

LEICESTER CHRONICLE 1880 to 1899

1 January 24 1880

LOUGHBOROUGH

A BOATMAN'S WIFE DROWNED An inquest was held on Saturday at Long Eaton, on the body of **Sarah Amelia Wakeling**, aged 47, wife of **John Wakeling** of Loughborough. The husband, a boatman, stated that on Friday he started from Mountsorrel about six o'clock. The boat was empty, and they (witness and his wife) were making for Shipley. When near Zouch Mills, deceased, who was steering, slipped and fell into the water. Hearing the splash, he hurried to his wife's assistance. Her clothes were taken off, and whiskey administered and blankets supplied. At Kegworth, deceased seemed better, and the doctor said they might take her away in the boat. Deceased afterwards became worse, and died about six o'clock, whilst on the river Trent. Deceased was 47 years of age, and had been married 25 years. The jury returned a verdict that deceased was "Accidentally drowned".

2 July 10 1880

SUPPOSED MURDER The Shropshire Union Canal boat *Eyton*, from Nantwich for Chester, arrived at Bunbury locks on Friday, when **William Ruscoe**, the master of the boat, asked **Cadman**, the lock-keeper, to bring a light, as he believed a boatman named **Richard Price** was dead. Cadman brought a light, and on going into the cabin, found Price dead. The cabin floor was covered with blood, and there was a large fracture on the man's skull. Constable Lathom found under the cabin floor a hammer which had some hair upon it, and also some blood stains. There had been a drinking bout among the boatmen at Nantwich. The inquest was opened on Saturday.

3 July 31 1880

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, WEDNESDAY

THURMASTON **Samuel Phipkin**, a boatman, was summoned for committing an assault upon John Cook, engineer, and Samuel Faulkner, hatter, Thurmaston, on the 10th inst. Cook stated that he, in company with Faulkner and a young woman, hired a boat on the 10th inst, and sailed on the canal from Thurmaston to Sileby ; and, after returning, and reached a place called Cherry Holmes, they saw two light narrow barges coming towards them. Consequently, they (complainants) rowed to the side amongst the rushes, thus leaving plenty of room for the defendant to pass, but he, however, ran one of his boats in the side of the boat in which were the pleasure party, who tried to ward off the approaching boat. Defendant afterwards took hold of the string attached to the pleasure party's boat, and handed it to his mate, who then began to drag the boat 100 yards down the river, while defendant rocked the boat until water began to enter it. The defendants afterwards assaulted them by knocking them down and falling against the young lady. Faulkner corroborated. The two complainants in this case were also summoned by the defendant Phipkin for assaulting him on the same occasion, and he stated that the two defendants began first to assault him, and one of them hit him with one of the oars. The case against Cook and Faulkner was dismissed, and the defendant Phipkin was fined 10s and costs for each offence against each of the two young men.

4 July 31 1880

A brutal ruffian named **William Jones**, a boatman, was charged at Liverpool on Monday, with throwing a boy, seven years of age, into the canal. Happily, the canal was not deep at the spot, and the little fellow managed to scramble out without assistance. The only excuse which the prisoner could offer was that the child struck his horse. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

5 August 21 1880

ALLEGED CHILD MURDER A case of alleged child murder was preferred on Wednesday against a woman named Elizabeth Wright at Stockton. A boatman named **Drayton** saw prisoner wandering by the river side on the previous night with her child in her arms, and spoke to her. In a

short time she returned, showing him her dead child, and saying that she and the child had been thrown into the river by two men, and that it had been drowned. Her clothing and that of the child were wet. The police discredited the story. The woman was remanded on a charge of murder.

6 September 4 1880

MR GEO SMITH AND THE CANAL ACT Mr George Smith of Coalville has sent the following letter on this subject to the papers :- It is grievous to think that in consequence of insufficient and defective inspection, an Act, the object of which is to secure the education and elevation of some 60,000 women and children living in canal boats, should become in many places little better than a dead letter ; in fact, the boatmen are making quiet fun of the sleepy, hoodwinking vigilance of many of the inspectors appointed by the local authorities to carry it out. In some districts, where the local authorities are not looking at the Act from a pound, shilling and pence point of view, it is doing wonders. On a visit to one of the Midland registration districts a few weeks since, I found the local inspector doing his work well ; but outside his city boundaries, and within a radius of six miles, twenty five or thirty boats could be seen any day unregistered and uninspected. Consequently, overcrowding of both sexes and all ages continues as in the past. The sooner the registration fee (5s) becomes an annual payment ; the inspection carried out upon the lines I have laid down ; the school inspector allowed to enter the boats, and the children educated by means of a pass book on a plan I propose to meet the case of the gipsy children, the better it will be for us ; unless it is that we have become so callous to the cries of the poor boat children that we shall feel a pleasure in beholding the Canal Boats Act drifting into a state little better than a farce, which has been the case in some localities for a long time.

7 September 18 1880

ATTEMPTING TO DROWN A GIRL On Monday, at Huddersfield Police Court, a boatman named **Hellawell** was charged with attempting to drown a girl named Ellen Harney, millhand. On Friday night, Harney and a married woman named Hirst, who does not live with her husband, met Hellawell. He asked them (as he knew Hirst) to go with him to a boat lying at Apsley, where they could have plenty to drink. On reaching the basin, Hellawell told Harney to go back, and as she said she would not go, the prisoner pushed her into the canal. When she came to the surface she tried to scream, but had her mouth full of water, and she sank again. When she came up again, her friend called to her, and told the prisoner that if he did not help to get her out, she would cry out murder and “swear her life against his”. When the girl came up the second time, he put his hand on her head and pushed her back into the water, but ultimately he caught hold of her, and Hirst dragged her to the side. The prisoner then ran away. Constable Casson apprehended him next morning, and in reply to the charge, the prisoner said, “I did not push her into the water ; I was not within twenty yards of her when she fell in”. The Bench committed prisoner for trial at the Assizes.

8 October 16 1880

MR GEO SMITH ON THE INSPECTION OF CANAL BOATS

HOW THE ACT IS WORKED IN LEICESTERSHIRE Mr George Smith of Coalville read a paper on this subject at the Social Science Congress on Friday. After stating the object of the Act, the author remarked :- In 1878, regulations were issued by the Local Government Board to the various registration authorities. But it was manifest to the most careless observer that it was the deliberate intention of most, if not all, the authorities to allow the Act to become a dead letter. This I found to be the case during my five days' journey from Rugby to London, in the midst of a deep snow and severe frost, on January 1 1879, the day the Act came into force. I did see one boat registered and numbered as the law directs. In time some registration authorities, more loyal and human than the rest, took steps to bring about the simple form of registration. After two years' agitation, the boats may be said to have been registered, but in a slipshod manner, scarcely worthy of the name “registered”. Probably the small registration fee of five shillings may have had something to do with such results. Two of the more vital and important features – viz, the herding together in the

cabins of men, women and children of all ages and size, and the education of the children, are to an alarming extent totally disregarded. At Birmingham, I saw canal boats in a filthy condition, and only two small boat children at school, which was built purposely for the boating folks by a lady well known in Birmingham, while there were numbers of boat lads playing on the wharf. At a colliery in Derbyshire, where there are nearly thirty families of boaters lying at the wharf, only one family sent their children to either day or Sunday School. At Oakthorpe Colliery, I found overcrowding as bad, if not worse, than it was before the Act. The manager told me there were living in one cabin "either nine or eleven of both sexes, and of all ages and sizes", and poor, dirty, sickly creatures they looked. This boat, and others similar, bore the registration mark. I found, on visiting Leicester, a boat bearing the Leicester registration mark, and which boat was worked between Leicester and Runcorn. Upon this boat, there were man, wife, and six children, some grown up. This boat passed through several registration districts on its way. The cabin accommodation in this case, as in the other I have mentioned, was only sufficient for three men, or man and wife and two small children. At Derby, a boatman said a local inspector had not set his foot on his boat outside Derby, or made any inquiries as to the number sleeping on board. Within the month, I have spent a week in a canal boat travelling between London and Leicester. During the night, I slept amongst bones, paraffin, leather, hempseed, rice, oil and sugar. On my journey, I saw hundreds of boats, upon which there could be close upon 2,000 children of school age, not attending school, but who would have been if the Act had been carried out. On one boat I visited, there slept in one cabin four men, one woman and four children. The woman told me that the poor little sickly children had been down of the fever. They looked more fit for a coffin than to be living in a canal boat cabin. Two boatmen I knew, and who worked with coal boats between the Leicestershire coal fields and Boxmoor, have died of fever in the boats during the year. I have given these cases to show how the Act is being carried out; of course there are some honourable exceptions all over the country. Many of the regulations are good so far as they go, but greater attention has been paid to the regulation dealing with shelves, cupboards, lockers, &c, and too little to the education of the children, overcrowding in the cabins, and the proper enforcement of the Act. Mr Smith then proceeded to repeat the valuable suggestions he has made in his work on "Our Canal Population".

9 May 21 1881

THE CANAL BOAT CHILDREN Next week, Mr Broadhurst will introduce a Bill called the Canal Boats Amendment Act, and promoted by Mr George Smith of Coalville, which contains the following useful provisions :- 1. The Local Government Board to have power to appoint inspectors for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Act. 2. The education of the canal boat children to be under the control of the Local Government Board, and brought about by means of a free passbook. Owing to the migratory habits of the boatmen, this arrangement will prevent much inconvenience. 3. No child to work on a canal boat or in relation thereto under the age of thirteen, unless such child shall have passed the third standard of the Education Code. 4. No child or young person under the age of eighteen to work on a canal boat on any Sunday. 5. All boats, barges, flats, &c, upon which there is accommodation for sleeping and cooking, to be deemed canal boats for the purpose of this Act. 6. All fees for registration to be paid annually, and the Local Government Board to have power to deal with them as they may think meet. 7. Power to be given to the inspectors to enter a canal boat at any reasonable hour.

10 June 11 1881

TWO FATAL FIGHTS On Monday at Preston, **George Bateman**, 22, and **John Isherwood**, 28, were charged with causing the death of **Henry Kellett**. The prisoners, deceased, and other canal boatmen were on Saturday afternoon drinking in the Jolly Tars Inn, when deceased said to Isherwood that he had once thrashed him, but that he (Kellett) would now fight him. He kicked Isherwood, who knocked him on a form. Deceased then squared up, and Bateman again knocking him down, Kellett's skull was fractured, and he died. The prisoners were remanded. On Sunday afternoon, a fatal fight took place at Aston, between two men named Samuel Johnson

Milder, 26 years of age, of Macdonald Street, and Charles Stanley of Brass Street. The men, with some companions, had been out for a country walk, and on passing through Birchfield called at a public house near the Chain Walk. About two o'clock, they began to quarrel, and went out into the street to fight. In the third round, Stanley struck Milder two severe blows in the region of the heart, and rendered him insensible. Before medical assistance could be procured, the man was dead. The body was removed to a neighbouring public house.

11 September 17 1881

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

ALLEGED THEFT **Thomas Johnson** was charged with stealing a duck belonging to Mary Ann Orton, value 3s, at Barrow on the 31st August. Prosecutrix wished to withdraw the case, because since laying the information, she had ascertained that the prisoner, who was a boatman, was told that the duck was floating dead in the river, and that he thereupon took it. A man named Brambley said he saw the duck in the river and told defendant of it. Defendant then went towards it. On this statement the Bench thought a felony could not be proved, and permitted the case to be withdrawn.

12 November 19 1881

A WOMAN FOUND DROWNED On Thursday morning, a young woman named Jane Cave, residing at 17 Dannett Street, who had been missing from her home since the 30th of October, was found in the Swan Mills canal locks. A boatman who was passing through the locks noticed something on the surface of the water. He called **Mr Noakes**, the lock-keeper, who discovered that it was the body of a woman. He got the body out, and with the assistance of PC Cusack and PC Major, it was removed to the Newarke Tavern. An inquest was held at the Newarke Tavern, Mill Lane, on Thursday night, when the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

13 December 17 1881

THE EDUCATION OF CANAL AND GIPSY CHILDREN

To the Editor – Sir – With the passing of Mr Forster's Education Act of 1870, and the amendments onward to 1880, it has generally been supposed that the education of all classes of children of the labouring population has been secured. In many respects this is no doubt true, but at the same time it is a farce and a fallacy to suppose that all classes of children in England are partaking of the educational advantages provided for them. Especially is this the case of the 70,000 canal and gipsy children of school age, growing up in ignorance in our midst, whose cause I am humbly trying to help forward. When the Canal Boats Act was passed, bringing the children living in the canal boats under the school authorities at which place the boats are registered as belonging, it was thought there was sufficient power in the sixth clause, together with the philanthropy and loyalty in the various local authorities for carrying out the Act, to meet the case of children living in boats. Practice has shown this supposition to be a fallacy also. In the grandmotherly bygone days of education, the pass book system I am recommending for the canal and gipsy children would have been difficult to carry out. It would not be so now. The present system of education is carried out upon the "standard" plan. For instance, a boat child in the II Standard would, on presenting his pass book, not be far out of his place in the II Standard in any school. To illustrate this point more clearly, I will suppose that a canal boat is staying at Leicester – maybe loading and unloading, or from other causes – what the boat child would have to do would be to present himself, with his pass book, at the nearest day school, and the schoolmaster would at once see what standard the child was in, to which standard he would send Jim or Polly without the trouble of examination at any time. When the boat had to leave the wharf, or the show or van had to leave the town or village, the children would ask the schoolmaster to sign the pass book showing the number of attendances they had made ; and so in like manner would it be all over the country. Of course it would be some extra trouble to the schoolmaster, for which trouble he should receive extra pay from the Government, according to the number of attendances the canal or gipsy children had made during the quarter. The education received by the pass book system would not be the best in the world, but it would be

a thousand times better than no education at all. The children would mix with other children, and the class feeling existing among them would become gradually less. The universal adoption of my system of free pass books for the canal and gipsy children would bring about surprising results in a very short time. To sum up the whole thing, there seems to be only two ways of dealing with the education of children living in boats. One is by passing the amended Bill and the adoption of my system of free pass books, and the proper carrying out of the Act under Government supervision and control. The other is the prohibition of the women and children living and working in canal boats ; which in either cases are not any violation of principles adopted by previous legislation. Of course the shortest, sharpest and most effectual way of dealing with the whole question would be to prohibit the women and children living in the boats. The most roundabout and not perhaps the most effectual way would be to pass the amended Bill. All things considered, it would be preferable, I think, to pass the amended Bill, so as not to press too heavily upon these boatmen and boatwomen, who prefer suffocation, filth and ignorance to a civilising life and heaven. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE SMITH (of Coalville)

Welton, Daventry, December 14 1881

14 December 17 1881

On Monday morning, at Burnley, Richard Heap, an operative, was charged with causing the death of his father, **Kemp Heap**, a boatman aged 53 years. The two were drinking together on Saturday afternoon, and returning home, had a quarrel on arriving at the house. The prisoner threw his father down and kicked him severely in the chest with his clogs, from the effects of which the father died on Sunday night.

15 December 24 1881

RECENT PUBLICATIONS Mr George Smith, in his "Canal Adventures by Moonlight", just published by Messrs Hodder and Stoughton, sheds additional light upon the life and characteristics of at least one large class of our floating population. Nor does the author content himself with mere hearsay upon this subject. Day after day and week after week has he practically become "one of them". During his "Six Days in a Monkey Boat", as well as upon innumerable other occasions, has he journeyed with our canal boat people upon his self imposed mission, shared in all their joys and sorrows, and left no effort unexerted that might enable him to ameliorate their condition, and secure for their children that which has been placed within the reach of all the other sections of the rising generation – the immense and permanent advantage of an elementary education. Of course Mr Smith makes no pretension to literary polish in the narrative of his adventures. But his plain and homely style only adds to the vividness and life like reality of the picture he presents. Mr Smith devotes his third and last chapter to a detailed history of the Canal Boats Act, and in an appendix he reprints a variety of notes and comments by the Press on the subject. Probably the most important feature of the work is the evidence it furnishes with reference to the operation of the Act. In too many instances, owing to the supineness of the local authorities, the measure seems to be practically a dead letter, and boatmen and their families are today precisely as if no such Bill had ever reached the Statute Book. Clearly, some well considered and adequate amendment is necessary, unless the children of our canal population, of all others, are alone to be permitted to grow up as victims of ignorance, to fall an easy prey to those temptations that lead to the workhouse or the prison.

16 February 25 1882

UNREGISTERED CANAL BOAT At Birmingham Police Court on Friday, **Louisa Bradshaw** of Loughborough, owner, and **Henry James** of the same place, boatman, were summoned for using a boat, the same not being duly registered. Dismissed on payment of costs.

17 March 25 1882

A BOATMAN ACCIDENTALLY DROWNED On Tuesday morning, Mr Henry Deane held an

inquiry at the Ram Inn, Loughborough, into the circumstances attending the death of a man named **Matthew Jefferies**, a boatman aged 58. Mr Arthur Eddowes, surgeon, said on Sunday morning he was called to see the body of the deceased. It was lying in a shed at the Ram Inn. Life was quite extinct. It bore no marks of violence. From its appearance, he was satisfied that death was the result of drowning. **Charles Dale**, boatman of Cheshire, said he and deceased had come from there with a boat load of salt for **Mrs Bradshaw**. He last saw Jefferies alive about half past six o'clock on Saturday night. The boat then laid in the canal basin at Loughborough. Witness left the boat, and did not return until between half past ten and eleven. On Sunday morning, he saw the deceased's body taken out of the water about three or four yards from the boat. He was dressed as witness saw him last. Thomas Harrison, living at Mrs Bradshaw's wharf, said on Sunday morning he asked the last witness how it was he had not started back with the boat. He answered that he had lost his mate. Witness directly afterwards perceived the body in the water. A policeman was fetched, and the body was fetched. On this evidence, the jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

18 June 3 1882

THE CANAL BOATS ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL

To the Editor

Sir – Friends of the poor, neglected, ignorant and cruelly treated boat women and children will be grieved to hear that there is not much chance of this simple little bill becoming law this session. In high quarters, outside and inside Government circles, I am told that the recent changes of a more sad and mournful character have materially helped to put a stumbling block in the way of canal legislation this year. Surely an amending Bill, which could be carried out without any inconvenience to boatmen and boat owners worth mention, and cost to the country not one penny, having for its object the education and welfare of 60,000 canal women and children, is worthy of better fate than "shelving" while Bills of not a thousandth part of the value as regards the country's welfare, even in these days of legislative strain, are passed into law. The Bill has been read the first time – and there it sticks – by Earl Stanhope, and will be supported – if it gets any further – by Earl Shaftesbury, Earl Aberdare, the Marquis of Tweeddale, and many others ; and in the Commons it will be introduced by Mr Burt, and supported by Mr S Morley, Mr John Corbett, Mr Pell, Mr Broadhurst, Mr McLiver and Mr Walter, and members of the late Government, and many others ; in fact, I do not see how anyone can oppose it, as it brings the canal children under the established laws of the country. If this Bill is to be opposed, I say then do away with our factory, educational and sanitary laws at once and for ever. If these laws are good, then most surely the canal children ought to be under them ; if they are bad, millions of children are living and working under gross injustice. It cannot be that opposition will come from canal and boat proprietors, many of whom are in favour of the Bill because the canal legislation that has taken place has had an upward tendency, both as regards the value of canal shares and the amount of traffic upon canals. Between 30,000 and 40,000 canal children are going without education today, and not 2,000 of these numbers will be found attending Sunday schools. In a large town in Cheshire, the authorities are building an infectious hospital, purposely to receive fever and smallpox patients travelling by and living in canal boats. In a boat cabin passing through Crick locks, a few days since, I counted two men, one woman and four children – two of school age. There would be about thirty cubic feet of space for each to live and sleep in. This boat was registered at Leicester. In passing by Braunston a week or two ago, I counted in a boat cabin, registered at Warwick, two men, two young women and a strong youth. There would be about 45 cubic feet of space for each to live and sleep in. The only bed in a narrow boat cabin is about 2 ft 11 in by 5 ft 9 in. These facts are given to show what is going on all over the country in face of an Act passed in 1877 to bring about the education of canal children, and to prevent overcrowding in the cabins. I am, your obedient servant,

GEORGE SMITH of Coalville

Top House, Welton, Daventry, May 30

19 August 19 1882

THE CANAL BOATS ACT At a large public meeting held at Weedon on Wednesday evening, Mr George Smith of Coalville referred to the causes of the failure of the Canal Boats Act of 1877 in some of its main provisions, and the remedy he proposed in his Amending Bill, which has been laid before Parliament. The Bill, he said, would have been passed long ago, and even during the present session, had it not been for the opposition he is contending against from a few canal and boat owners. He said his Bill would secure the education of 40,000 canal children of school age, and he added that it would not cost the country one farthing to carry it out, and it would not cost the boat owners and boatmen more than 2s 6d each per annum, the registration fee charged. When the Act of 1877 is amended, Mr Smith wants the principle of the Act extended to all gipsy vans and shows, and the children living in them brought under the schoolmaster and their abodes under the sanitary officers.

20 September 9 1882

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

ALLEGED ASSAULT **Henry Simmons**, boatman, was charged with assaulting **Joseph Smith**, another boatman, at Loughborough on the 4th inst. Mr H Deane prosecuted, and Mr R S Clifford defended. Complainant is engaged by Mr Heafford, coal merchant of Loughborough, and defendant by Mr Allcock. There appears to have been some difference between them as to the loading of their boats. On Friday, it was alleged, defendant threatened complainant at the wharf, and on Monday at the same place struck him, knocked him down and jumped upon his face while on the ground, at the same time using foul and menacing language. Complainant took out a warrant, and defendant was arrested by PC Ward at his employer's (Mr Allcock's) office. Ward heard Mr Allcock ask the defendant if the complainant struck him at all, and defendant stated that he did not. On the other hand, the defendant's case was that the complainant first used offensive names to him, and then picked up a cudgel to strike the defendant with. Defendant closed with him, and they fell together, complainant's head coming into contact with a coal stack. This statement was made by a witness named Francis Kilburn, and was corroborated in its substantial points by Walter Cunningham. Case dismissed.

21 September 9 1882

TOWN HALL, WEDNESDAY

CRUELTY **Charles Woodhouse**, a boatman, was summoned for ill-treating a horse by working it while suffering from wounds on the shoulder, on the 25th August. Inspector Fair prosecuted, and PC Major and PC Vendyback gave evidence substantiating the charge. Defendant said he had been working on the river 30 years, and never before had a horse with a blemish. He had worked this horse only six hours, having hired it of a farmer who had since turned it out. Defendant was fined 10s and costs, or seven days.

22 September 9 1882

THE FINDING OF A BODY IN THE CANAL Mr G F Harrison, coroner, held an inquest on Saturday afternoon at the Old Plough Inn, Birstall, on the body of a woman unknown, which was found in the canal near Birstall on Friday afternoon. Before taking the evidence, the Coroner referred to the mysterious occurrence in the Abbey Meadow, some light on which it was hoped would be thrown by the discovery of this body. That, however, had turned out not to be the case. He had directed Dr Emms to make a specially careful examination of the body, and the result was that he found no trace of anything suspicious, and nothing to lead him to believe that there had been foul play in connection with the death of the woman. The jury might therefore dismiss from their minds anything which had come to their knowledge with reference to the occurrence to which he had alluded, and return their verdict simply on the evidence which would be adduced. PC Burton of Birstall gave evidence of the finding of the body, which was first seen by a boatman named **George Griffin**, who stated that on Wednesday evening he saw a corpse in the water within ten yards of the

place, where it again came under his view on Friday. It was between Birstal Weir and Belgrave Bridges. The body had not been identified. Mr A W Emms, surgeon, Belgrave, said that he saw the body about half past three on Friday afternoon. The woman was about 45 years of age, 5 feet 6 inches high, stout, with black curly hair, a florid complexion, and full round features, and had on a black dress with straw hat, the trimming of which consisted of a black feather, with crape round the edge and small leaves. She had on also a black cloth jacket with four buttons, and two odd old elastic side boots. She had been in the water four or five days. There were no marks of violence upon her person, and he had no doubt death was caused by suffocation by drowning. He could not say whether it was a case of suicide or accidental death, but there was nothing to lead him to suspect that the death was caused by any other means than the deceased's own act if the death was not accidental. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

23 September 30 1882

MR GEO SMITH OF COALVILLE AT THE SOCIAL SCIENCE CONGRESS On Tuesday, at the Social Science Congress in Nottingham, in the health department, Mr George Smith read two papers on the following subjects :- (1) The Canal Boats Act of 1877, and the Amending Bills of 1881 and 1882 ; (2) The Condition of our Gipsies and their Children, with Remedies. In the former, after recounting the circumstances under which the Canal Boats Act of 1877 was pushed through at the fag end of the season, Mr Smith pointed out that the main features of the Act, viz, the education of the canal children, the prohibition of overcrowding in the cabins, and the annual registration of the boats, are almost entirely neglected. The following, he said, were the failing points of the Act of 1877. 1. The Act to a great extent is permissive. 2. Proceedings cannot be taken against the boatmen and boat owners for evading the regulations of the Local Government Board – the most important of all. Breakers of this Act can be brought under the lash of the law, but breakers of the regulations cannot. 3. The Act of 1877 is placed in the hands of the local registration authorities to carry out, consequently the expenses fall upon the rate payers, and the result is that the local sanitary inspectors have had but little added to their salaries, in many instances nothing – and with strict orders not to go beyond their town or city boundaries. Thus it will be seen that boats plying between the registration districts, which are as a rule between 20 and 50 miles apart, are left to themselves. 4. Another oversight in the Act is the non annual registration of the boats, and consequently there have been no fees to meet the expenses. It was intended from the first that there should be an annual registration of the boats. 5. The want of power in the Act to enable the Local Government Board to appoint officers to supervise, control, inspect, enforce and report to Parliament upon the working of the Act and the regulations. 6. Another cause of failure in the Act has been owing to power not having been given to inspectors to enter the cabins or inspect the boats at any other time than "by day". Boats are more or less on the move by day, and it is only when they are tied up – which generally happens after six o'clock – or when they are being loaded or unloaded, that the local registration officer has an opportunity to see, or to form any idea as to what number of men, women and children are sleeping and huddling together in the cabins. 7. The Act does not give the School Board Officer power to enter a boat cabin. The education clauses of the Act have, I might almost say, entirely failed : (a) owing to the indifference manifested by the school authorities at which places the boats are registered as belonging to : (b) the extra trouble they give to the school attendance officers : (c) the facilities given and chances seized by the boatmen to get outside the town or city boundaries with their children so as to elude the grasp or shun the eye of the School Board Officer. 8. The payment of a week's school fees demanded from the children who can only attend one or two days in the week. It is not either fair, honest or just to compel a boatman to pay more for the education of his children than others have to pay. 9. Many boats in the canal districts, with women and children on board, travelling short distances, have escaped registration and inspection, under the plea that their boats are not used as dwellings. 10. Another very important reason advanced by the registration authorities, why the boatmen and boat owners have not been prosecuted for breaches of the Act is that all the trouble and expenses attending prosecutions have had to be borne by the local ratepayers, while the fines, in

accordance with the Act of 1877, have been paid over to the county fund, instead of the borough or local fund. The Bill I am humbly promoting, and which has been before Parliament during the last two sessions, provides a remedy for these faulty places. 1. I would do away with the permissive features of the Act of 1877. 2. Fines to be inflicted for breaches of the regulations as well as for breaches of the Act. 3. I give under the Act the Local registration authorities part of the registration fees. I propose that the annual registration fees should be 5s for each boat, one half of this amount to go to the Government, and the other half to the local authorities. 4. The registration of the boats to be annual. This will be a very simple and inexpensive affair, no matter what registration district the boat happens to be at the time of the renewal. 5. I give under the Bill the Local Government Board power to appoint one or two or more officials to visit the canals in various parts of the country, and to see to the proper enforcement of the Act, and to report annually to Parliament. 6. I propose that the inspectors should have power to enter a canal boat at any "reasonable hour". 7. No child shall be employed on a canal boat unless such child shall have passed the "third standard". 8. I propose that children, whom the regulations allow to live in the cabins, should have a free educational pass book, which would enable them to attend any day school while the boats are being loaded and unloaded. 9. No child under the age of 16 to work on a canal boat on Sundays. 10. All boats, upon which there is accommodation for cooking or sleeping to be deemed to be used as dwellings. 11. All fines to be paid over to those authorities who enforce the Act.

In the second paper, Mr Smith gave an appalling description of the condition of gipsies and their children. They live, he said, huddled together regardless of either sex, age or decency, under hedges, in tents, barns or on the roadside, with but little regard for marriage ceremonies. Their food, in many instances, is little better than garbage and refuse, and the most riff raff of them bed themselves upon rotten straw. We have also at this late day, with sunny education gleaming on every hand, over 30,000 poor gipsy children of school age, growing up as vagabonds, and not two per cent of the whole able to read or write a sentence. Our gipsies of today are neither more nor less than ignorant, idle tramps, scamps and vagabonds. This I know full well, for I have found it out over and over again, not by hearsay, but by mixing and eating with them in their wretched abodes often during the last five years.

The remedies he suggests are : 1. All movable or temporary habitations registered and numbered, and under proper sanitary arrangements in a manner analogous to that provided under the Canal Boats Act of 1877. 2. Not less than 100 cubic feet of space for each female above the age of twelve, and each male above the age of fourteen, and not less than 50 cubic space of space for each female under the age of twelve, and for each male under the age of fourteen. 3. No male above the age of fourteen and no female above the age of twelve should be allowed to sleep in the same tent or van as man and wife, unless separate sleeping accommodation and suitable ventilation provided. 4. A registration certificate to be obtained, and renewable annually, at any of the urban or rural sanitary authorities in the country, for which the owner of the tent or van shall pay a sum of 10s commencing on the 1st of January in each year. 5. The compulsory attendance at day schools a given number of times of all travelling children, or others, living in temporary or unrateable dwellings, up to the age required by the Education Code, which attendance should be facilitated and brought about by means of a free educational pass book, procurable at any booksellers, for the sum of a shilling, as I have suggested to meet the case of canal children. 6. The children to be at liberty to attend any National, British, Board or other day schools under the management of properly qualified schoolmasters. 7. No child under thirteen years of age to be engaged in any capacity for either hire or profit, unless such child shall have passed the "third standard" of the Education Code. 8. No child or young person to work for either hire or profit on Sundays under the age of sixteen. 9. Power to be given to any properly qualified sanitary officer, School Board visitor, inspector or Government official to enter the tents, vans, shows or other temporary or movable dwelling at any time or in any place, and detain, if necessary, for the purpose of seeing that the law was properly carried out. 10. The Local Government board to have power to appoint one, or two or more officials to see that the local authorities enforced and carried out the Act, and also to report to

Parliament annually. 11. All fines to be paid over to those authorities who enforce the Act and the regulations of the Local Government Board. 12. As an encouragement to those gipsy wanderers who cannot afford to have healthy and suitable travelling vans and other abodes, and who desire to settle down from their wandering and degrading existence to industrious habits, the Government should purchase commons or wastelands, or allot lands of their own to the gipsies in small parcels upon a long lease – say for ninety nine years – at a nominal rent.

24 August 4 1883

Branded with “D” as a deserter, flogged with the cat o' nine tails, drummed out of the army, punished with five years penal servitude, was the disastrous record brought up against **Frederick Hall**, boatman, convicted by the West Riding Justices at Rotherham of assaulting a policeman and committing various offences while in a drunken frenzy. He was sent to three months hard labour straight off the reel, and if he failed to pay £2 11s, in addition to costs, on three summonses, he will have two months and fourteen days further imprisonment to undergo.

25 August 4 1883

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, WEDNESDAY

LEICESTER ABBEY **George Mees**, a boatman, Leicester, was charged with damaging a fence at Leicester Abbey to the amount of 1s, the property of Thomas Warner, on the 25th ult. A keeper in the employ of Mr Warner of Leicester Abbey stated that he saw the defendant in a fence, engaged cutting a stick with his knife. He noticed that the defendant had damaged the fence to a considerable extent, and he thereupon took him to the Belgrave police station. The Bench fined him 2s 6d, and the costs and damage, amounting altogether to 13s 6d.

26 August 11 1883

TOWN HALL, SATURDAY

LARCENY FROM A CANAL BOAT Henry Cooper and John William Bennett, two labouring men, were charged with stealing an anchor of the value of 30s, the property of Messrs Boam and Forrest, coal dealers, Leicester. **Alfred Hunt**, a boatman, said that he left the anchor safe on his boat on the previous Sunday evening, and went with the prisoners to a public house to have some drink. While they were in the public house, the prisoner Bennett went out, and returned in about a quarter of an hour. He subsequently missed the anchor from the boat. Mr Forrest deposed that the anchor was worth about 30s. **John Swain**, cabin boy on the boat in question, said that he saw the prisoner Bennett take the anchor from the boat and convey it away. PC Musson stated that he apprehended the prisoners, and they made no reply on being charged with the offence. In defence, the prisoners asserted that they understood that the anchor belonged to a man named **Locker**, who had previously worked the boat in question, and they were going to sell it for him. The magistrates sentenced them to one months imprisonment each with hard labour.

27 September 29 1883

WIGSTON

SAD CASE OF DROWNING An inquest was held on Wednesday at the Horse and Trumpet Inn, Wigston, by the coroner, G F Harrison Esq, touching the death of Joseph Spence, framework knitter, whose body was found in the canal on Tuesday. A married woman named Vann gave evidence to the effect that she knew the deceased. He was about 60 years of age, and was a married man, but lived alone. Last Monday evening, she saw him coming out of a public house at Wigston. She heard him say that he would do no more work. She (witness) reproved him for talking in such a manner, and he then told her that he meant what he said, for his son had refused to lend him 5s to pay the frame rent. Deceased, who was the worse for drink, went in the direction of his home. **William Gilbert**, a boatman, stated that while he was returning to Leicester by the Union Canal on Tuesday morning, and when near the Turnover Bridge, he saw a man's hat on the towing-path, and subsequently noticed the dead body of the deceased standing upright in the canal, the head being

about four inches under the surface of the water. With the assistance of Mr Nicholls, the body was taken to Kilby Bridge and handed over to the police. Mr A L Edkins, surgeon and assistant to Dr Hulme, who was called to see the body on Wednesday, said that death had been caused by suffocation from drowning. The jury returned a verdict of "Suicide while in a state of temporary insanity".

28 November 3 1883

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, SATURDAY

GREAT WIGSTON **George Hollingsworth**, a youth from Derbyshire, was charged with stealing £1 3s 1d, the moneys of **Henry Jones**, on the 23rd October. Deputy Chief Constable Moore stated that the prosecutor was a boatman, and the prisoner had been in his employ. Prisoner took the money from the cabin of the boat and absconded. In consequence of the prosecutor being away with his boat, he asked for a remand until next Saturday. Prisoner was accordingly remanded.

[Note : name of accused shown as Higgins in the following article]

29 November 10 1883

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE

BLABY **George H Higgins**, 14, was charged on remand with stealing £1 3s 1d, the money of **Henry Jones**, at Blaby, on the 23rd ult. Prisoner pleaded guilty. Prosecutor, a boatman, stated that the prisoner was in his employ. On the day named, they went from Leicester to Blaby on the boat, and when near the wharf at Blaby the prisoner got off the boat and made off. Immediately after, the prosecutor went into the boat, and found the money missing. He chased the prisoner, but missed him. The prisoner's father stated that the boy had run away from a boarding school, where he was being respectably brought up, and he had been unable to find him till now. He was willing to pay back the money which had been stolen. The Bench said they were reluctant to send a youth like the prisoner to gaol, and he would be dismissed on his father refunding the money and paying costs.

30 November 17 1883

Between six and seven o'clock on Tuesday night, a boatman named **Kent** noticed a man walking backwards and forwards across Trent Bridge at Nottingham in a suspicious manner. At a moment when the bridge was clear of passengers, the man threw himself into the river, and was not seen again, darkness and fog rendering rescue almost out of the question. On the parapet was found a small black bag containing a bundle of chips and an order book bearing the name of "F Woodward". There is no further clue to the identity of the man, whose body has not been found.

31 January 5 1884

A boatman named **Brittain** was on Monday evening unloading a boat load of nightsoil at Curdworth when he discovered among the rubbish the dead body of a child, apparently about nine days old. The body was removed to the White Hart Inn to await an inquest. The nightsoil had been removed from Aston, near Birmingham, and there is reason to believe that the child was murdered. The body was not at all decomposed. Information has been given to the police, who are carefully investigating the matter.

32 June 21 1884

At the Wednesbury Police Court on Tuesday, William Tustin alias "Wolf" and Joseph Eades, both of Birmingham, were charged with fighting a prize fight at the Delves in the parish of Wednesbury on the 3rd instant ; and **Henry Cooper**, boatman, Smethwick, was charged with aiding and abetting. They were all bound over to keep the peace for six months.

33 July 12 1884

CANAL BOAT REGISTRATION In our time and country, travelling and traffic are chiefly by road and rail. Older systems have become comparatively unused. Among these the canal boat still

holds its own and works its way from one river and one populous district to another. The boatmen and their families do not form a numerous class, though it is one which is increasing in numbers. It is, moreover, recruited from the poorest of the people. The homes of these persons are necessarily not commodious, and they depend for wholesomeness much more upon their surrounding atmosphere than on their internal arrangements. It is obvious that the public would profit in more ways than one if the law for registration of these craft, which is at present ineffective for want of executive machinery, were put in force. Here and there, desultory attempts at notification have done some good. The School Board officers have taken measures to secure the attendance of the boat children, but the canal population, as a whole, have usually been out of sight and out of mind. When we consider the results in propagation of disease, and in hidden development of crime and immorality which may arise from this neglect, we can but hope that it will soon terminate. It cannot be said that the privileges of owners are infringed by the application to their inland barges of conditions to which even the mercantile marine is subject.

The Lancet

34 December 20 1884

TOWN HALL, SATURDAY

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **William Smith senior** and **William Smith junior**, boatmen of London, were charged with cruelty to a horse, the latter working it while lame, and Smith senior by causing it to be worked knowing its condition. PC E Hall stated that about midday on Friday, he was attracted by a crowd of persons to Hotel Street, where the younger defendant was in charge of a horse. The animal was unable to move, being lame in the near fore leg. In answer to witness's questions, defendant said the horse was bought about a month ago in London. He worked it on the canal from that place to Foxton, drawing two boats, each with a load of 20 tons. At Foxton it became very lame, and being unable to draw any further, he walked it to Leicester. In his (witness's) opinion, it was cruel to walk the horse, and he had the greatest difficulty in getting it as far as the White Lion Hotel, Cank Street. Inspector Fresco, RSPCA, also spoke to the animal's condition, after which the magistrates inspected it outside the Court. On returning into Court, they fined the older defendant 20s and costs, and dismissed his son. Smith senior consented to the horse being destroyed at once, and the ex Mayor remarked that the fine would have been heavier otherwise.

35 January 10 1885

TOWN HALL, FRIDAY

THEFT FROM A BOAT Ernest Harradine, a youth described as a labourer, of Houghton in Huntingdonshire, was charged with stealing from a cupboard in the cabin of a boat at the Public Wharf, between six and 11.30 on the 31st December, two vests, a watch guard and a quantity of tea and sugar, value £1 1s, the property of **William Smith**, boatman. PC Harry Smith stated that he received the prisoner into custody at Derby yesterday, and found in his possession a pawn ticket relating to the vest produced, which had been pledged at Nottingham. He charged prisoner with stealing the articles named in the charge, and he admitted having taken the vest produced, but denied all knowledge of anything else. At the request of the Chief Constable, the Bench on this evidence remanded prisoner for a week.

36 January 24 1885

TOWN HALL, SATURDAY

DISCHARGED Ernest Harradine, a youth hailing from Houghton in Huntingdonshire, was charged on remand with stealing, on December 31st last, two vests, a watch guard and a quantity of tea and sugar, value £1 1s, the property of **William Smith**, boatman. Mr Duns, Chief Constable, said prosecutor could not be found. He had no further evidence to offer, and he therefore left the case entirely in the hands of the magistrates. The Bench discharged prisoner.

37 April 4 1885

TOWN HALL, TUESDAY

HOLIDAY DEBAUCHERIES The following defendants were fined 10s for being drunk and using obscene language :- **John Cooper**, boatman, and Henry Sharpe, 17 Rudkin Street, rivetter.

38 May 16 1885

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

A DIRTY ASSAULT **John Leatherland**, boatman, Loughborough, was summoned for assaulting Mr T B Cartwright at Loughborough on the 29th ult. Mr Deane appeared for the complainant. The evidence showed that Mr Cartwright, his wife and a friend named Hine were in a pleasure boat on the canal. As soon as they got alongside a barge, of which the defendant was in charge, he commenced to bale out water with a large shovel. He deliberately threw the contents of one shovel over Mr Cartwright, and a portion of the contents of another went over Mr Hine. Defendant was represented by his father, who pleaded guilty on his behalf, and the facts having been spoken to by Mr and Mrs Cartwright and Mr Hine, the Bench fined the defendant 30s, including costs, or 14 days hard labour, the Chairman saying in his opinion it was a question whether the fine met the case. Defendant's father : How long shall you give him to pay the fine? The Chairman : Not a day. The father : Then he may do the 14 days ; you know where he lives.

39 June 6 1885

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

THE BLACK LIST **Samuel Callaghan**, boatman, Loughborough, was fined 30s and costs, or 14 days hard labour, for being disorderly and refusing to quit the Angel licensed premises at Loughborough.

40 June 6 1885

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE

BELGRAVE **John Cooper**, boatman, was summoned for assaulting his wife, **Harriet**, on the 1st June. He did not appear, and Sergeant Marlow said when he served the summons defendant was in a great rage, began to smash the chairs and tables, and everything else in the room. Complainant said on Monday her husband came home at dinner and found some goods tied up in a bag. He asked her what it meant, and she said she did not know, and he hit her flat handed on each side of her face and kicked her on the arm. She would not live with him any longer, and this was the fourth home he had broken up. Sergeant Marlow said defendant told him that the cause of the bother was that his wife threw a beefsteak and a dish at him. Complainant denied this, and said there was not a beefsteak in the house that she could throw at him. A girl lodging in the house with complainant corroborated the assault. Defendant was bound over, himself in £10 and one surety in £10, to keep the peace for six months, or in default of finding a surety, one months imprisonment, and to pay costs 17s 6d, or seven days.

41 June 13 1885

BARROW-ON-SOAR

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING The Clerk produced a circular letter from Mr Haslam asking what steps the Board had taken to enforce the Education Acts in respect of children in canal boats. He was directed to reply that though a canal passes through the district, no boats stopped nor were registered, neither did any boatmen or their families live in the district.

42 June 27 1885

FATAL ACCIDENT TO A CHILD – THE INQUEST The inquest on the body of William Henry Crane, aged seven years and eleven months, son of Henry Crane of 2 Court G, Belgrave Gate, glass cutter, who was run over by a dray in Lower Hill Street on Tuesday evening, was held at the Infirmary on Thursday afternoon before the coroner, Mr G F Smith. Mr T B Neale (Fowler, Smith

and Warwick) attended the inquiry on behalf of the parents of deceased. The mother of the child stated that about 5.30 last Tuesday evening, she sent deceased to Carrington Street to fetch some work, and gave him a basket to put it in. She heard no more of him until about six o'clock, when a woman named Ross went to her and told her that the boy had been run over, and was at Mr Smith's in Lower Hill Street. She at once went to the place mentioned, where she found him, and he was taken to the Infirmary in Mr Smith's cart, his father accompanying him. She and her husband went to the Infirmary about eight o'clock the same night, and remained with deceased until he died about 2.30 on Wednesday morning. John Bathurst Okell, a dresser at the Infirmary, said he attended to deceased when he was brought in shortly after six o'clock on Tuesday evening. He found him very much bruised about the chest, but no bones were broken. In his opinion, death resulted from the shock and internal injuries consequent upon the accident. In reply to one of the jury, he said that in his opinion the lung had been ruptured. Deceased was just able to talk, but did not give any account as to how the accident occurred. **John Jelley**, the driver of the dray which ran over the deceased, stated that he was a boatman and lived at 5 Britannia Street, Leicester, but now working for Messrs Fellows and Morton as drayman. On Tuesday night last about six o'clock he was driving a dray belonging to his masters in Lower Hill Street, having turned out of Belgrave Gate. When he had got a short distance from the corner he heard someone shouting, and pulled up. He went back a little way, and found that he had run over the deceased. He had not seen him, neither was he aware that he had run over him, as he did not feel the dray go over anything. He waited until he saw the child picked up and taken away, and then went on with his dray, as he could not leave it. He did not know who the child was. In the course of a lengthy examination by Mr Neale, Jelley said he was 55 years of age, and had been accustomed to driving horses both along the canal and in the public streets. He had only been in the employ of Messrs Fellows and Morton a week, and before then had worked for a few days for the Grand Junction Canal Company. He had not taken a permanent place with them, and he got his living chiefly by "jobbing about" and taking the places of men who were ill, or doing anything that he could get. He started on Tuesday night about five o'clock, and had made several calls when he got into Hill Street. At that time he had five casks of soda on his van, weighing 2 1/2 cwt. His horse was only walking, and his attention was taken by a baker's cart standing a little way up the street, which only just allowed him room to pass, so that he should get by without a collision. He did not look out for foot passengers, and did not see deceased at all. The Coroner : The place where the child was lying when he was called back was twenty yards or more from the baker's cart. By Mr Neale : He was perfectly sober at the time, and had had nothing to drink that day (Thursday). He did not run on the path, which is only eight inches wide, or he would have felt the jerk. He did not ascertain who the deceased was, but left him as soon as he saw the crowd collect and knew that he was identified. The Foreman remarked that they considered he should have been more careful to see if there were any foot passengers about before he drove so close to the kerb. In opening the case before the jury viewed the body, the Coroner said it was supposed that the dray caught the basket of the deceased and threw him under the wheels. It was very unfortunate that the locality was so ill adapted to meet the exigencies of the traffic, but it was not their fault, and the alteration could not be made without much difficulty. He did not know whether it would not be possible, however, for the police to exercise supervision of the traffic, and direct it in a safer manner. The accident was witnessed by a man named Boot and Mr Smith, the baker, the former of whom promised to come if the coroner would allow the latter to stay at the shop, as it would be inconvenient for both to leave. They neither of them appeared, however, and the inquiry was adjourned until Friday afternoon to allow the coroner opportunity to subpoena them.

43 July 25 1885

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, WEDNESDAY

AYLESTONE **John Dormer**, boatman, was summoned for illegally taking fresh water fish in the river Soar at Aylestone during the prohibited period on the 19th April. Defendant did not appear. Mr Eddowes prosecuted on behalf of the Trent Conservancy Fisheries Board, and in opening the case

said the Board had extensive powers to protect fish in the Trent and all its tributaries, and also in any piece of water connected with or fed by any such tributaries. The offence in question was committed in the canal which, close to the spot where defendant was fishing, was joined by the river Soar. A water bailiff named Fern, in the employ of the Leicester Angling Association, said he saw defendant on his boat in the canal, and he was using a very destructive kind of net, called a bow net. It was attached to a long pole, and as the boat was moving, defendant dragged it along, walking from one end of the boat to the other. Witness saw him catch two roach. Sergeant Leach stated that the defendant came to the office on Monday and said he could not appear, and wished the case to be taken in his absence. He acknowledged the offence, but said he was very sorry, and promised that he would destroy the net and not again commit the offence. Defendant was fined 30s, costs 18s, or fourteen days. Mr Eddowes applied that half the penalty should be handed over to the Board as they were at great expense in preserving the fish. The Bench agreed to hand over half the fine as requested.

44 August 1 1885

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

CHARGE OF HIGHWAY ROBBERY **Arthur Scott**, boatman, Fiskerton, Nottinghamshire, was charged with assaulting with intent to rob Henry Hall on the highway at Barrow on the 27th ult. Prosecutor was going from Mountsorrel to Barrow, and when he reached the Duke of York Bridge he asked the prisoner for a light. Prisoner gave him one, and when he had lighted his cigar, the prisoner caught hold of his throat and declared that he would have all he possessed or take his life. Prosecutor shouted, "Murder", and struggled with the prisoner, who several times clutched at his watch chain. Prisoner ran off when prosecutor shouted, and was subsequently arrested on a barge by PC Kirchin, who also found a silk handkerchief, which the prisoner had snatched from the prosecutor's neck, on the towing path by the canal. Prisoner was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions.

45 September 12 1885

A BOY DROWNED IN THE CANAL An inquest was held at the Earl of Stamford Inn, Northgate Street, on Wednesday afternoon, before the coroner, Mr G F Harrison, touching the death of **John Joseph Fereday**, aged five years, the son of **Thomas Fereday** deceased, boatman, who lived with his mother, Emma Spencer, at No 1 Court I, Northgate Street. The mother stated that the lad returned from school about 12.10 on Monday morning, and as dinner was not ready, she told him to go out and play. About a quarter to one, a little boy named Wickwar came to her and told her that her son had fallen into the canal and wetted his clothes. She, with a neighbour, went to the water side, and on the Northgate Street Bridge met three young men, of whom she asked if they had heard of deceased. They said they had not, but on getting a few yards away, one of them called out, "Here he lies", seeing him at the bottom of the water. She then fainted, and remembered nothing more. The boy Wickwar said that deceased was playing at the water's edge and fell in. In reply to one of the jurors, he said that it was entirely an accident, and that no one pushed him. A shoe rivetter named George Gill, 75 Northgate Street, said that at 12.45 on Monday he was at work at his window, which overlooked the canal. Hearing that a boy was drowning, he went out and saw deceased under the water against the bridge, and with the aid of another man succeeded in getting him out with a boat hook. Dr Grandison, who was passing, used every means in his power to restore life, but without success. In his evidence, the doctor said that death resulted from suffocation by drowning, and he had no reason to believe it was otherwise than accidental. A verdict of "Accidental drowning" was returned.

46 September 12 1885

TOWN HALL, MONDAY

A CRUELTY CASE **William Smith**, a boatman of Bromley, London, was summoned for cruelly ill-treating a horse on the 21st August by working it when in an unfit state. Mr Fresco, RSPCA, said

that he saw defendant with the horse attached to a couple of boats on the canal. On the animal's shoulder were a number of festered wounds, and although the collar had been altered so as to prevent chafing as much as possible, the sores were pressed upon, and caused much pain. In reply to the Bench, defendant said he lost his job in London owing to being stopped by the inspector, and had since sold the horse. He denied that there was more than one wound on the horse, and said that was a small one. PC William Bates gave evidence as to the condition of the horse. Mr Shaw of the Durham Ox, where defendant puts up his horses, said he saw the animal before it went to London, when there was only one little wound which a threepenny piece would cover. The defendant was fined last December for cruelty to a horse, and had been previously charged with a similar offence. He was now fined 40s and costs, or 14 days.

47 October 24 1885

LEICESTERSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

ATTEMPTED HIGHWAY ROBBERY **Arthur Scott** (17), boatman, was indicted for assaulting Henry Hall with intent to rob him, and to steal a watch and chain, value £2, the property of Henry Hall at Barrow-on-Soar on July 27th. Mr Garratt prosecuted. On the night in question, according to the prosecutor, he was going home through Water Lane and saw prisoner near the bridge. Prisoner gave him a light, and they remained talking for some time. As he was about to leave, prisoner sprang at him, took hold of him by the scarf, and said, "I'll have all you got or your ---- life". He then made a dash at prosecutor's watch and struck him several times. Prosecutor shouted for the police, and Scott ran down the towing-path. He found a policeman at Barrow, and took him to the place where the affair had occurred, and they found the handkerchief produced on the road in the direction the prisoner ran away. PC Kirchin said that he went to the Duke of York's Bridge near Mountsorrel, with prosecutor, and found marks of a scuffle having taken place. Thirty yards further on he found a handkerchief, which prosecutor identified. He afterwards arrested the prisoner in a boat on the canal, and when going to Loughborough, Scott volunteered the statement that he was guilty. He now denied he had any intention of stealing the watch. He was found guilty, and in consideration of having been in prison nearly three months, was sentenced to four months hard labour.

48 November 14 1885

ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH PETTY SESSIONS

ALLEGED ASSAULT **Samuel Hadway**, boatman, Moira, was charged with assaulting William Butlin, aged 9, on the 9th October. Defendant pleaded not guilty, and the Bench dismissed the case, each party to pay their own costs.

49 March 27 1886

SAD CASE OF DROWNING An inquest was held on Tuesday afternoon at the Bow Bridge Inn, King Richard's Road, before the coroner, Mr G F Harrison, on the body of George Brooks, aged 58, a bricklayer, who lived at 81 Hinckley Road, and who had been missing since February 10th, and was found dead in the canal on Monday morning. From the evidence given, it appears that the deceased had worked for Mr Brown, King Richard's Road, at Oadby. On Friday February 5th, he complained of feeling tired and weary, and he had frequently made a similar complaint since an accident which happened to him about two years ago, when he fell from a building on which he was at work. On the 6th February, he told his wife that he should not go to work, and he never went to work again. On Wednesday the 10th, he left home at 11.30 in the morning, saying that he was going to see his master. He did not return, and after sitting up until late that night, his wife went to bed supposing that he had stayed at Oadby. On the following day, Mr Brown called at deceased's house, and Mrs Brooks told him that her husband had left home on the preceding day for the purpose of seeing him. Mr Brown told her that he had not seen him, and inquiries were made, but without result. On the Friday, the wife sent to the central police station and reported deceased as missing, and advertisements were inserted in the local papers. Nothing, however, was heard of deceased

until last Monday morning, when a boatman named **Thomas Edwards**, 5 Augustine Friars, found the dead body floating in the canal near to Mr Harding's dye works. He gave information to the police, and Sergeant Oldacre and PC Jackson succeeded in taking the body from the water. It was in a very decomposed state, and was removed to the Bow Bridge Inn. On being searched, 1 1/2d was found in the pockets, but a topcoat which deceased was wearing when he left home is missing. Dr Blacksley said that he had examined the body, and the appearances were consistent with the supposition that deceased had been in the water for several weeks. He found no marks of violence, and nothing whatever to lead him to suspect any foul play. In his opinion death had occurred from suffocation by drowning. The Coroner pointed out to the jury that there was no evidence to show whether deceased had committed suicide or whether the drowning was caused by accident, and under those circumstances a verdict of "Found drowned" would be the proper one to return. The jury returned an open verdict.

50 March 27 1886

TOWN HALL, SATURDAY

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **David Allen**, boatman, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it while suffering from lameness. PC Bates spoke to having found defendant working the animal on the towing-path of the canal this morning. It was very lame, and on being examined by Inspector Lucas, RSPCA, was found to be suffering from disease of the off hock. Allen, who lives at Tamworth, said he had taken the horse past scores of policemen, who had made no complaint. He bought it from a colliery company, and was paying for it by instalments. The magistrates fined defendant 40s or 14 days imprisonment, and ordered the pony to be sold for slaughtering.

51 May 8 1886

THE DROWNING FATALITY An inquest was held on Monday afternoon at the Full Moon Inn, Russell Square, before the coroner, Mr G F Harrison, on the body of William Henry Johnson, aged eight, whose parents reside at 49 Woodboy Street, and who was drowned in the canal near the Abbey Park on Saturday. The mother stated that the lad left home at 11.30 on Saturday morning to play, and at noon two boys came to her, and told her that he had fallen into the canal. She went towards the canal, and met her brother in Wood Street carrying the deceased, and the body was taken to the Great Northern Inn, and subsequently removed home. A lad named David Bunney, living in Charlotte Street and aged 10, stated that he was playing at the side of the canal at the Abbey Park all Saturday morning, and about noon saw the deceased with two more boys named Green and Johnson cross the waste ground at the back of the lime kilns, and go to the side of the canal opposite to where he was standing. Deceased had his cap full of stones, and there were several tops in the water, at which he pelted. While doing so, he suddenly fell into the water. Witness saw a man named Harry Cave, shoe rivetter, 50 Royal East Street, coming along, and called to him that deceased was in the water. He at once took off his coat and jumped into the canal, and lifted the deceased up in the water, and some men tried to reach him, but failed to do so. Cave then was obliged to leave hold of deceased, who sank, and he was with difficulty rescued himself. By Mr Baum : No one pushed deceased in the water, as there was no one near him when he fell in. Other evidence was adduced to the effect that a boatman named **Walter Rudkin**, hearing of the accident, went to the spot in a boat, taking with him a boat hook. He felt about in the water for the body, and found it in about five minutes, and with the assistance of PC Grayson, it was removed to the Great Northern Inn. Mr MacAlevey, surgeon, deposed to examining the body, and said that he found no suspicious appearances, and in his opinion death had resulted from accidental drowning. The Coroner commented on the brave conduct of Cave in attempting to rescue the deceased, and remarked that he would have attended the inquest, but he was very unwell, the result of his immersion. A verdict of "Accidental drowning" was then returned.

52 June 5 1886

SUICIDE AT BARROW-ON-SOAR On Wednesday morning, Mr Henry Deane held an inquest at

the Railway Inn, Barrow-on-Soar, touching the death of Frederick Martin, a bag hozier, living at Sileby, whose body was found in the river Soar on Monday. Jane Martin said she was the wife of the deceased, who was 35 years of age, and was a bag hozier living in Sileby. He left home last Monday morning about seven o'clock for Hanford and Miller's at Loughborough, by whom he was employed, and said he should be back by the nine o'clock train. Witness met this and two following trains, but deceased did not appear. Her husband's brother was going to Loughborough, and she accompanied him there in search of her husband. She went to the railway station and the Coffee Tavern, but could find no traces of him. On the way home, she heard of his body being found in the river Soar. He had been in a desponding state for some time past, in consequence of the depression in trade, but seemed to be in better spirits on Sunday. She had suggested that they should both go to Loughborough, but deceased said he would go by train, as it was so much trouble to catch the pony. About 11 years since, he was in such a low condition that he had to be removed from Sileby to the seaside for some time. Witness had to watch him that he did not make away with himself. Deceased was very ill last Friday, and she dare not let him go out. On Monday he seemed better. He (deceased) had an uncle in the asylum. Thomas Marriott, brother-in-law of the deceased, said he saw deceased a week last Sunday, and he then appeared to be in a very distressed condition. He had not seen him since. Harry Morris, a porter in the employ of the Midland Railway Company, said he saw deceased get off the train last Monday morning at 7.10. He gave up his ticket, No 847, Sileby to Loughborough, 3rd class, and said he should go on by the next train. Deceased asked witness whether he must leave the ticket with him, and witness answered that he must. He went through the gate. There was nothing in his appearance or manner to attract the attention of witness. **David Cliff** said he lived at the Lock House at Barrow. Last Monday, a boatman brought a coat and hat to his house, and said he had found them lying on a bank near the bridge. Witness took them to PC Kirchin, and together with another man they dragged the river. The body was found about six o'clock in the afternoon. PC Kirchin said that the last witness brought the coat and hat to his house about 12.30 on Monday morning. From what he said, witness examined the bank of the river, and found traces of someone plunging into the stream from the bank. The footmarks were close to the edge of the bank, and with assistance they dragged the river, and found the body about eight yards from the footmarks. Witness searched the body, and found half a sovereign and sixpence, and a silver watch and chain, and a paper relating to some work. The watch had stopped at ten minutes past seven. The jury returned a verdict that deceased committed suicide whilst in a state of temporary insanity.

53 July 24 1886

ROGUES AND VAGABONDS In the Birmingham Police Court on Monday, three rough looking men named Henry Hands, 23, glassblower ; Thomas Smith, 26, labourer, and **William Connor alias Brown**, 27, boatman, were charged with breaking into the premises of Messrs Hill and Hartridge, merchants and manufacturers, Princip Street, Birmingham. About 11 o'clock on Saturday night, the prisoners took a boat along the canal to the prosecutor's premises. They then succeeded in breaking open the iron gates. A high wall, which separated the yard into which they got and the office, was scaled, and they entered the office. Much damage was done to the safe and drawers, which they forced open, but all they could lay their hands on in the shape of money was threepence. Police-constables Hands, Jasper, Miles and Moseley were informed of the office breaking expedition upon which the prisoners had gone, and at once proceeded to the prosecutor's premises. The prisoners were busily engaged in the packing room when the officers interrupted them. They offered no resistance, and were conveyed to Duke Street Police Station. Superintendent Sheppard said the prisoners belonged to a gang of notorious burglars, known as the "loungers on the top of the eleven". [Laughter]. Mr Hebbert (clerk) : What have you to say why you should not be punished as rogues and vagabonds? Prisoner Smith : Well, your worship, we plead guilty to burglariously entering the place, but we didn't steal anything. At this statement, Hands reminded Smith in a rather testy manner that he had pleaded guilty to a more serious offence than the one with which they were charged. Smith at once sought to retract his first plea, and

added, "We're guilty of being rogues and vagabonds, your worship". Mr Lowe : You will have to go to gaol for three months and be kept at hard labour. Prisoners (in unison) : Thank you, sir.

54 September 4 1886

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT, WEDNESDAY

AN OLD OFFENDER **George Perry**, boatman, Loughborough, against whom a long list of convictions was read, was sentenced to 21 days hard labour, without the option of a fine, for being drunk on the night of August 30th. PC Brown and Sergeant Shillcock proved the case.

55 November 13 1886

HINCKLEY PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY

SCHOOL CASES Thomas Kiddle, clerk to the School Board, charged **John Taylor**, boatman, Hinckley, with neglecting to send his child to school. Fined 1s.

56 January 22 1887

TOWN HALL, SATURDAY

A HARD CASE **Thomas Marlow** (70), boatman, 22 Leadenhall Street, was charged with stealing from the Public Wharf, Belgrave Gate, on the 14th inst, 100 lbs of coal, value 8d, the property of the Wollaton Colliery Company. Mr J B Fowler defended. Mr William Boam, manager, said he had been shown the coal produced (screened cobbles), which he identified as the property of his masters by the seam. Joseph Rudkin proved seeing the prisoner take some coal off one of the stacks, which he placed in a bag. Acquainted Edwin Moore with what he had seen. Edwin Moore said he was watching in the coal wharf, and about seven o'clock last night saw prisoner go to a stack and put some coal into a bag which he had. Witness accosted him, and inquired what he had in the bag, to which he replied, "Nothing", but declined to let witness look. He caught hold of the bag, and felt that it was coal, upon which prisoner wanted to take it back, and asked witness to say nothing about it. He sent for a constable, by whom prisoner was taken into custody. PC McGeorge said when he charged prisoner with stealing the 20 lbs of coal of the value of 2d, he replied, "Not a deal of money". Witness afterwards searched prisoner's house, and after some coal which he found had been identified, he charged prisoner with stealing it, but he said, "I never stole it". Prisoner pleaded guilty, and on his behalf Mr Fowler pointed out that he had been out of work for a long time, and had never been before the Court previously for felony. The Chairman said under all the circumstances the Bench would give a lenient sentence – seven days hard labour.

57 May 28 1887

TOWN HALL, MONDAY

BAD LANGUAGE **James Marriott** (60), boatman, Birstall Street, was charged with being drunk and using obscene language in Princess Street at 1.15 am on Sunday. Fined 10s, or seven days.

58 September 24 1887

TOWN HALL, SATURDAY

A NEGLIGENT HUSBAND **William Sabin**, boatman, no fixed residence, was charged with neglecting to maintain his wife and child, whereby they became chargeable to the common fund of the Union on the 15th inst. He pleaded guilty, but stated that his wife left the boat of her own accord when they were about 50 miles away, and came back here. The relieving officer having proved the chargeability, Mr Thacker said that on Wednesday he saw the prisoner with respect to the application of the woman for relief, and told him she was quite destitute. Sabin said he should not do anything till he was obliged. The prisoner was discharged on promising to allow his wife 6s per week towards her maintenance.

59 October 8 1887

Thomas Lowry, jobbing boatman with several aliases, was on Tuesday committed for trial by the

Manchester City magistrates on a charge of manslaughter. Prisoner had for some time lived with a married woman named **Jane Jones** in a low part of the city, and on Sunday evening the 18th ult, she was found in a dying condition, suffering from terrible injuries to the head, her skull being fractured to such an extent that the brain protruded. Prisoner absconded at the time.

60 December 3 1887

HINCKLEY PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY Mr Kiddle, clerk of Hinckley School Board, charged **John Taylor**, boatman, with unlawfully employing a child named **Samuel Truslove** without having obtained a certificate under the Education Act, at Hinckley on the 25th November. John Burton, school attendance officer, said he saw the boy in the cabin of a boat which had just returned from Moira. He had warned defendant that he was liable, as the boy had not obtained a certificate. Mr Kiddle said the lad was 11 years old, and had passed only Standard II. Only three attendances had been made since the 1st of November. Defendant was grandfather of the boy, and he had been fined twice under the Act for non attendance. They had exhausted all other means to secure the attendance, and now summoned defendant for employing the lad. Fined 5s and costs 11s, or seven days.

61 January 21 1888

TOWN HALL, SATURDAY

ALLEGED CRUELTY **William Tebbutt**, boatman, back of 259 Belgrave Gate, was summoned by John Lucas, Inspector, RSPCA, for cruelty to a horse by working it while in an unfit state from lameness, on the 31st December last. PC Mantle stated that on the day in question he saw defendant driving a horse attached to a large boat on the canal. The horse was very lame, but in good condition. Defendant said the horse belonged to Messrs Boam and Forrest ; he knew it was lame, and was ashamed to go with it. Defendant pleaded guilty, and said he had no other horse to work but this, which was brought out to him on the canal bank. In answer to the Mayor, Inspector Lucas said he had not sufficient evidence to prove that Messrs Boam and Forrest sent the horse out knowing it to have been unfit for work. Under the circumstances, the Bench dismissed the case, advising defendant not to work a horse in a similar condition even if it was sent out to him.

62 February 25 1888

SUDDEN DEATH OF A LEICESTER BOATMAN An inquest was held at the Navigation Inn, Trent Lock, on Monday, before the coroner for South Derbyshire (Mr W E Whiston) relative to the death of **Tom Smith**, 31, a boatman of Leicester. The evidence showed that the deceased had been to Wollaton Colliery with two boats, and returned to Trent on Saturday. He became ill, and died about 7.30 pm the same evening. Mrs Smith, mother of the deceased, stated that her son had been in poor health, and had undergone treatment for tumour in the head at Leicester Infirmary. The Coroner remarked that the cold weather had no doubt affected the deceased, and probably no doctor would have been able to save him. A verdict was returned to the effect that death was due to apoplexy.

63 June 16 1888

SINGULAR CHARGE OF WILFUL DAMAGE ON THE TRENT At the Loughborough Police Court on Wednesday morning, before the Rev R Burton and F W Paget Esq, **John Turner**, boat owner, **William Wilmot**, **Frank Hallam** and **Silas Steer**, boatmen of Sawley, were summoned for doing wilful damage to the amount of £3 by removing gravel, stone and sand from the river Trent at Lockington, the property of Mr N C Curzon of Lockington. Mr Henry Deane prosecuted. Defendants pleaded not guilty to doing damage. Mr Deane said the prosecution was an important one. The Trent was a natural river made navigable, and the Navigation Company had the control over the course so far as to enable them to keep it free for navigable purposes. No question in that respect arose in this case. The river at the point where the offence was committed was from 9 to 13 feet deep. It had a very rapid flow, and boatmen had occasionally gone to parts of it and dredged

out boat loads from the bed of the river. Where the river was deep and rapid, still further deepening increased the "scour", and Mr Curzon had been put to the expense of hundreds of pounds recently in making and repairing the banks of the river. On the 4th May, defendants were seen in their boat using a dredger with a windlass, and the farmer who occupied the land near discovered that their boat was about half full of gravel. Two holes had previously been made in the bed of the river, and the repair of the banks in consequence had cost Mr Curzon £170, so the offence was a serious injury to the landowner. The amount of damage was immaterial to Mr Curzon. What he wanted to so was to show these men that they could not for their private purpose make holes in the river and inflict injuries to the banks. Mr John A Walton, land steward to Mr Curzon, said the land on the Leicestershire side of the river at the spot mentioned belonged to Mr Curzon, who had spent over £500 in repairing the banks. When the bed of the river was taken out, the banks close to it fell in, and the removal of the sand would undoubtedly cause damage to the banks. Mr William H Potter, who farms land on Mr Curzon's estate, said he saw the men with a "pan dredger" getting sand out of the bed of the river near Horse Bridge on the 4th May. He thought the defendants were the men, but was not certain. He told them they were doing wrong, and Turner, whom he knew, said he hoped not, but if they were he would shift the boat. Told them not to do so at once, and he went to the bridge and saw that the boat was about ten yards from the middle of the river on Mr Curzon's side. He had seen damage done to the banks after dredging. **Mr Heywood**, lock-keeper at Sawley, spoke to seeing the boat about 12 yards from the middle of the river. Turner said he had never before been ordered not to get gravel out of the river, and he had not got gravel out of the river for ten years. Hallam said they were not aware of having done anything wrong. As Turner was the owner of the boat, and the other three men only acted as workmen, the cases against the latter were dismissed. Turner was fined £1 damage and £1 costs.

64 July 28 1888

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT, WEDNESDAY

DRUNKENNESS George Perry, boatman, Loughborough, charged with a similar offence (drunk and disorderly) at Loughborough, on the 14th inst on the evidence of PC Bowley, was fined 30s or 14 days hard labour.

65 August 25 1888

At Whitchurch on Friday, John Gallagher was committed for trial on the charge of attempting to murder **Aaron Thomas**, a boatman. Without the slightest provocation, prisoner struck Thomas a fearful blow on the head with the handle of a windlass, causing an extensive wound, and was about to deal him another blow as he lay unconscious on the ground, when the murderous instrument was wrested from him. A constable subsequently found him in a field, naked. Dr George said he could not tell whether the prisoner was suffering from homicidal mania or alcoholic insanity. The prisoner, in answer to the charge, said he killed Thomas for disobeying his orders.

66 September 8 1888

HINCKLEY PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **William Marriott**, boatman, Hinckley, charged **William Pratt**, coal merchant, with breach of contract, claiming 10s damages. Complainant, a boat lad, said he was engaged by defendant at 10s per week. There was 10s due to him for wages on the 25th August, and he had received no part of it. By defendant : A boy did bring 4s 6d down on the 20th August, but he paid it away for horse keep at Moira. Defendant admitted that the 10s was due at the time, but he sent him 4s 6d. The lad was three weeks doing three days work. He discharged him on account of his laziness, and his man, when he went down, was told that 4s 6d was due for horse keep, so that the lad must have kept the money. The Bench said the defendant must pay the 10s and costs, and if the plaintiff had stated what was untrue as to paying for the horse keep, he must indict him for perjury.

67 **October 6 1888**

SAD CASE OF SUICIDE AT MOIRA An inquest was held at the Navigation Inn, Moira, on Monday afternoon, before Mr Deane, coroner, touching the death of **Elizabeth Newbury**, aged 19 years, daughter of **John Mellor** and **Eliza Newbury**, whose body was found in the canal at Moira on Saturday morning. From the evidence, it appeared that the father of the deceased is a boatman living at Moira, and the deceased had been living with other members of the family. The girl was subject to fits, which seemed to affect her temper, and on the morning of her death she had had a serious quarrel with her mother and sister, and soon after the quarrel her body was found in the canal. Dr Williams (Ashby) said he was sent for on Saturday morning to see the deceased. He examined the body. There were no marks of violence, but the usual appearance of death from drowning. There was nothing about the condition of the body which would lead him to suppose that the deceased had had a fit just before getting into the water. John Thornley, a roadman, said he was working on the road between Ashby and Moira on Saturday morning, between nine and ten o'clock, when he saw the deceased on the road near the canal. She was coming from the direction of Ashby towards the canal bridge. Witness noticed that the deceased had been crying and appeared to be in trouble. Shortly after, he saw deceased walking on the towing-path of the canal, and she was looking in the water. About an hour after this, he saw deceased taken out of the water close to where he had seen her. Eliza Newbury, mother of deceased, (who appeared very distressed) said that she and another daughter were going to Ashby on Saturday morning, and the deceased wanted to go too. But as she had had two very bad fits during the night, she told her she could not go, but that she must go back with her father. Instead of going back, however, she kept following on, and used bad language towards witness. After this, the two girls had a quarrel, and witness told the deceased that she would go to the policeman. Shortly after this, the deceased went towards the boat, and witness thought she had gone home. She followed on just after and made inquiries, but found that she had not been home. The deceased thought that witness took more notice of the younger sister than she did of the deceased ; but it was not so. She was always a good girl except after these fits, which seemed to affect her temper. From information given her, witness went to the bridge and looked over into the water, and saw the deceased's hat in the water. By the Coroner : These fits came on the girl very frequently. By Dr Williams : She had been having fits for two years. Sometimes she had as many as six in a fortnight. When in these fits, her hands and face were drawn, and her face would become purple. After further evidence, the jury at once returned a verdict of "Suicide whilst in a state of temporary insanity".

68 **February 16 1889**

TOWN HALL, TUESDAY

ALLEGED THEFT OF HAY George Timson, labourer, lodging in the Workmen's House, Bedford Street, and Martin Richardson, labourer, Coach and Horses Yard, Humberstone Gate, were charged with being in company with another and stealing 6 cwt of hay, value £1 16s, the property of William Prentice and others, from a building in Foundry Lane between January 30th and February 8th. Mr Waring (Haxby and Partridge) prosecuted. Reuben Saunt, labourer in the employ of the prosecutors, said on Wednesday January 30th he locked up six trusses of hay in a building in Foundry Lane, and on the 8th inst found the place unlocked and the hay gone. He communicated with his employers, and identified the hay produced as similar to that stolen. It was of a special kind. On Friday last, Timson made a statement to witness. **Mary Foster**, wife of **Edward Foster**, boatman, Charlotte Street, deposed that about a week ago prisoners took two trusses to her house. Timson said "they had brought it for Foster". Her husband was not at home, and she paid Timson 4s, for which he asked. A few days later, Timson took two trusses, and on a third occasion, when he also took two, he was accompanied by another man (and Richardson). She paid Timson 4s at each visit. This was all he asked, and she thought it was all right. The men put the hay in the loft, and it remained there until the police fetched it. Questioned as to whether her husband had been home during the period she had spoken to, the witness several times contradicted herself, but adhered to her statement that her husband was not present when the hay was delivered. PC Merrin said

yesterday he arrested Richardson and charged him with the offence, to which he replied, "Yes". Detective Sergeant Palmer deposed to apprehending Timson who, when charged, said, "It's quite right". Witness afterwards jointly charged the prisoners, when Richardson admitted having carried one of the trusses for the other prisoner. The men were remanded until Tuesday next.

69 February 23 1889

TOWN HALL, TUESDAY

STEALING HAY George Timson (32), lodging at the Workmen's Home, and Martin Richardson, Coach and Horses Yard, Humberstone Gate, labourers, were charged on remand with being concerned in stealing six trusses of hay, value 36s, the property of Messrs W Prentice and Co, hay and corn dealers. Mr Waring (Haxby and Partridge) prosecuted, and Mr Bouskell watched the proceedings on behalf of the man Foster, to whom the hay was sold. No additional evidence was offered. Timson was formerly in the employ of the prosecutors as an occasional man. Between the 30th ult and the 8th inst, six trusses of hay, each of which weighed about a cwt, were abstracted from a store in Foundry Lane, and sold by the prisoners and another man to **Mrs Foster**, the wife of a boatman living in Charlotte Street. Prisoners pleaded guilty, and having both been previously convicted of larceny, they were each sentenced to six weeks hard labour.

70 May 25 1889

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT, WEDNESDAY

ALLEGED ASSAULT ON THE POLICE Thomas Swan of Loughborough was summoned for assaulting PC Challoner on Sunday in the borough. Mr Rowlatt prosecuted, and Mr Deane defended. PC Challoner said he was on duty in the Rushes, Loughborough, about 10.30 pm on Sunday, and saw a man named John Gamble, who had been convicted of poaching. The man was coming from the direction of the canal, and just before passing witness he whistled in a peculiar manner. He considered it his duty to search the man, but found nothing on him. Immediately after, another man named John Grimbley came up from the same direction, and as he also was a convicted poacher, witness searched him, finding in his possession certain gun caps. A man named Trigg was instructed to assist witness, and Grimbley made peculiar noises with his mouth. Witness walked in the direction of the canal bank and met defendant coming from that way, whom he suspected, as he had previously seen him in the company of poachers. Defendant came round the corner towards witness, who stopped him, saying that as he suspected him of coming from land in search of game he should search him. He was about to do so when a companion named Staniforth said, "Don't you let him touch you Swanny in the street". Witness said he should search him, and proceeded to do so. Staniforth again objected, and Swan resisted, at the same time pulling a piece of wood out of his pocket and striking witness with it on the ears. Told Swan he should lock him up for the assault. Defendant resisted, and witness blew his whistle. With considerable difficulty, defendant was taken up the street, a person named Roberts and defendant's sister resisting. When near Mr Gadsby's shop, defendant threw himself on the ground and kicked witness on the helmet. PS Shilcock and PCs Kirby and Williams came up, and the man was taken to the Police Station. When the defendant was searched at the station, on him were found powder flasks, an eel line and "wads". By Mr Deane : He mentioned the "wads" when defendant was remanded. He did not know of any previous charge against defendant. He had no knowledge of defendant having left the town on Sunday, or of any poaching having taken place on that day. He suspected him by the signal given by the other two men. He had not previously seen defendant that day. He had made no charge against the other two men. He suspected defendant because he was coming from the direction of the canal, as well as from the signals of the two men. He did not tell Trigg to search the others. He had never met defendant before under similar circumstances. He had been on duty from five o'clock, but had not seen Trigg. He went into the White Lion about six o'clock, but had nothing to drink until after eight o'clock. He had a can of beer, but did not pay for it. He was treated. From the White Lion, he went to the Black Lion, where he stayed a minute or so, but had nothing to drink. Then he went to the Oak, but had nothing there, nor at the Charnwood. It was about nine

when he entered the Ram, and stayed three or four minutes. He fetched Simmonds and Hambleton, who he believed bought the coat witness was after. He did not drink with the men, but had a drink with Mr Cayless. Alfred Whitehouse did not put a shilling in his hand to pay for the beer. He might have read from his pocket book, but was not certain that he made an entry. He did not push Swan against the wall, nor did he say to the man that he was going to search him before he went any further. Defendant did not ask the reason for being searched. He did not kneel upon Swan, but put another constable's handcuffs on him. He had not been asked to lay any further information against others. Re-examined by Mr Rowlatt : From the noises made by Grimbley and Gamble, he suspected that poachers were coming from the direction of the canal bank. The reason for his visiting public houses on Sunday night was because he had been instructed to inquire into two supposed thefts. Thomas Trigg, gamekeeper of Stanford, said as he was passing through Loughborough on Sunday night, PC Challoner asked him to go to the canal bank. He saw defendant come up, and also a man and a woman. When they arrived at 2 Bridge Street, he saw something pass from defendant to the others, resembling either a stick or a gun. Later on he saw the assault. By Mr Deane : About two o'clock the same afternoon, he saw PC Challoner in a public house in Meadow Lane. Challoner had no drink to his knowledge. When Challoner stopped Swan, witness did not recollect telling him of something passing from Swan to the others. He had had dealings with Swan, but did not meet him sometime previous when a County Court action was threatened. He heard Swan say he should not be searched at all. PS Shilcock said he assisted in searching defendant on Sunday night, when he had upon him the articles mentioned by PC Challoner. For the defence, Mr Deane submitted that on no particular occasion had it been shown that Swan was in the company of convicted persons. The responsibility of searching must be used by a constable with the greatest caution, and he asked whether in Swan's case there was "good cause". There was not a tittle of evidence that defendant acted in concert with poachers. As to the gun or stick passing from defendant to the others, as related by Trigg, it had been amply shown by that witness that Challoner knew nothing of it at the time of searching. It was exceedingly unreasonable that Swan, with 17 years good character, should submit to being searched in the town on a Sunday night. He also submitted that there was no assault. He was not going to speak against the visits to the public houses but his instructions were that Challoner was at the Ram for an hour. Everything depended upon the confidence the Bench placed in Challoner. Henry Staniforth, framework knitter, Bridge Street, said he went to the Boat Inn on Sunday night, where he saw defendant. They came to Bridge Street together with witness's wife. Defendant handed nothing at all to him or to Mrs Staniforth. They parted for home, but witness hearing Challoner say he was going to search Swan, turned back. Swan asked three or four times the reason for the search, but Challoner refused to reply until Swan said he would go anywhere out of the street. It was then that Challoner said he suspected him of having been in search of game. He never advised defendant not to be searched. Defendant did not strike Challoner on the ear with the piece of wood. When near Mr Gadsby's, defendant did not kick the constable. When Mrs Spencer, defendant's sister, came up, Challoner threatened her if she did not get away. By Mr Rowlatt : His wife went the same way as he did. She was not carrying anything. At the time Challoner took hold of Swan, he had just let go of Grimbley. Witness was seven or eight yards away. He did not advise Swan not to be searched, nor see any assault. John Brewster of Bridge Street said he was sitting at his door on Sunday night when he heard Challoner say, "I'm going to search you". Witness went in the direction of the noise, and saw Challoner, who had hold of Swan as he was standing near the wall. By Mr Warner : He had not that night heard Challoner ask anyone else to be searched. By Mr Deane : He heard Swan tell Challoner to take his hands from his (Swan's) pockets, and Challoner say he should search defendant under the Poaching Prevention Act. His private opinion was that Challoner had had some drink. By Mr Rowlatt : He did not know Trigg or Grimbley. He heard Staniforth advise defendant to go quietly to the station. There was no fighting. He never heard Swan charged with assault, and was under the impression that he was taken into custody for night poaching. Francis Burton, Bridge Street, said when the complainant and defendant were near Mr Gadsby's, he saw Swan on his back and the constable kneeling on him. When he saw Swan, the latter lay perfectly still. William

Hambleton said that while he was in the Ram about 10 o'clock, PC Challoner came in and told witness the coat he wore was a stolen one, and witness would have to go with him. Challoner had two or three mugs of beer, and drank out of "our pint". Whitehouse paid for the next, giving Challoner a shilling, which he gave to the landlady. Out of the change, Challoner kept three halfpence, and handed the remainder of the change to Mrs Whitehouse. Challoner had a mug of beer with the three halfpence, and Whitehouse told him he had "a good cheek". By Mr Rowlatt : Challoner got him convicted in 1886 for stealing pears. Burton was not in his company that night. **Frederick Simmonds**, boatman, gave similar evidence. This concluded the defence. Mr Rowlatt said if the Bench required evidence as to PC Challoner's sobriety, he was prepared to call it. The Bench said they did. Superintendent Smith said there was not the slightest suggestion that on Sunday night PC Challoner was not sober. He was sober. The Bench retired to consult, and on returning into Court said they had decided to convict. Mr Deane handed in testimonials from Mr Cartell and Mr Watts. The Bench fined defendant 40s, or 21 days. Mr Warner added that the magistrates desired to express their opinion that it was very undesirable for policemen on duty, even if their duty called them into public houses, to drink so much beer in public houses as Challoner appeared to have done by his own admission.

71 July 13 1889

ATHERSTONE PETTY SESSIONS A fine of 10s, with 19s 6d costs, was imposed upon **John Hemsley**, boatman, Polesworth, for trespassing in search of game upon land in the occupation of Messrs Mallaby and Alkin at Grendon on the 23rd ult.

72 January 4 1890

A WOMAN DROWNED The body of a woman, identified as that of Hannah Warburton of 2 A Court, Gray Street, was found in the canal near the West Bridge about a quarter past nine o'clock on Sunday morning, by a boatman named **Joseph Skidmore**. The latter, with the assistance of Joseph Bodycot of 32 Redcross Street, recovered the body, and it was removed to the Bow Bridge Inn, where Dr Blakesley made an examination. The poor woman was seen near her home on Saturday night. She was married, but lived apart from her husband, and had latterly obtained a livelihood as a charwoman. At the inquest, which was held by Coroner Harrison on Monday morning, evidence of identification was given by James Brown, shoemaker of 105 New Park Street, who said the deceased was about 53 years of age. She was the wife of Joseph Warburton, a bricklayer, by whom she was deserted 11 years since. From inquiries which witness had made, he ascertained that the woman was seen in Gray Street at half past eight on Sunday morning. He knew of nothing to cause her to destroy herself. Joseph Skidmore having deposed to seeing the body floating in the canal underneath the West Bridge, and its subsequent recovery, Dr Blakesley certified that death was due to suffocation by drowning. An open verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

73 March 22 1890

A DONKEY STARVED TO DEATH At Rugby Petty Sessions on Tuesday, **James Renshaw**, boatman, Stretton-under-Fosse, was charged with ill-treating a donkey by keeping it without food on February 14th and several successive days. On February 13th, a man named Salisbury noticed in an allotment belonging to the defendant a donkey tethered to the hedge by a rope, and without any means of subsistence. A week afterwards he saw the animal lying down, and going up to it found that it was dead. Inspector Jones said the animal was a young one, and had been perfectly healthy, but its stomach was quite void of any traces of food. The defence was that the owner had been confined to his bed through illness, and had been unable to attend to his donkey. Defendant was fined £3 and £1 14s 6d costs, or in default a months imprisonment.

74 May 31 1890

SUDDEN DEATH OF AN OLD WOMAN The borough coroner held an inquest on Tuesday morning at the Telegraph Inn, Belgrave Gate, touching the death of an old lady named **Mary**

Payne, aged 77, a widow, who died suddenly on Sunday morning. The evidence of the daughter of the deceased, Elizabeth Naylor, was to the effect that her mother was the widow of **Aaron Payne**, boatman, and had been living with her. She was in her usual health until between nine and ten on Saturday night, when she sank back in her chair in an unconscious condition, and remained so until she died, about half past three on Sunday morning. Dr F W Lewitt was the medical witness in the case. He said he was called in early on Sunday morning, but Mrs Payne had just died. He had examined the body, and was of opinion that death was due to a natural cause – apoplexy. The jury returned a verdict accordingly.

75 December 20 1890

SWADLINCOTE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

INEBRIATES **John Summers**, boatman, Measham, was summoned for being drunk at that place on the 22nd November. Sergeant Lester stated the case, and defendant, who did not appear, was fined 24s including costs.

76 January 3 1891

MOIRA

ENTERTAINING THE BOATMEN Through the exertions of Police Sergeant Allen of Overseal, funds were recently raised to provide the boat people with a Christmas entertainment. These people have for some time been lying ice bound at the Rawdon and Reservoir Pit of the Moira Colliery. On Christmas afternoon, they were provided with an excellent dinner in a tent at the Reservoir Pit, Messrs Nixon, Thornewill, Ison, Holbrooke, Buxton and others assisting Sergeant Allen. After dinner, Mr Ison presided, pipes and tobacco were distributed, and a few pleasant hours were spent in conversation, speech making, &c. On the following day, the boatmen were each presented with a bowl of good soup.

77 January 17 1891

LEICESTER COUNTY COURT

INTERPLEADER CASE The parties in the next case were **John and Joseph Rudkin**, boat owners and builders, execution creditors ; **John Smith**, boatman, 9 Great Holme Street, execution debtor ; and Henry Preston, Red Lion Inn, Highcross Street, claimant. Mr Hincks was for the claimant, and Mr Simpson for the execution debtor. The claim was for certain goods and chattels taken in execution under a process issued at the instance of the Rudkins. Judgement for the claimant Preston.

78 January 31 1891

LEICESTER COUNTY COURT

ADMINISTRATION ORDERS Mr Keites applied on behalf of **John Smith**, boatman, 9 Great Holme Street, whose debts amounted to £37 1s 4d, for an administration order, offering 5s a month. Mr Simpson opposed on behalf of the majority of the creditors, and the application was dismissed.

79 February 28 1891

ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH PETTY SESSIONS, SATURDAY

THEFT OF PROVENDER **Richard Hunter**, boatman, Coventry, was charged on remand with stealing a quantity of oats, beans and chaff, the property of Lord Donington, at Moira on the 10th inst. The prisoner, who is 72 years of age, pleaded guilty. Taking into account his age, and that he had already been locked up for ten days, the Bench ordered him to be imprisoned for one day. A few hours later, Hunter was liberated, and he left Ashby for Coventry, telling the police that he was going to the Coventry workhouse.

80 March 14 1891

DROWNING FATALITY AT BELGRAVE FOUR WEEKS IN THE CANAL On Saturday

evening, Mr G E Bouskell, the district coroner, held an inquest at the Talbot Inn, Belgrave, on the body of a man named James Godwin, whose body was found in the canal on Saturday morning, after having been there since February 7th. PC Payne, a Belgrave constable, was the first witness. He stated that information was given at the police station on February 7th that a man was in the canal. Witness went in company with Inspector Marlow and dragged the water, but could not find anything. Witness heard on Saturday morning that the body had been recovered by a boatman named **Edward Gade**, who reported the matter. Witness took charge of the body, and identified it by the description given. Mr A W Emms, surgeon, said he saw the body on Saturday morning, and had no doubt death was caused by suffocation by drowning. There were no suspicious appearances about the body. George Godwin, farm labourer, Wanlip Hill, identified the body as that of his son James who, he said, was a shoe traveller. Deceased left home on Saturday February 7th, about two o'clock in the afternoon, to go to Leicester. Witness met him on the Loughborough Road, and deceased smiled at him but did not speak. He appeared in his usual health. He did not return home, and witness, hearing of a man being in the canal, communicated the next day (Sunday) with the police. Deceased, prior to the 7th of February, was in very good spirits, and had not been depressed at all. He had not, to witness's knowledge, any pecuniary difficulties. A Rothley shoehand named Robert Henry Vines said he was with the deceased on the night of Saturday the 7th February. Witness met him at a public house at Belgrave about four o'clock in the afternoon, and they had a lot to drink together. When they started to walk home, both were the worse for liquor and could not walk straight. They parted company in the Loughborough Road, near Belgrave, but witness did not know on which side of the canal bridge. Witness did not quarrel with the deceased, nor did Godwin have a quarrel with anyone else. They were both in the employ of Mr Ward of Rothley. Charles Vines, son of the last witness, said he was present on the Saturday night in question. Both his father and deceased were about drunk, and when they got near the Birstall Lane (which is beyond the bridge), deceased said, "I am going home ; I shall be home in half an hour". He then started to go up Red Hill. Witness and his father remained for five or seven minutes afterwards, and then started to go home. It was a very dark night, and they did not see deceased again. Henry Rimmington, a printer of Belgrave, said he recollected the night of February 7th. About ten o'clock that night, he was on the Loughborough Road, and on going in the direction of the bridge heard some groans and sounds, as if someone were quarrelling. Witness stopped to listen, and went on to the bridge and looked over, but the night was intensely dark and he could see nothing. He then went to the other side of the bridge, and heard groans directly underneath. He got over the railing, which is about four feet high, and went down the side of the water. As he was getting over the railings, he heard a man and a young woman coming down Red Hill. He shouted to them, and the man followed witness to the bank, where he struck a match. Witness then saw a man in the water, holding on to a beam which was about a yard from the pillar of the bridge, and some six or seven yards from the bank. Witness heard him say, "Come and save me", and then tried to get to him, but as the beams were very slippery and not being able to see what he was doing, witness could not get to the man. Witness asked him if he could hold on for a quarter of an hour, and he said he could. He did not appear to be exhausted. Witness hurried off for the police, who came at once. He was gone not more than ten minutes, and when he got back he saw deceased once, splashing in the water and out of his depth. From the sound he was making, he should imagine the deceased was the worse for liquor. The jury returned an open verdict.

81 March 21 1891

TOWN HALL, THURSDAY

A VIOLENT FELLOW **John Mee**, boatman, 10 Foundry Lane, pleaded not guilty to committing a breach of the peace by fighting in Foundry Square on Wednesday evening. PC Wilkins stated that he caught prisoner fighting. The other man was "escorted away by females". Prisoner said the other man was the aggressor, and he only stood in his own defence. There was a further charge against the prisoner of assaulting his mother, **Hannah Mee**, on Wednesday, to which he pleaded not guilty. Complainant said her son had been drinking for two days when he ought to have gone with

his father's boat, and on Wednesday afternoon, he broke into her house and was taking away his father's coat when witness stopped him. He then struck her in the face, and kicked her badly. Prisoner said it was a family affair. Whenever there was any bother at home "it was always him". The Chairman said his father would have to find a substitute for prisoner for the next voyage, and prisoner would have to go into retirement in the apartments down Welford Road for a fortnight.

82 October 10 1891

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, THURSDAY

BIRSTALL Joseph Flear, boatman, no fixed residence, was charged with being drunk on the highway at Birstall on the 17th October, and with assaulting **Dennis Street**, a boy aged 15 years. PC Gutheridge said he received complaints of the ill-treatment of the boy by the prisoner, and last night found Flear very drunk. Witness afterwards saw the lad, and found him very badly bruised, with weals on his arms, side and back, and there was a bruise on his head, while his nose was bleeding. A little girl was in the cabin of the canal boat of which prisoner was in charge, and she had been brought to Leicester, and discovered to be in a filthy condition, with her head full of vermin. Superintendent Ormiston said the man was detained for drunkenness because he said he was going away with a load. They had found that he left Leicester a day or two ago, and just outside the town the horse fell into the canal. Prisoner blamed the lad for this, and thrashed him unmercifully. No doubt steps would be taken by the NSPCC. Prisoner was remanded until Saturday.

83 October 17 1891

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, SATURDAY

SHAMEFUL CRUELTY AND NEGLECT AT BIRSTALL Joseph Flear, boatman, no fixed residence, pleaded guilty to being drunk at Birstall, and also to assaulting **Dennis Street**, aged 13 years, on the 7th inst, and neglecting and ill-treating **Kate Flear**, aged 8 years. Mr Simpson prosecuted on behalf of the NSPCC. Evidence was given proving that defendant is a boatman, and on the day in question he was drunk, and was seen beating Dennis Street, a boy in his employ, very violently with a rope. He then struck him and knocked him from the canal bank into the boat, cutting his head very severely. The girl, Kate Flear, was defendant's daughter, and was found to be in a most filthy condition, and must have been badly neglected for a long time. Defendant's wife left him several months ago, and since then defendant, his daughter and the boy Street had lived on the boat by themselves. Dr W P Peake gave evidence as to the horrible condition in which the girl was. Defendant denied that the wound on the boy's head was caused by him. Mr Morton, one of his employers, gave him a good character, and said he was one of the cleanest boatmen they had. Fines to the amount of 50s, costs 31s, or 36 days imprisonment in default, were imposed.

84 December 26 1891

LOST IN THE FOG AND DROWNED At Leeds last night, a boatman named **William Lamb**, 25, and a labourer named Patrick Cowan, 66, lost their way in the fog, walked into the river, and were drowned.

85 March 19 1892

"PLAY" IN THE COALFIELDS

400,000 MEN IDLE The stoppage at the collieries where the miners employed are members of the National Federation began on Saturday. The men were practically unanimous in carrying out the resolution of the Manchester conference, and their movement received support through the action of the Durham colliers, who had decided to strike against a proposed reduction of wages. In Lancashire, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire the stoppage was general ; but in Staffordshire the men were divided, the Cannock Chase house coal pits being closed, while some South Staffordshire collieries, chiefly supplying coal for manufacturing purposes, remained at work. In North Wales, too, although the Federation resolution has been widely supported, there is a division, and in the Flintshire district not more than a fourth of the miners came out to "play". At a

meeting of the Lancashire and Cheshire Federation on Saturday, it was decided to support a resolution in favour of resuming work next week, and to restrict operations afterwards to five days a week if necessary, a proposal which met with approval in some other districts. Reports state that, notwithstanding increased output during the last three weeks, stocks of coal at the pits are generally low.

The "Press Association" says :- It is interesting in view of the present situation to know what advances have been made to the men since 1859. The prices prevailing in 1879 formed the basis on which all advances and reductions since that date have been calculated, and at the termination of the sliding scale agreement in 1889, prices were 5 per cent above the 1879 basis. In August 1889, an advance of 10 per cent was given, making 15 per cent above the basis. In December the same year another 10 per cent was given, making 25 per cent advance. In March 1890, 5 per cent was allowed, giving an increase of 30 per cent. In November of the same year a further advance was granted, to take effect in January 1891, of 5 per cent, bringing up the wages to 35 per cent above the basis. Although nominally 35 per cent above the basis, it must be considered that owing to an agreement that each 1 1/4 per cent should be taken to correspond with three farthings per day, which is really more if mathematically worked out than the actual county average wage of 5s 11d as existing at present, that it is really 42 per cent above the basis.

Between twenty five and twenty six thousand colliers ceased work at seventy four pits in Derbyshire, and it is computed that the number of other work people who have in consequence of the stoppage been thrown out of employment is quite a third of that number, including supernumeraries on the Midland and Great Northern Railways, and workmen engaged at iron furnaces and various large industries in the county. The majority of the miners ceased work about noon ; others having left at the end of their shifts about half past ten o'clock. The weather was wintry, and as the colliers were brought to the pit bank with their tools, they gradually dispersed in a quiet and orderly manner – of course with a few exceptions. In various districts, the men held private meetings amongst themselves, and discussed the question. The majority seemed inclined to think that one "stop week" would be quite sufficient, especially as they will in no way benefit by the funds of the association. The colliers in most instances are in an impecunious position, and this may account for their returning to work at an earlier period than they otherwise would have done. At most of the large ironworks in the district, large numbers of men have been discharged, and the stoppage, so far as they are concerned, will in most cases be for an indefinite period. The owners have been compelled at great expense to damp down some of the furnaces in blast, owing to the want of coal and coke to keep them going.

Within a radius of four miles of Ilkeston, quite 4,000 miners are taking a holiday. Not a small proportion of them confess that they cannot see what good will result from the movement, and many of them openly avow they would be at work except that they do not wish to act differently from others. Hundreds of the men are out without having given notice, but it is not expected that the employers will take any notice of this fact.

Upwards of 20,000 men employed in the Nottinghamshire collieries ceased work and commenced their so called holiday, the miners in that county being practically unanimous in supporting the resolution of the Manchester conference. In a few pits in the Mansfield district, several hundred men and boys refrained from handing in their notices, but the managers intimated that they would have to cease work with the rest. Addressing a meeting of the men, Mr Councillor Bailey, the Notts mine agent, said the only way to retain their 40 per cent advance was to cease work until all stocks had been cleared off the market.

The situation on Monday quite fulfilled the predictions of a week past as to what would happen when the resolution of the Manchester conference was actually put in force. The miners seemed in most districts disposed to treat the closing of the pits in the light of a holiday for themselves ; there was no great pressure of orders for coal for domestic purposes ; and the managers of works in different parts of the country – especially those engaged in the production of iron and steel – made it understood that continued high prices for manufacturing fuel would have to be met by either partial or total stoppage. The effect on the industries of the country appears to be the most serious

result of the action of the colliers. At Bolton, over 2,000 people other than miners are thrown idle in consequence of the cessation of work at the pits, and at Warrington, Wolverhampton, Sheffield and elsewhere, manufacturers are being a good deal hampered. On the railways too, a very quiet time has set in. Some of the companies have, in view of the possibility that a restricted coal supply may render it necessary to take off their least important trains, given notice to many of their hands in the running departments ; others have put the men at their works on short time ; and of course the heavy traffic of the lines serving the coalfields has suddenly shown a great falling off. The Black Country miners have not joined the general movement. They remain at work, as do the men under the South Wales sliding scale arrangement. At the London Coal Exchange, there was no excitement, and no alteration in prices was announced.

The strike of Durham miners commenced on Monday with every prospect of the struggle being a protracted one. Mass meetings of the men were held, at which resolutions were passed expressing in the strongest terms a determination not to accept the proposals of the colliery proprietors, and the owners also, in the form of a statement to the public, made it clear that at present at any rate they have no intention of receding from the position they have taken up. Already the strike is having disastrous consequences, not only in its influence upon the main industries of the district, but also upon the domestic condition of the colliers. It is stated that many of the colliery villages are without water, their supplies from the pits being cut off, and the applications for pumping operations to be resumed have been refused.

About 600 delegates, principally from the north of England and Scotland, attended the conference of the Miners' Federation in London on Wednesday. An impression prevailed that at the beginning of next week, the miners will resume work. A leading London firm announced that in this expectation the price of Wallsend coal had been reduced to 22s 6d, being a decline of 4s per ton from Tuesday. In Liverpool on Wednesday, large numbers of river and canal boatmen were thrown out of work owing to the coal strike. The North Wales Miners' Federation passed a resolution in favour of "playing" for one week, and working five days per week in future.

86 May 28 1892

SAD DEATH OF A KITCHENMAID The borough coroner, Mr Robert Harvey, held an inquiry on Tuesday evening at the Slater Street Schools into the circumstances attending the death of Emma Burton, aged 26, who was employed at the Bell Hotel as a kitchenmaid. Mrs Pick, who resides at 2 Pingle Street, said deceased was her sister. The last time witness saw her alive was on the 9th inst, when she appeared in her usual health and spirits. She had never said anything to witness that would lead her to think that she contemplated suicide. Mary Elizabeth Gregg, a scullerymaid at the Bell Hotel, said deceased was her aunt, and had been employed at the Bell Hotel a little over two years. She had never noticed anything strange in deceased's manner, for she always appeared cheerful. Witness had questioned her as to her condition, but she had denied that there was anything the matter with her. Witness saw her aunt on Tuesday night, when she told her she was going out for an hour, and witness did not see her again alive. **Frederick Warren**, a boatman, said on Monday afternoon, while passing through the North locks, he found that he could not shut the gates. He procured the drags and then found the body of a woman. With assistance he removed it and gave it into the charge of PC Sharpe, who conveyed the body to the North Bridge Inn. Mr P Peake, surgeon, stated that he examined the body, and was of opinion that it had been in the water for four or five days. From the appearances he thought deceased was in an advanced state of pregnancy. Death was due to suffocation, caused by drowning. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned", and the foreman said that it was the opinion of the jury that the locks were too exposed and very dangerous.

87 June 18 1892

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT, WEDNESDAY

A LOUGHBOROUGH ASSAULT CASE John Dakin, Ann Dakin and Thomas Rodgers were charged with assaulting **Samuel Callaghan** at Loughborough on the 11th inst. Callaghan was

charged with assaulting Ann Dakin and Rodgers. Complainant, a boatman, said he was in the Oak Inn at 7.30 on Saturday evening. When he went into the inn, one of Dakin's sons wanted to fight him, but he declined. Mrs Dakin came in and struck him on the head with an umbrella, without any provocation. John Dakin knocked him down, and Rodgers kicked him. He had had a dispute the Thursday previous with defendants respecting some coal. He did not accuse Rodgers of stealing his coal. David Callaghan, son of complainant, who was with his father, corroborated his statement. Henry Spencer said he heard a dispute about some coal. Mrs Dakin struck Callaghan on the head with the knob of an umbrella stick. John Dakin caught hold of him and shook him. **Henry Leatherland**, a boatman, corroborated the former witness's statement. He said the complainant did not strike back. PC Bowley, in charge at the police station at the time Callaghan made a complaint, spoke of the condition he was in. He had a bruise on his head from which blood was flowing. Mrs Dakin was then called. She said that after a few words respecting the coal dispute, Callaghan struck her in the stomach, and she retaliated by striking him on the head with her umbrella. Rodgers was there, but he did not kick Callaghan. John Dakin said Callaghan followed him into the yard, and said he was "a better man than him". He shoved him backwards, and bumped his head on a bench after he had struck his wife. Rodgers said Callaghan offered him some whisky, which he refused. A dispute afterwards arose between Dakin and Callaghan, and he alleged that Callaghan struck Mrs Dakin. He denied hitting or kicking Callaghan, but complainant struck him on the cheek and also on the nose, causing it to breathe. Mrs Rodgers was also called and gave evidence related to the commencement of the assault. The charge against Callaghan was dismissed. In the other charge, the defendants were fined 15s each, including costs, or seven days.

88 July 16 1892

TOWN HALL, WEDNESDAY

CRUELTY TO A MULE **John Merchant**, boatman, and John Henry Brown, clerk, were summoned, the former for cruelty to a mule by working it while in an unfit state from lameness, and the latter for causing it to be so worked on the 16th June. They pleaded guilty. Evidence was given in support of the charge by PC Grant, Inspector Alexander RSPCA and Mr Bailey, veterinary surgeon. The Inspector said Merchant told him that Brown knew the mule was lame when sent out. Mr Bailey reported that the animal was suffering from ringbone, and for an aged mule was in a fair condition, but not fit for work. The Bench, believing that Merchant acted under instructions, though he ought to have refused to take the mule out, fined him 5s and costs, and dealing more severely with Brown who, they said, ought to have known better, ordered him to pay 20s and costs, or 14 days.

89 September 2 1892

On Tuesday at Atherstone, **William Johnson**, a boatman, was committed for trial, bail being allowed, charged with shooting Joseph Harding. On the 17th inst, as defendant's boat was proceeding along the canal at Polesworth, a number of young men, who were standing on a bridge, annoyed him by calling to his horse to stop. Defendant fetched a gun from his cabin and fired, several shots striking Harding in the hand. His defence was that he merely wished to frighten them.

90 September 24 1892

TOWN HALL, SATURDAY

SCHOOL BOARD CASES A large number of parents were summoned for not sending their children regularly to school. Fines of 5s, or 5 days were imposed.

Cornelius Church, 52 Marjorie Street, boatman.

91 October 29 1892

THE CHARGE AGAINST A CANON

VERDICT AND SENTENCE At the Middlesex County Sessions on Saturday, before Mr Littler QC, the Rev Canon Baynes, 58, surrendered to his bail to further answer the charge of assaulting

Miriam Louisa Cogswell, aged 10. Mr Arthur Hutton prosecuted and Mr P Rose-Innes defended. Henry Foy said that on the afternoon in question he was sitting on the same seat as the prisoner and the children at the Warren, Twickenham, when he commenced the acts complained of. He then got into a boat, and afterwards went to the police. Cross-examined : He did not remonstrate with the prisoner. Henry Parrott gave corroborative evidence, and said his back was towards the prisoner. **Mr George Holder**, boatman, deposed to witnessing the prisoner's conduct from a boat in the river. Robert Bennett said that from what he heard he went to the Warren and saw the prisoner sitting between the two girls. John Cogswell, the father of the child, said that he was a painter, and on getting home from work at a quarter past five on the 8th of August, he found the children crying. He afterwards gave the prisoner into custody. Inspector Mealham said that when the prisoner was charged, he said, "It's false". The defendant called no witnesses. Mr Rose-Innes, in defence, said this was a most serious offence, especially to the prisoner, who was a clergyman of the Church of England. He asked the jury to say that the case had not been made out to their satisfaction. If the case for the prosecution was true, the prisoner ought to have been in a lunatic asylum, and not in the dock. The prisoner, when charged, said it was monstrous, and so it was. The witnesses who had been called ought, if their evidence was true, to have interfered, but they did not. They appeared to have watched, as they said, "to see something more". Instead of going away, the accused went to the cottage and offered to give an explanation of this alleged occurrence. He asked them to come to the conclusion that a friendly act had been misconstrued. The reason the child was crying was because she was late home. The prisoner had not been in the Church without distinguishing himself. His connection commenced from 1859, and he had held various benefices. A verdict of guilty would put him out of the pale of his friends and society generally. Mr Littler, in summing up, pointed out that the jury had nothing to do with the consequences. If offence was proved, they had nothing to do but find the prisoner guilty, whatever was his station in life. The offence was not peculiar to any station of life. The jury, after a short consultation in private, were called back, and Mr Littler said the prisoner could have been called if he had liked. If he was called, and they convicted him, afterwards he could take into consideration the question of perjury. Mr Rose-Innes : I never heard such a thing before. After that, he absolutely declined to call the prisoner. The jury found the prisoner guilty. Mr Hutton said the prisoner had been a Canon of the Church of England, and had twice been charged with fraud. In sentencing the prisoner, Mr Littler commented on the fact that these children were sent out to play on the public grounds provided for the purpose. The prisoner had no character to lose, and the least sentence they could pass was 18 months imprisonment.

92 March 18 1893

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, WEDNESDAY

BIRSTALL **Thomas Marlow**, boatman, Leicester, did not appear to a summons charging him with being drunk and disorderly at Birstall on the 6th. He was fined 5s, costs 11s 6d, or seven days.

93 April 15 1893

Startling evidence was given at an inquest held at Blackburn on the infant child of a Wigan canal boatman named **Moore**. The mother stated that she, her husband and child all slept in the cabin bed, which the coroner's officer said was exactly 38 inches wide. The coroner observed that the conditions were eminently favourable to suffocation, and the jury assented, but in the absence of medical evidence declined to return a verdict of suffocation.

94 April 22 1893

LEICESTER COUNTY COURT

IMPORTANT ACTION AGAINST THE CANAL COMPANY William Charles Marris, house agent, New Street, sued the Leicestershire and Northamptonshire Union Canal Company, 23 Friar Lane, for £15 for trespass and damage to trees. Mr Toller, instructed by Messrs Freer, Blunt, Rowlatt and Co, appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr W Simpson for the defendant. Mr Toller, in

opening the case, stated that the plaintiff owned land by the side of the River Soar at Aylestone, at the junction of the old river with the newer cut of the canal. On the bank of the river he had two very fine willow trees. In January last, when the ice was on the river, a man cut the whole of one of these trees down, and it was found that he was acting by the instructions of the Canal Company. Compensation was now claimed for the damage to the trees. Mr Simpson said it was admitted that the branches were lopped because they interfered with the navigation. Mr Toller remarked that they were more than lopped, the whole tree was cut down. Mr Simpson admitted that a great mistake had been made in not giving notice to the plaintiff that they were going to cut these branches. He contended that it was a matter of only a few shillings, if there was any damage at all. The jury could not take into consideration any sentimental feeling. Evidence was given for the plaintiff, and then Mr Holt, the surveyor to the company, gave evidence as to the branches projecting over the water ten or twelve feet. **Thomas Smith**, a boatman of 40 years experience, spoke as to the obstruction, and said his stove, chimney and other things had been swept off the boat by the branches. William Warner jun assessed the actual amount of damages at 20s. The judge, in summing up, said there was nothing to justify conduct of this kind. The company were entitled to cut off what was actually in their way, but they had no right to go beyond that. Whether they had gone beyond that was for the jury to say. The jury, who had earlier in the day visited the spot and examined Mr Marris's property, found that plaintiff's claim was very reasonable, and gave him the verdict for the £15 he claimed.

95 June 17 1893

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

BREACH OF CONTRACT **William Gilbert**, boatman, Mountsorrel, was charged by William Cook with a breach of contract, and £1 damages were claimed. Mr Cook, a coal merchant of Loughborough, stated that he made an agreement to go with the defendant to Crich. He bargained with him for £1 2s for the job, which would last a week. Upon arriving at Mountsorrel, the defendant left the boat, saying he did not think he should go any further. The Bench made an order for the defendant to pay the amount claimed, and also the costs of the day.

96 June 24 1893

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Alfred Whitehouse**, a boatman, 56 Derby Road, Loughborough, was charged with having cruelly ill-treated a horse on the 9th inst. Defendant pleaded guilty. PC Weston said that as he was on duty in Alsopp's Lane about 3.30 on the day in question, he noticed the defendant in charge of a horse on the towing-path of the canal. Noticing the animal was lame, he accosted defendant on the matter, who said the horse was lame when he started on the journey from Mountsorrel. The officer said the horse was pulling two boats, which the defendant told him contained 47 tons of stone. Inspector Alexander, NSPCA, said that when he examined the horse a few days after the occurrence, he found that the animal was not able to bear its weight on the off hind leg. Defendant told him that he had the horse examined at Mountsorrel by a blacksmith, who said it was fit to be worked to Loughborough. The blacksmith was called and denied that he had made such a statement to the defendant. Whitehouse brought the horse to him on the 18th to bleed, but he would not. The next day, when the defendant brought the horse to him, it was in a worse condition. The question of working it did not crop up at all, or he would have advised the defendant not to work it. Mr Coates, veterinary surgeon, Loughborough, said the horse was in a poor state. He thought the defendant had worked it more through ignorance than motive. Defendant was fined £2, including costs, or 14 days hard labour.

97 July 29 1893

A boatman named **John Schofield** (42), living at Leeds, was knocked down on Saturday night whilst fighting with another man, and fractured his leg. He was conveyed to the Infirmary.

98 August 5 1893

SHOCKING CHARGE AGAINST A FATHER At Wolverhampton on Wednesday, **Edward Payne**, a middle aged boatman, was committed for trial on a charge of having criminally assaulted his daughter, **Henrietta Payne**. It was alleged that whilst travelling from Ellesmere to Wolverhampton, the prisoner slept with two of his daughters, the girl Henrietta and an elder sister, and that he assaulted both of them. They, however, made no complaint until their mother took proceedings against their father for non payment of arrears of maintenance. The evidence disclosed a shocking state of immorality. The defence was a total denial of the allegations.

99 August 26 1893

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

WILFUL DAMAGE William Greasley, shoehand, and **Henry Smedley**, boatman, both of Loughborough, were charged with breaking a fence at Woodhouse Eaves on the 14th inst, doing damage to the amount of 6d, the property of Mr Everard de Lisle. John Walker, Longcliffe, proved the case. Both defendants denied the charge, stating that they did not go off the road. They were fined £1 each, including the costs, in default ten days imprisonment with hard labour.

100 October 14 1893

THE COAL TRADE DISPUTE

MOIRA AND DISTRICT The hundreds of men and boys employed at Lord Donington's pit maintain that resolution to decline the masters' offers which has characterised the Moira men throughout the struggle. The colliery manager had asked the men to meet him at the Canal End recently and many of the miners attended, but upon Mr Jno Turner attempting to address them, they shouted that if he had anything to propose, he should do so to their (the miners') representatives. It was not known what suggestion Mr Turner was about to make, but if it was an appeal to the men to resume at the 10 per cent, or any reduction, his efforts would have been fruitless, as the men are determined to resume work only at the old rate.

The miners generally have not been neglected by the Relief Committee, and bread, tea, flour and sugar have been distributed weekly, while one week each miner received a shilling from the Federation. There are scores of coal boats near Moira, completely blocking the canal – three, four and five abreast. Moira (Rawdon) Colliery, the nearest to the canal, being idle, enforces the idleness of many boatmen who, with their wives, and in several instances many children, loiter by the banks of the canal, or help the father to recover coal from the bed of the canal – mineral which in prosperous times had fallen from the coal trucks when the boats were being loaded.

101 October 21 1893

A RIVER MYSTERY IN LEICESTER On Sunday last as some canal boatmen were passing through Leicester with three boats on their way to London, they noticed something in the canal which had the appearance of a lifeless body, and a cap, but from some reason unexplained, they did not think it worth their while to report the matter, and passed on. However, they returned on Thursday morning, and informed **John Rudkin**, a boat builder at the Public Wharf, Belgrave Gate, of what they had seen. Of course further inquiries were instituted, and as a result a body of a man was recovered from the canal, which it is believed was the one seen floating in the water on Sunday. It is stated that it has been identified, but up to a late hour on Thursday night, further particulars were not available.

102 October 28 1893

SAD DEATH OF A LEICESTER PENSIONER An inquiry was held at the Town Hall on Saturday afternoon by Mr R Harvey into the circumstances attending the death of William Brandon, gardener, 1 Cardinal Street, whose body was found in the canal on Thursday evening. The circumstances have already been published. Deceased left home about a fortnight since, taking with him his pension, he being an old soldier. He was seen once or twice in the neighbourhood of the

canal, but his whereabouts were unknown to his friends. On Sunday some canal boatmen, whilst on their way from London to Derby, noticed a body in the water near the Public Wharf in Belgrave Gate. They did not report the case till Thursday, when on their return they gave information to William Chambers, a labourer, who searched and discovered the body, which was afterwards identified. At the time deceased left home his wife was dangerously ill, and she died a few days afterwards. Dr Emmerson stated that he examined the body, and found a nasty cut over the right eye. He believed that death was due to drowning, but he could not say positively. He did not think the wound had anything to do with death. It was probably caused by a boat striking the body after death. Selina Price stated that on Friday she saw deceased walking down the towing-path towards Belgrave. He was the worse for drink. The jury returned an open verdict, to the effect that there was not sufficient evidence to show how deceased got into the water.

103 January 6 1894

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT, WEDNESDAY

ASSAULT Edwin Cooke, coal dealer, Loughborough, was summoned for assaulting **Theresa Matlock** at Loughborough on the 26th. A cross summons charged Matlock with assaulting Cooke. Mr Clifford appeared for Cooke. Mrs Matlock, wife of **George Matlock**, a boatman, said that at ten o'clock on Boxing Night she went to the Green Man Inn, Swan Street, for her husband. Cooke, who was there, using filthy language, came up to her and asked her to shake hands. She declined, and he then commenced using disgusting epithets to her. Her husband having asked her to fetch some tobacco, she went out of the house and met defendant, who struck her, causing the discoloration of her eye. He then went away, and she had not seen him since. In cross-examination, witness said she never told defendant to hang himself. She did not follow Cooke out of the house. She did not strike him, nor had she an umbrella or stick. Mrs Annie Litherland corroborated, adding that she went after Cooke and asked him if he was not ashamed of himself. He replied that he would serve her the same. Cross-examined : Mrs Matlock tried to kick Cooke. She did not take part in the fight. Superintendent Smith stated that when Mrs Matlock complained at the police station on Boxing night, she had a quantity of blood on her clothing. Mr Clifford having addressed the Bench, Cooke went into the witness box. He stated that when the woman came into the house, he asked her to have a drink. She replied that he might go and hang himself like his father did. She also used a filthy expression. He went out of the house to get rid of her, and was walking home when he received a severe blow on the neck with an umbrella. He took no notice of the incident, but a few seconds later he received another blow. He then turned round and struck her in the face. The woman had continually insulted him respecting his father. Thomas Hudson, a labourer, corroborated, and said Mrs Matlock carried an umbrella. Mrs Litherland, recalled by the Bench, swore that neither Mrs Matlock nor herself had an umbrella. If she (witness) had had one, she would have "laid it about him". Superintendent Smith stated that when Mrs Matlock and Mrs Litherland came to the police station, neither of them had an umbrella or stick. The Bench retired, and on their return the Chairman announced that the charge against Matlock would be dismissed. They considered Cooke had had some justification, but used more violence than was necessary, and he would be fined £1, including costs.

104 February 24 1894

DEATHS

HUMPHRIES On the 16th inst at Moira, **Daniel Humphries**, boatman, aged 61 years.

105 March 3 1894

TOWN HALL, THURSDAY

EDUCATION ACT A number of persons were summoned for offences under the Education Act, and their cases dealt with as under :-

Cornelius Church, boatman, 52 Marjorie Street, 5s.

106 March 10 1894

THE FOWL STEALING CASES AT LOUGHBOROUGH At the Loughborough Police Court yesterday, before the Mayor (Alderman W S Cartwright), **William Litherland**, 128 Paget Street, and **James Henry Dakin**, John Street, both boatmen of Loughborough, were charged with stealing eight live tame fowls and 36 eggs, value 23s, the property of William Cooper, Bridge Street, Loughborough on March 3rd. A man named Addleton was before the magistrates on Wednesday on this charge, and was remanded for a week. Prosecutor stated that he kept a dozen fowls in a barn on the canal bank, and locked the place up on Saturday. Next morning, eight fowls and 36 eggs were missing, and he reported it to the police. He had been shown the fowl and skin produced, and identified them as his property. Sergeant Agar stated that he found the fowl and skin at the house of Addleton. From information received, he arrested the two prisoners on Wednesday evening. He told Dakin he was suspected of having a key which fitted the padlock securing the barn. Prisoner denied it at first, but subsequently admitted that it was true. When jointly charged with the theft, they both said they only took three fowls and nine eggs from Cooper's place, and four fowls from Faulks'. Prisoners were remanded till Wednesday on this charge, and were informed that they would also be charged with stealing four fowls, the property of Arthur Faulks, on the 3rd inst. Bail was allowed.

107 March 17 1894

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

THE FOWL STEALING CASES William Henry Addleton (32), labourer, Brookside, Loughborough ; **William Litherland** (22) and **James Henry Dakin** (19), boatmen, Loughborough, were charged on remand with stealing eight fowls and 36 eggs, value 23s, the property of William Cooper, grazier, on March 3rd, and four fowls, value 10s, the property of Arthur Faulks, on the same day. The evidence in these cases was given last week. It was that Cooper kept a dozen fowls in a barn on the canal side. They were safe on the morning of March 3rd, but eight of them and 36 eggs were gone when prosecutor visited the place next morning. On receiving information of the robbery, Sergeant Agar made inquiries, as the result of which on the 6th inst, he went to the prisoner Addleton's house, and told him he was suspected of the theft. In the pantry Agar found a cooked breast of fowl, and in a closet were a skin and two feet, and prisoner told him he would find the remainder of the birds at a certain spot on the canal bank. The sergeant found another fowl in the place indicated, and it and the skin had been identified by Cooper. On the 7th inst, Sergeant Agar arrested the other prisoners, and Dakin admitted that he had a key which fitted the padlock securing the door of the place where the fowls were kept. The boots of Litherland and Dakin corresponded with several of the footprints round the barn. When charged, all the prisoners said they only had three fowls and nine eggs. Prisoners elected to be tried summarily, and all pleaded guilty. The other case was then gone into, and the evidence was to the effect that the fowls had not been missed by the prosecutor or his man. When Addleton was arrested two fowls were found under a bed which, it was later discovered, belonged to Faulks. Addleton pleaded guilty, and the other two said they were with him, but did not go near the barn. A fine of £5 was imposed on each prisoner, or a months imprisonment in default of payment, for the two cases.

108 June 2 1894

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

DUCKING THE LOCK-KEEPER **John Locker, jun**, boatman, Loughborough, was summoned for assaulting **William Carr**, quarryman, Barrow-on-Soar, on April 26th. Complainant said his father kept the lock house at Mountsorrel, and on the day in question he was there about six in the evening. Defendant was in a boat below the lock, and he drew the bottom paddles when one of the top lock gates was open, contrary to the bye laws, as it wasted the water. Complainant went to him and asked him to drop the paddle. He refused, and threatened him with a "windlass". Complainant got it from him, and defendant recovered it, but Mrs Carr obtained it from him and took it away. Shortly after, complainant thought defendant had gone away, and he was stooping to pick up a piece

of wood when Locker came behind him unawares, and pushed him into the lock, which was then full of water. He swam to the gates and clambered out. Defendant was hardly sober at the time. John Pilgrim of Mountsorrel gave evidence as to defendant pushing complainant into the lock. Defendant, who did not appear particularly bright, had nothing to say, and the Bench fined him 40s, including costs, or 14 days in default, the Chairman remarking that it was a lenient decision for a very serious assault.

109 July 21 1894

DROWNED WHILST DRUNK

A SAD STORY TOLD AT THE INQUEST An inquest was held by Mr John Close, coroner, at the Derby Town Hall on Tuesday morning, touching the death of John Webster, who was drowned while bathing in the river Derwent on Monday morning. The body was identified by Ellen Webster, the deceased's widow, who stated that she lived at 4 Parker's Place, Parker Street. Her husband, who was 22 years of age, had been residing with his brother at 94 Warner Street, they having been separated for about three weeks through a quarrel. She last saw deceased alive at five minutes to nine on Monday morning, when he was in the company of a man named Hart. Neither her husband nor Hart were sober, as they had been out together. Deceased spoke to her about a reconciliation, and the last words he said were to the effect that he would get a home for them to live together again. Joe Hart, a driller of 118 Parker Street, said he had known deceased five months. He slept at witness's house on Sunday night, and they went out together on Monday morning. Among the places they called at was the Seven Stars public house, Nottingham Road, where they had beer. Witness and deceased were both drunk, and anyone could have seen as much, but the landlady of the Seven Stars made no objection to serve them. Deceased nearly fell asleep on the settle, and witness persuaded him to go out. They then went to the Coach and Horses public house, Little Chester, where deceased had two bottles of soda water and witness half a pint of ale, the landlord serving them in the usual way. Deceased wanted to have beer as well, but witness told him he had had enough. Witness admitted that they were both about as drunk as each other. When they left the Coach and Horses, they walked up to the river side, and deceased said, "What do you say to a bathe, Joe?" Witness assented, and they stripped and entered the water. It was then about ten o'clock. Witness could only swim a little, but deceased was a very good swimmer. Deceased swam across the river and back, and was in the act of doing so a second time when he suddenly disappeared. Witness had his back turned at the moment, and he never saw deceased again. Witness shouted to deceased, but received no answer, and he ran to the Folly House for assistance. A woman there gave him a life buoy, but when witness told her he could not swim, she told him it was no use him jumping into the river. He accordingly hurried down to the Police Station to report the affair. Witness was further examined as to his condition. He thought there was no more danger in deceased bathing while drunk any more than in witness bathing himself. Witness then admitted that on the way to the Seven Stars they called at the Nottingham Arms, Bridge Gate, where they had some beer. In answer to a further question, witness said they visited the Elm Tree public house in Watson Street before breakfast. They were at the Elm Tree from half past seven until ten minutes to eight. They were both very drunk on Sunday night. They were at the Elm Tree until shortly before ten, when they went home and had some more beer fetched from the Elm Tree, which they drank in witness's house. They neither of them went to bed on Sunday night, but slept downstairs on the sofa. **William Gregory**, a boatman of Furniss Yard, Brook Street, spoke to getting the body out of the water, and Police Sergeant Hawke deposed to removing it to the public mortuary. The Coroner, in the course of his remarks to the jury, said he thought it was exceedingly wrong of the landlord or landlady of the various public houses where deceased and Hart called to have served them with drink in the condition in which, according to the evidence, they undoubtedly were. The Coroner added that in his opinion the authorities of the borough would not be doing their duty if they did not summon the publicans in question before the magistrates. Eventually, the jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned whilst bathing".

110 September 29 1894

TOWN HALL, THURSDAY

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE Several cases under the Education Act were heard, a fine of 5s being imposed on **William Withers**, boatman, 33 Britannia Street.

111 October 27 1894

A MEDICAL MAN AND SUNDAY WORK At an inquest held on Tuesday at Alpraham, Cheshire, on the body of a canal boatman named **Thomas Bricknell**, who was fatally kicked by his horse, it transpired that the deceased lay in great pain all day on Sunday. Dr Munro's assistant was sent for, but refused to attend "because it was Sunday". The jury, in returning a verdict of "Accidental death", commented on this, and expressed regret that the doctor had not seen deceased before death.

112 December 29 1894

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

HOLIDAY MAKING **John Locker**, boatman, Loughborough, was charged with being drunk and disorderly on the 22nd inst. He did not appear, and Sergeant Gotheridge and Inspector Agar having proved the case, a fine of 10s including costs was imposed.

113 January 12 1895

MOIRA

ICE BOUND BOATS The severe weather has caused great loss to the boatmen at Moira. The canal is frozen, and the ice is about six inches thick. A large quantity of coal is usually sent daily from Lord Donington's Moira Colliery to Oxford and Braunstone. About a dozen boats followed the ice boat, but were unable to proceed further than Measham, a distance of about five miles.

114 January 26 1895

GREAT FLOODS

HOUSES INUNDATED – ROADS IMPASSABLE

REPORTED NARROW ESCAPES The heavy and continuous rain of Sunday, following on the rapid thaw of the few previous days, had the natural effect of considerably swelling the volume of water in the river and canal, and on Monday morning there was the usual spectacle along the Soar Valley, right away from the new pumping station, of floods several feet in depth. The rainfall in the neighbourhood measured over an inch between nine o'clock on Sunday morning and nine on Monday morning, and the total for Saturday and Sunday was no less than 1.22 in. It is safe to say that the efficiency of the flood works through the borough has never before had so severe a test, and the fact that there is not a single complaint of overflow within the boundary of the old borough, and hardly within the limits of the scheme, speaks eloquently for the excellence of the works, and their adequacy for the purpose for which they are constructed. But whilst the low lying part of the old borough of Leicester has escaped, many of the residents at Belgrave have been put to great inconvenience, and some of them to loss, whilst even above Leicester in the Aylestone district, the floods were also very extensive. But the full force of the torrent has been experienced most unpleasantly at Belgrave and further down the valley, the scene from the new pumping station being, at ten o'clock on Monday morning, one continuous sheet of water. The floods were caused, of course, by the inadequacy of the river below Belgrave to pass the water along. By the West Bridge it was calculated that the water was rushing at a rate equal to ten miles an hour, and when it reached the bridges over the Thurstaston and Loughborough roads it was simply blocked. The towing-path of the canal between the Twelve Bridges and the West Bridge was submerged at various points, and in the low lying district of Aylestone Park, the overflow from the brook extended across the meadows into Aylestone Road for some distance near Cavendish Road – at a late hour on Sunday night there being nearly two feet of water.

The lower pathway alongside the Soar for the entire length of the Abbey Park was submerged,

while the current here was very strong indeed. Approaching the pumping station, the condition of things became worse, practically the whole of the fields and the allotments between that point and the Loughborough Road, and extending from Beaumont Road on one side to Ross's Walk and Vicarage Lane, Belgrave, on the other, being one immense lake, in the centre of which is situated the Bridge House Estate, Beaumont Road, which is already built on, has just escaped the full force of the flood, but portions of the street at the Belgrave end were under water early in the morning, and a few of the houses on the Bridge estate side were flooded. The water was noticed to be rising with unpleasant rapidity at this point about ten o'clock on Sunday night, and some of the residents then took precautions against possible floods which proved to have been a very discreet course. Between nine and ten o'clock on Monday morning, the water had reached its highest level, and it then had extended to the cottages on the opposite side of Beaumont Road. The occupiers – many of them – blocked up their front doorways with mud in order to keep the water from washing into the front rooms underneath the doorway, and fortunately they experienced no other inconveniences. But Mr Bott, who occupies the cottage known sometimes as the White House, at the corner of the Old Bridge estate, fared much worse. His house was absolutely surrounded by the water, and the family found it necessary to live in the upper storeys. Further up the Beaumont Road, on the same side, the floods washed against the garden walls, but did not penetrate them. Communication with the town by means of the Thurcaston Road was, for foot traffic, completely suspended, the floods extending with a considerable current across about 100 feet of the roadway. The view here was, up to noon, a strange one. The lamp standards and the hedgerows were discernible, but between them there was only one large sheet of water. The football ground of the Belgrave club was noticeable by the Rugby goal posts, and one could trace the size and shape of the various fields by the hedges and fences protruding above the water. There was a very strong current underneath the bridge over the Loughborough Road, and on the other side, towards Wanlip, the meadows stretching from the Birstall Road up to the back of the houses in Bath Street, Belgrave, were entirely submerged. So far as could be seen, the same kind of thing existed further down the valley, where the meadows were all under water.

Some interesting incidents have been reported in connection with the floods. Situated close by the bridge on the Thurcaston Road, Belgrave, are three cottages at what is known as the coal wharf. They are occupied by Messrs William Houghton, J Fleet and S Foulds, and their experience is that the floods are the highest known there since March 1889. They were awakened about three o'clock on Monday morning by a policeman, who found that the water of the canal had then risen on a level with the gateway leading to the houses. The coal wharf was entirely submerged, and in a very short time the ground floor rooms of the three houses contained nearly two feet of water. The occupants were, of course, unable to leave the bedrooms until the water had subsided. A rabbit hutch in one of the back gardens was swept out by the flood, and its occupants were drowned, whilst the water came against the back part of the premises to a depth of several feet. A couple of ponies, which had been in charge of the pound keeper here, had a very narrow escape. They had been put in what was considered a place of safety near the Thurcaston Road, but when the water was at its height, about ten o'clock, the animals were found to be in difficulty. They made their way along the roads of the building estate to the banks of the canal, and then boldly swam across the stream and landed safely in the garden attached to Miss Ellis's house near the church, and were afterwards again taken care of. A number of men were watching the animals, and expected that they would be carried by the current down to the Thurcaston Road bridge, where preparations were made to rescue them.

A boat which had been fastened near the weir close to the pumping station broke loose, and drifted down to the Loughborough Road bridge, where it was recovered, and a watchman named Whitehouse, in the employ of the borough authorities, had a very unpleasant experience. He was on duty all day on Sunday, and at night found his box surrounded with water so that he could not leave. He was kept a prisoner until ten o'clock, when a boatman named **Warren** rowed across the flooded meadows and rescued him. Messrs Billson's rope walk at Belgrave was also submerged, and a good deal of damage was done, but at the old lock house near the pumping station, although the water was deep in the garden and nearly surrounded the house, the inmates fortunately escaped a flooding.

After ten o'clock, the water sank rapidly, although up to one o'clock there was a strong current across the Thurcaston Road, and it was only with difficulty that vehicular traffic was carried out.

Mr Mawbey, the borough surveyor, paid a visit to various points along the whole length of the new flood scheme from Aylestone to Belgrave during the morning. He informs us that the rainfall in the 24 hours up to Monday morning was 1.02 inch, and in the previous 24 hours .22 inch. About 2 1/4 inches of rain have fallen during the last nine days. The flood, he considered, was due to their having fallen .80 inch of rain between 11.45 on Sunday morning and 12.30 midnight – a period of 12 3/4 hours – and owing to the land having previously become saturated, and the dykes etc being full, a very large proportion of this 12 3/4 hours' rainfall flowed into the river. The maximum flood height was reached six hours after the termination of the heavy storm. Some hundreds of acres of land, Mr Mawbey stated, were under water at Aylestone. Immense volumes of water have been discharged by the flood works, the maximum velocity of which at different points was, roughly speaking, from 60 to 85 yards per minute.

At various places in the neighbourhood of South Wigston, the water rose several feet, notably on the Countesthorpe Road, just past the canal, where pedestrian traffic was entirely stopped, and also at Glen Parva, where the water was very deep. At Blaby, close to the Post Office and Congregational Chapel, the water was out for a considerable distance.

Rain commenced falling at Melton on Saturday and continued until Monday morning, when the river and tributaries had overflowed, submerging adjacent fields for a considerable distance. Of 20 sheep belonging to Mr Turner, which were grazing in a field near Smith's Mill, 17 have been drowned.

Whetstone has been visited by the most extensive flood since 1880. Communication between the higher and lower parts of Whetstone, so far as foot passengers were concerned, was entirely cut off, and on Sunday morning it was hardly safe for horses and carts to proceed through the village. The water commenced to rise on Sunday morning, but did not attain any height till past four o'clock in the afternoon. Those attending church from Whetstone House had to wade through the water, and those living lower down had to go home by a back way instead of as usual through the village street. At night, the Congregational Chapel had to be closed owing to the rapid increase of the flood. At the lower end of the village, the water entered several houses, causing great difficulty to the occupants, and the lamplighter was unable to extinguish the street lamps. All work on the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway extension is entirely suspended in the meadows, which on Monday presented the appearance of an inland sea.

LOUGHBOROUGH AND DISTRICT Consequent on the heavy rains and the rapid thaw during the early part of the week, floods made their appearance in the Soar Valley on Wednesday morning, and reached their height on Thursday evening. Work was suspended in the Loughborough section of the MS and L line on Wednesday, and on Thursday morning the temporary line between Stanford and Nottingham Road was completely under water. A number of navvies, however, were employed at the portion nearest the Midland station, keeping the embankment and metals in position. The water had almost subsided by Saturday, but rain again falling heavily, it rose rapidly on Sunday, and on Monday morning the state of affairs was as bad as ever. The contractors of the local portion will be heavy losers, for the embankments and plant have sustained much damage.

The water continued rising throughout Monday, and reached its greatest height about midnight. During the evening, it flooded the houses in Railway Terrace, the occupants having to beat a retreat to the upper rooms. On the Ashby Road, the Burleigh Brook overflowed, and the road was under water at the foot of the hill. The floods commenced to subside early on Tuesday morning, but went down very slowly, and on Wednesday afternoon still covered very large tracts all along the Soar Valley.

SOAR VALLEY INUNDATED If it had been possible to take a bird's eye view of the low lying portion of the valley of the Soar between, say, Birstall and Loughborough, a huge lake would have been found in place of the river and canal which usually wind their sinuous course through the district. The lake had practically no break between Birstall and Loughborough, though, of course, it varied greatly in width according to the conformation of the land. In some places it was upwards of

a mile across, while in other and deeper parts of the valley it narrowed down to a quarter of a mile, but here the stream became a seething torrent, which it was quite impossible for any craft to navigate in safety. In those parts of the valley where smaller tributaries effect a confluence with the main stream, there were vast stretches of water covering thousands of acres of land at a considerable distance from the river bed. This was the case where the river Wreake joins the Soar, about a mile below Syston. The waters of the Wreake overflowed their banks in many places, and a tremendous sheet of water arose, extending from the close vicinity of the village down to the Soar. Unfortunately for Syston, the sewerage works, which are now in progress, have suffered to a serious extent by the floods. The contractors were at work, before the waters rose, on that portion of the road which passes under the Melton railway called the Flattern, leading from the village to the Fosse Road. Since Sunday night, the land hereabouts has been under three feet of water, and the sides of the trenches which, of course, rapidly filled, have collapsed in many places where they were insecurely shored up. The new sewage farm and its partially erected buildings soon presented a scene of utter desolation, the water encroaching over the whole of it, in some places to a depth of five feet. The pumping engines, which had been in use for keeping the trenches clear while the work was proceeding, were submerged and necessarily suffered much damage in consequence. The water reached its greatest height on Monday morning, when it was close to the end of the village, the floods from this point being a mile across. The lower rooms of Syston Mill were inundated, and the weir was many feet under water. A man named Bevan had an alarming experience on Monday morning while endeavouring to get from Lewin Bridge to Syston. He was driving a horse attached to a cart, and while passing through about four feet of water, the animal was seized with a cramp and fell. Bevan was thrown out of the cart, but fortunately escaped with nothing more serious than a ducking, and assistance being at hand, he was able with some difficulty to rescue his horse.

With its volume vastly increased by the inflow of the Wreake, the Soar played great havoc in the neighbourhood of Cossington, where the floods attained the dimensions of a little inland sea, over a mile in width, in which the river course itself could only be traced by the velocity of the current. The main street of Cossington was under water on Monday, and the roads from the village to Sileby and to Rothley House were impassable except to vehicles. The opinion was expressed that no greater flood had been experienced in the district since the great inundation of July 1880, which became more serious from the fact that the hay was carried into the hedges, and thus backed up the water to a much greater extent than would otherwise have been the case. General complaint was made in Cossington with regard to the embankment footpath that was constructed some eighteen months ago, in view of floods, along the side of the road to Rothley House. Owing to the absence of sufficient outlets, this embankment held the water up, and as a result, this portion of the road became very dangerous. On the ditch side, the water was at least six or seven feet in depth. Mr Hancock's mill and house were in the middle of a great lake, the water encroaching into the rooms to such a depth as to render the removal of some of the furniture imperative. An attempt was made on Monday afternoon to take a load of coal from Sileby to Cossington, but the water was found to have attained so great a depth at one place that the driver had to take the horse out of the shafts, and leave the waggon on the road, until the flood had partially subsided. From Cossington, away down to Sileby, Mountsorrel and Barrow, the valley presented quite a picturesque appearance. The river and canal were entirely lost to sight in the waste of waters, but here and there the stonework of a bridge rose above the surface of the flood and marked what was previously the line of navigation. The footway between Sileby village and Mountsorrel Workhouse usually crosses three distinct streams – the canal, the river, and a broad backwater – but now all three watercourses were merged into one great lake, dotted and intersected by the tops of the hedgerows or lines of pollard oaks, the latter possibly indicating the position of the banks of the Soar. The lower portions of Mr Draper's mill at Sileby were flooded, but very little damage was done. The roads between Sileby and Mountsorrel, and Barrow and Quorn, were all under water to a considerable depth, and traffic of any kind was rendered exceedingly difficult for several days.

At Burton on Trent, the recent heavy rains caused floods in the vicinity of Station Street and High Street.

The heavy and continuous rain of Saturday night and Sunday caused the watercourses in Broughton Astley and neighbourhood to rise higher than has been known for a number of years, and considerable damage and inconvenience were occasioned. The water in the vicinity of the station was immense in volume, Mr Cartwright having great difficulty in getting his cows off a field which was inundated. During afternoon service, the approaches to the church from the village were covered to a great depth suddenly, and worshippers in some instances had to be carried through the rushing water. The yard and premises of the White Horse Inn were covered, and reaching from there towards the Liberal Hall from 300 to 400 yards of the roadway was submerged. The occupants of the Bull's Head Inn, the schoolhouse and neighbouring cottages had to take refuge in the second storey, all the ground floor rooms being several inches under water. Barrels were found swimming in cellars, while it was difficult on Monday morning for the milk carts to reach the station, and Mr Frank Hall, postman, was fain to get a lift through the flood on his rounds. The flood reached half a mile towards Cosby, and all the fields around were submerged. The vast rush of water at Soar Mills gave Mr Franks, proprietor, no little trouble, the mill being completely flooded. The highway from Leire to Dunton Bassett was impassable, and all the tributary streams to the river Soar were swollen to an abnormal extent. About noon on Monday, the water had partly subsided, and fortunately no casualty is reported.

115 February 2 1895

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

ONSTRUCTIONS AT MOUNTSORREL **Thomas Jarrom**, boatman, Loughborough, was summoned for obstructing the highway at Mountsorrel on the 19th January. PC Saunders stated that defendant left a horse and cart on the road for three quarters of an hour, and a fine of 10s was imposed.

116 May 18 1895

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

DRUNKENNESS IN THE RUSHES **William Leatherland**, boatman, Loughborough, did not answer a summons for being drunk and disorderly in the borough on Saturday night, but sent his wife. PC Beardmore stated that at 10.30 he found a large crowd near the Ram Inn. In the centre of the people was Leatherland, who was drunk and assaulting his wife. He created a great disturbance and used filthy language. A man named Jarrom, who was also drunk, then came upon the scene, and increased the disturbance by trying to prevent him separating Leatherland from his wife. PC Morley corroborated. Fined 15s, or eight days hard labour.

117 August 3 1895

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

SMART CAPTURE **John Thacker**, boatman, Nottingham, was charged with stealing 50 lbs of sugar, value 7s, the property of Messrs Fellowes and Morton, canal carriers, Nottingham, and Charles Polkey, grocer, Nottingham Road, Loughborough, was charged with receiving the same knowing it to have been stolen, on July 30th. Mr Perkins prosecuted, and stated that Thacker had been in the employ of the prosecutors for a good many years. Lately, they had missed quantities of goods from the boats, but had never succeeded in tracing the thefts till Tuesday. On the evidence that would be given, he (Mr Perkins) would ask for a remand. Inspector Agar stated that about 11.20 on Tuesday morning, he was on the Nottingham Road canal bridge, and saw one of Fellowes and Morton's boats going towards Derby. He saw Thacker leave the boat with a bag full of something, the boat proceeding on its journey. Prisoner came up the steps to the bridge, and went along the Nottingham Road to Polkey's shop, into which he went. Witness followed and, standing outside when a woman went in, saw through into the room behind the shop, where Thacker was with Polkey. The latter was holding a bag, into which Thacker was emptying some sugar. In a few minutes, Thacker came out with an empty bag, and went along Clarence Street. Witness entered the shop, and said to Polkey, "Hullo, Charlie, what's the boatman brought you this morning?" He

pointed to the bag, and said the man had asked to be allowed to leave it with him for a few minutes, and would call for it again. Witness had seen Thacker putting something into his pocket as he came out of the shop, so he asked Polkey if the man did not give him money. Prisoner replied in the negative. Witness took possession of the sugar, and then went after the boat. He overtook it at the first lock. Thacker was with it, and witness told him what he had seen. He said he took Polkey some clean clothes from Leicester. Witness told him he knew what was in the bag, and prisoner then said, "Master, don't lock me up. I will give you anything not to say anything about it". They went into Mr Kendrick's house, and prisoner handed witness 4s, which he said he received from Polkey. He took Thacker into custody, and next morning apprehended Polkey on a warrant. He repeated that the man had only left the sugar there for a short time, and denied giving him 4s for it. When charged together, Polkey denied buying the sugar from Thacker, who repeated that Polkey held the bag while he emptied out the sugar, and then gave him 4s for it. On this evidence, prisoners were remanded till Monday, and bail was refused.

118 August 10 1895

ALLEGED THEFT OF SUGAR FROM A CANAL BOAT AT LOUGHBOROUGH

ACCUSED COMMITTED FOR TRIAL At a special sitting of the Loughborough Bench on Monday morning, when the magistrates present were Messrs C T Parker (chairman), F Winser, and J S Smith, **John Thacker**, a boatman of Nottingham, and Charles Polkey, grocer, Nottingham Road, Loughborough, were charged on remand, the former with stealing and the latter with receiving, 50 lbs of sugar, value 7s, the property of Messrs Fellows and Morton, canal carriers, Nottingham, on July 30th. Mr R S Clifford prosecuted, Mr Wilfred Moss appeared for Thacker, and Mr H Deane for Polkey. Inspector Agar stated that on Tuesday morning the 30th ult, he was on the Nottingham Road bridge over the canal, and saw one of Fellows and Morton's boats going from Leicester towards Derby. As it went under the bridge, the prisoner got off onto the towing-path and came up on to the road. He was carrying a bag containing something bulky, and went up the road and into Polkey's shop. Witness followed and stood outside, but could not see into the shop until a woman went in. He then saw through the shop into the room at the back, where both the prisoners were standing, and Polkey appeared to be holding a bag, into which Thacker was emptying something from the bag he had been carrying. After a few minutes Thacker came out, and was putting something into his waistcoat pocket. He was carrying the same bag, but empty, and went up Clarence Street. Witness went into the shop, and said to Polkey, "Halloa, Charlie, what's the boatman brought you?" Polkey pointed to the bag on the sofa, and said, "He's brought a bit of sugar, and is going to call for it again in a few minutes". Witness asked him if he gave Thacker anything for it, and he replied that he had not. Witness said he had seen Thacker bring it from a bag, and he suspected it had been stolen. Polkey made no reply, and witness took the sugar away, and then went after the boat. He overtook it at Kendrick's lock, and told Thacker what he had seen on the Nottingham Road. Thacker said he took Polkey some clean clothes which he had brought from Leicester. When witness told him he knew what was in the bag, Thacker said, "Oh, master, don't lock me up, and I'll tell you all about it. I'll give you anything if you won't lock me up". They went into Mr Kendrick's house, where prisoner told him he was with a boat load of sugar, which he was taking from London to Derby, and had taken some to Polkey, who gave him 4s for it. He asked witness to "make it up" and offered to give him what he liked to do so. When they went out of the house, prisoner called to his wife, who was steering, to bring the boat to the side, but she swooned and could not do so. Witness saw several boxes marked "Tate" on the boat, and he asked prisoner from which he took the sugar. He replied that he took it from about ten or twenty of the boxes. Witness took Thacker to the police station, and on the following morning apprehended Polkey, who said Thacker would have called for the sugar if he had not been locked up. Witness said that a lad came to him (Polkey) on Tuesday morning, asking him "if he was straight, and expecting the sugar". Prisoner replied, "Oh, that's all rot". The men were put together, and Thacker repeated the statement about the 4s, and Polkey denied its truth. Cross-examined by Mr Moss : Witness was close to the top of the steps on the bridge when Thacker came up, and he was in uniform. As he went towards Polkey's shop, the man

kept as close to the wall as he could get, and witness followed him. When witness started the conversation with Thacker, he did not warn him that his statements might be used against him, because he did not know then that he would be charged. By Mr Deane : Polkey had had his shop for a good many years, and it was on the road to the railway station. If anyone had looked out of the shop, they would certainly have seen witness. Thacker was carrying a striped bag, but it was possible that the plain bag in which witness afterwards found the sugar had been inside that same striped bag. When both prisoners were in custody, and before putting them together, witness asked Thacker if he would recognise Polkey. He said he should, and when he saw him he said that was the man he sold the sugar to. Witness could not say what was his object in putting this question to Thacker. **Harry Whitehouse**, living at the North Lock, Leicester, said he was employed as a boy on barges. He had been working on the barge *Nelson* lately, of which Thacker was the captain. They had been to London, and came from the City Basin with a cargo of Tate's sugar in cases. They got to Loughborough last Tuesday. When they reached the place where a new bridge was being built over the canal, Thacker told witness to go for a loaf to a (?rock) shop on the right side of the Duke of York Bridge. He was to ask the master if he was straight, and whether he wanted any sugar. He went to Polkey's shop and asked this, and he replied, yes, he could do with it. Witness bought the loaf of bread and went back to the boat, telling Thacker what Polkey had said. Cross-examined by Mr Deane : Witness did not know how old he was. He had been to school for a bit – about three weeks. He did not know what it meant to be sworn to tell the truth. He did know the difference between telling a lie and telling the truth. Frederick William Fellows of Nottingham, manager of the prosecuting firm, stated that the boat *Nelson* left London on July 24th and arrived in Derby last Friday, with 200 cases of Tate's No 1 sugar, 100 cases of No 2, and two barrels of resin. Witness personally superintended the unloading of the cargo on Saturday. Each case should contain one cwt net of sugar, and the cases were made to hold that quantity exactly. Witness found that 28 cases had been opened, and quantities varying from two to six pounds of sugar taken from each. The cases had been carefully opened and nailed up again, but in some of them the packing paper inside was rumped. It would be easy to pass the cases over without finding they had been tampered with. He missed about 100 lbs of sugar, and the value of the 50 lbs produced would be about 7s or 8s. Cross-examined by Mr Moss : Thacker had been employed by the prosecutors for some ten years, and before then was engaged by the Grand Junction Canal Company for about forty years. He was a married man, and his wife went with the boat. He had borne a very good character as a workman, and witness had always looked upon him as one of their best men. In reply to Mr Clifford, witness said he could not give prisoner a character as to honesty. On the evidence, Mr Clifford asked for a committal, and the prisoners were committed for trial at the next sessions. The defending solicitors asked for bail for their clients, and Thacker was allowed to enter into his recognisances for £20, and to find two sureties for £10. Polkey was required to enter into his own bond for £30, and two sureties for the same amount.

119 September 14 1895

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNKENNESS **John Draper**, boatman, Bridge Street, Loughborough, did not answer a summons for being drunk and disorderly in the Rushes on Saturday evening. Sergeant Gotheridge proved the case, and a fine of 20s, or 14 days, was inflicted.

120 September 21 1895

TOWN HALL, WEDNESDAY

“ON THE DRINK” **Robert Marlow** (18), Pike Street, boatman, was charged with stealing £3, the money of Charles Atkins Wheeler of Belgrave Avenue, on September 13. Prosecutor, a coal merchant, said prisoner had been employed by him as captain of one of his boats. On Friday last, he advanced him £3 to pay the dues on his undertaking to go to the Shipley Collieries for a boat load of coal. He did not go for the coal, and witness could not trace him. Detective sergeant Merrin arrested prisoner yesterday in Park Street, when he said he was sorry he had done it. He now

pleaded guilty, and admitted that he ought to have gone on the journey. Prosecutor said Marlow had been on several voyages for him before, and he had no cause to complain of him. The charge was reduced to one of stealing £2, and in explanation of the offence, prisoner said he went "on the drink". The man had been living in the town for 18 years, and nothing was previously known about him. In reply to the Bench, Mr Wheeler said he would not mind giving him another trial if he had the opportunity. Prisoner was given some good advice, and bound over in £10 to come up for judgement if called upon within three months.

121 October 19 1895

THE THEFT OF SUGAR AND ITS DISPOSAL **John Thacker**, boatman, pleaded guilty to an indictment of stealing 50 lbs of sugar, the property of Messrs Fellows, Morton and Clayton Ltd, at Loughborough on the 30th July. Charles Polkey, framework knitter, was charged with feloniously receiving the same, knowing it to have been stolen, on the same date, which, however, he denied. Mr White (instructed by Messrs Clifford and Perkins) prosecuted, and Mr Toller (instructed by Messrs Deane and Hands) was for prisoner. Mr White stated that the sugar was stolen during transit on a barge from London to Nottingham upon the Grand Junction Canal, and it would be proved that it was carried to Polkey's, and that he paid 4s for it. Inspector Agar spoke to seeing Thacker take the sugar into Polkey's shop, and leave it there, and afterwards being told by Thacker in Polkey's presence that the latter paid him 4s for it. **Harry Whitehouse**, who worked on the barge with Thacker, said he went to Polkey's and asked him whether he wanted any sugar, and if it was straight, to which he replied yes. The defence was that Polkey was not aware that the sugar had been stolen, and Mr Toller pointed out that there was no attempt at concealment on Polkey's part when the inspector was making inquiries. The Chairman summed up, referring to the various suspicious aspects of the case bearing against Polkey, and after a short deliberation the jury returned a verdict of guilty. Mr Fordham addressed the Bench in mitigation of the offence of Thacker, pointing out that he was 68 years of age and had always borne an excellent character. The Chairman expressed his great objection to appeals to mercy on character in cases of conviction on own admission, remarking that it did not look like a case of first offence. In passing sentence of four months with hard labour in each case, he said the fact that there was no previous conviction against them had been taken into account by the Bench.

122 November 16 1895

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

A BATCH OF DRUNKARDS **John Draper**, boatman, had a long list of convictions against him, and for being drunk and disorderly on Sunday night, he was sent to gaol for 21 days with hard labour. **John Locker**, another boatman, was convicted of a like offence, and was sent to prison for 14 days, having been fined twice this year for similar offences.

123 February 29 1896

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNKENNESS **James Henry Dakin**, boatman, Loughborough, pleaded not guilty to a charge of being drunk and disorderly in Pinfold Gate on the 15th inst. Inspector Agar and PC Weston gave evidence, and defendant denied the charges on oath, but a fine of 15s, including costs, was imposed.

124 May 23 1896

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNKENNESS **George Perry**, boatman, Loughborough, was fined 15s, including costs, for being drunk at Mountsorrel on the 9th inst.

125 June 20 1896

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

DAMAGING BARROW LOCK **Harry Jordan**, boatman, was summoned for damaging the gates

at Barrow Lock on April 28th. **James Witham**, who resides at the Lock House, stated that the defendant, who was going “downwards” ran the boat clean into the gates. He was in charge of the boat, and his wife steering. **James Gooch**, manager of the Leicester Navigation Company, stated that there were eight or nine posts within a distance of 120 yards of the lock for boatmen to haul the boats to. There had been a great waste of water and damage to the lock gates during the last few months, and the company wished to put a stop to it. The defendant had been previously warned. A fine of £1, including costs, was imposed.

126 May 8 1897

UNKNOWN MAN DROWNED AT THURMASTON About two o'clock on Friday afternoon, **William Rhodes**, a boatman in the employ of Messrs Fellowes, Morton and Clayton, discovered the body of a man in the canal near the locks at Thurmaston. The remains were got out of the water and conveyed to the True Blue Inn to await an inquest. The body, which did not appear to have been in the water more than 24 hours, was that of a man about 45 years of age, 5ft 9in in height, and weighing about 13 stone. Deceased was wearing a blue cloth jacket, dark plaid trousers and vest, with a running red stripe, Blucher boots, white cotton shirt with a blue stripe, woollen undershirt and pants, dark brown worsted socks, and a black and white scarf round the neck. He is also described as being full faced, with heavy auburn moustache, clean shaved. On Saturday morning, a hard felt hat, which the man was seen wearing on Thursday evening, was found on the canal bank. It has the manufacturers' name, Lincoln and Bennett, and also what is apparently the name of the shopkeeper selling it, viz, Lawson, Preston. Mr Deane was communicated with, and the inquest was held on Monday at 11.45 at the True Blue Inn. No evidence of identity having been obtained, William Toon, basket maker, Thurmaston, stated that about 8.30 on Thursday evening, he and two others met the deceased on the towing-path between Thurmaston and Birstall. When they first saw him he came out of the hedge and pushed by them. He was then whistling. He looked strange, and witness remarked to his companions that there was “something on with him”. They looked round several times at him, but could not see him far, as it was getting dark. The spot where the body was found was about 400 yards from where witness saw the man. He appeared sober at the time. PC Hinman, stationed at Thurmaston, said that about two o'clock on Friday afternoon, William Rhodes, a boatman in the employ of Messrs Fellowes, Morton and Clayton, reported to him that he had seen the body of a man in the canal near the Thurmaston Locks. Witness went to the spot, and found the body had been removed by George Wilson, a framework knitter of Bath Street, Belgrave, and others. On the body witness found a halfpenny and a farthing, a watch key and another small key. Witness then gave a description of the man as already published, adding that the name on the trouser buttons was Fillis, Blackburn. The description had been circulated as far as possible, but the man had not been identified. The body had also been photographed, and the photograph could be seen on application to the police. Dr W J Spence, Syston, said death was due to drowning. The body was well nourished, and witness put the man's age at about 45. The jury found that the deceased committed suicide by drowning, and that there was not sufficient evidence to enable them to decide as to the state of his mind.

127 June 5 1897

At Middlewich on Saturday, **Sarah Bann**, the wife of a canal boatman, was charged with attempting to commit suicide. A salt boiler saw her floating down the Shropshire Canal. He rescued her, and found a large apron securely tied round her head. Respiration was restored with difficulty. Prisoner, who had been drinking heavily for a week, said she fell in the water, but could not explain her head being muffled. She was remanded in custody.

128 June 19 1897

FOUND DROWNED NEAR ASHBY An inquest was held at the Moira Baths Hotel on Tuesday afternoon, before Mr Coroner H Deane of Loughborough, on the body of **Abel Lamsdon**, a boatman, who was found drowned in the Ashby Canal at Moira on Tuesday morning. Mrs

Lamsdon, the widow, identified the body as that of her husband, who was 33 years of age. He belonged to Oxford. She saw him about 6.30 on Monday night, when he appeared quite sober. **John Humphreys**, a boatman of Oxford, said he had known the deceased all his life, and saw him about 11.15 on Monday night, when he was on the swing bridge. He appeared to be sober. He was called up by the previous witness, and recovered the body of the deceased from the canal. Deceased's boat was close to the side of the bank, and he could have stepped on or off the boat from the path. It appeared to witness that the deceased overbalanced himself when sitting on the side of the boat. PC Hyman said there were no marks of violence on the body. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

129 June 19 1897

THREE MONTHS FOR ROBBING HIS FATHER

SAD CASE AT LEICESTER At the Borough Police Court on Tuesday morning, before Alderman Wood and other magistrates, Thomas James Gadd (22), cabinet maker, no fixed residence, was charged with stealing from a drawer in a bedroom of a house in Queen Mary Street, £43 1s in money, the property of his father, **Edward Gadd**, boatman, between the 31st May and the 13th inst. Prosecutor stated that when he examined his drawer on the 10th of this month, he missed £30 in gold. On the 13th, he missed another £13 1s, and he gave information to the police. John Grant, hosiery hand, Queen Mary Street, said on Sunday night last he saw prisoner come to the window of his father's house and get in. He came out again in a few minutes. Evidence was also called showing that he paid money in a public house, and Harry Groocock, cab proprietor, said he had taken prisoner pleasure trips. On Monday, he paid £7 5s. Detective Constable Maine gave evidence as to arrest, and stated that when charged with the theft, prisoner replied, "It's all right". He now pleaded guilty, and expressed sorrow for what he had done. He was sent to prison for three months.

130 August 7 1897

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

THE INEBRIATE LIST **William Litherland**, boatman, was charged with having been drunk and disorderly in Green Close Lane, Loughborough, late on Saturday night last. Sergeant Gotheridge proved the case. Fined £1, costs included, or ten days.

131 August 28 1897

On Tuesday, an inquest was held at Tipton respecting the death of **James Willis**, Icknield Square, Birmingham, boatman in the employ of Messrs T and M Dixon, coal merchants, Birmingham. The horse attached to the boat of which deceased had charge suddenly started, and Willis, who was walking a short distance behind, was pulled by the rope over the side of a turnover bridge into the canal. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

132 September 18 1897

BOROUGH POLICE COURT

A DRUNKEN BOATMAN **Thomas Webb**, boatman, no fixed residence, was charged with being found drunk on the licensed premises of George Lewin of the Britannia Inn, on the 15th inst. The evidence showed that the man was drunk and was conveyed to the police station by PC Bishop. Defendant denied that he was drunk, but he was fined 5s.

133 November 20 1897

LEICESTER COUNTY COURT

BUYING A STOLEN HORSE **John Rigby**, 70 Marjorie Street, boatman v John Sanders, No 1 St Mark Street, general dealer. This was a claim to recover £3 paid for a horse which, having been stolen, was subsequently taken away by the rightful owner. Mr Keites appeared for the defendant. The facts of the case were exceedingly simple. On the 12th October, plaintiff bought a horse off

defendant at the Britannia Arms for £3, Sanders in turn having bought it off a stranger for 15s. A few days afterwards it transpired that the animal had been stolen, and plaintiff and defendant were subsequently taken to the police station, but afterwards discharged. The rightful owner of the horse, however, took the animal away. The case was adjourned for a month, for the attendance of a witness.

[Note : Name shown as Rigley in article dated June 11 1898]

134 November 27 1897

MARKET HARBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

BAD LANGUAGE Frederick Tear, George Dunkley, labourers ; **Alfred Woodhouse**, boatman ; and Annie Heatherman, single, all of Husbands Bosworth, were charged with using bad language at that place on November 14th. PC Burditt gave evidence of the offence, and said he had received many complaints. Superintendent Burton said he had received anonymous letters as well as personal complaints of bad language, both by girls and boys, in the streets at Husbands Bosworth, one letter stating that it was not fit for respectable people to pass along the streets on a Sunday night, especially when going to and from the places of worship. Defendants were fined 15s each, including costs.

135 December 18 1897

BOROUGH POLICE COURT

STREET FOOTBALL **Henry Whitehouse** (19), boatman, Old Mill Lane, was summoned for playing football in Belgrave Gate on the 8th inst, and he was fined 2s 6d, or three days.

136 March 12 1898

DRUNKENNESS **John Locker**, boatman, Loughborough, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in the Rushes on Saturday night. PC Grocock stated that the defendant was in the centre of a crowd. He had his coat off and wanted to fight, and used very bad language. Fined 21s or 14 days.

137 March 19 1898

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF A LOUGHBOROUGH GIRL

FOUND IN THE CANAL When passing along the canal near Loughborough early on Thursday morning, a boatman named **Gadd** saw a body floating just below the surface of the water. He gave information to the police, who dragged near the Corporation Baths, with the result that the body of a young woman was brought up. It proved to be that of a girl named Ellen Squires, 17 years of age, who had been missing from her home at 50 Pinfold Gate since Thursday February 17th. The body was removed to the Corporation Hotel to await the inquest.

138 April 2 1898

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **John Draper**, boatman, Loughborough, and Jane Brooks, Steeple Row, Loughborough, were summoned for being drunk and disorderly in Church Gate on the 26th ult. Draper, an old offender, was sent to gaol for one month, and the woman was fined 20s, or 14 days.

139 June 11 1898

BOROUGH POLICE COURT

ALLEGED THEFT OF A HORSE Thomas William Smith, baker, no fixed residence, and Henry Sanders, hawker, St Mark's Street, were charged with stealing a horse, value £10, from a field on the Thurmaston Road, the property of John Dormer, plumber of Archdeacon Lane, between the 9th and 21st of October 1897. Prosecutor said he kept two horses. On the 9th October, one of his horses was in a field on the Thurmaston Road. On the 21st of that month he missed the animal, though on the Sunday previous it was still in the field. He reported the loss to the police, and went to some

stables in the occupation of a man named Foulds. There he saw his horse, and he took possession of it. The prisoner Smith had been lodging with him for about three weeks up to about the 9th October. He left without giving notice. He did not see prisoner again till he was in custody yesterday (Friday). George Lewin, Britannia Inn, Belgrave Gate, said he saw the two prisoners in the yard of his house on the 21st October. They had a horse with them, which Smith was selling to Sanders. Sanders was accompanied by his father. The bargain was completed, and they left the house, taking the horse with them. **John Rigley**, boatman, Marjorie Street, said he purchased the horse from the prisoner Sanders's father, and eventually he took it to Foulds' stables. It was there claimed by the prosecutor on the 21st October. Samuel Foulds, coal merchant, Belgrave Wharf, said on the 21st October the horse was brought by John Rigley, and on the same date it was claimed by the police. Detective sergeant Beamish said on the 3rd inst he received the prisoner Smith into custody from the Kettering police. He charged him with the theft, and he replied, "I saw Sanders, and he asked he to get him a horse. I told him I knew where I could get one. I fetched it, and Sanders gave me 14s for it. He knew I had no horse, belonging to me". Later in the same day, witness arrested Sanders, and placed both men together and charged them with the theft. Smith replied, "It is quite true ; he gave me 14s for it", pointing to Sanders, Sanders said, "My father paid you for it". Smith now said Sanders bought the horse from him, but Sanders denied that he bought the animal, and said he knew nothing about the matter. Prisoners were committed to the Sessions for trial.

140 August 6 1898

BOROUGH POLICE COURT

ALLEGED SERIOUS WOUNDING James Gannon, engine driver, lodging in Britannia Street, was charged with feloniously wounding William Savin by striking him with an iron wrench, while in the public wharf at Belgrave Gate late on Friday evening, with intent to do him grievous bodily harm. The Chief Constable stated that Savin was now in the Infirmary and unable to appear. He should therefore call a man who witnessed the occurrence, and then ask for an adjournment. **John Gill**, boatman, stated that he saw Gannon strike Savin on the head with an iron wrench, knocking him down, and causing blood to flow. PC Winters deposed that Savin came to him on Friday evening, and complained that he had been struck on the head. He had an extensive wound on the side of the head, and witness took him to the Infirmary. The Bench granted a remand until Wednesday.

141 September 3 1898

BOROUGH POLICE COURT

A CURIOUS CASE **Charles Pilgrim** (11), school boy, Dannett Street, was charged with stealing from a stationer's shop, No 95 King Richard's Road, on August 9th, 15s in money, the property of William Taylor Mason. The case was adjourned from the 22nd ult, the evidence taken on which date was read over. In the evidence was a statement by PC Hood that the boy admitted taking the money, having spent some of it, and having given 5s or 6s to another boy named Bailey. Now an alibi was set up. **James Chater**, a boatman, and the boy's uncle, said that on August 5th he went away with his boat, taking the boy with him ; and they did not return to Leicester for a week. The boy, he said, was with him all the time, and slept in the same cabin. The Magistrates' Clerk pointed out that the boy himself had admitted to the police having taken the money, and had also made a statement as to how he had disposed of it. The boy now said he did not take the money, and declared that he was with his uncle all the time. The Chief Constable said he felt justified upon this evidence in asking for a remand in order that inquiries might be made as to the boy's statement. The boy was remanded until Saturday next.

142 September 10 1898

BOROUGH POLICE COURT

THEFT BY A YOUTH **Charles Pilgrim** (11), school boy, Dannett Street, was brought up on

remand, charged with the theft of 15s from a shop on the King Richard's Road, the property of William Taylor Mason, stationer, on the 9th August. It will be remembered that the lad pleaded not guilty at the last hearing, and the lad's uncle, a boatman, swore that the lad was with him on the canal, away from Leicester, at the time of the alleged robbery. The Chief Constable said he would now call further evidence in six boys, who would swear that the lad was in the town. The boys stated that they saw the lad in the town on the 8th, 9th, and 10th of August. Detective Sergeant Carson said he was present when the lad was charged with the theft on the first occasion. The boy then admitted his guilt, saying he had given 5s or 6s to another boy named Ernest Bailey. The Bench found the lad guilty. He had been previously convicted, and was now sent to Desford until he attains the age of 16 years.

143 December 24 1898

EXECUTION AT DERBY **John Cotton**, 66, a boatman, who was sentenced to death at the recent Derbyshire Assizes for the murder of his wife at Bugsworth, near Stockport, on October 26th, was executed in Derby Gaol on Wednesday morning. The condemned man, since his conviction, exhibited the utmost contrition, and paid deep attention to the ministrations of the prison chaplain, the Rev J S Johnson, to whom he more than once admitted the justice of his sentence. He walked firmly to the scaffold, where Billington, the executioner, placed the noose round his neck. While the chaplain was repeating the words, "Remember not the offences of Thy servants," the bolt was drawn, and the body disappeared from view.

144 February 18 1899

FIRE IN FOUNDRY LANE The fire brigade was summoned about 6.30 on Tuesday night to a fire at 12 Foundry Lane, where a child, in carrying a lighted piece of paper upstairs, set fire to some clothing in a bedroom. Fireman Payne, who lives in the vicinity, was called, and he extinguished the flames with a few buckets of water before the arrival of the brigade. The house is occupied by **Cornelius Church**, a boatman, and the damage is only slight.

145 March 18 1899

SAD DROWNING FATALITY An inquiry into the death of Annie Elizabeth Hitchcock, aged 26, a married woman, lodging in Curzon Street, was held at the Town Hall before Mr Robert Harvey on Saturday afternoon. Jesse Hitchcock, a miller of Bruin Street, said he had been living apart from his wife, the deceased, for nearly two years. He had seen her at times since, and provided her with money. He last saw her alive on Wednesday night at her lodgings. She was in very low spirits; he did not know why. They had had no unpleasantness on that occasion. Since they had parted she had several times, in his hearing, said she was tired of her life. By the jury: They parted because of some unpleasantness, for which she was more to blame than he. Sarah Jackson, a widow with whom the deceased lodged, said she last saw Mrs Hitchcock alive on Thursday evening, when she left the house, saying, "Ching, ching, I shan't be long". She enjoyed good health generally, but used to be downhearted when her husband visited her. Meeting him anywhere seemed to upset her. She was cheerful enough when she left home on Thursday evening. Her child lived with her. She received money from her husband, but not regularly. **Enoch Skidmore**, a Corporation boatman of Elmdale Street, said on Friday morning he, with a man named **Chambers**, was in charge of a boat near the Belgrave Locks. He was pulling the boat, and the rope was slack and was partly in the water. It became entangled with something, which proved to be the body of a woman. They got the body out, and he reported the matter to the police. The body was afterwards removed to the mortuary. Dr Dodd said an examination of the body showed that death was due probably to suffocation from drowning. The coroner, having reviewed the evidence, said for anything they knew death might have been due to accident or suicide. There was no direct evidence either way. The jury, after some deliberation in private, returned an open verdict of "Found drowned", there not being evidence to show how the deceased got into the canal. They were further of opinion that the husband was to blame in his conduct to his wife and child.

146 April 8 1899

WOMAN FOUND DROWNED AT DERBY On Thursday morning the body of a married woman named Kate Spinks, who had been living at 5 Union Street, was found in the canal near the Cattle Market Bridge, Derby The body was discovered by a man named **James Collins**, a boatman of Shaw's Yard, Cockpit Hill, and, with the assistance of PC Delaney, he recovered the body, which was removed to the mortuary.

147 April 15 1899

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

OBSCENE LANGUAGE For using obscene language at Mountsorrel on Easter Monday, **Furley Gilbert**, boatman, Mountsorrel, was fined 10s including costs. Sergeant Collis proved the case in the absence of defendant.

148 April 22 1899

LOUGHBOROUGH POLICE COURT

BAD LANGUAGE **William Gilbert**, boatman, Mountsorrel, was charged with using obscene language in that place on the 3rd inst. He did not appear, and Sergeant Collins and PC Kirkland having given evidence, a fine of 20s was imposed, or ten days in default of payment.

149 June 3 1899

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

AN OLD OFFENDER **John Draper**, boatman, Steeple Row, was charged with being drunk and disorderly at Loughborough on the 27th May. PCs Taylor and Pinfold gave evidence, and the Chairman said the man had been 26 times convicted of various offences, and fines seemed to have no effect. He would go to prison again for 28 days, with hard labour.

150 July 8 1899

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNKENNESS **Frederick Dakin**, boatman, 14 John Street, Loughborough, and **William Smart**, boatman, Sanvey Gate, Leicester, did not answer charges of being drunk and disorderly at Mountsorrel on the 17th ult. PC Kirkland gave evidence, and the defendants were fined 15s each, or seven days hard labour.

151 August 5 1899

LOUGHBOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

GARDEN PILFERING John William Benskin (15), labourer, Walter Benskin (12), schoolboy, and **Frederick Johnson**, boatman, Station Street, were charged with stealing and damaging fruit to the extent of 3s, the property of Alfred Bunney, boot and shoe maker. Robert Feary, employed at the Sewage Works, spoke to seeing the three defendants scale the wall of the prosecutor's garden on Sunday morning last. They had a handkerchief, into which they put something which was taken off the wall trees. Mr Bunney gave evidence as to the damage, and said he wished to press the case, as he had suffered considerable damage. Johnson did not appear, and the Benskins stated that they had rabbit stuff in the handkerchief. They only had three plums, which they ate. Johnson was fined 7s 6d, John Benskin 5s, and Walter 2s 6d, and ordered to share the damage.

152 October 7 1899

NSPCC PROSECUTIONS AT LOUGHBOROUGH

PARENTS SENT TO GAOL At the Loughborough Police Court on Wednesday, before the Rev R Burton and other magistrates, **Sarah Ann Perry**, wife of **George Perry**, boatman, The Rushes, Loughborough, was charged with neglecting her children, **Ethel**, aged 12, **Joseph**, 7, and **Mary Ann**, 5. She elected to be dealt with by the Court, and pleaded not guilty. In this case, Mr H Deane prosecuted for the society, and having opened it, called Walter Fryer, master of the Loughborough

Workhouse. He said the defendant's husband and three children entered the house on the 18th September. The man had an injured elbow. They had remained in the house since. The children were very verminous, and two of them had to have their hair cut very close. They were in a shockingly dirty state, but fairly well nourished. Inspector Barnes said he had known the Perry family for over two years, and had them under observation. In September 1898, the husband and wife were summoned for neglect, and the former was fined, the charge against the latter being withdrawn. Since that time, he had frequently seen the woman drunk in the streets, and had noticed the dirty state of the children. He visited the house on the 18th September and saw the girl Ethel. Her clothing was indescribably dirty. She had a mark on her face which she said was caused by her mother biting her, because she would not go into the Blue Boar to her father. The case was instituted on account of the filthy state of the children. Drink had been the cause of defendant being in trouble at that Court. In reply to the Bench, Sergeant Holland said it was one of the most wretched homes of Loughborough. The Bench convicted, and sentenced the woman to a months hard labour.