the police to the matter. Witness, however, instructed a lighterman named **George Crook** to see that no one meddled with the bag. By the Coroner : There was nothing whatever in the bag beyond the portion of the body so far as the witness could see. Police-constable 159 said that at half past

twelve on Wednesday morning, he was called to Rainham Ferry, and there found the mutilated remains of a woman lying upon the shore. The bag which had enclosed the remains had been tied up with a piece of cord. The knot was an ordinary one which anyone could tie, and had no distinctive character about it, such as a sailor's knot or a slip knot. Dr Calloway was at once summoned and viewed the body. By the Coroner : When called to the case, the bag was quite open and the body exposed to view. He had been making inquiries with the idea of tracing out the parties who had thrown the body into the river, but without success. He had no idea himself who the woman was. He saw no mark upon the bag, and it contained no letter, paper or linen. Dr Edward Calloway stated that on Thursday he was shown part of the body of a female, which consisted of the last two bones, and a half of the lumbar vertebra along the trunk, which had been sawn through completely straight by a fine sharp saw. The integuments surrounding the vertebra were cut by a very sharp instrument, which had also passed through the abdominal wall. There was neither head nor legs ; the thighs had been taken out of their sockets, the muscles of the thigh being cut obliquely from the inside to the outside. These were also clean cut, and must have been done by a sharp instrument. There was no jaggedness in any of the cuts, which had evidently been done by someone expert in the use of the knife. He could not detect any mark of particular violence to the body, which had been dead probably about a fortnight. By the Coroner : Although death had taken place fourteen days, still the body might not have been in the water for so long a period. He would judge that the age of the deceased would be between twenty seven to twenty nine, and the body was in a very well nourished condition. There were no evidence of maternity. It would be contrary to the Anatomical Act to (.... ...) the body from a hospital. Coroner : How do you account for the body being found? Witness : It is as though someone were attempting to get rid of it piecemeal. He was quite sure, however, that a skilful person had cut up the body, the part of the spine offering least obstacles to severance having been selected for the operation. The way in which the thighs had been cut proved conclusively that the person who operated was thoroughly acquainted with anatomy. Mr Superintendent Dobson of the Essex County Constabulary, deposed that he saw the body on Wednesday in a shed at Rainham Ferry, and on Thursday examined the body in company with Dr Calloway, and then proceeded to Scotland Yard, and saw Superintendent Shore, who stated that there was no information in the office of any woman being missing. Notices of the finding of the body were immediately telegraphed all over the metropolitan district, with instructions to look out for the missing portions of the body. Coroner : You don't think this body has been taken from a dissecting room? Witness : No. Superintendent Shore stated that the hospitals were very careful and particular, and he had no idea that this was part of a dissected body, neither had witness. The inquiry was then adjourned for three weeks.

146 June 11 1887

MURDEROUS ATTACK BY SEAMEN James Dogherty, 24, Thomas Murray, 22, William Gibson, 26, and James Baldwin, 24, seamen of the ship *Idlewild* lying off Bugsby's Hole, East Greenwich, were charged at the Greenwich Police Court on Monday with stealing rhubarb value 1s from the market gardens of George R Mason, East Greenwich, and assaulting **Arthur Hart**, lighterman of 10 Lanthorpe Road, East Greenwich.. The evidence showed that on Sunday night about eleven o'clock, as Hart was walking down Marsh Lane, he saw Murray and Gibson breaking off the rhubarb. He told them they ought to be ashamed of themselves. Dogherty came up, and Murray held Hart while Dogherty struck him several times in the face. Gibson called out, "Kick him", and Hart fell insensible to the ground. A little later, Acting Sergeant Alford, 51R, was passing up the lane and saw Hart lying on the ground, bleeding from a severe wound in the head, and there was about a pint of blood on the ground. Alford expressed the opinion that if the man had not been found he would have bled to death. A doctor was called, and the prisoners were pursued and found on the river bank. Dogherty was naked and about to swim to his ship, but on seeing the police he picked up his clothes and ran over the marshes, being caught after an hour's chase by Police-constable Patman, 406R. The other prisoners were afterwards apprehended. They denied the charge, but elected to be dealt with in preference to being sent for trial. Mr Marsham committed

Dogherty and Murray for two months hard labour each, fined Gibson 20s or fourteen days, and discharged Baldwin.

147 June 25 1887

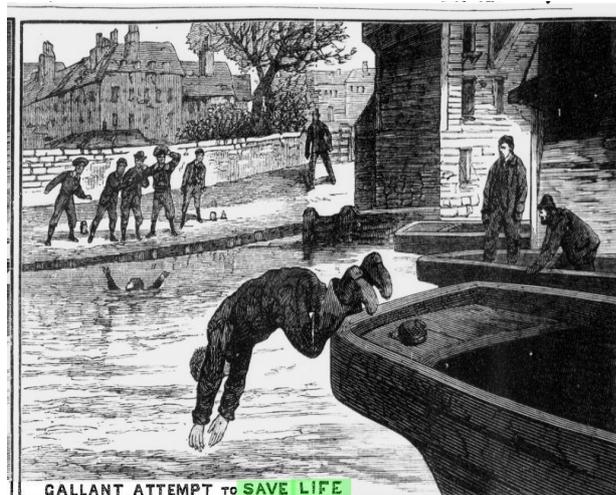
At an inquest at Tipton on Thursday, respecting the death of a boatman named **Stephen Poole**, it was shown that the deceased had for years been in the habit of sleeping in brickyards and near to furnaces. On Wednesday morning his charred remains were found on a cinder heap near to some ironworks. It is supposed deceased was overcome by the fumes from cinders, and that his clothes becoming ignited, he was burned to death.

148 July 16 1887

SERIOUS COLLISION IN THE THAMES A collision occurred in the Thames on Saturday afternoon between the London Steamboat Company's steamer, *Princess Mary*, which left London Bridge at half past three with upwards of three hundred passengers for Woolwich and intermediate piers, and a barge off the entrance of the Surrey Canal. The barge, which belonged to Messrs **Perkins and Homer**, was being towed upstream by the tug *Rhine*. When off the entrance to the Surrey Docks, the tow rope became unfastened, and the barge going on by itself struck the steamer slightly forward of the port paddle box, carrying away the sponson and throwing the vessel on her side. The water being close to the portholes of the saloon, they shipped a quantity of water, some of it passing over the upper deck. A great deal of confusion occurred among the passengers, four or five men jumping overboard for the purpose of swimming to land, but they were picked up by the tug and boats which had put off the moment they saw the collision. The majority of the passengers were landed at the Tunnel Pier by **Mr Walker's** tug the *Britannia*, while others were got aboard some vessels at anchor, and afterwards landed at the Globe and other piers in the vicinity by small boats. The *Princess Mary* was kept afloat by (...) pumping and proceeded down the river at a slow rate for Woolwich to be repaired. With the exception of a wetting the only casualty reported was that of a man who had his leg broken ; he was taken on to Greenwich by the *Rhine* and landed there.

149 July 23 1887

GALLANT ATTEMPT TO SAVE LIFE On Saturday last week, Dr G Danford Thomas held an inquest at he Paddington Coroner's Court on the body of George Langham, aged 7 years, living with his widowed mother at 27 Lisson Grove, Marylebone, who stated that the deceased left home on Thursday afternoon with some other boys, and she afterwards learned he had been drowned. **George Wildman**, a bargeman living at No 14 Blomfield Mews, Paddington, stated that on the

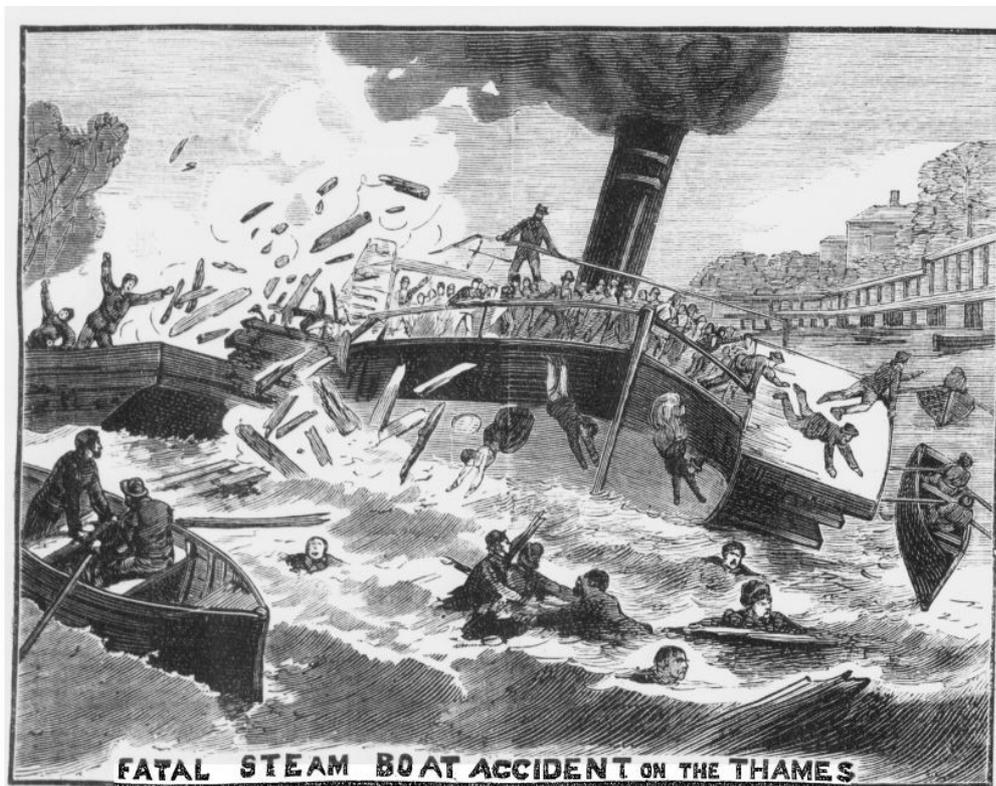


evening in question he was on a barge off Mr Line's Wharf, Paddington Basin, when his attention was drawn to a number of boys on the towing-path, who were calling out. He then noticed that a little boy was in the water, and without taking off any of his clothes he jumped in, and being able to

swim a little – there being seven or eight feet of water – he made for the boy, who was about twenty yards off. His heavy boots, however, and his clothes impeded his movements, and by the time he had reached the spot, the boy had gone down for the last time. He got the body on shore, but had great difficulty in getting out himself, as he was weighed down by his clothes. Police-constable 65F proved assisting witness out of the water and sending for medical assistance, and in the meantime he tried the usual means of artificial respiration. Dr Scolfield having stated that death was from suffocation by drowning, the jury returned their verdict accordingly, and expressed an opinion that the conduct of the bargeman was most praiseworthy in risking his own life in trying to save that of the deceased. They thought he should receive some reward or acknowledgement, and requested the coroner to lay the facts before the Royal Humane Society. The coroner promised that this should be done, and the inquiry then terminated.

150 July 23 1887

FATAL STEAMBOAT ACCIDENT On Saturday afternoon last week, an alarming collision took place on the Thames near the Cherry Gardens Pier. As the steamer *Princess Mary* (belonging to the Woolwich Steamboat Company) was on its way to Greenwich, she met the *Tilbury* tug, having in tow the barge *Rhine*, belonging to Messrs Cory, coal merchants.



When off Cherry Garden Pier the rope broke which connected the barge with the tug, and the barge, then drifting with the stream, came into collision with the steamboat, which was at the time heavily laden with passengers. The paddle box of the steamboat was knocked off by the barge, and such was the force of the collision that many passengers were knocked off their legs. The *Princess Alice* disaster brought vividly to the minds of many. A wild screaming was raised, and a fearful panic ensued. Many believed that the boat was cut in two and was going down. All efforts to compose and reassure people were useless. Many, in the hope of gaining the shore, at once jumped overboard into the Thames, and were soon swimming, struggling and shouting for assistance. Women as well as men, it is said, and some with children took boldly to the water, but failed in their wild efforts to reach the shore. A number of lightermen, seeing their danger, at once put off, and soon a fleet of boats was engaged in the rescue. The crew of the barge and tug rendered valuable assistance, but several persons were carried fast down by the returning tide. Some were overtaken and saved, but it is feared that all were not recovered.

A passenger on the steamer at the time of the collision has made the following statement :- After stopping at two piers, and just before reaching a third, our vessel met a steam tug drawing some barges. One of the barges broke away and collided with the steamer on the port side, striking her by the paddle box with tremendous force. Many of the passengers were thrown down, and a scene of terrible panic ensued. The passengers – perhaps as many as thirty – leaped overboard and made frantic efforts to get on to the barge. Women were among the number, and one man bore a little child in his arms. Some, who were unsuccessful in reaching the barge, clutched at the floating wreckage, and were carried down stream until rescued by passing boats. All the while the women, and even men, on board shrieked and threw themselves into each other's arms. Tugs and all kinds of craft immediately bore down to the assistance of the steamer. I was taken with others on board a small screw vessel. One of our party, who was seated by the paddle at the time of the collision, had his left leg broken, and the vessel therefore made at once for Greenwich Hospital, a distance of possibly two miles. The force of the collision broke all the woodwork of the paddle away, leaving the wheel exposed. A man was on the barge and helped to draw the people from the water. The crew of the steamer tried all in their power to calm the passengers, and when help came, prevented by their firmness all crowding to one vessel.

151 August 20 1887

CORONERS' INQUESTS On Monday Mr William Carter, coroner, held an inquiry at the Crown Tavern, Lambeth Road, respecting the death of Frederick James Norris, aged 11 years, the son of parents residing at 4 Italian Walk, Vauhall, who was drowned while bathing in the Thames. It appeared from the evidence that the deceased, who was very fond of the water, on Saturday afternoon was bathing in the Thames near Vauxhall Bridge, when he got out of his depth and, notwithstanding the gallant efforts of a young man named William Stafford, who swam after him with all his clothes on, the deceased sank before Stafford could reach him, and he was drowned. His body was found in the mud on Sunday afternoon by **Thomas Rumley**, captain of the sailing barge *Robert*, of Sittingbourne. After hearing further evidence, the jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

152 August 27 1887

ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES An accident which it was at first thought would result in a serious loss of life happened on Monday evening on the Thames, towards the close of the Horselydown Regatta. The final heat was being rowed, and during the excitement about forty people clambered on to the top of a cargo of hay on board the barge *Maria* of Harwich, which was anchored at Ray's Coal Wharf, Shad Thames. The tide was on the ebb, and as the barge first grounded it heeled over slightly towards the river, the hay overbalanced on account of the extra weight and fell into the water, carrying with it all the people who were on top. Twelve of these fell into the river, and the utmost excitement and alarm was caused lest they should all be drowned. Eleven of the number, however, either scrambled on to the hay again, which was floating, or were rescued by boats. The body of one man named Jeremiah Bryant of 132 Wolseley Buildings, Bermondsey, was recovered some time afterwards, but life was quite extinct. There is an impression on the part of those who were present that another man was drowned ; but the Thames Police, who were soon on the spot and rendered all the assistance in their power, have been unable to recover any more bodies. The accident happened at half past seven, and the police were busily engaged in dragging the river until half past ten without any result, and as by that time the tide had so far receded that the mud was visible, they abandoned the search.

Another account says :- A regatta in which scullers were competing for the Horselydown Prize Skiff was taking place in the vicinity of Ray's Wharf, Horselydown, about a mile below London Bridge ; and the various preliminary heats having been decided, the final one was in progress. Among the numerous spectators of the race were a group of 35 people, who secured an advantageous point of view by clambering upon a hay laden barge which was lying in the river. In the excitement produced by the deciding heat of the contest, these people all rushed to the port side of the barge,

which in consequence heeled over and precipitated all its occupants save one into the water at a time when there were no other boats within convenient distance. One version of the sad affair is that the hay fell on top of some of the people in the water, and prevented them from being seen or heard. At all events, delay necessarily occurred before succour could be brought, and when it did arrive several persons had sunk. Some of the men, being expert swimmers, made for the shore, and others managed to keep themselves afloat until assistance arrived in the shape of the steam launch *James Yates*, belonging to Mr B Murphy, and of a number of watermen's boats, which rescued them. The only person who was not precipitated from the barge was **Charles Crawley**, a waterman, who afterwards assisted in the work of rescue. He believes that fourteen lives have been lost, and his estimate is borne out by other spectators of the accident. When everyone alive had been rescued, efforts were made to recover the bodies by dragging, but only one body was recovered.

153 August 27 1887

DROWNING OF A SUPPOSED NAVAL OFFICER Mr William Carter held an inquest on Saturday at the Crown Tavern, Lambeth Road, on the body of a man (name at present unknown), but supposed to be William Pearce, a retired naval gunner of H M ship *Pembroke*, who was found drowned in the river Thames. **Sidney Smith**, a waterman, said he found the body on Wednesday off Prince's Wharf, Commercial Road. Henry Lidiard, Inspector of the Thames Police, said both arms of the deceased were tattooed, the right one with a ship in full sail, and the left with an anchor and half moon and banners of war. On searching the clothes, which were in very good condition, witness found 7 1/2d in bronze, a small pearl handle pen knife, a tooth brush, two wax candles and a small leather pocket book, a leather card case containing a card printed "William Pearce RN, 104 King's Road, Brighton"; a carte-de-visite of a young woman taken by "R G Edwards, photographer, 6 The Grove, Hackney", and there was also a letter addressed to the deceased by a Miss Georgie Austin. The deceased was a man about 47 years of age; length five feet ten inches; complexion fair; hair dark brown (turning grey), mutton chop whiskers and moustache red; one tooth deficient in the upper jaw. He was dressed in a black diagonal coat and vest, dark tweed striped trousers, white collar, dark blue tie with white spots, white cotton shirt with blue stripes (marked "Pearce"), white cotton singlet, and white flannel under, grey socks and lace up boots. In further reply to questions, witness said he had made inquiries, and had ascertained that the writer of the letter (Miss Austin) was an actress, and was travelling in the provinces. Mr Francis Fryer, the coroner's officer, informed the court that he had written to 104 King's Road, Brighton, and had received a reply that morning to the effect that no such person as William Pearce was known there at the present time. The jury returned the following verdict :- "Found drowned in the river Thames, but as to how the deceased got in the water we have no evidence".

154 September 3 1887

MURDEROUS ASSAULTS ON WIVES **Joseph Taylor**, 35, described as a lighterman living in East Street, Lambeth, was charged at the Lambeth Police Court, before Mr Biron, with violently assaulting his wife by striking and kicking her about the head, face and body. The wife gave her evidence with evident reluctance, and said she did not desire her husband punished. All she wanted was a little help from him to keep her and the children. Mr Biron said he must know something more about it. The wife stated that the prisoner had frequently knocked her about in a violent manner. On Saturday night he came home, and after abusing her, ordered her into the back room. He followed and there knocked her down, and whilst on the floor kicked her on the face and head in a brutal manner. She lost a deal of blood, and at the time she had the baby in her arms. Dr Fuss, divisional surgeon, said he saw the woman at the police station. She was bleeding profusely from three wounds on the face and injuries to the lips. Her face was dreadfully disfigured, and her injuries would be such as would be caused by violent kicks. The baby carried by the woman was smothered in blood which had flowed from the mother's wounds. The prisoner admitted striking his wife, but denied the kicking. Both prisoner and his wife had been drinking. Mr Biron, after hearing further evidence, sentenced the prisoner to three weeks hard labour, and granted a judicial

separation, the prisoner to pay the wife 12s per week. He should have sentenced the prisoner to a much longer term, as it was a murderous assault, only he desired the wife should not be kept for a long time without the allowance.

155 October 1 1887

ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES On Wednesday morning, on the Thames near Lambeth Bridge, at an early hour, an accident occurred whereby two persons were drowned. It appears that shortly before one, a barge named the *Sparrow* was going down the river on the ebb tide, when it came into collision with Lambeth Pier. There were then two men on board the barge. In answer to the watchman's question how the collision occurred, they said, "To tell you the truth, we were having a "doss" in the cabin." The watchman then returned to his box for the purpose of making an entry of the occurrence on his slate. While in the act of so doing, he heard shouts for help and police. On going on to the pier, he noticed the two men whom he had spoken to on the barge struggling in the water, and the craft was floating down the river. An alarm was raised, but before assistance could be rendered both the men disappeared, and were drowned. The body of one of the victims was found at six o'clock. The body of the second man, up to ten o'clock, had not been recovered. How the men got into the water is a mystery.

156 December 24 1887

Alfred Pain, tug master, appeared before Mr Slade at the Southwark Police Court on Monday, on a summons issued at the instance of the Thames Conservancy, charging him under 21 and 22 Vic chap 47 with obstructing and interfering with a regatta on the Thames, off Bankside, on October 17th. The evidence was to the effect that on the day in question the defendant, who was master of the tug *Naples* to which a barge was attached, steamed down the river in the direct line of a pair oared gig race, the final heats of which were just being rowed off. Although cautioned by the umpire and several others interested, he continued his course, and the wash of the tug nearly swamped two of the boats and spoiled the competition. Defendant said he stopped the tug as soon as he found there was a race going on. Mr Slade fined him 10s and costs.

157 December 24 1887

James Minton, owner of the barge *Alice*, was summoned at Brentwood (*Brentford?*) on Saturday for allowing refuse to fall into the Brentford Canal, flowing into the river Thames, in contravention of the laws of the Thames Conservancy Board. Mr Payne appeared for the prosecution, and explained that a man in defendant's employ had been detected in pumping from the barge *Alice* (defendant's) a quantity of liquid of a most filthy and dangerous character. It was a liquid which formed in a quantity of refuse taken from gasworks. Its properties were really cruel, as it consisted of a sulphuretted hydrogen. It was powerful enough to kill a fish in one second, and could destroy the life of a human being in one minute. Evidence in support having been given, the defendant was fined £5.

158 December 24 1887

MURDER OF A CHESHIRE POLICEMAN A terrible murder has been perpetrated at Broadheath, Cheshire. It appears that on Friday night a constable named Davies left home to go his round, and during the night made some of his points. He did not return on Saturday morning, and intelligence of the fact was conveyed to Superintendent Leighton of the Cheshire Constabulary, stationed at Altrincham. The superintendent, suspecting foul play, sent several men to scour the country, and later on a waterproof cape, which Davies wore, was found on the towing-path of the Bridgewater Canal near Timberley Station. Dragging was immediately commenced, with the result that a boatman recovered the body, which was conveyed to Broadheath. There was a terrible wound on the head, from which blood had flown freely down the face and neck. The poor fellow's hands were tightly clenched in a death grip. The opinion formed by the police is that Davies was beset by a desperate gang of poachers, that they murdered him and then threw his body into the canal.

159 January 21 1888

At the Gravesend Borough Police Court on Monday, **Joseph Richard Reader**, waterman, was charged with being guilty of a series of robberies on board steam tugs and other craft lying moored in the Thames. There were about a dozen specified charges, but only two or three were heard, the principal case being that of a theft of clothes and boots, with over £5 in money, from the cabin of the tug *Conqueror* on the night of December 2nd. Prisoner, who was wearing the stolen trousers, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to six months hard labour.

160 March 31 1888

AFTER THE BOAT RACE A man named **Henry Towers**, aged 34, was on Monday morning found dead at his lodgings in Lower Thames Street. The deceased was a waterman by trade, but of late had been employed as a potman at the City Arms public house, Great Tower Street. He seems, however, to have squandered most of his earnings in drink, and lived in a miserable garret at the top of a house in Lower Thames Street, for which he paid no rent. The only furniture in the place was a bed and one chair. On Saturday, the deceased bet heavily on the boat race and, it is said, won a considerable sum, which excited him a great deal. He went home about midnight, and a fellow lodger saw him lying at the foot of the staircase apparently the worse for drink. With assistance he took him into his room and placed him on the floor, where he left him. On Monday morning he was found in the same position on the floor, dead.

161 June 23 1888

On Monday morning the body of a Customs officer was picked up in the Thames near the Tower. On Sunday evening the deceased, whose name is **George Cusick**, and who was an outdoor officer, went to assist an examining officer to search a vessel lying in the Thames. He was in a barge off Brewer's Quay, and was in the act of stepping off into a skiff, when he overbalanced and fell into the water. Cusick was sucked under the keel of the barge by the action of the tide, and drowned.

162 July 21 1888

As the barge *Loulea* of Rochester was proceeding up the Thames on Wednesday morning, about a quarter to seven o'clock, it came into contact with one of the abutments of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway bridge. Two brothers named **Cross** and a female were on the barge, and one of the brothers was knocked overboard by the tiller of the barge hitting him during the collision. The accident was witnessed from Blackfriars Bridge by a large number of people, and in a short time two or three boats rowed to the spot, and endeavoured to rescue him.

163 July 21 1888

An adjourned inquiry touching the deaths of two young women named Watts and Rogers and a young man named Isaacs, who were drowned in the river Avon at Bath on the 6th inst, was held at Bath on Monday by the city coroner. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, but added as a rider that the conduct of a boatman named **Wiltshire** who, instead of pushing off at once to the deceased's assistance, went for another man, was highly reprehensible.

164 November 10 1888

FATAL ACCIDENT AT VICTORIA DOCKS On Saturday Mr Baxter held an inquest at the Town Hall, Poplar, on the body of John Casey, aged 13, the son of a coal porter living at 11 Arthur Street, Canning Town. **Joseph Martin**, the son of a stevedore of Star Street, West Ham, said on Thursday last he went to the Victoria Docks with the deceased to see his father. They went on board a ship, and after they came off the deceased got into a truck on a line of rails leading to the edge of the quay. A man who was at work at the docks pushed the truck along the rails, which ran with great force against a piece of wood at the edge of the quay, and then tumbled over into a barge below, the deceased being underneath. He was got out and taken to the Poplar Hospital in a van. Mr Charles Dear of 29 High Street, Stratford, deposed that he was manager to a firm of slate merchants, and

was in the docks superintending the unloading of a barge of slates on Thursday, and saw the boys. He was not there when the truck fell over. He did not touch the truck, and there were no men about who could have pushed the truck. The witness Martin was called in, and stated that Dear was the man who pushed the truck along a distance of ten or twelve yards. Questioned by the jury, Martin, however, acknowledged after some time that he himself pushed the truck along. He was told by the coroner that he was a little liar, and that if he saw his father and mother he should advise them to give him a good thrashing. The jury concurred to the coroner's remarks, and said that they had no doubt but that the boys were playing there with the truck, giving each other rides. Mr Frank Cerney, house surgeon at the Poplar Hospital, deposed that the deceased was suffering from a collapsed cranium, and was in an incoherent state. He died about one o'clock from shock, consequent on his injuries. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

165 January 5 1889

As the steamship *Wapping* of London was proceeding down the Thames on Monday morning at a quarter past five, she came into collision, when abreast of Greenwich Pier, with a sailing barge named the *Twin Brothers* of Brayford, which was lying at anchor. The barge sank within two minutes of being struck, the two hands on board fortunately saving themselves in their boat, having had a very narrow escape of their lives.

166 February 16 1889

An inquest was held on Saturday at the Castle, Woolwich, on the body of Mark Rycroft, a fisherman from Harwich. **George Curtis**, a lighterman, said that he and deceased agreed to take an empty sailing barge from Bermondsey to Harwich. It was rather a small craft to navigate the German Ocean, but they agreed to risk it. The barge was going to Harwich to be repaired. On passing Beckton, below Woolwich, they encountered a "half gale", the barge becoming unmanageable, and deceased fell into the river. He was only in the water five minutes, but the water was foul in consequence of the close proximity to the southern outfall sewers. Deceased was also heavily clad in sea boots and a large oilskin jacket. The jury returned a verdict of accidentally drowned.

167 February 16 1889

THE GREAT FIRE IN LAMBETH At daylight on Friday, the great fire which broke out at midnight on the banks of the Thames at Ward's Wharf, Commercial Road, Lambeth, was practically subdued. At that time, thanks to the exertions of a large force in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, the safety of the buildings next to the one first attacked had been ensured, and the actual damage caused by the conflagration was found to be the destruction of the five floored warehouse of **Messrs Barber and Co**, wharfingers, and severe damage to five barges. The oil refinery of Messrs **Younghusband and Barnes** at the Old Barge House Wharf escaped destruction by a most fortunate chance, and the extinction of the fire at this point was solely owing to the remarkable force of appliances which was set to work at the scene. The rapidity with which the fire spread was undoubtedly owing, in the first instance, to the strong wind which was blowing, and in the second to the unfortunately short supply of water which was obtained when the fire engines and men from the nearest stations began to collect at the scene. It was considerably past midnight when the fire alarm from the Commercial Road point rang into the Waterloo Road station, and by the time the news had been telephoned to Kennington Lane, and thence to the central station at Southwark, the look out man at headquarters reported from the lofty tower that a fire was throwing a strong light close by. Not an instant was lost in sending on aid, and in a time to be measured by seconds from the first ringing of the alarm, a dozen steamers were on their way to the scene. The chief and second officers of the brigade left headquarters instantly in a hose van carrying one thousand feet of hose, and assumed the command of the brigade, and messages were dispatched to all the river floats up and down the river to proceed from their moorings to the scene. With a large extinguishing force early on the spot, however, the fire brigade authorities had the misfortune to find that they could only obtain at first a miserably poor supply of water, and their earlier efforts were consequently

paralysed. This allowed the flames to burn from the bottom of the building to the top, and to blaze through the roof, and the mischief spread across to the barges lying at the wharf with amazing fury. The entire district was lit up, and it was then that the utmost apprehensions as to the safety of the adjoining premises were entertained. Three barges of Messrs Barber, two of **Messrs Newman and Oweon**, and one of Messrs Younghusband and Barnes caught fire one after the other, and when at last a good supply of water was obtained, the conflagration was raging with such intensity that the chief officer had to get a force to work nearly equal in strength to that employed at the greatest fires of recent years. No fewer than sixteen steamers, as well as the four river floats, were playing on the flames at one time, and the scene was a magnificent one. When the roof fell in, the warehouse was seen to have been completely gutted, but the work of the brigade was by no means ended, and none of the engines could leave off work for a long time. Late on Friday the following official report was presented to Captain Shaw :- Twelve am Friday – Called to Ward's Wharf, Commercial Road, Lambeth, SE, occupied by Messrs Barber and Co, wharfingers ; cause of fire unknown ; insurance unknown ; damage – a building of five floors, about seventy feet by forty five feet, and the contents nearly burnt out and the roof destroyed, and three barges on the riverside and the contents seriously damaged by fire, water and breakage ; ditto, ditto, Messrs Newman and Oweon, (....) importers ; two barges in dock and the contents seriously damaged by fire, water and breakage ; and contents in store slightly by water ; Old Barge House Wharf, ditto, Messrs Younghusband and Barnes, oil refiners, contents and building insured in the Phoenix and others, back front slightly damaged by fire, contents by water ; and a barge on riverside severely damaged by fire and breakage.

168 March 9 1889

A BAD CHARACTER At the Surrey Sessions on Monday, Walter Cooney, aged 24, labourer, was convicted for stealing from a barge on the Thames, at Mortlake, a bale of wood pulp, value 10s, belonging to the Thames steam tug and Lightering Company. The barge, on the 16th February, was left late at night by the lightermen, and on their return they saw prisoner on the barge *Sisters*, rolling the wood pulp. On seeing them return, he jumped off and ran away. A constable said prisoner had a very bad character. He had been in custody at Richmond at least twelve times for all kinds of offences, and prisoner picked up a livelihood as a waterside lounge. He had been in custody for larceny, felony, assaults on the police and drunkenness. Only recently he was charged with assaulting and robbing a lighterman, but was discharged as the prosecutor did not appear. Sentenced to imprisonment for twelve months with hard labour.

169 March 30 1889

A POINT UNDER THE WATERMAN'S ACT At the Westminster Police Court on Saturday, **Charles Smith**, master of the steamtug *Benbow*, was summoned by **Charles Smith**, a freeman of the River Thames, for unlawfully navigating a tug without having one licensed waterman on board to assist in the management and navigation thereof, in contravention of the bye laws made under the Watermen's and Lightermen's Act 22 and 23 Vic c 133. Mr Frank Salford, barrister, supported the summons. Mr Farnfield, for the defendant, after a statement of facts had been made, contended that the Act could not apply to steamtugs, as they were not used at the time the statute was passed, nor were they mentioned therein, and further that the Watermen's Company had no power conferred on them by the same Act to make a bye law dealing with steamboats engaged in towing craft. After hearing Mr Salford, Mr D'Eyncourt, in the course of a written judgement, said the words of the bye law only admitted of one construction – that there should be a second man on board the tug. The bye law appeared to be a reasonable one, and he decided that it was valid, and that the Watermen's Company had authority to make it under the powers of the statute. As the practice of entrusting tugs to the master in charge alone had obtained for a very long time without being called in question in a court of law, it was necessary to impose a penalty of a certain amount. He therefore fined the defendant 20s and three guineas costs. In answer to Mr Farnfield, Mr D'Eyncourt said he would state a case if there was a wish to appeal ; but he asked that the court might be informed on the

matter as soon as possible.

170 March 30 1889

UNAVENGED MURDERS

THE MURDER OF ELIZABETH HOPLEY At the Stafford Winter Assizes in the year 1857, one of the strangest among the most extraordinary cases which have been tried there for many years was that of Philip Clare, a miner, who was indicted on December 14th at Stafford for the murder of Elizabeth Hopley, a young woman 18 years of age.



On the 30th of the previous April, George Buckley, a labourer, was going to his work about half past four o'clock in the morning, when he saw a human body in the Bradley arm of the Birmingham Canal. He drew it out, and it was recognised to be that of Elizabeth Hopley. The surgical evidence went to show that the girl had met her death by drowning.

There were no appearances about the body to indicate previous violence. There was no trace about her head or elsewhere of any blow.

The last time the girl was seen alive was on the previous evening, when she quitted the house of her aunt at nearly ten o'clock, without bonnet or shawl, and without saying where she was going.

The girl, a short time before her decease, had been working for Philip Clare as a bank's girl, but had recently left his service, and was then working for a Mr Moon, and the canal in which the body was found was about half way between her aunt's house and the place in which she worked.

It should be remembered that at the particular spot where the body was discovered, the canal forms a fork, and near this place there was a coke hearth in full work, and light of which was very flickering and dazzling.

At first sight it seemed that when the poor girl had reached the spot where the canal forms the fork,

she had fallen over the wall of the canal, which is about two feet in height, and so had met with her death.

This supposition seemed coherent and conclusive enough, and but for positive testimony given at the trial, there never would have arisen a doubt that the case was one of accidental death.

Three weeks after the body was found, a certain Samuel Wall, a labourer and a man of somewhat questionable antecedents, informed the landlady of the house at which he lodged that Elizabeth Hopley had been murdered, and that he had witnessed the fatal scene from first to last.

Three days afterwards, he was summoned before the magistrates, and gave such evidence as led to the arrest of the prisoner on the 24th of May. He stated that he knew Philip Clare ; that on the 29th of April, being then watchman to one Mr Rose of Bradley, in the discharge of his duty, he came near the railway bridge. When about one hundred or two hundred yards away he saw two persons, or two shadows, on the bridge, and gradually drew near it until he was distant from it but fifteen or sixteen yards. In this position, he heard a woman's voice say, "Philip, don't kill me! You said you would kill me before". He then saw the man on the bridge strike the woman a blow on the head so violently that it knocked her down. Hereupon he went up to the man, whom he instantly recognised as Philip Clare, and saw him put the woman on his shoulder. Wall said, "Philip, you will have to suffer for this".

This was the first notice that Clare had of his presence, but as soon as he became aware of it, he turned upon Wall and said, "If you speak I will serve you the same". Wall at the moment let him proceed, but followed him. Clare then carried the young woman upon his shoulder across the railway bridge to the Bradley side. He turned to the left down a cart road between some buildings and cottages until he got close to the basin in which the body was found.

At this time, Wall was following the murderer, and was close behind him. Clare now paused and, addressing his pursuer again, said, "Now, if you speak or tell anyone I will kill you. I will serve you the same way as I served her, and set someone else to watch instead". He then turned from him and, carrying the body a little further, deliberately, and in Wall's presence, put the woman in the water.

This occurred about twenty minutes past midnight on the night of the 30th of April. Wall went on his way, but he had not gone above a quarter of a mile when the prisoner overtook him and renewed his threats, and Wall, being apprehensive of the consequences, locked himself up in an engine house until daylight.

Such was the strange story which this man told in the court.

The only attempt at corroboration of Wall's evidence was the testimony of one Samuel Hawes, a watchman on the Great Western Railway, who stated that about eleven o'clock on the night in question, he heard a man and woman quarrelling near the railway bridge before mentioned. By no effort of ingenuity, however, could the moment at which this occurred be taken as later than half past eleven pm, and it took place, in all probability, ten minutes or a quarter of an hour sooner ; whereas Wall positively fixed the time at which the body was cast into the water as at twenty minutes after midnight.

Again, Clare – so said the witness – carried his victim upon his shoulders along a cart road close by the foot of the bridge, and just at the foot of this bridge were houses inhabited by colliers and labourers, but Wall never attempted to give the alarm to them.

Finally, Philip Clare accounted for his time on the night in question in the following manner :- From half past six until about eleven pm, he was proved to have been in a public house in Bilston. At eleven o'clock, he left the public house in company with one William Wolliscroft and three others. Wolliscroft proved that he had accompanied Clare to about a quarter of a mile from his own house. One John Plant, a cottager who lived near Clare, saw the prisoner pass his door about twelve o'clock. The two men fell a-talking, and remained in conversation till near two o'clock.

This evidence was, of course, conclusive, and the prisoner was almost on the instant acquitted by the jury.

The strange tale told by Wall had caused great excitement in the neighbourhood, and the court was crowded with persons anxious to hear the result.

This charge of murder against Philip Clare resulted, as was generally anticipated, in an acquittal, and no one could doubt that the verdict was justified by the evidence, although it is opposed to the positive testimony of a witness who professed to have seen the murder committed by the accused. Never did a case come before public attention more enveloped in mystery. No theory formed respecting the death of the unfortunate young woman whose body was found in the canal appeared satisfactory. The *Times*, in an article upon the subject, said :- But for the statement of Wall, there could never have arisen a doubt that the case was one of accidental death, but, in point of fact, before a word was uttered by Wall, so dissatisfied was the coroner's jury with that conclusion that the inquest was adjourned to give the police an opportunity of making inquiries, and some of those who have given the greatest attention to the case are, even now, inclined to think that she committed suicide, although the evidence of her leaving her aunt's house, undisturbed in mind, appears quite incompatible with that supposition. The fact of there being so many houses close, and several persons at their ordinary duties near the spot where she was drowned – whilst it renders Wall's account so difficult of belief – also appears incompatible with the deceased accidentally falling into the water, since no cry of distress was heard. What could have induced her surreptitiously to leave home at that hour without bonnet or shawl is equally mysterious. The conduct of Wall and his statement are no less inexplicable. His intelligence and his steady persistency in his extraordinary story appear to preclude the possibility of his labouring under a hallucination, whilst there is not the slightest reason for supposing that he had any ground for ill feeling against Clare. The *Times* asked if Wall himself was concerned in the young woman's death ; but no one who saw his diminutive stature and his lameness would for a moment entertain the idea that he could attempt violence upon a strong muscular young woman such as she is described to have been. The discrepancy in the evidence of the persons who speak to the prisoner's return home is, perhaps, not to be wondered at, since Plant never referred to a clock, and he must therefore have been mistaken, as one witness, a Mrs Elmore, stated that she heard the clock strike an hour later than the time he assigned by supposition for the return of Clare. On the other hand, the statement of Wall is so extraordinary in itself, so entirely unsupported, and indeed so irreconcilable with the rest of the evidence, whilst his conduct in keeping silence for three weeks afterwards, and absconding after giving information, is so opposed to the ordinary course of proceeding which the witness of such a crime might have been expected to pursue, that a judgement instinctively shrinks from attaching credit to his statement. The one prevailing feature of the case is mystery so dark that little hope can be entertained that it will ever be solved.

171 April 27 1889

An inquest has been held at Hollow Shore near Faversham, by Mr W J Harris, coroner for the district, on the body of **Charles Hayward**, aged 34, who belonged to Faversham, and who was drowned so long ago as January 31st. The deceased was a “hoveller” or longshoreman, and on the date in question he and another man named **Bedster** were at the mouth of the creek in a boat. Having been engaged to help the *Empress* up to Faversham, a rope was thrown to them, and they made their boat fast, but as it fell astern it ran against the barge's boat and both capsized and filled, the two men being thrown into the water. Bedster was rescued, but Aylward, who was a strong swimmer and battled bravely for a long time with a heavy sea, perished before the *Empress* could be got round. The body was not recovered till last week, when a fisherman named Snip found it on the mud flats between Faversham and Seasalter. The remains presented a shocking spectacle, and were scarcely recognisable. Owing to the absence of Bedster and the captain of the barge, who witnessed the occurrence on January 31st, the inquest was adjourned. The deceased leaves three motherless children.

172 May 4 1889

THREE MEN DROWNED IN THE THAMES By an unfortunate accident that happened early on Saturday morning on the Thames near the East Lane Stairs, Bermondsey, three men lost their lives, and a fourth narrowly escaped. The men drowned were **Harry Stock**, residing in King Street,

Rotherhithe, and **George Douglas**, living in Deptford, both firemen on board the General Steam Navigation Company's ship *Era* ; and a boatman known as Topsy, resident in Bermondsey. The two firemen were being taken from the stairs to their steamer by Topsy, and when the boat was pushing off, a man by name Cartwright jumped in. The passage was made in safety, but when the boat reached the side of the *Era* a dispute would seem to have taken place as to the payment of the fare. How it happened exactly is not known, but all four men were precipitated out of the boat. Cartwright, luckier than the others, contrived to catch hold of a ladder hanging over the side of the *Era*. The cries of distress that were raised by the drowning men quickly attracted attention, and a boat was pulled out from the quay to the spot where they were struggling. It arrived in time to pick up Cartwright, but the others had disappeared, carried away into the darkness by the ebbing tide. Douglas and the boatman were married and had families, while Stock was a single man.

173 May 25 1889

Shaking Door-mats at an Inconvenient Hour.

John Forth, a servant, was summoned, before Mr. Sheil, under the Police Act, for shaking a door-mat



after the hour of eight in the morning, at Thurloe-place, South Kensington. Constable Webb, 427 B, proved that the defendant beat and shook a dirty mat at a quarter to nine in the morning outside No. 39, Thurloe-place, and that there had been repeated complaints by gentlemen going to the adjacent District Railway Station of the nuisance. Mr. Sheil : Yes, it must be stopped. It is a terrible nuisance. (To the defendant) : Whose servant are you ? Defendant : Mr. Hyde's. Mr. Sheil : Then perhaps he will pay the fine for you, and next time it will be 40s. Now you will have to pay a penalty of 5s., or go to prison for three days.

174 May 25 1889

THAMES

GAMBLING AT CARDS ON BOARD A BARGE Jeremiah Galligar, aged 21 years, Daniel Marney, 24, Robert Anderson, 19, Albert Fredder, 18, James Donald, 17 and Richard Murphy, 16, were charged with gambling with cards on board a barge. On Sunday night, Frederick London, a sub inspector of the Thames Police, was on duty in a boat on the River Thames. As he was passing New Crane Stairs he heard a noise on board one of the barges, and he rowed alongside. He then heard the clinking of money. On going on board and descending the cabin, he saw Galligar, Macdonald (*sic*) and Anderson playing at cards and the other prisoners were close by them, but he did not see them with any cards. Finding they were detected they threw the cards down and rushed from the cabin, pursued by the inspector and the boat's crew, who secured them and took them into custody. Mr Williams fined Galligar, Macdonald and Anderson 2s each and discharged the others.

175 June 8 1889

FATAL BOAT ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES A sad accident took place on the river on Friday afternoon, by which four lads were upset from a boat, one of them being drowned. About one o'clock a party of four lads hired a boat from Mr Carter of Queenhithe for a row during the dinner hour. Shortly before two, on returning, the wind being strong and the tide running up, they collided with the chain of the barge *William and Isabella* of Rochester, which was lying at anchor. All the four were precipitated into the water. The *Arrow* steam tug, belonging to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, immediately went to their assistance, and the firemen succeeded in rescuing three of the lads, little hurt by their immersion. The fourth who, it is stated, is an employee at one of Messrs W H Smith and Sons bookstalls on the Underground Railway, was carried away and drowned. His body was not recovered, but his cap is in the hands of the police. But for the timely assistance of the crew of the fire float, all the others would have been drowned, for though they could swim, the tide was very strong, and being hampered by their clothes they had little or no chance of escape.

176 June 8 1889

LAMBETH

THROWING A BOY INTO A CANAL **Job Clarke**, 22, boatman of no fixed home, was charged with assaulting William Taylor, aged 15, by striking him in the face and throwing him into Regent's Canal. It was admitted that a number of boys had been irritating the prisoner, spitting and throwing



stones at him, and it appears the prisoner, who was drunk, caught the boy Taylor and threw him into the canal. Taylor said the prisoner held him under the water and attempted to drown him. Police-constable 265Y said he was called to the spot and saw Taylor swimming across the canal. A bargeman got a drag and assisted the boy to the shore. The prisoner said he was sorry for having, whilst drunk, thrown the boy into the water, but he tried to save him afterwards. Mr Smith said prisoner had committed a serious assault, and he would be fined 40s, or be imprisoned for a month.

177 June 15 1889

THE LATEST THAMES HORROR On Thursday afternoon last week, a labourer named Davies



discovered in Battersea Park a bundle containing a portion of a human body, believed to belong to the body of which the other remains found formed part. The remains were found in a shrubbery near the wall of the frame ground, and were wrapped in a piece of brown paper, inside which was a piece of a woman's dress of a plum colour, and torn. It had two flounces of red and white, The

band of the skirt has a blue ground with white check, similar to the material of which dusters are made. The whole bundle was tied with white Venetian blind cord and some ordinary string. A large dark pin was fastened to the band of the skirt. In the pocket of the skirt was found a small black vulcanite moulded button, the surface of which is marked with parallel lines. The remains consist of the upper part of a woman's trunk. Some of the ribs are missing, and the breast bone has been nearly cut across. The chest cavity is empty, but the portion found contains the spleen, both kidneys and a portion of the stomach and intestines. The five lower ribs were entire, and portions of the five upper ones were found, but the first and second ribs are missing. The remains were handed over to Sergeant Briggs, and were subsequently examined by Dr Felix Kempster.

HOW THE FIND WAS MADE Joseph Davis, in an interview with a representative of a news agency, said : I am a gardener employed in Battersea Park, and about twenty minutes to two in the afternoon I was at work there, when I saw a parcel lying among the shrubs near the frame ground. This place is about two hundred yards from the river shore, and is closed to the public, but people can get to a path leading to it by climbing a low railing. The place is not much frequented by anyone employed, and a parcel might lie there unnoticed for some time. When I got near the bundle I noticed a most suspicious and unpleasant smell, and thinking what it must contain I called Police-constable Walter Angier, 502V. We then conveyed it to the police station in a garden basket.

On the parcel reaching Battersea Police Station it was at once handed over to Sergeant Briggs who, in conjunction with Sergeant Viney, has the local inquiries connected with the case in hand. Dr Felix Kempster, whose surgery is only a few yards from the police station, was called, and he proceeded to examine the remains. The bundle presented a most repulsive appearance on being opened. Telegrams were dispatched with all speed to the police headquarters, giving the following description of the remains :- "Found in Battersea Park, the upper part of a woman's trunk, probably a portion of the other human remains found in the Thames. The chest cavity was empty, but the remains consisted of the spleen, both kidneys, portion of the stomach, portion of the intestines, lower six dorsal vertebrae and upper three lumbar ; five lower ribs (entire) and portions of five upper ribs, the first and second ribs being missing. There was a portion of midriff, and also both breasts, with the integumentary covering to the chest. The chest bone is cut right down the centre. This has apparently been done with a saw. The ribs are also sawn through in a similar manner.

SUPPOSED IDENTIFICATION OF THE VICTIM The discoveries of remains made on Thursday, and the results of identifications which have awarded the efforts both of the river and land police, it is hoped will elucidate the circumstances surrounding the murder – for murder undoubtedly it is – of the unfortunate woman whose dismembered remains are coming to light in and about the River Thames. From the information already possessed by the police, there are reasons to believe that a crime of peculiar atrocity has been committed, only equalled within recent years by the murder and mutilation for which the notorious Kate Webster paid the death penalty a few years back. The discoveries on Thursday form an abundant proof of the vigilance which is being displayed by the police officials, acting under the direction of Detective Inspector Regan of the Thames police ; Detective Inspector Tonbridge of Scotland Yard ; and Sergeant Briggs of the Battersea local force. It should be added, in this particular, that the exertions of these officers have been supplemented by the activity of the riverside watermen. The investigations so far have not only resulted in the finding of many portions of the remains, but have furnished the police with particulars which inspire the most buoyant hopes of clearing up the mystery surrounding the identity of the deceased woman.

WHO SHE IS SUPPOSED TO BE The Metropolitan police have, amongst the numerous communications of inquiry after lost friends, received a letter from Oxfordshire to the effect that the murdered woman is supposed to be L E Fisher, a native of Oxford. The document states that the published description of the remains answers almost identically with the personal appearance of this young woman, who came to London for the purpose of entering service in a good family some time ago. So important is this information considered by the chief commissioner that he, without delay, telegraphed to the Oxford police to at once institute inquiries, and in the meantime despatched Detective Inspector Turrell of the Criminal Investigation Department to assist them in this work.

THE LATEST DISCOVERY The important occurrence in connection with the crime was the finding by a man named **Charles Marlow** of the upper half of the trunk of the body, whilst it was floating in the river off Covington's Wharf, adjacent to the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway at Battersea. This spot, curiously enough, is almost immediately opposite where last year an arm was found which belonged to the woman's body found in one of the cellars of the foundation of the new police offices now in course of erection in Whitehall. Charles Marlow said :- On Thursday about four o'clock pm, I was working on one of the barges belonging to **Mr Covington**, contractor, at his wharf, when I noticed something floating up the river. It was in about ten or twelve feet of water and floating level with the surface, so that it might easily pass unnoticed. I got it out with the aid of a broom, and then I found it was a bundle enveloped in a piece of what looked like a woman's dark skirt. There was no paper outside, and it was tied with common string. I undid it, and then I thought that the contents, to which several leeches were adhering, were human remains. Some Thames police were passing at the time, being towed along by a steam tug. I hailed them, and succeeded in attracting their attention. They came over to me and took charge of the parcel, which I understand they conveyed to Battersea mortuary.

MEDICAL OPINION The services of Dr Kempster were requisitioned in this case also. His examination revealed the fact that the bundle contained the missing half or upper portion of the trunk of this unfortunate woman. The arms had been cleanly cut off at the shoulder joint. The head, which is still missing, and the discovery of which will be an important aid to the police, had been separated from the body close to the shoulders. The chest bone had been cut down in a similar manner to that of the other portion, and the two other ribs – absent, as previously stated, from the other part of the trunk – were in the bundle, together with the collar bone, two shoulder blades, and all the skin of the back entire. A portion of the windpipe remained, but the lungs had gone. The hair on the recently found remains corresponds with that on the pieces of body previously discovered, and substantiates the original suppositions that the woman's hair was of an auburn tint. This discovery is an important point to be borne in mind, inasmuch as it is stated to correspond with the description of the female furnished from Oxford.

CORROBORATIVE EVIDENCE These discoveries, there is no doubt, all relate to one body but, in addition, at several points along the river suspicious "finds" have taken place. One of these was made by a man named David King, who picked up, early on Thursday morning near Nine Elms, what is believed to be a human liver. He handed it to Police-constable Brady, 24V, and the medical gentleman engaged in the case will endeavour to decide whether or not it has any connection with the already discovered remains. Another similar find occurred near Southwark Bridge. This discovery was made at four o'clock on Thursday morning by one of the Thames Police named Hayes. It was a piece of flesh of peculiar construction, and resembled one of the organs of the abdomen. It was at first thought that it might be a portion of the same woman's body, and was accordingly forwarded to Detective Inspector Regan, who conveyed it in a two pound jar to Dr Mahoney. This gentleman discouraged the belief that it was human remains, but together with the other portions of the body which have been found in the East End, it was taken by Detective Regan to Battersea, where all the remains are now under care and awaiting an inquest, which will in due course be held by Mr Braxton Hicks.

FURTHER DISCOVERIES AND CLUES Throughout Friday frequent telegraphic messages reached Battersea Police Station reporting the discovery of further human remains in the Thames. In one or two instances the articles found evidently had no connection with the recent murder of the unknown woman, who is supposed to have borne the name of Fisher. Several more portions of remains belonging to those already at Battersea mortuary were brought to light during the day, however, and it is supposed this is owing in no small measure to the effects of the heavy thunderstorm which passed over London on Thursday night. The first discovery on Friday took place near Wandsworth Bridge, where a gipsy named Solomon Hearne discovered a woman's right leg lying on the foreshore of the Thames on the Fulham side. The limb was barely covered with the collar torn from an ulster of dark check pattern, exactly matching the material found in the bundle which was picked up near the Albert Bridge, Battersea, on Tuesday morning. Police-constable

Kingsley, 241T, was called, and the parcel was handed into his charge. After a preliminary medical examination by the local divisional surgeon, the limb was conveyed to the Battersea mortuary. Dr Felix Kempster, on comparing it with the other remains, at once pronounced it to belong to the same body. The limb consisted of the leg and foot entire, it having been cut off from the thigh just below the knee. It was well formed, and apparently had been committed to the water at about the same time as the other portions of the body. The appearance of the limb supports the doctor's statement that the deceased woman must have had fair, if not auburn hair. Some few hours later, intelligence was received that the missing right leg had been found floating in the river off Limehouse. It appears that a lighterman named **Stanton** was at work there, when he noticed a bundle wrapped in some dark material being carried along by the tide. After rescuing it from the water, he handed it over to Inspector Hodgson of the Thames Police, who happened to be in charge of a police galley on the look out. The parcel was found to consist of the sleeve of the check coloured ulster (which has been used in disposing of the remains) and the right leg and foot of a woman. Just over the cuff of the sleeve was a ticket pocket, and the whole bundle was tied round with a piece of common string. Detective Inspector Regan (of the Thames Police), who with Detective Inspector Tonbridge, has charge of the case, proceeded to Battersea, where the limb was pronounced by Dr Kempster to belong to the other portions in the hands of the authorities. About midday, a bargeman named **Woodward**, working at Palace Wharf, Nine Elms, reported to Police-constable Hall, 407W, that he had picked out of the river a substance which he believed was human flesh. The portion, which was very small, was seen in due course by a medical gentleman acting in the matter, but he was unable to decide definitely whether it was human or not. He was rather inclined to think it was a piece of a human lung, judging from the cartilage around the bronchial tube. The following are now the missing portions of the body :- The head and neck, lungs and heart, two arms and hands, intestines, bony pelvis, and right thigh. For these a more careful search is being maintained. All along the foreshore of the Thames, experienced watchers have been engaged, and every likely hiding place, such as the shrubbery of Battersea Park, where one of Thursday's discoveries took place, is being inspected.

The police are constantly in receipt of communications from persons who have lost sight of friends or relatives, and they look to these to furnish them with clues to work upon. One communication received on Friday was from a constable in the Hertfordshire constabulary, who at first believed that the murdered woman was his sister, whose maiden name was "L E Fisher" - the name found written on the piece of underclothing in which the thigh found at Battersea was wrapped. It appears that this woman, immediately previous to her marriage some four or five years ago, marked a quantity of her new clothing with her then name of "L E Fisher". She married a man named Wren, being at the time about twenty years of age. She had a child, and on May 18th of last year, when she was enceinte, she left her home at Hornsey with a man named George Robinson, a plasterer of Islington. Neither of the pair have been seen since. Robinson, whom the police are attempting to find, is about thirty years of age and of fair complexion. It is stated, however, that the constable who came from Ware, Herts, believing the murdered woman might be a relative of his, was quite unable to identify the remains, nor could certain physical peculiarities of his relative be traced on the remains.

The police authorities also attach considerable importance to what is now known as the "Highbury Clue", as it is now established beyond doubt that a young woman named "L E Fisher" was employed as a barmaid at the Old Cock Tavern at Highbury, although eighteen months have elapsed since she left that place. The clue first arose through the fact of one of the customers seeing the name of "L E Fisher" as being that marked upon the underclothing in which the remains were wrapped when discovered, writing to the authorities that he remembered a young woman of that name being employed at the above-mentioned tavern. This at once led to inquiries being made, and the present landlord, while he himself has been at the place only ten months and therefore could not have known the young woman, yet states that a young person named "L E Fisher" was employed by his predecessor, and he has since learnt that the customers were in the habit of calling her "Laura". It is expected that this clue will probably lead to inquiries being made, or statements elicited from

others who knew the young woman during the time she lived at Highbury.

The police announce that the portions of clothing which have been found have been carefully preserved at Battersea Police Station (Bridge Road), where they will be open, between the hours of ten and four, for the inspection of any persons who have missing female friends. On Friday night the police issued a photographic facsimile of the words "L E Fisher" which were marked on the linen in which the thigh found at Battersea on Tuesday was wrapped.

178 June 15 1889

THE THAMES MYSTERY The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis presents his compliments to the Editor, and begs to ask that the enclosed facsimile of the name on the portion of a pair of women's drawers in which part of the human remains recently found in the river Thames was wrapped may be reproduced in the *Police News*.

4 Whitehall Place, 8th June 1889



SUPPOSED CLUES AS TO IDENTITY Amongst the numerous communications of inquiry after lost friends, the metropolitan police received a letter from Oxfordshire to the effect that the murdered woman was supposed to be L E Fisher, a native of Oxford. The Chief Commissioner without delay telegraphed to the Oxford police to institute inquiries, and in the meantime despatched Detective Inspector Turrell, Criminal Investigation Department, to assist them in this work, but nothing more has been heard of the matter. The police authorities have been engaged investigating some information which a constable in the Herts constabulary named Fisher had furnished. He stated to a representative of the Press Association that he believed the remains were those of his sister, whose maiden name was L E Fisher. It appears that just previous to her marriage, she marked a quantity of her linen with that name. She married a man named Wren, and went to live at Hornsey, but a little over a year ago, when she was enceinte, she eloped with a man named Robinson, a plasterer by trade.

FURTHER DISCOVERY Another discovery of remains connected with this case was made on Monday afternoon by a man named **Joseph Squire**, a lighterman, off Newton's Wharf, Bankside. Whilst at work he noticed a peculiar looking object floating in the water, and on getting it out, he found it to be the right arm of a woman doubled up, with the wrist and shoulder tied tightly together with a piece of common string. Squire at once handed the limb – which, by the way, unlike most of the other portions found, was not wrapped up in anything – to a constable of the M Division, and it was then conveyed to the Battersea mortuary. The three medical gentlemen engaged in the case – Dr Bond, Dr Hebbert and Dr Felix Kenpster – happened to be conducting a further examination of all the remains previously found, and they at once directed their attention to this fresh discovery. They had no doubt that it belonged to the other remains. The hand was tightly clenched as if the woman had died in agony. Monday's examination of the left hand of the murdered woman caused the doctors to question their previous belief that she had not been married, as they noticed some slight marks on the third finger, which had apparently been produced by the removal of a ring. The marks, however, were not clearly defined, so that the medical gentlemen are not able to give a definite opinion. Besides the portions of the woman's body still missing viz the head, neck, lungs, heart and intestines, there are reasons to believe that the child of which she was undoubtedly delivered has also been thrown into the river.

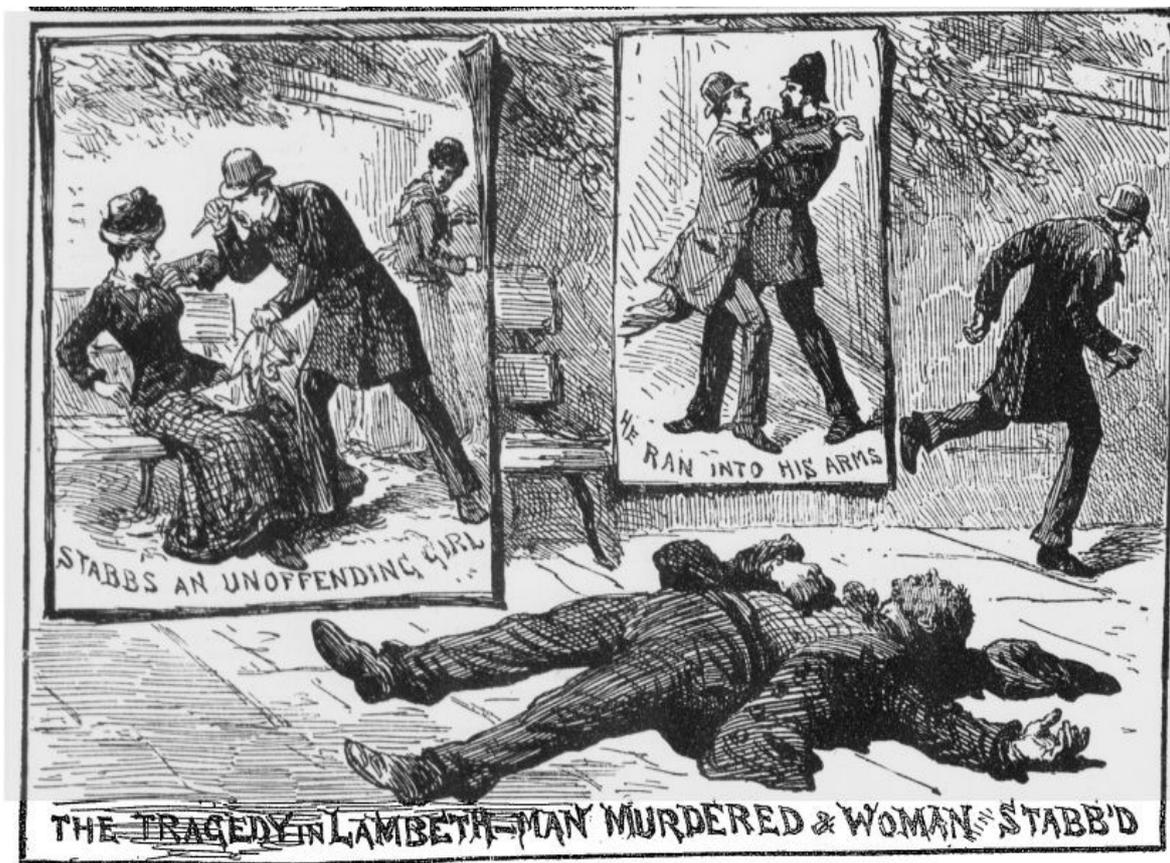
On Monday afternoon, the case formed the subject of a long consultation between Mr Robert Anderson (Assistant Commissioner), Mr McNaughton, Detective Inspector Marshall, Detective Inspector Tonbridge, and the other officers engaged in the investigations. Only a comparatively few persons, it is understood, have made application to see the clothing connected with the case, which

is kept for the inspection of those inquiring after a woman answering the description of deceased at the Police Station, Bridge Road, Battersea. The doctors are of opinion that the woman was about twenty four years of age, five feet four inches in height, and with fair if not auburn hair. The inquest, it is believed, will be opened by Mr Braxton Hicks on the 24th inst, although the date has not been finally decided.

From various indications, it is believed that the murdered woman occupied a better position in life than is indicated by the clothing which has been discovered with the body. The river is still being dragged with a view of recovering the head.

179 July 6 1889

MYSTERIOUS TRAGEDY AT LAMBETH On Saturday morning at about two o'clock, a policeman going along Lambeth Palace Road saw a man lying on the pavement almost opposite Lambeth Palace. The policeman went to rouse him under the impression that he was in a drunken stupor, but to his alarm found that the man was lying in a pool of blood. Further examination showed that the man, who appeared to be about twenty five to thirty years of age, had a frightful stab behind the ear. He was alive, but ten minutes after he had been carried to St Thomas's Hospital close by, he expired. On the Embankment, quite near to the spot where the man was found murdered, another attempt to murder was made – most likely by the culprit in the other case. The victim this time was a young woman about 19 years of age, who was sitting on the seats. First accounts said that at about a quarter past three a passer by saw her lying asleep ; a few minutes later he heard her scream. Turning round, he saw a man lifting his arm threateningly above the girl's head. A weapon glittered for a second, and then it was brought down with swift descent. The witness to this horrible deed raised an alarm, and several policemen rushed to the spot in time to give chase to the would-be assassin, who threw down a bloodstained knife as he fled. A crowd joined in pursuit and, after an exciting run through the narrow streets, the fugitive was successfully hunted down. The woman in the meantime had been taken to St Thomas's Hospital, and was found, like the man, to have been wounded behind the ear. Her name is Margaret Webb, and she lives with her sister Flora at 31 Gabriel Street. Her injuries were found not to be of a serious character, and later in the morning she was reported to be progressing favourably. The body of the man lies in the hospital mortuary, within a few yards of the place where he met his death. He looks like a waterman who had dressed himself in his best. He seems to have been a handsome, well set up man. He has brown hair cut short, and a very slight brown moustache. He has a prominent well formed nose, and the full lips are slightly parted, as they probably were in life, disclosing an irregular row of teeth. He was a pretty big powerful man, five feet eight inches in height and seems, from his clothing, to have been fairly prosperous. His coat is of black twill and his trousers are black. He wore a black cloth cap with a peak, such as sea engineers wear. His blue check cotton shirt had been put on clean that night. His white merino vest, with yellow facings, was also new. As to the manner in which he met his death, there is only a tiny punctured wound on the left side of the neck to show. It is a little round wound, no bigger than a sixpence, and not deep, but sufficient. The place where he was stabbed and where he was found was, says the night man at the hospital, more like a slaughterhouse than anything else. The pavement was carpeted with a thick covering of coagulated gore. One of the vestry water carts had to be sent for to remove the horrid record of the deed, and long after, the curious crowd that hangs about the Lambeth Palace Road and the Embankment could see its traces. Margaret Webb's injury is of the slightest character, but its situation shows clearly that it was the murderer's intention to kill her by the same swift method by which the first victim had been dispatched. The knife was aimed at the same fatal spot as in the other case, but luckily missed its mark, and striking no vital part inflicted a comparatively slight injury. The fact illustrates the cool deliberate wantonness with which the man went about his work. The woman Webb was lying dozing upon a bench with a handkerchief thrown over her face. The man came along, stealthily lifted up the corner of the handkerchief so as not to wake her, and stabbed her.



PRISONER IN THE DOCK James Crickford, the prisoner, is a young man, apparently of about 27 years of age, rather under middle height, with short black hair and fair moustache. He wears a dark brown suit, and is of respectable appearance. He looks a harmless inoffensive man. When he was placed in the dock on Saturday morning before Mr Biron at the Lambeth Police Court, he seemed not to realise his position, and appeared quite unconcerned. Inspector Jackson of the L Division deposed that at three o'clock that morning he went to St Thomas's Hospital, and saw a man lying dead in the receiving room with a punctured wound on the left side of the neck. As he left the hospital, he passed the prisoner outside in Lambeth Palace Road, and a few seconds later Constable 83L came down the Embankment shouting, "Stop him ; he has stabbed a woman!" Witness turned and saw the prisoner running. He turned into Parish Street, and was there stopped by 49L. The Inspector, at this stage of the evidence, produced a pocket knife, whose blade was smeared with blood, and the shirt which prisoner was wearing at the time of his arrest, with bloodstains on the left cuff. The knife, said the inspector, corresponded with the wound in the unknown dead man's neck. When charged with wilful murder he made no reply, but explained the stains on his shirt by saying that he had interfered in a quarrel between two men in the next room to his at 24 Marsham Street on Monday night, and they had struck him in the face and made his nose bleed, and the blood had dropped on his shirt. Prisoner was asked here if he had any question to ask the inspector. He simply said that he remembered going past the hospital, but knew nothing of the occurrence. Mrs Elizabeth Ford was next called, and said she was going along the Embankment at twenty minutes past three that morning, and saw Crickford coming along. A woman was lying on one of the seats, her face covered with a handkerchief. He stopped opposite her, hastily lifted the handkerchief, and struck a blow at her head. The witness was not near enough to see whether he had anything in his hand, but as soon as he had struck the blow, he walked hurriedly away towards Lambeth Bridge, passing her (witness) on the way. The woman whom he had struck rose up, screaming and crying out, "Stop that man!" She was bleeding from a wound under the ear. Later on, the witness went to the police station, and picked the prisoner out from a group of nine working men. The prisoner : The men I was placed with were navvies. Witness : That is not so, but ordinary workmen. Prisoner added : I don't remember anything of the occurrence. Elizabeth Ford continued, and said she lived

in Fountain Court, Lambeth. Her husband was a potter. She did not know the prisoner. About twenty minutes past three o'clock in the morning, she was going along the Albert Embankment towards Westminster. The prisoner was coming from the direction of Westminster, and walking rather fast. There was a female sitting on a seat on the Embankment in a rather leaning position. The prisoner was walking rapidly, and suddenly stopped in front of the woman for about a second. He darted to her, and took up a pocket handkerchief which was over her face, and then made a blow at her with his other hand. She could not say if he had anything in his hand or not at the time. The blow was on the right side. She was in front of her at the time. The prisoner then hurried away towards Lambeth Bridge. The woman said something, and then screamed and called out, "Stop that man!" Witness asked her, "What's he done?" and she only repeated, "Stop that man". As the prisoner passed, witness said, "What have you done to the woman?" He stared at her, but made no reply. Witness hurried after the prisoner, and then saw two policemen, to whom she made a statement, and they hurried off after the prisoner. She returned to the woman, and found her standing up. Witness then saw she was bleeding from a wound under the ear. Witness took her to St Thomas's Hospital, and afterwards went to the station, and eight or nine were placed together, and she picked out the prisoner. Mr Biron asked if there was any evidence as regarded the murdered man. Inspector Jackson said not at present. He had the doctor present. Mr Biron said at present he would not hear that evidence. He should remand the prisoner, and considered it a case in which the Treasury should be communicated with, and then the necessary evidence should be collected. Inspector Jackson said he would attend to the matter.

The magistrate at this point remanded the case for a week.

THE BLOOD STAINED SHIRT The landlady of 24 Marsham Street, Westminster, where the prisoner lived, bears out his statement as to the cause of the blood stains on his shirt. She says that he came home on Monday night very drunk – a frequent habit of his – and greatly annoyed the two waiters who occupy the room next to his by beating with his stick at the wall between the two rooms. She did not see any blow struck in the quarrel which ensued, but knows that he must have bled in some way, for his pillow next morning was besmeared with blood. He has lived with her for nine weeks. He has never been out all night, but often till the small hours of the morning. She describes him as a very pleasant man when sober, but a demon when drunk, but would never, even in his most drunken moments, have thought him capable of murder. She had never noticed anything strange in his manner, and added, with true landlady pride, that he always paid his rent regularly a week in advance.

THE BODY IDENTIFIED The Press Association states :- On Sunday morning, the body of the murdered man was identified as that of **George Hammond**, mate of a coal barge, of Great Wakering near Shoeburyness. The remains were identified by the captain of the barge. The unfortunate man, with other members of the crew, had arrived in London on Friday with a cargo of coal, and anchored in the river off St Thomas's Hospital. It is stated that the deceased who, as alleged, was of intemperate habits, was intoxicated at the time he fell a victim to the tragedy.

The young woman Margaret Webb is reported to be progressing favourably. She attended at the Police Court on Saturday, but her evidence was not then taken.

ANTECEDENTS OF THE ACCUSED The Central News says :- As far as can be ascertained at present, there does not seem to be any motive for the crime and, as it is understood, the prisoner Crickman was not acquainted either with the murdered man or with the woman Mary Ann Webb (*sic*). Webb is 19 years of age and a weaver by trade and, according to the police, has no fixed home. The prisoner is a rather sullen looking man, with dark hair and a light moustache. He appeared to view the proceedings at the Police Court with indifference, gazing about him as though he was not the person concerned. He was dressed in a dark brown coat and vest, tweed trousers, turn down collar and dark necktie. The prisoner had been living for about nine weeks in Marsham Street, Westminster, and there a Central News reporter interviewed his landlady, Mrs Player, who made the following statement :- "Crickman came to me about nine weeks ago and said he wanted a bed. He was then out of employment, and thought he would only stay a week or a fortnight. As far as I know, he has not obtained work, but he has always paid his rent weekly in advance. He has

been drinking heavily since Easter, often not coming home until one or two o'clock in the morning. On Monday night he came home, and between two and half past two he hammered at the door of a room in which slept two waiters, who have lived in my house two years. I got up, and came down to them. Crickman went into their room, and they had a row, but I cannot say if they hit him. I told him I could not put up with such conduct and he would have to go by Friday. On Saturday morning he left, taking with him a black tin box, and gave me the key of his room, and was perfectly sober". Both the waiters referred to were seen by a Central News reporter, and corroborated Mrs Player's statement as to the quarrel. One of them added that he caught hold of Crickman's nose and twisted it violently. He was not certain whether the nose bled, but thought it very probable that it did. This statement, it will be noted, has an important bearing upon the prisoner's assertion that the blood stains on his coat were due to one of the waiters making his nose bleed.

180 July 13 1889

FIRE AT SURREY COMMERCIAL DOCKS One of the enormous timber conflagrations which have occurred at intervals in London during the last few years, and which have always so severely taxed the resources of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, broke out a few minutes before four o'clock on Friday afternoon in the Surrey Commercial Docks, and was burning fiercely up to a late hour at night. At the time mentioned, the news went from mouth to mouth in the docks that a fire had broken out in the Russia Dock, where enormous quantities of timber are always stored, and directly afterwards great clouds of black smoke, which began to roll over the docks, proved that the news was true. From some cause, which is at present unascertained, flames suddenly burst out at a quarter to four o'clock in one of the enormous sheds upon the docks. These sheds are used by the dock company for the purpose of storing the loads of timber which are brought over from Russia, Norway and Sweden, and the ports of other countries, consigned to large timber merchants, who rely on the dock company to store them and "clear" the loads as they require the timber. At this season of the year they are crammed from end to end with thousands of tons of pine, deal and joisting, and the Russia Wharf is in the summer a constant source of activity, barge load after barge load of timber being unloaded from early morning till late at night. When the first alarm of fire was raised, those who were at hand appear to have been paralysed for a few moments, and the flames began to make most extraordinary progress, spreading right and left with startling speed. The cry of, "Fire", sped rapidly through the docks, and the men began to run the manuals out, and started to pump water on the flames. Their efforts, however, even at this early stage, were without the slightest effect ; and while dense clouds of smoke began to roll out from the vast structure, it was palpable that the conflagration was extending to all parts of the building. In spite, however, of the threatening character of the outbreak, there appears to have been a lamentable delay in communicating the alarm to the London Fire Brigade, and no definite news of the outbreak was given until after the lapse of several all important minutes. The firemen on the floating river station saw smoke rising, and after reporting the fact by telephone to the nearest land station, proceeded from their moorings to the scene. An indirect "call" came over the wires at nine minutes to four to a "timber yard alight at South Bridge, Rotherhithe", and three minutes later the "call" came for a Russian timber shed alight in the Commercial Docks. Without the definite "calls", however, the Fire Brigade authorities wisely judged that the outbreak was a serious one, and from the first there was no lack of help at the scene. Steamers were ordered on from every station in South London, and as every steamer arrived, it was set to work on the scene. The task before the brigade, however, was a stupendous one. When the fire occurred there was a considerable breeze blowing, and the flames, which from the first burnt with terrific fierceness, were fanned into red heat, and spread around with corresponding strength and rapidity. Shed after shed and stack after stack of timber caught fire, and the masses of flames in separate structures and piles of wood began to multiply with bewildering rapidity. At half past four o'clock the scene was a magnificent one, for one of the largest fires which has been witnessed in London since the memorable Haggerstons conflagration was then in full progress. Over a dozen sheds had caught, and in these alone there was a mass of fire extending one hundred yards one way and sixty another. This was formidable enough, and

represented a gigantic furnace, the appearance of which it would be impossible to describe, but there were also as many stacks as sheds alight on every hand, and the blinding and suffocating smoke and the frightful heat rendered the work of extinction a terrible one from the very earliest moment. It was at once apparent that an enormous force of extinguishing power would be necessary to deal with the disaster, and accordingly, in response to the urgent messages which were telephoned to the central station at Southwark, every district of the metropolis was called upon to render its tribute to the remarkably large force of engines and men which was dispatched to the scene. Not only, too, was the fire attacked from the land side, but all the river appliances which the brigade possesses were called in to aid. The rapid and powerful tugs, which have been recently added to the force of the brigade, were soon sent from their moorings, and the *Comet*, the *Buzzard*, the *Cormorant* and the *Active* floats all began to pump water on to the fire from the riverside. Over one hundred and fifty firemen assisted to direct the streams of water, and with twenty land steamers at work, and dock manuals and floats in active use, thousands of tons of water were thrown on the fire. The character of the fire can be described in three words, for it was "a timber fire" of the first magnitude. Nothing but timber was affected, but it is very seldom that such masses of timber had been seen enveloped in flames. The mischief was not even confined to the buildings and the stacks of timber, for the barges lying in the dock basins and loaded with tons of timber caught fire, and nearly a dozen of these were involved at five o'clock. Hundreds of firemen and dock employees worked on every side to endeavour to overcome the fire, but this was a task which only hours of steady pumping could accomplish. The all important work of surrounding the mischief was accomplished about six o'clock in the evening, but this was only the least portion of the work of extinguishing the conflagration, and it was expected that the fire would burn for days. As the evening advanced, the walls and the roofs of the buildings fell inwards and outwards, but the great stacks showed no signs of collapsing, and continued to burn steadily. Fifty men, with officers, were ordered to the scene to remain all night, but at half past eight the authorities were enabled to circulate the following official "stop" message :- "Surrey Commercial Docks. There have been thirteen timber shed buildings, covering an area of about 312 feet by 178 feet, used as stores, and several stacks of buildings in yards severely damaged by fire and water, and several barges destroyed and some damaged". The steamers, however, were at that time all at work, and the majority of them will continue at work all night. Vans were running between the scene of the fire and the Central Fire Station keeping the engines supplied with coals, and at ten o'clock the scene at the fire was one of great animation. Contingents of the Salvage Corps, under Mr Hall from Watling Street, and Mr Ordway from Southwark, rendered good service in saving property, and the rough official report which the experts of that corps prepared thus describes the damage :- "Thirteen timber shed buildings of one floor, covering an area of about 312 feet by 178 feet, and the contents very seriously damaged by fire and falling down ; several stacks of timber, covering an area of 178 feet by 35 feet, and about 450 feet of jetty, and 100 feet of fencing damaged by fire ; several barges destroyed and damaged ; gatekeeper's office damaged by fire and water, and other injuries caused". At half past two o'clock the same morning, the West Ham Fire Brigade were called to an outbreak of fire on the premises of the New Imperial Saw Mills at Meesons Road, Stratford, in the occupation of the Saw Mills Company Limited. On arriving at the scene, Mr Superintendent Smith found that the fire had got a good hold, and though every effort was made to check the progress of the flames, four buildings of two floors each, one hundred and thirty feet by one hundred and twenty feet, became involved, and it was not until after four hours' work that the conflagration was checked. Some of the warehouses were stored with veneers and fancy woods, and the whole of them were nearly burnt out and their contents destroyed, while the stock in the yard was also damaged. The damage is estimated at £7,000, covered by insurance in several offices.

A fire occurred at Ordnance Wharf, Blackwall Lane, East Greenwich, on the premises of Messrs Forbes, Abbott and Lennard, manufacturing chemists. A still containing fifty tons of tar caught fire from an unknown cause, and before he could escape, John Creasy, aged 36 years, was burnt to death.

At the Military and Royal Naval Club, 18 Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, a fire broke out soon after

five o'clock on Friday morning, and the back room on the ground floor, used as a store, was greatly damaged.

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OUTRAGES ON THE RIVER On Monday at the Thames Police Court, **James Crick**, 25, a waterman of 70 Queen Elizabeth Street, Horselydown, and Thomas Ruffeltt, a packing case maker, were charged with committing an assault on Jessie Miller of 40 Commercial Road, Lambeth, on the River Thames. They were further charged with being concerned in attempting to murder the prosecutrix by throwing her from a boat into the River Thames. Detective-Inspector Regan of the Thames Police watched the case on behalf of the Criminal Investigation Department. The prosecutrix, a decent looking woman, stated that she was a widow and was a book folder. On Monday the 1st inst, she went to Westminster to see the Shah, and the two prisoners invited her into their boat, which was by the stairs at Westminster Bridge. She told Crick she had no money, and the accused said that did not matter. They offered witness a drink, and she took it. She went into the boat, and they picked up five or six passengers. They rowed down the river, and landed and had some drink at Horselydown. Ruffeltt and witness returned to the boat alone. Prisoner rowed the boat a little way, and then Crick again joined them. Witness thought they were going to take her back. It was then getting dark. Crick tried to take liberties with her, and she resisted. He then pulled her to the bottom of the boat, and assaulted her. Ruffeltt was rowing. Witness got very excited. She could not say whether she jumped out of the boat or the accused threw her out ; but she found herself in the river, and the accused rowed away. Witness cried for help, and two men in a boat rescued her and took her to the infirmary. Witness next saw Crick on Sunday at the police station, and she picked him out from others. At the time witness was very unwell. By Crick : Witness knew the nature of an oath. When she met the prisoners she was excited on account of seeing the Shah. Witness did tell Crick she was miserable, and that it would not take her long to commit suicide. She, however, did not mean that. Witness was singing in the boat, but did not say she was "Tootsie Sloper". Crick said she was, and she laughed. She had been drinking before she came across the prisoners. Witness could not tell whether she used filthy language while in the boat or not. Crick was advertising a paper. Witness did not say she would go anywhere with Crick. He was sober. Witness drank very freely in the public house. She was not very drunk. Witness did not throw the seats overboard. When she fell into the water she was near to the side. At this point, Mr Saunders remanded the accused. Inspector Regan said two men would prove pulling the prosecutrix out of five feet of water.

Samuel Tiford, 24, a waterman, was also charged at the same court with assaulting Sarah Truett, a single woman of Whitethorn Street, Bromley. Mr George Hay Young, solicitor, defended. Prosecutrix, a smartly dressed young woman, stated that she had known the accused some two or three years. She saw him on Saturday evening. The next morning, prisoner, witness, two young men and two young women went in the prisoner's boat to Gravesend. They returned to Blackwall the same night, and the other two young men and women got out. Witness and the accused then crossed over to the other side of the river and went into a public house. They then got into the boat and were crossing again to Blackwall. When they got in the middle of the river, prisoner ceased rowing and committed the offence with which he was charged. Witness screamed, and in the struggle she almost fell into the water. A police galley came up, and the prisoner was arrested. By Mr Young : Witness was 21 years of age. She had previously been out with the accused, but he had not molested her before. Constable Catlin said that at five minutes to twelve on Sunday night, a man made a report to witness. He and others manned a galley and found a boat with prisoner and prosecutrix in it. The girl made a complaint to witness, who arrested the accused. The latter was under the influence of drink, and made no reply to the charge. Mr Saunders remanded the prisoner.

182 July 13 1889

A GALLANT BOATMAN Early on Tuesday morning a fire broke out in a house occupied by a man named William Harbutt, on the canal side near Lodge Street, Oldbury, and was only prevented

from being attended with fatal consequences by the brave conduct of a boatman named **Benjamin Taylor**, in the employ of Mr Hickman of Brierley Hill. It appears that Taylor and his wife were in a boat on the opposite side of the canal, and shortly after midnight they were alarmed by hearing cries for help. Hurrying out of their boat they saw that a fire had broken out in the front bedroom of a house on the opposite side. Taylor and his wife ran over a bridge close to, and in a few seconds reached the house, which by this time was filled with smoke.



Mrs Harbutt, who had two children sleeping with her, the husband being at work, was either overcome by the smoke, or so terrified, that she was powerless to render any help to her children. Taylor, after some difficulty, obtained access to the house and, rushing upstairs through the smoke, he, at considerable personal risk, succeeded in rescuing Mrs Harbutt and her two children, one of them a baby. Having rescued the inmates, Taylor afterwards extinguished the flames. The bedclothing and a quantity of Mrs Harbutt's clothes were destroyed. The fire, it is thought, originated through a spark from a candle falling upon a table cover. On Tuesday night, at the Parochial Offices, the vicar (Rev W T Taylor) presented Taylor with a sum of money, as a reward for his brave and prompt conduct in saving the lives of the three persons referred to above.

183 July 20 1889

THE MYSTERIOUS TRAGEDY IN LAMBETH James Crickmer, pawnbroker's salesman living in Marsham Street, was charged on remand at the Lambeth Police Court on Saturday with the wilful murder of **George Howard**, a bargeman of Great Wakering, Essex, by stabbing him with a knife on the Albert Embankment on the 20th ult. He was further charged with attempting to murder Margaret Webb on the same morning. Mr Horace Avory said he prosecuted for the Treasury. With regard to the woman, he need not go into the facts of that case, but with regard to the murdered man the circumstances were peculiar. Just before two o'clock in the morning, he was seen sitting by a building known as the dead house of St Thomas's Hospital. He was in a drunken state. Afterwards he was found stabbed in the neck and dead. Mr Avory proceeded to point out that prisoner had told Mary Ann Brooks that he intended doing something desperate, as the world was all against him. The prisoner was afterwards seen at a coffee stall near where the murder took place. After that, he was seen to come to the woman on the seat at the Embankment. He was noticed to aim a blow at

her neck with something he held in his hand. He had, it appeared, previously made certain overtures to her, which she had refused. After leaving the woman, the prisoner walked away and stopped for a moment, apparently looking at the bloodstains where the murdered man had been found. He then noticed a policeman followed, and ran away. When captured, a two bladed pocket knife was found stained with blood. That knife had since been compared with the wound on the deceased, and exactly fitted. The condition of the knife did not point to the blow on the woman, and therefore it was to be considered that it was the weapon used to stab the deceased. A conversation took place with regard to the murder, and during that the prisoner made no reply. When the prisoner was searched, a florin was found in his boot, which he said he had put there for safety. The prisoner when he left Mrs Brooks was without money and, further, it was known that the deceased had money, but when found he had but a halfpenny on him. It was stated that when the cry of "Police!" was raised, a man got up from a seat close by. After some further evidence, Mr Avory proceeded to call **Frank Hall**, cook on board the barge *Governor*, who spent the evening with deceased, and now repeated the evidence he gave at the inquest. He saw deceased change a half sovereign, and thought he spent about 5s 6d. Peter Edwards, Shelton Street, Drury Lane, lamplighter, stated that on the night of the 28th he went along Palace Road about a quarter to two o'clock, on his way to work. He passed the building belonging to the hospital called the dead house. He saw a man standing against the wall in a leaning position, and apparently drunk. After he passed him, witness crossed the road, and then saw a man going towards the drunken man and on the same side. When he last saw him, he was about fifty yards from the drunken man. He could not describe the man. It was too dark. The man appeared to come from Lambeth Bridge. Witness went to a coffee stall outside Lambeth Palace, and at a quarter past two o'clock, commenced putting out the lights on the Embankment. He then saw a girl lying on a seat not far from the dead house. She had a pocket handkerchief over her face. She was at that time alone. Annie Harris, Eastham Street, Tabard Street, charwoman, stated that on Friday she was passing about two o'clock along the Albert Embankment, and saw a man in a sitting position outside the dead house, asleep. She had previously seen him walking along very drunk. Soon after she left the coffee stall, she heard an alarm, and then the sound of a policeman's whistle. William Fraser, brass finisher, said about ten minutes past two o'clock, as he was passing the dead house, he saw a man lying on the pavement. He was lying on his right arm, and his head was towards the wall. Witness noticed blood coming from him. He called out, "For God's sake, man, get up!" Witness then called, "Police!" He saw a cab, and a man seemed to come from behind it. Witness called the driver to stop, but he went on. The man also went on. Witness continued to shout, "Police". He then saw a man rise from a seat close by the end of the dead house. Witness spoke to the man, and then met a constable running towards the body. Police-constable Ess, 49L, deposed to being on duty at Lambeth Palace Church at ten minutes past two o'clock when, in consequence of what a cabman told him, he went to the dead house and there saw the deceased on the pavement. With assistance he took him to the hospital. He heard a police whistle and saw the prisoner running, followed by Police-constable Cheeseman, towards Westminster Bridge. Witness caught the prisoner in Paris Street. Cheeseman said, pointing to prisoner, "He's stabbed a woman on the Embankment", and he made no reply. They then took the prisoner to the station. On the way he struggled to escape, but witness told him if he attempted it he would break his arm. The prisoner said, "I suppose you'll give me a night's lodging". He then went quietly. Margaret Webb, an ironer, stated that on the night of June 28th she was shut out from home, and went to the Albert Embankment and sat on one of the seats. She believed she went to sleep. The seat was near the dead house. Some time afterwards a man came towards her, and she then heard the cry of "Police". Some man with a dark moustache came up and spoke to her. He was dressed very much like the prisoner. Mr Avory : Was it the prisoner? Witness: I am certain it was not the prisoner. The witness added that the man spoke to her. He made certain proposals, which she refused, and he walked away muttering something. She would know the man again who spoke to her. She put a handkerchief over her face, and shortly afterwards felt a thump on the right ear. She sat up, and then saw the prisoner about four steps from her. He was going towards Lambeth Bridge. She then found she was bleeding, and called to Mrs Ford,

“Stop him”. She saw him turn round into the Palace Road, and the witness Ford spoke to the prisoner, and then followed him. Witness was taken to the hospital. The prisoner declined to put any questions, and Mr Biron, at this stage, directed a further remand.

184 September 21 1889

STRIKE CASES AT THE POLICE COURTS **William Daniels**, master stevedore of Barking Road, Essex, was summoned for intimidation at the Thames Police Court on Saturday. **Ernest Jeremy**, superintendent of Messrs Davy and Goulden's Wharf, Bow, stated that on the morning of Thursday, the 5th inst, he received a telegram to provide ten men to work on board a ship at 6s a day wages, and to be kept on board. The same evening he was in Robin Hood Lane, Poplar, taking the men to the ship, when he met Daniels, who said to him, “I'll give you a smack on the nose. You had better get your coffin ready, as my men are going to kill you”. He then went away. The defendant discharged nearly all the vessels and brought petroleum to London. The defendant threatened him because he could not obtain the men witness obtained. By Mr Young : Defendant employed a number of men, and some days his men were on strike. Witness had never asked defendant to part with some of his money. He had done some work for defendant's father, and also for defendant. **William Moss**, master lighterman, said on September 5th he was with prosecutor and the ten men in Robin Hood Lane. Witness did not hear defendant say the words complainant had mentioned. A witness named Hornsey corroborated the evidence of Jeremy. In answer to Mr Young, the witness said Jeremy told defendant if his men came to kill him, his men would kill him. He also said, “I've got something here”, (putting his hand to his mouth). For the defence it was contended that defendant did not intimidate complainant. The strike had effected defendant, and he would be the last man to try and prevent any man from going to his work. Complainant annoyed defendant, who certainly threatened him, but that was not done to prevent him doing his work. Having heard witnesses for the defence, Mr Lushington said he could not doubt defendant had been guilty of intimidation, and he would be bound over in the sum of £10 to keep the peace for six months, and would have to pay two guineas costs.

Five lightermen named **Benjamin Brown**, 42, **Albert Allen**, 26, **John White**, 29, **William White**, 26 and **William Carter**, 38, were also charged on remand with conspiring together to intimidate several persons. **William Moss**, master lighterman at Rowett's Wharf, Bow, said that he had been employed by Messrs Davy and Goulden of that wharf, and employed men to do work he had contracted to do. He had employed all the prisoners. About a month ago, they went on strike, telling him they went out because others had gone out. Between two and three o'clock on Wednesday morning, witness had some barges coming up the River Lea. He was on the towing-path near Three Mill Bridge, and saw one of his men, a man named Buckett, navigating a barge. All the prisoners were there, and witness heard them say they would punch and kick him and throw him overboard. He expected they meant either Buckett or himself. They did not give any reason. Witness was not frightened of intimidation and it would take more than this to frighten him. They often had rows and made it up the next moment. He treated the prisoners to beer after the warrants were served and was friendly with them. He was so now. Witness wanted all of them to return to their work, and did not wish to proceed with this prosecution. By Mr Lushington : Witness heard the strike was ended and that the men were willing to start work on Monday. **Thomas Buckett**, lighterman, said he had been working for Moss, and on Wednesday morning was navigating a barge along the river. All the prisoners were at Bromley Lock, and witness spoke to John White and said, “Good morning”. They walked along the towing-path, but did not follow witness or say anything to him. He heard them speak to Moss, but could not hear what they said. After he moored his barge, witness went home and did not return to work, because the other lightermen were on strike. By the Magistrate : He did not hear them threaten to throw anyone into the cut or to punch anyone. By Mr Waters : Witness was not in fear. The defence was that the accused denied threatening anyone. They were walking along together and talking to each other ; they did not intimidate Buckett in any way. Some words did take place between Moss and the prisoners, but no threat was used. They were willing to go to work, and now offered to work. He (Mr Walters) trusted the magistrate,

taking into consideration what Moss had said, would not punish the prisoners. Moss said they were hard working men, and Mr Davey, one of the firm, said his only object was to have his men protected. He only wished prisoners to be bound over to keep the peace. Mr Lushington said there was evidence that the accused attempted to intimidate Moss and Buckett, but on recommendation of the prosecutor he would order each of the prisoners to find two sureties in £20 each to keep the peace for six months. They would be given a week in which to produce the sureties.

James Fowler, 40, was charged on remand with assaulting his wife **Anne**. Prosecutrix's evidence showed that her husband had been on strike, and on Saturday last he had some money given him from the strike fund. He spent the money in drink, and when witness asked him for some money, he punched her about the face, picked her up and dashed her on the ground. Her head caught the pavement and was severely cut. A constable who saw the assault arrested the prisoner, and took the prosecutrix to the Poplar Hospital, where her head was dressed. A constable stated that accused had previously received fourteen days hard labour for assaulting his wife. Mr Lushington said the accused had been guilty of a savage assault, and he would be sentenced to one month's hard labour. There would also be a judicial separation, and the prisoner would have to allow his wife 12s a week.

Patrick Walsh, 30, dock labourer on strike, was also charged with being drunk, disorderly and using obscene language. Constable 24H Reserve said on Friday evening he saw the accused accost several men as they left the London Dock, and heard him use disgusting language towards them, and heard him say, "What are you going to work in there for, when we're out on strike?" After a lot of trouble some of his companions got him away, he shouting out, "I'm a picket, and won't go away". Some other men left the dock, and Walsh accosted them and used disgusting language towards them. As he would not go away, witness arrested him. Prisoner admitted he was drunk, but denied using bad language. Mr Lushington sentenced him to ten days' hard labour.

Henry Bell, 41, of 123 Forty Acre Lane, Canning Town, was charged on a warrant at the West Ham Police Court on Saturday, with assaulting **James Doyle**, and also with using abusive and threatening language to him, with the idea of intimidating him from working. Mr Willis said he appeared for the prosecution, but as the prisoner had only been arrested that morning, he had been unable to communicate with the prosecutor. Doyle was in the employ of the Anglo-Continental Guano Company at Silvertown, and he alleged that he had been intimidated by the prisoner. He would ask that when the evidence of arrest had been given, a remand should be granted. Police-constable Keogh, 268K, then deposed that he arrested the prisoner at Forty Acre Lane, Canning Town, at half past eight o'clock, and when the warrant was read over to him, and he was told he must go to the station, he remarked, "All right, I'll go ; it was only a drunken row". Prisoner was remanded.

185 September 21 1889

SERIOUS FIRES IN EAST LONDON Two great fires broke out in East London on Sunday. The more disastrous conflagration occurred at Quebec Wharf, Kingsland Road, where at eight minutes past eleven o'clock in the morning, it was found that the premises of the North Metropolitan Tramways Company were in flames. A vast warehouse of great height, running nearly forty yards in one direction and thirty in another, which was used as a granary and general stores, caught fire at the first floor from an unknown cause, and in an extraordinarily short space of time the entire building was a mass of flames. Floor after floor caught fire – great tongues of flame burst out from every window, and at a quarter before noon the granary resembled a gigantic furnace. The first intimation reached the firemen at the Shoreditch Station eight minutes after the outbreak of the fire, the alarm in the Kingsland Road being rung. A manual and a steamer were at once turned out, and when four minutes later the alarm from the Ridley Road point was rung, another manual and steamer were sent on. It was not, however, until twenty six minutes past eleven that a man ran into the station and stated that the Tramway Company's great granary was in flames, and on this news, steamers were sent out from all the eastern district stations. The gravity of the fire was apparent from the first, and in a few minutes the news had been telephoned to the governing authorities at the central station at Southwark, and it was decided to send on engines from every district in the metropolis to render aid. The coal van was kept running between headquarters and the scene of the

fire to supply the steamers, and engine after engine was set to work to throw water on the conflagration. At first two hydrants were set to work, followed by two stand pipes, but it was not long before no fewer than twelve steamers were busily engaged in pumping tons of water on to the flames. At the outset of the fire, George Dewey, a young fellow of 22, was badly burnt on the face, and also received a scalp wound, and he had to be removed to the London Hospital. Some of the adjoining premises were in great danger for some time, and it was not long before the premises of Mr Blythe, a lime and cement merchant, became involved, and began to blaze furiously. A good supply of water was obtained from the canal which ran at the back of the burning buildings, as well as from the street mains, and when some of the long ladders arrived, the firemen were enabled to pour the streams of water into the blazing structure on a level with the different floors. About noon, the flames burst with terrific fierceness through the roof, and at this time the spectacle presented by the fire was a very grand one, and was keenly watched by an enormous crowd. Every part of the great structure was then hopelessly involved, and after the firemen had worked for about another hour, part of the masonry gave signs of falling. The officers of the brigade promptly observed this, and gave orders to provide for the safety of the men, but they were none too soon, for an immense mass of brickwork presently crashed down, and a portion of it falling on a barge which was lying in the canal of the wharf, caused it to sink. The firemen worked very hard till late in the afternoon to subdue the fire, when the backbone of the mischief had been broken. A good many of the engines and men were then enabled to proceed to their respective stations, but it was late in the evening before the fire was finally subdued and the firemen were enabled to leave the scene. Captain Shaw thus records the fire :- "11.8 am, Sunday. Called Quebec Wharf, 315 Kingsland Road, E, to the premises of the North Metropolitan Tramways Company (R L Adamson, manager) ; cause of fire unknown ; contents insured in the North British and Mercantile, building in the Guardian. Damage : A building of four and five floors, about one hundred feet by seventy feet, used as a granary stores, and the contents nearly burnt out, and most part of the roof destroyed and partly fallen down. George Dewey, aged 22 years, burnt on face and wounded on the scalp, and taken to a hospital. 317, ditto, T Blyth, lime and cement merchant, a timber shed, building about thirty feet by eighteen feet (used as lime store), and the contents severely damaged by fire, water and breakage. Kingsland Basin ditto. **Messrs Vokin and Co**, lightermen, barge and the contents damaged by breakage and sunk.

186 October 5 1889

PROSECUTION OF STRIKE HANDS **Benjamin Brown**, 42, a lighterman, surrendered to his recognisances at the Thames Police Court on Saturday, to produce two sureties in £20 each, which he was ordered to find by Mr Lushington to keep the peace for six months. Brown was charged with four other men with intimidation. The prosecutor alleged that the men followed and threatened two lightermen named **Moss** and **Buckett**. The two latter, however, denied that they were intimidated, and said they were not at all afraid of the men. Mr Lushington ordered all five men to find sureties, which they all succeeded in doing, with the exception of Brown. The necessary sureties now being forthcoming, Mr Saunders ordered Brown to be released.

Timothy Driscoll, 32, a brutal looking fellow, was charged with violently assaulting **James Griffin**, a dock worker, by dislocating his arm. Prosecutor said on Saturday morning he was waiting for work outside the London Dock. The prisoner came up, seized him by the throat and called him a "blackleg". Driscoll then tried to choke him, and afterwards seized him by the legs and threw him to the ground with great violence. Driscoll then attempted to kick him. He was seriously injured, and on being conveyed to the hospital it was found his right arm was dislocated. Mr Saunders said the prisoner had been guilty of an outrageous assault, and remanded him for a week.

187 October 12 1889

CHARGES OF INTIMIDATION The other day at the Thames Police Court, **Henry Wettenhall**, 23, was charged on a warrant with assault, intimidation and using threats. Mr Humphreys prosecuted on behalf of the London and India Docks Joint Committee, and Mr H Young defended.

Frederick Hall, labourer at the brandy vaults, London Docks, said that on August 22nd he was at work, and left at about five o'clock with nine others, one of whom was his brother. They were going along Old Gravel Lane and saw eight or nine men standing outside a public house. They came up to witness and his companions, and prisoner said, "You've been to work". Witness replied that he had not, when Wettenhall said, "Show us your hands". He complied, when he punched him twice in the face. Witness's companions, with the exception of his brother, ran away. The other men said, "Give it 'em", and one of them knocked witness's brother down. The police came up, and escorted them to the police station. The following morning, he and his brother were going to work, when they saw prisoner opposite the principal entrance to the dock. Wettenhall said to them, "Oughtn't you be ashamed of yourselves for going to work?" and when he replied, "No", he said, "Take my advice, and don't go". Witness was frightened, and did not go to work again until September 13th. By Prisoner : On September 13th, witness's brother struck the accused. **Cornelius Hall**, brother of the last witness, and in the employ of the Dock Company, also gave evidence. Constable Cole, 418H, said when he arrested prisoner, he said, "Yes, I was there, but I used no violence". In answer to the magistrate, Frederick Hall said the warrant was not applied for until a month after the affair happened. By Mr Young : Witness made a complaint to his superior on August 23rd, but he was spoken to first. Had the matter been left to him, he did not suppose he would have taken out a warrant against prisoner. He did not know the latter had been refused work at the docks. Other evidence having been given, Mr Young, for the defence, said it was very strange that no proceedings were taken for over a month after the alleged offence was committed. Prisoner preferred being tried by a judge and jury, and Mr Kennedy committed him for trial, but admitted him to bail.

Dennis Butler, 31, was charged at the same court with intimidating and using threats towards **George Manning**, a railway pilot. He was further charged with obstructing Manning in the execution of his duty, thereby endangering the lives of railway passengers. Manning said he was a railway pilot at the South West India Dock. On the morning of Friday week he was hauling a barge along the basin to enable him to swing the bridge and permit an approaching train to pass. Prisoner said, "What right have you to haul that barge?" He was raising the barrier to allow the train to pass, when Butler caught hold of him and said, "You blackleg. I'll give you something ; I'll hack your face in", and used bad expressions. He raised his fist in a threatening attitude, and witness caught hold of him and gave him in custody. When prisoner obstructed him, the barrier was in such a position as to prevent the train passing. Mr Humphreys now said that, having considered the facts, he withdrew the graver charge. In answer to Mr Waters, Manning said the prisoner seemed to be sober. Witness was frightened by the accused. For the defence, Mr Waters contended that at the time the prisoner was the worse for drink, and foolishly abused Manning, but not with the intention of intimidating him. Mr Kennedy said it was a very serious case, and the accused would be sentenced to two months' hard labour.

188 October 26 1889

THAMES

A FOOLISH FREAK **Edward Hamblar**, 61, respectably dressed and described as a ship's joiner, was charged with disorderly conduct and being dressed in female attire. Inspector Ferrett, H Division, stated that on Sunday night he saw a crowd of about six hundred persons in Bromley Street, Ratcliffe. He went up and found the prisoner detained by two men. He was dressed in women's attire. He was wearing the hat and veil produced, also a black jacket, print dress, two flannel petticoats and a large dress improver. Witness told Hamblar he should arrest him, and took him to the station. All the people around the prisoner imagined he was "Jack the Ripper" and the excitement was very great in consequence.

Prisoner gave no explanation of his conduct. Prisoner said it was only a freak. Mr Saunders said the prisoner had been guilty of very foolish conduct. He did not make a handsome woman (Laughter). Inspector Ferrett said it got abroad that the prisoner was "Jack the Ripper". Had not witness arrived as he did, the prisoner would probably have been torn to pieces. Mr Saunders



bound the prisoner over in the sum of £10 to keep the peace for six months.

189 **October 26 1889**

THAMES

CHARGE OF ATTEMPTED MURDER

Charles Frost, 42, lighterman of Old Ford Row, Bow,



was charged on remand with attempting to murder **William Self** of 505 Old Ford Road, by pushing him into the River Lea. Prosecutor stated that on the afternoon of Sunday the 6th inst, he was at Rowett's Wharf, Bow, making a barge fast. Prisoner was there, and said, "Who are you having a game with? Will you move the chain?" He refused to do so, when the accused said, "I'll throw you into the cut". Witness told him that was more than he could do, when the accused deliberately pushed him into the Lea. The depth at that spot was seven feet or eight feet. Witness went down twice, when a lad named Cowell jumped in and assisted him ashore. While he was in the water, he heard someone say to the accused, "Aint you going to save him?" and prisoner reply, "No. Let him drown". Witness could not swim. By Mr Waters : Prisoner was on a barge behind witness. His barge was being towed by two boys, while witness was navigating his with an oar. The accused did not ask him to allow him to pass. He had room to pass witness's barge on the outside. Witness was making the barge fast with a chain, and refused to leave go of it. He was not pulled overboard by that. Witness's brother saw the occurrence, but was not in court that day as he was afraid to attend. Mr Saunders remanded the accused.

190 November 9 1889

The Lightermen of London are on the verge of another strike, which may be productive of great public inconvenience. On this occasion, as it seems to us, the men are decidedly in the wrong. Having agreed with their employers to submit the dispute to arbitration, they accepted Lord Brassey as umpire, and about the meaning of his award there can be no possible doubt. The question at issue concerns night work only. The contention of the workmen is that one "job" shall count as a night's work, and that if a second is required of them, it shall be reckoned as another night's work. Lord Brassey decided that for work done between the hours of 8 and 12 pm, the payment should be four shillings, and that for a whole night's work, viz from 8 pm to 6 am, the wages should be six shillings. His award ensures the men four shillings a night at the least. They are never to have less than that ; and if they work after 12 o'clock, they must have two shillings more. But now comes the curious part of the dispute. The men appear to be willing to accept this arrangement as long as it relates to what they call one job ; that is to say, they are willing to continue at the same piece of work from 8 to 6 for the amount named – six shillings for the whole ten hours. But if they finish one job, say at 12 o'clock, and are then put to another to complete the night's work, they require four shillings for the first job and six for the second, making ten shillings altogether instead of six, although they may be working exactly the same number of hours. It might happen, indeed, that the two jobs together took them less time than one, and then they would be receiving ten shillings for a smaller amount of work than they are now willing to do for six. We fail to see on what principle of justice or common sense such a demand can be sustained. It seems preposterous. And we only hope that the Wade Arms Committee, who represent the men, and with whom the ultimate decision rests, will take a rational view of the question. It is one that ought easily to be settled without the violent remedy of a strike. The point in dispute is, after all, not a very big one, and is surely capable of amicable adjustment, if no extraneous influences are brought to bear upon the workmen.

191 November 9 1889

The "Teignmouth" allowance case came up for decision at the Petty Sessions on Monday. Considerable interest has been manifested in the case from the fact that it interests the masters and owners of vessels entering the River Teign as to whether it is legal to allow the bargemen beer as a gratuity when loading the vessels with clay. In the present case, **Captain John Whitear** of the schooner *John* was summoned by Miss C E Terry, the President of the Church of England Temperance Society (local branch) for paying wages in a public house, and for giving beer, which was considered part payment, in contravention of the Truck Act. The magistrates decided, after having counsel's opinion, to dismiss the case, and gave the plaintiff right to carry it to a higher court.

192 November 23 1889

TERRIBLE TRAGEDY AT NEWPORT On Saturday morning, a double tragedy took place at Newport (Mon), a boatman named **Jacob Manship**, 65, in the employ of a firm of ship repairers, shooting his wife Margaret dead and then cutting his own throat. The wife was found in a pool of blood in the bedroom, and the bullet had entered her neck on the right side. The husband appears to have gone downstairs and cut his throat with a razor. He then went into the garden and called a neighbour named Davies, but the daughter was afraid to go out to him, as he had been in the house three or four times on the day previous, and seemed to be strange in his manner. A milkman named Giles went to the house on his morning rounds, and raised an alarm. The wife was found lying on the floor of the bedroom in her nightdress, quite dead. The husband was removed on an ambulance carriage to the infirmary, where he died in the course of the afternoon. Jealousy is the alleged motive of the crime. The murdered woman is described as a quiet hard working person, and the husband as superior to his calling, but of a brooding disposition and hot tempered. The only high words the next door neighbours have heard during the twelve months the couple have lived there was about a month since, when the husband accused the wife of being unduly familiar with a lodger named Davies. His suspicions were aroused from seeing the lodger come out of his wife's bedroom. The wife denied the accusation, and said for the sake of peace the lodger had better leave. The husband, however, was led to believe that the lodger afterwards paid stolen visits to the wife, and he threatened if he found him in the house that he would shoot him. The double-barrelled gun found in the bedroom was used by Manship to shoot sea birds. He had lately taken it and another fowling piece to his father-in-law's house at Cwmbran, a village six miles distant, to dispose of them in a raffle, but fetched them both back a day or two before the tragic affair. During the time he was in the infirmary, he told one of the nurses that he was sorry for what he had done ; and when the neighbours ran into the house and asked him where his wife was, he said she was dead upstairs and that he had shot her. One of the married sisters of the deceased woman came to Newport from Cwmbran to do some shopping and see her sister, and arrived at the house to find a crowd round it, and the sister the first victim in what proved to be a double tragedy.

193 November 30 1889

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT **Charles Frost**, bargeman, who was indicted for assaulting and beating **William Self** with intent to murder him, and who pleaded guilty on Wednesday to a common assault, came up for judgement. The prisoner was ordered to pay a fine of £10, or be imprisoned for six weeks.

194 December 7 1889

THE FATAL COLLISION ON THE THAMES On Friday night Mr Wynne E Baxter resumed an inquiry at the Poplar Town Hall into the circumstances attending the death of **Thomas David Neal**, aged 35, lately living at 14 York Square, Ratcliffe, who is alleged to have been drowned in the Thames through his barge *Albert* being run down by the SS *Curlew* on Friday October 25th. William Parsouson, a pilot, deposed that he was in charge of the *Curlew* on the morning in question. The steamer was bound for Antwerp with a full cargo. Leaving Union Pier at a quarter to one, they proceeded slowly down the river, at no time going more than three miles an hour. When off Milwall, they struck an empty barge, but did no damage to it, though a hole was knocked in the steamer's plates. He denied that his was the vessel which collided with the *Albert*. Cross-examined by Mr Brydon, he admitted within a minute of striking the empty barge they heard cries for assistance, and on lowering a boat, were just in time to see the man Phillips taken out of the water by two watermen. **Mr William Hammond Bittlestone**, marine surveyor to the General Steam Navigation Company, deposed that he had examined the *Curlew*, and found a hole six inches by four inches in her head plates. She had no other injuries, and judging by that he did not believe the vessel could have been in such a severe collision as the one which caused the damage to the barge. By Mr Balham : The plates of the *Curlew* were only three eighths of an inch thick. A Juror : Then she's not fit to go to sea. Witness said she had passed Lloyd's survey. W S Thornton, chief mate of

the *Curlew*, said that on the night of the collision he was on the look out on the fore-castle, and when passing Deptford Cattle Market, he saw a barge half a ship's length ahead of them. He called out to the pilot, but at that very moment the barge ran into them. It appeared to be an empty barge, and witness shouted to the lighterman to hold fast, but the shock caused him to fall. So far as he could see, the barge was not injured. The captain ordered witness and two men to row after the barge and get its name. On their way, they were told that one man was drowned but, not knowing what this meant, he asked, and was informed that a barge had been sunk and two men knocked overboard. He did not find the barge they struck, and he was told that she had sunk. He was very much surprised to hear it, as the force with which they ran into it was not enough to do much damage. The jury, after a long consultation, returned a verdict of accidental death, adding a rider that the barge was run down by the *SS Curlew*, and that the pilot was deserving of severe censure ; and also expressing their opinion that the steamer was going faster than was safe for the general safety of barges and similar craft.

195 December 13 1889

WESTMINSTER Annie Smith, a girl of 18, wife of a young lighterman, and who seemed very weak and ill as, wrapped in a heavy shawl, she took a seat in the dock, was charged on remand, before Mr D'Eyncourt, with stealing bed linen and underclothing, value 30s, the property of her mother, **Agnis Timson**, Yeoman's Road, Brompton. It was stated last week that the accused, who occupies a room in the same house as her mother, was very near her confinement, and consequently, by direction of the magistrate, every consideration was shown her. She took the articles from her mother's room and pawned them, and it now appeared from the statement of the prosecutrix, that she might have done so at the request of her husband (the girl's father), who certainly had some of the money and spent it. Mr D'Eyncourt : What did you give your daughter in custody for? Did you disapprove of her marriage? Witness : No. Her husband is a most respectable, hard working young man. I don't wish to do the girl any harm. Be merciful to her, sir, and give her a caution. Mr D'Eyncourt : If I deal with it, I must do her harm in one sense. I must send her to the House of Correction. At this juncture the poor girl shrieked and fell senseless in the dock. The mother rushed from the witness box, and the painful impression in court was heightened when, greatly agitated, she assisted the gaoler and others to carry her child out of court. After a considerable interval, accused recovered from the swoon, and was led into court. Her mother then expressed regret that she had embarked on the prosecution, and said that her daughter was very ill, and she had to bring her to the court that morning in a cab. Mr D'Eyncourt said he would accept the girl's husband's bail to produce her if called upon after her confinement, and addressing the prosecutrix, he added, "If you desire to go on with it after that, you will have to bring her here".

196 December 21 1889

FATALITIES IN THE FOG On Monday afternoon, Mr Wynne E Baxter held an inquiry at the Poplar Town Hall into the circumstances attending the death of **John Colley**, aged 25, a dock labourer lately living at Stewart's Terrace, Cubitt Town, Poplar, who was drowned in the Millwall Dock during the fog on Friday night. The deceased was employed by Mr B McAndrew at the Millwall Dock, unloading the Spanish boats. About eight o'clock on Friday night, Superintendent Webster heard a splash, but the fog was so dense he was unable to ascertain what it was. All hands were turned out with lamps, and the deceased's body was found floating in the water. He had been sent by the foreman to the lamp room, and is supposed to have missed his way in the fog in returning and stumbled into the dock. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

Mr Baxter held another inquest at the same place on the body of James Ansell, aged 33, a stove fitter late in the employ of Messrs Donald Currie's, East India Dock, and living in Spey Street, Bromley. Henry Smith, a plumber in the same employ, deposed that on Friday evening he, with others, was passing along the quay when they heard cries. It was very foggy, so they groped to the wall, and then crawled on their hands and knees to the edge of the dock and threw a lifebuoy and rope over the side. They hauled up a man named Butcher, who said that his mate Ansell was still in

the water. The life line was lowered again, but Ansell was not rescued. Butcher, who was much exhausted, was conveyed to the hospital, where he is still detained as an in patient. He said that they were walking towards the gates, but the fog was so dense that they lost their way and walked straight into the dock. Inspector West of the dock police deposed that he was informed of the accident, but owing to the danger of moving about in the fog, the drags were not used until the following morning. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

A third inquiry was held by the same coroner on the body of **James Dyckhopf**, aged 44, a lighterman lately living in Blair Street, Bromley, who was drowned in the River Thames on Friday last. **William Hall**, a lighterman, deposed that on Friday evening at 8.30, he was off Blackwall. He spoke to the deceased, who was in his barge, but could not see him owing to the fog. A minute later, witness heard him cry, "Bill, Bill, I am overboard – help!" But, though witness strained his eyes to try and see him, he could not do so. The body was recovered on Saturday morning. In this case also, a verdict of accidental death was returned.

Three deaths from drowning were reported to the district coroner on Monday morning, each having occurred during the dense fog which prevailed over all East London on Friday. One child walked into Duckett's canal at Bow, when returning home, and the bodies of two other persons were recovered from the Regent's Canal.

Three drowning fatalities occurred in the vicinity of Hanley, on the North Staffordshire Canal, during a dense fog on Saturday night. In the first case, **Margaret Theobald**, aged 27, the wife of a boatman, had gone to open some lock gates to allow her husband and a horse to pass through, when she fell into the water. The horse also fell into the canal at the same time, and the screams from the poor woman for help were drowned by the clamour consequent upon the rescue of the animal. It was unknown that Mrs Theobald was in the water until some time after, when her body was recovered. Within a few yards of the same spot, and almost at the same time, a married woman named Scott, aged 40, fell into the water and was drowned, whilst on her way home. In the third case, a lad named Tomkinson, whilst selling newspapers, walked into the canal near Hanley and was also drowned. The fog which overhung the Potteries at the time of these calamities was very dense, and traffic was almost entirely suspended.

197 December 28 1889

WESTMINSTER Samuel Wells, 15, an errand boy living at Fulham, was charged with being concerned with about twenty other boys in stealing eighteen sugar bags from a barge on the Thames, and about nine hundredweight of coals in transit on the London and North Western Railway. The boys in the first place, as appeared by the evidence, stole the sugar bags from the hold of a barge at Chelsea Creek, and then getting onto the railway company's depot close by, knocked off nearly half a ton of coals from the trucks. Some were engaged in this occupation and others were filling the bags, when the company's detectives tried to surround them, but they escaped in all directions. One police officer in the chase accidentally pitched head first into the river, and the prisoner would not have been captured had he not rushed up to his waist in a hole on the foreshore full of water. The boy was remanded for inquiries, and to see if some of the other offenders could be arrested.