

## MANCHESTER TIMES 1828 to 1859

### **1 December 19 1828 New Bailey**

TUESDAY A man named **Thomas Glover**, the captain of one of Kenworthy's boats, was placed at the bar, when Diggles, the beadle, stated that in consequence of some information which he obtained yesterday afternoon, he went on board the boat of which the prisoner was the captain, and searched it. In a cupboard or press he found two kegs, one of rum and the other of gin, which the prisoner denied having any knowledge of, but which he afterwards said he had purchased from a smuggler in Liverpool. He (Diggles) went with the prisoner to his house; prisoner's wife gave them some time before they could gain admittance, and when they got in he saw a woman hurrying out at the back door with a basket containing two pieces of prints; these he seized, and the prisoner's wife denied that they were hers. Mr Coates, who appeared for the prisoner, submitted to the magistrate that there was no case made out. Diggles stated that the prisoner's brother was captain of a boat which sailed last night, and in which, it was supposed, the goods he was in search of had been deposited. The magistrates understanding that two persons had been sent in pursuit of the boat, remanded the prisoner.

**Edward Leigh** and **John Hackett**, two boatmen, were brought up for an assault upon the watchmen. It appeared that last night a number of boatmen and others were at a public house in Campfield, and two of them having quarrelled, went out of doors to fight. The watchman seeing a row sprung his rattle, and was immediately saluted with a shower of stones; the watchmen who came to his assistance were saluted in a like manner for about an hour. The prisoners were two of the men. They were ordered to find bail, which they immediately did, and were discharged.

### **2 July 11 1829**

FOUR DAYS AT THE NEW BAILEY The drag net of the Vagrant Act was then brought into convenient operation. Three men, sad rogues no doubt, having been found in a yard at midnight, where they could have gone with no other intent than to commit a robbery, were committed to the treadmill for a month. A lad named **Beckett** was then brought up, charged with taking a horse away from the warehouse of Mr Faulkner. It appeared that Mr Faulkner had let the horse on hire to a boatman, whose servant the prisoner was. Beckett declared that he was only taking care of the horse for his master, and called a witness to prove this, but the manner of the witness giving rise to a suspicion that the two had stolen the horse, they were both ordered to be detained until it should be forthcoming.

### **3 January 7 1832**

OBSTRUCTION OF A ROAD A correspondent at Aston under Lyme says : The road from Ashton to Dukinfield passes over the Manchester and Huddersfield Canal, about three yards below a lock, and every boat passing down the canal stretches a towing line across the road for five minutes or upwards, those going upwards doing the same, but for a shorter time. This serious obstruction may have been but triflingly felt at the time the canal was cut, but the population of Aston and Dukinfield have increased since that time considerably, and such an obstruction is no longer sufferable, particularly when it might so easily and so cheaply be removed, by some such simple contrivance as a light endless chain, passing under and over rollers attached to the underside of the arch of the bridge. Something of this kind the public should insist on being adopted, if the affairs of the company are in so impoverished a state that they cannot afford to build a new and more capacious arch. The simple contrivance recommended would not cost £10, and would be found equally advantageous to the boatmen as to the public, for the great length of time that the rope is stretched across the road is occasioned by the severe pull necessary to overcome the inertia after the boat has fallen down the lock from the higher level to the lower. And in this operation, the lock being so near the road, and there being no road under the bridge for the horse, the rope stretching from the boat, at the bottom of the lock, over the battlements of the bridge (at least seven yards higher) across the road, occasions great loss of power, and unnecessary friction – and of course

greater delay to passengers on the road; all of which would be entirely avoided were the rope passed at once under the bridge, on the same level with the boat. Let the canal company remedy the difficulty as they may judge best, but as the public possessed a right of road long prior to such obstruction they, doubtless, have but to assert and maintain that right, in order to rid themselves of such obstruction.

#### 4 September 8 1832

#### New Bailey Court House

CAUTION TO BOATMEN **John Gillman**, a boatman employed on the Manchester and Bolton and Bury Canal, appeared to answer an information preferred against him by Mr Samuel Kay, Law Clerk to the Canal Company, for passing with his boat through the upper lock at Oldfield Lane, in violation of the 20<sup>th</sup> bye law of the Company's Act of Parliament, when the water did not run over the weir, instead of waiting for a second boat to come up. The case was fully proved, and the defendant was fined in the mitigated penalty of £5.

#### 5 July 6 1833

A NARROW ESCAPE On Monday night or early on Tuesday morning, some ill disposed person cut about twenty yards of rope which secured a flat lying close to the weir at Throstle Nest, and carried it away. As the river was swollen at the time in consequence of the late heavy rains, the flat would have been swept over the weir had not an accident occurred which in all probability saved the lives of the men on board. The first intimation the flatmen had of their perilous situation was given them by the vessel's coming in contact with a boat which had just entered the lock to come up the river. This practice of cutting away the ropes from the flats on the river Irwell has been very frequent of late, and in several instances the boats so turned adrift have been laden with valuable cargoes. Two men named James Thompson and John Baker were apprehended on suspicion of committing the offence ; but, there being no conclusive evidence against them, they were discharged.

#### 6 July 13 1833

EMBEZZLEMENT A boatman named **William Mellor**, formerly in the employment of Mr Thompson, carrier, of this town, was on Tuesday placed at the bar of the New Bailey, charged with having by means of forged receipts retained about £14 of his master's money. About six weeks ago, a warrant was obtained for his apprehension, and entrusted to Moss, the beadle, to execute. The latter met the prisoner on the canal bank between Manchester and Halifax, near to the latter place, but as soon as he attempted to take him into custody, the prisoner was joined by three other boatmen, who flung Moss into the water. He was obliged to get out as well as he could, and leave the prisoner where he found him. Mellor was subsequently taken by the constable of the township in which he had been rescued. The prisoner had nothing to say in his defence, and was remanded until yesterday to give time for the attendance of the necessary witnesses.

#### 7 December 21 1833

CAUTION TO CANAL BOATMEN **Thomas Heeds**, the manager of a boat on the Ashton and Peak Forest Canal, appeared before the magistrates on Wednesday to answer to two charges brought against him by Mr Meadows, agent of the said canal company. The first charge against him was for refusing to deliver to the toll collector a declaration of the quantity of goods he had on board his flat, for which offence he was liable, under the Act, to the penalty of 10s for every ton of goods on board. The second charge was for having, on another occasion, delivered a false declaration, for which also he was liable to a similar penalty of 10s for every ton on board. The penalties altogether would amount to about £10; and the Act left no discretionary power in the Magistrates to mitigate. At the suggestion, however, of Mr Hampson, Mr Meadows consented to receive £4 10s in full mitigation. **Thomas Green**, a boatman navigating the same canal, was next charged with having delivered a false declaration, and with having thrown a brickbat at the company's agent when he boarded the boat to gauge it. This defendant being a poor man, Mr Meadows consented, on the

recommendation of the Bench, to accept as satisfaction a public submission for throwing the brickbat, and the costs of weighing the boat and cargo, court expenses, &c.

**8 May 3 1834 Rochdale**

**MAN DROWNED** On Tuesday night, which was remarkably dark and stormy, a boatman named **John Haslam** and several others called at a beer-shop at Blue Pits near Castleton Moor, and drank there a considerable time. Haslam's boat was moored to a quay at the canal, and his boy was in the cabin. Haslam did not return on board that night and nothing was heard of him, but in the morning he was perceived beneath the water, in a standing position, near the stern of the boat, and quite dead.

**9 May 3 1834**

**MIRACULOUS ESCAPE FROM DESTRUCTION** We never in the course of our experience had to place upon record a more providential escape from death than that which we are about to narrate. On the afternoon of Monday, about two o'clock, Mr Samuel Becket of Hulme, commission agent, was in the upper storey of the warehouse of Messrs Soresby and Flacks, the carriers, at Knottmill, showing some samples of malt to Mr Bradshaw of the Swan Inn, Fountain Street. The building is seven stories in height, and underneath is the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal. In the floor of each room, immediately over the canal, there is a large aperture for the purpose of raising goods from the boats, which is done by means of a windlass in the first storey. There was no cover or guard to the apertures by which accidents might be prevented. As Mr Becket was walking down the room, with the samples in his hand, in conversation with Mr Bradshaw, not being aware of the danger, he unconsciously approached the aperture and suddenly disappeared. Some persons who were in the room beneath state that they saw something descend with immense rapidity, and considered it to be a load of malt which had fallen through by accident. Mr Becket fell, as he believes, as nearly as possible in a perpendicular position; but on arriving at the last storey, his surtout caught the iron handles of the windlass, and the cloth gave way. This caused him to turn round with inconceivable velocity, and fortunately to avoid falling into a boat which was in the canal at the moment; had that been the case he would have been instantaneously killed. He, however, avoided the boat, and was pitched with his head foremost into the canal, which is said to be six feet deep at the spot; for a moment, his head was fast in the mud, which prevented him from rising to the surface of the water. On rising he swam about for a few seconds as well as he was able, until a boatman caught him by the hair of his head, and held him in that manner until assistance arrived, when he was taken out perfectly sensible. A surgeon was sent for, and Dr Crowther was speedily in attendance, but Mr Becket was able to walk as far as Liverpool Road on his way to his residence; there he became rather faint, and he was conveyed home in a coach. From the alarming nature of the accident, it was at first thought that he had sustained some considerable injury, but we are happy to state that, with the exception of some slight bruises and discolourations, he is uninjured.

**10 May 24 1834**

**SINGULAR DETECTION OF A THIEF** On the afternoon of Saturday, a man named Thomas Grounds, who gains his livelihood by dealing wholesale in potatoes, was robbed of nine sovereigns whilst in the tap-room of St Matthew's Tavern, Camp Field. He gave information of his loss to the police, and the same afternoon, Daggatt, the keeper of the Knott Mill lock-ups, went to the public house, and accidentally heard from the conversation of the company that a boatman of infamous character named **Isaac Clarke** had been paying for ten shillingworth of liquor, and also that he was then gone to a shop in Shudehill to purchase a suit of clothes. The crafty officer said nothing to all this, but knowing from the character of Clarke that he could not have obtained so much money by honest means, went out expecting to meet him on his return. Having sauntered about Deansgate for about an hour, Daggatt perceived his customer walking past the Star Inn, bedecked in a fine new suit of clothes, new hat, &c, in company with a woman well known to the police, named Mary Ann Hulme. He made them both prisoners, and on searching Clarke found £6 5s upon him, which,

added to the ten shillings he had given to the company at the tavern and the cost of the new clothes, amounted to £9, the identical sum taken from Grounds. The prisoners were taken before Mr Foster at the New Bailey on Monday, when the worthy magistrate committed Clarke for trial, but ordered the woman to be discharged, there being no proof that she was implicated in the felony.

### **11 July 5 1834**

**A MAN DROWNED** Between the hours of nine and ten o'clock on Saturday night, a boatman named **John Hewitt** was drowned in a lock of the Duke of Bridgewater's canal at Knott Mill, under the following circumstances :- The boat was ready to pass through the lock, and the unfortunate man got out in order to turn the winch which communicates with the paddles. He had been engaged thus for a few minutes when the handle accidentally slipped off and, missing his footing, he was precipitated into the canal. The water was entering the lock with great force, and of course carried him along with it, and as it was violently agitated he could not be perceived for some time. Two boys who were in the boat gave an alarm as soon as they saw the accident, and a person on coming up extricated the man from the water, but he was found to be quite dead. An inquest was held on Monday before Mr Rutter, when a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned by the jury.

### **12 July 26 1834**

**A MAN DROWNED** On the night of Sunday last, a man named Joseph Allen, a dyer, met with an awful and premature death, under circumstances which, it will be seen, add another to the long list of victims to the vice of intemperance. He had been drinking for some hours at a beer-shop in Pendleton, and in the course of the evening was joined by a boatman named **George Jordan**, who remained in his company until nearly ten o'clock. The deceased appearing almost incapable of taking care of himself, Jordan, to whom he had previously been known, invited him to pass the night in the cabin of his boat, which lay in a lock of the Bolton canal, Oldfield Road, adjoining the River Irwell. The night was almost dark when they left the beer-shop; and on arriving at the boat, Jordan told the deceased to wait upon the bank whilst he jumped upon the deck of the boat, about three yards below the bank. He did this for the purpose of contriving some method to get the deceased down without danger of accident. Instead of obeying the directions of Jordan, whilst the latter was in the cabin, the deceased unfortunately walked straight forwards, and of course fell into the lock. Jordan finding he had disappeared, called out, "Joe, art thou in the water?" to which he replied, "I am; come and help me". Jordan then held out his hand, asking the deceased to take hold of it, and he would endeavour to extricate him; the deceased immediately did as he was directed; and having secured the hand, made an unexpected effort to spring into the boat and, in the fruitless attempt, precipitately dragged Jordan over the boat side into the water. They both struggled together for some minutes and ultimately Jordan, by the exertion of great strength, got the deceased to a place in the wall where there was a kind of joint, by which he desired him to hold fast until further assistance could be obtained. Jordan then left the deceased, and attempted to get out of the lock himself by climbing the gates, but when he had got near the top, he lost his grasp and fell into the water. He made a second attempt, on seeing which the deceased called out to him, "George, thou'lt be drowned". Jordan replied he should not, and was adding something more, when he again lost his hold and fell into the water; the deceased continued calling out that he would be drowned, and was desired to mind himself, and keep fast. Jordan was in the act of making a third attempt to climb the gates when he heard the deceased call out, "George, I am going, I am going; the Lord have mercy upon me", and presently he fell, and no more could be seen of him. Jordan at last got out, and immediately proceeded to the Oldfield Lane lockups where he procured assistance, and the body of Allen was recovered shortly after eleven o'clock, but all attempts to restore animation were fruitless. On Monday an inquest was held over the remains by W S Rutter Esq, when the above facts were narrated by the witnesses, and in accordance with which the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**13 August 30 1834**

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH ON THE MERSEY AND IRWELL NAVIGATION We have great pleasure in giving insertion to the annexed petition from the flatmen employed on the Mersey and Irwell Navigation, to the Company of Proprietors, and we are happy to announce that it has been most favourably received – that a suspension of trade on the Sabbath has taken place on those rivers with the prospect of there being, ere long, a total cessation of labour on that day throughout the whole line. What is not the least satisfactory, as concerns the facilities and interests of the trade of the navigation is, that such is the ardour and gratitude of the poor men for the privilege conferred, that by their extra exertions to redeem the time hitherto expended on the Sabbath (by working up to the latest hour on Saturday night, and proceeding on their passage at the earliest hour possible on Monday morning) no delay whatever ensues in the despatch of business ; whilst the benefit conferred on a numerous class of men, long excluded from the public ordinances of religion and means of Christian instruction, is inconceivably great, and must prove nothing less than a public blessing. One more circumstance we cannot withhold, viz, that the flatmen on the Mersey have presented to Mr Edward Atherton Lingard of the Old Quay, who has been instrumental in forwarding their suit, a beautiful silver teapot and coffee pot, with silver sugar basin and cream jug to match, bearing this inscription :-

*Presented to Mr EDWARD ATHERTON LINGARD  
by the Flatmen in the service of the Company of Proprietors  
of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation  
as a Memorial of their esteem and gratitude  
for his sincere and earnest endeavours to promote their  
temporal and spiritual welfare  
1834*

The following is a copy of the Petition of the Flatmen before referred to:-

*The humble and respectful Memorial and Petition of the undersigned Flatmen, employed in the service of the Company of Proprietors of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation.*

To the Company of Proprietors of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation assembled at their annual meeting in Warrington.

June 4 1834

MUCH RESPECTED AND HONOURED MASTERS It is with deep sentiments of submission and reverence that the undersigned, being Flatmen employed in your vessels, venture to approach you with their very humble and respectful memorial of gratitude, for the regular and constant employment afforded them in your service.

Your humble memorialists trust that they shall long continue to testify their gratitude, by a zealous and unremitting attention to your interests in the navigation, to which they feel strongly attached (many of them from long and early associations) and whose prosperity they are exceedingly anxious to promote.

With this unfeigned expression of their sentiments, your humble servants presume to address you, and they trust that their much respected employers will condescend to allow them, most humbly and respectfully, to lay before them their complaint of a grievance which they have long endured, and which so painfully wounds their consciences, that they must earnestly entreat the serious consideration of their case, and the most compassionate regard to the prayer of their complaint, that they are constrained to live in the habitual desecration of the Christian Sabbath, and in the neglect of the opportunities of public worship, and other religious observances of that holy season.

Humbly believing in the divine commandment and constant duty to keep holy the Lord's Day, and extremely anxious to avail themselves both of the rest and the blessings which it offers them, your humble memorialists deeply regret, as highly displeasing to Almighty God, and grievously injurious to their moral and religious interests, the necessity under which they are placed, of openly and constantly profaning the Sabbath by pursuing their ordinary occupations, and in being thereby



deprived of the public ordinances of religion. They do therefore most earnestly pray their honoured masters to adopt such regulations as shall protect them in the enjoyment of the Sabbath Day, whose sacred repose your petitioners feel to be so necessary for their bodies, and whose ordinances are so essential to their souls. The profanation of the Sabbath is the trial and grief of your petitioners, and they do most earnestly and respectfully solicit for exemption from all Sunday labour.

Your petitioners do not venture to make this application without having seriously reflected upon its nature, and its probable consequences to the interests of their respected employers, and they feel warranted in expressing their firm conviction, that so far from any arrangement by which your petitioners might consecrate the Sabbath to God, obstructing the facilities of business, or diminishing the quantity of weekly work usually performed by them, that it would have quite the opposite effect. Besides the blessing of a gracious Providence, which might be reasonably and scripturally expected to crown so good and benevolent a regulation, inasmuch as the Word of God plainly declares, that His blessing rests on those nations and individuals who honour the Sabbath, and His curse on those who dishonour it, your humble petitioners, grateful for such an indulgence, would feel stimulated to apply themselves to work with redoubled zeal and diligence. And, by working up to the latest hour on Saturday night, and proceeding on their passage, to or from Liverpool, at the earliest possible hour on Monday morning, so far from the interests of their honoured masters suffering by the plan, your petitioners feel quite sure that they should not only be able to accomplish as much work, and with as much dispatch as at present, but that they should be able to exceed in quantity what they are now in the habit of performing. Thus the Lord's Day would be honoured, and your humble petitioners would be benefited, both in body and soul, by their conscientious endeavours to "remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy".

They do, therefore, most humbly and earnestly, urge the prayer of their petition, that they may no longer be constrained in a matter about which they labour under the most conscientious objections, but that they may enjoy the privilege of resting one day in seven from their worldly toil, and of sanctifying the Sabbath as the Lord their God hath commanded ; and through the power of Christian principles, implanted and strengthened in the use of the means publicly afforded on that holy day, they may "hereafter lead a godly, righteous and sober life", and prove themselves more faithful and exemplary servants of their honoured masters, and more useful and esteemed members of society.

And your humble petitioners will ever acknowledge their deep debt of gratitude, and pray for the temporal and spiritual welfare of their honoured masters.

#### **14 February 28 1835**

**HIGH WIND** On Sunday, about six o'clock in the evening, a violent gale of wind arose in this town and neighbourhood from the westward, and continued without intermission the whole of the night and greater part of Monday. Much damage was sustained by new buildings, but we are happy to state that no instances of personal injury have come to our knowledge. At Marple, however, on Monday, a boatman by the name of **Moore**s lost his life, in consequence of being blown into one of the locks of the canal. An inquest was held over him on Wednesday before Mr Hollins, coroner, and a verdict of accidental death returned.

**DREADFUL ACCIDENT – SEVEN MEN DROWNED** On Tuesday, twelve men in the employment of the trustees of the Bridgewater property were sent in a boat from Worsley to repair a breach in the canal embankment at Bollington. When they arrived, they found that the breach had been repaired by some other workmen. Next morning, on returning home by way of Hollins Green, between eight and nine o'clock, the river being agitated by a strong wind, the boat, which was greatly overloaded by the twelve workmen and the two boatmen, suddenly swamped. Seven of the men contrived to gain the banks of the river, but the other seven were drowned. Five of the bodies were found in the course of the same day, but the other two had not been discovered at nine o'clock yesterday morning. The jury were to sit at eleven o'clock. We understand that the men were warned of their danger, and advised not to venture together in the boat.

## 15 September 19 1835

DISCOVERY OF THE BODY OF THE LATE HENRY BAILEY, DEPUTY CONSTABLE OF CHEETHAM The late Henry Bailey, deputy constable of Cheetham, it will be recollected, was drowned in the river Irwell on the 11<sup>th</sup> March last, during a great flood, whilst endeavouring to save a child of Mr Trees, joiner and builder, who had fallen into the torrent. His death, under such circumstances, occasioned a great sensation in the town, and a universal admiration of his heroism and intrepidity. Great exertions, the expense of which was not regarded, were made to recover the body, but without the slightest prospect of success, and all further efforts were considered hopeless. On Saturday, however, the body was found, after being in the water from the 11<sup>th</sup> March to the 12<sup>th</sup> September. About half past six o'clock in the morning, two daughters of **Thomas Ryle**, a flatman residing at Sticking's Island, about a mile and a half below Barton Bridge, went out together to gather mushrooms. In five minutes afterwards, they returned and informed their father that the dead body of a man was lying upon the banks of the river about fifty yards from the house. Ryle immediately went to the place, and found a body lying as described, the edge of the water just touching the feet. Considerable rain had fallen on Thursday and Friday, by which the river became much swollen, so that the body must have been released from its resting place by the increased waters, and left upon the bank where it was found when they returned to their natural height. Ryle found that the deceased had on a pair of shoes newly half soled, a pair of stockings, part of a pair of dark coloured trousers, a black waistcoat, part of a linen shirt, a flannel waistcoat, a black stock round his neck and a belt around the body. He suspected the body to be that of the lamented Bailey, and immediately went to Cheetham and gave information of the circumstances. Mr Thomas Robinson, the assistant overseer, and Mr Gorse, the present deputy constable of the township, returned with Ryle to Sticking's Island, and found the body upon the bank. Mr Robinson immediately recognised it to be that of Bailey from its general appearance, and from the belt which Bailey during his lifetime had often shown to him and recommended him to wear one similar to it. Mr Robinson further identified it from the shoes, they having been repaired by John Moore of Manchester on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, eight days before the unfortunate man was drowned. In order, however, to be more fully satisfied of the identity, Mr Robinson took the shoes to Moore, and he on seeing them immediately pronounced them to be those of Bailey. The body when found, although discoloured, was but little decomposed, but the action of the atmospheric air rendered its decay so rapid that it had to be removed as early as possible, and on Sunday afternoon it was interred in Walker's Croft cemetery, Cheetham, and the funeral procession accompanied by an immense concourse of spectators.

## 16 November 28 1835

**SIMCO'S CHEMICAL ESSENCE of LINSEED**, for the cure of coughs, colds, asthma, hoarseness, consumptive coughs, soreness of chest, difficulty of breathing, affected lungs, influenza, and catarrhal affections, in bottles at 1s. 12d. and 2s. 9d. One 2s. 9d. bottle is equal to three 1s. 12d. ; by purchasing a 2s. 9d. bottle a saving of 74d. is made.—This essence gives immediate relief to the lungs.—The following are selected from among numerous other cases :—

“ Mr. SIMCO.—Sir :—This is to certify that my wife had long been afflicted with a dreadful cough and hoarseness, so much so that she entirely lost her voice ; upon your recommendation she made trial of your Chemical Essence of Linseed, a very few doses healed the soreness of her stomach, her cough gradually abated, and by a little perseverance with the doses, according to the bill of directions, her cough was quite cured, her voice was restored, and she is now quite well. We have recommended it to many of our acquaintance, who I am happy to say have received an effectual cure, and you are at liberty to make what use you please of this statement, by way of recommendation to your valuable cough medicine ; and am, your's respectfully,

WILLIAM HOPKINS.  
“ Bridge-street, Northampton, May 10th, 1835.”

William Johnson, **Northampton** Cotton End, Northampton, during last winter was afflicted with a hard stubborn cough, which was produced by exposure to wet weather, and damps and colds, by frequent repetitions of which his lungs were much afflicted, his throat very clammy, his cough harsh and dry, could hardly bear to lie down, the lungs had become much inflamed, and his breathing very difficult. In this dilemma he purchased a bottle of Simco's Chemical Essence of Linseed, and the extreme benefit he derived from it encouraged him to purchase more ; and he has given the proprietor leave to publish his case, assuring him that he received a complete cure by his essence ; and he considers by the essence curing him no one need despair.

### 17 August 13 1836

**DEATH BY DRINKING SPIRITS** An inquest was held on Monday before W S Rutter Esq, on view of the body of a widow woman named Mary Boarder, aged 56, who lived with her two daughters in Booth Street, Deansgate, and whose death was occasioned by drinking a quantity of rum, given to her by two boatmen named **Taylor** and **Aldred** on Saturday night. A report having got abroad that the boatmen had forced the liquor down her throat, they were placed in custody on a charge of manslaughter, but it was proved at the inquest that she had consented to drink part of the liquor, and they were liberated after a reprimand from the coroner. Mr Ollier, surgeon, opened the body of the woman after death, and was of opinion that she died in consequence of drinking a great quantity of spirits, and the jury returned a verdict accordingly.

### 18 November 26 1836

**A SINGULAR RECOGNITION** “What are you looking at?” said a boatman in Jackson's Row to his companion, who was staring with much amazement at a man who had just passed them dressed in his Sunday best. “Looking at,” repeated the other, without moving his eyes from the object, “wee airm looking at that felly there wi moi other zuit on – or aun dang'ed if they an't very like um”. So saying, the boatman followed the unknown person who had attracted his attention to reconnoitre, and passing sometimes before him, and then dropping behind again, and looking alternatively at his coat, then at his waistcoat, and then again at his trowsers, he repeated very audibly, “Aum danged if that be'ent my coat! Au, zay, sorry”, said he, unable any longer to restrain himself, “au zay, sorry, tha's gotten my trowsers on!” “Your trowsers on?” said the stranger, who evidently wished to avoid the collision, and turned to go another way. It was too late, however, to get off so easily, the stout boatman seized him eagerly by the collar, and a policeman was introduced to him in a very unceremonious manner. The boatman was a native of Staffordshire, who had come to Manchester with one of Pickford's boats, which having had occasion to leave for a few hours on a previous night, he found on his return had been robbed, and his best clothes stolen. The prisoner's name was Henry Robinson, and when examined at the New Bailey on the following day, being unable to give a satisfactory account of the manner in which he had obtained the clothes, he was committed to the sessions for trial.

### 19 January 14 1837

**CHARGE OF ROBBERY** Yesterday at the New Bailey Court House, three boatmen named **John Plummer**, **John Thompson** and **Samuel Petty** were committed for trial at the next sessions for stealing two casks of oil and two sacks of flour on Thursday morning, the oil from the wharf of the Merchants' Company on the Rochdale Canal, and the flour from the warehouse of Mr Thornton, situated near to that wharf. The property was found in a boat of which Plummer was captain, and the other prisoners were known to belong to it, and were consequently apprehended with him. None of them were able to give a satisfactory account of the manner in which they had obtained the goods. Plummer at first said they had been given to him to take into Salford, but could not tell where they were to be delivered.

### 20 February 18 1837 Stockport

**BRUTAL ASSAULT UPON A PRIVATE WATCHMAN** On Monday, two boatman named **Pearson** and **Smith** were examined at the Court House before J Slack and Apelles Howard Esqrs, charged with a violent assault on a private watchman in the canal company's yard on Lancashire Hill. The complainant, who appeared in court with his head tied up, and seemed to have been shockingly battered and bruised about the face, stated that he was on duty on Saturday at midnight when the prisoners were creating a disturbance and throwing stones in the canal. He asked them what it was for, and Pearson replied that if he asked any questions, they would throw him in. They then knocked him down and beat and kicked him brutally. He cried out, “Murder”, but no one went to his assistance; and Pearson then said, “D—n him, punch him to death”. Bramall said he went to apprehend Pearson on Sunday morning, when he behaved very violently, taking up a piece of iron



to strike him with, and threatening to stab him with a carving knife. The prisoners were advised to compromise the affair; and after retiring to a private room a few minutes, agreed to give the watchman £2, when they were discharged with a severe reprimand from the magistrates.

## **21 March 25 1837**

**CHARGE OF ROBBERY** On Tuesday a man named **Joseph Darlington** was brought up for examination at the New Bailey, charged on suspicion with stealing 11lb of raw Broosa silk from a boat at the wharf of Messrs Kenworthy and Co. It appears that the prisoner was met at an early hour on Saturday morning with the silk in his possession by two watchmen in Ducie Street, who took him into custody, and it was afterwards found that he had been engaged as a boatman to one of Kenworthy and Co's boats at Liverpool about ten days previously, and discharged at Manchester on Saturday morning, about half an hour before his apprehension. By the boat with which he had come to Manchester, six bales and twelve cases of silk had been sent from Mr W B Prescott's at Liverpool to Messrs E Ralli and Co, merchants, Parsonage, St Mary's, from which it was supposed that he had stolen the silk found upon him; and on application at Messrs Ralli and Co's warehouse, after the goods had been delivered, it was found that one of the cases appeared to have been opened; four of them were each 11lb under the weight written in the invoice; one of the bales was also 11b deficient, and one was wet, so that its proper weight could not be ascertained. The silk found upon the prisoner was of the same description as that in the packages. No one had seen the prisoner leave the boat, so that it could not be ascertained whether he had left it with a bundle in his possession. When apprehended, he had told the officers that it was a bundle of dirty linen he had been sent with to get washed. The prisoner was committed for trial at the sessions.

## **22 July 1 1837**

**THEFT** On Wednesday a boatman named **James Smith** was committed at the New Bailey for trial at the sessions, for stealing a tarpaulin from a boat belonging to Messrs Faulkner and Co. The prisoner belonged to a boat of Messrs Thompson and Co's, and was seen carrying the property off.

## **23 December 2 1837**

### **Stockport**

**MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT AT MARPLE** On Wednesday night last, the 22<sup>nd</sup> ult, **Martha Wardle**, wife of **John Wardle**, boatman, went out about six o'clock into a neighbour's house to borrow a candle, leaving two children alone in the house, the eldest Jane, a little girl three years and five months old, and the younger, one year old. While the mother was out, it is supposed that the older child had lighted a stick wherewith her clothes caught fire. A neighbour next door was alarmed by the smell of fire and the shrieks of the children, and ran into the house to see what was the matter, when she found the poor child in flames behind the door (the oldest child) upon the floor. She immediately took the rug upon which the child had fallen and wrapped it round the body, and extinguished the fire as quickly as possible; and another woman put out the sofa, which was kindled in two places, and just in time to save the younger child. A surgeon was immediately called in, and every assistance promptly rendered to the little sufferer, until 12 o'clock the same night, when death put a period to her sufferings. An inquest was held on Saturday at the Bull's Head Inn, before John Hollins Esq, coroner, when a verdict of "Accidentally burnt to death" was returned.

## **24 April 28 1838**

**ROBBERY OF A BOATMAN** On Monday a young man named **Edward Hargeaves** was brought up at the New Bailey, charged with robbing a boatman of two £5 notes and about five pound in gold and silver. The case was heard by Daniel Maude Esq, the new residentiary magistrate (who this day took his seat on the bench for the first time in that capacity) and R Lomax, Thos Potter and L B Hollinshead Esqrs. The boatman said he had employed the prisoner to push his boat round to one of the wharves on Friday, and the prisoner was present when the prosecutor changed a sovereign. He (prosecutor) then took him to a public house called the Woodman's Hut in Dale Street, where he paid for a quart of ale. While he was there, being fatigued with having been at work during the two

preceding nights, he fell asleep, and was awoke by feeling something at his pocket. On opening his eyes, he saw the prisoner going from the room with his purse, and followed, but could not overtake him. He then gave notice of the robbery at the police office, in consequence of which the prisoner had been apprehended. Mr Taylor, solicitor, Bridge Street, appeared for the prisoner, and contended that the prosecutor was so drunk on Friday that he did not know what he was about. In proof of this, he called Mr Dean, the landlord of the Woodman's Hut, who stated that when the prosecutor entered his house, he told the company, consisting of several boatmen who appeared to be known to the prisoner and himself, that he had been robbed. He said he ought to have four sovereigns and 20s in silver in his purse. He afterwards counted the money in his purse, and finding the amount to be three sovereigns and 40s in silver, he said his money was right. Mr Taylor said this showed he must have been drunk and Mr Dean, when told a second time by the prosecutor that he had been robbed, did not believe him. Mr Maude asked Mr Dean if he thought the prosecutor was drunk at the time. Mr Dean said he appeared to have had liquor, but evidently knew what he was doing. The prosecutor again swore that he had been robbed, and was sure that when he awoke he saw his purse in the prisoner's hand. There was no one else in the room then. The prisoner was committed for trial.

## **25 July 14 1838**

**SERIOUS ROBBERY AT CHADDERTON** The magistrates in attendance at the Oldham Petit Sessions on Thursday last, the Rev John Holme and W Bentley Esq, were engaged a considerable time in investigating a charge of robbery brought against Richard Ogden, keeper of the Navigation Inn, Whitegate, Chadderton, **William Kay**, captain of a boat of Messrs Storey of Worksop, plying on the Rochdale Canal, and two boatmen named **Atkinson** and **Rushton**. Nine loads of malt were alleged to have been stolen from Messrs Storey's boat and placed in the cellar of the prisoner Ogden. Peter Pinnington (whose testimony was corroborated by Samuel Hall) stated that he saw the malt conveyed into Ogden's from the boat about one o'clock on the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup> June. John Hall, farmer, who gave information of the robbery, stated that Ogden had urgently desired him not to persist in inquiries as to the case, as it would do him a deal of injury. Police-constable Howard said the prisoner Atkinson had declared to him that the malt at Ogden's belonged to Messrs Marsden, Peck and Gregory. Ashton, constable of Hollinwood, deposed to Kay and Rushton telling him that some of the malt bags had fallen into the canal. Mr Wild, deputy constable of Oldham, stated that the publican Ogden had informed him that he would not pay for the malt until he had an invoice for it. Several witnesses employed by maltsters at Worksop, and by the Rochdale Canal Company, gave evidence that the quantity of malt delivered at Worksop and received at Manchester was deficient two and a half loads. Messrs Ascroft and Foulkes, solicitors, who were retained for the defence, argued that evidence was wanting as to the malt found at Ogden's being stolen. The prisoners were ultimately remanded till Saturday; the publican was liberated on bail. On Saturday, the accused appeared before the Rev John Holme at Hollinwood; no further evidence being produced, they were committed for trial at the Salford Sessions.

## **26 October 6 1838**

**DISCOVERY OF PROPERTY SUPPOSED TO BE STOLEN** On Tuesday, seven prisoners named Rose Goodier, Mary Parkinson, --- **Wedge, George Montgomery, Joseph Russell**, Nathan Wakefield and **James Kent** were brought before Mr Maude at the New Bailey Court House, by Police officers Phenix, Norbury, Bianchi, Dale and Williamson, under the following circumstances. Phenix and the other officers stated that in consequence of information, they went to a beer-shop at Droylsden on Monday, kept by Rose Goodier (who was the wife of a man lately transported for receiving stolen property) for the purpose of searching it. On their appearance the other female prisoner, who is the daughter of Goodier, ran from the house, and was followed by Norbury, and found secreted in the house of a farmer. In her pocket was found the keys of some drawers in her mother's house, in which, on their being unlocked, was found some wearing apparel and some silver plate, consisting of spoons with different initials upon them, and a valuable silver mounted teapot.

In the cellar of the house was also found a 36 gallon barrel, containing a considerable quantity of port wine. On being questioned, the prisoners could give no satisfactory account of the manner in which they had become possessed of the goods, but said the wine had been left there that morning by a boatman. The house was on the banks of the canal, and a private door communicated with it. In consequence of this statement, the two women were then taken into custody to the Manchester Police office, and Dale and Bianchi went to Pickford and Co's warehouse to enquire about what boatmen had come up the canal that morning, and found that Captain Wedge had brought a boat up at an early hour. Wedge was sent for, and with his two men, the prisoners Montgomery and Russell, came into the office, and was examined in the presence of Messrs Pickford and Co's clerk, but said he had not any port wine in his boat. The officers then went into his boat, where they found that before leaving the cabin, Wedge had broken a large bottle containing some sort of liquor which appeared to have been port wine. In the cupboard they found three pounds of tea, a large bottle of gin, a small tin pump, such as might be used for extracting liquors of any kind from a barrel through a small gimblet hole, two gimblets of different sizes, and a "jemmy" or small crow bar. They then went, in consequence of other grounds of suspicion, to search another boat which the captain had left the prisoner Kent in charge of, where they also found several pounds of tea and a large bottle of rum. The bottle was afterwards broken by Wakefield, who happened to come in when they were searching, and was abusive. They had consequently apprehended him along with the others. None of the property had yet been owned, and the officers wished the prisoners to be remanded that they might have the opportunity of making inquiries. Mr Maude, after sufficiently investigating the case, consented to remand all the prisoners, except Kent and Wakefield, till Thursday. The two prisoners excepted were discharged. The prisoners were again placed at the bar on Thursday, when a clerk from Messrs Pickfords and Co's stated that the gin produced was of the same quality as some in a cask which had been brought up in Wedge's boat, and that the cask in question, on examination, was found to be seven quarts short of measure. It had apparently been watered also, as it appeared muddy, as would be the case under such circumstances, and some port wine had also been sent. The prisoners were again remanded till Saturday, in order that the parties who had sent the gin and wine might be written to, to furnish evidence as to the quality and quantity of what was forwarded by them. Mr Taylor appeared for the prisoners, but declined at present to say anything.

## 27 November 3 1838

FATAL AFFRAY BETWEEN TWO BROTHERS The revels at Frodsham (Cheshire) fair, held last week, were attended by circumstances involving two families in great distress. On Friday night week, according to custom, the rustic population of that village met at the Gardener's Arms public house for the enjoyment of a country dance, and among others there assembled were two brothers, **Peter and Matthew Darlington**, "flatmen" employed on the Weaver and Mersey navigation. One of them had been drinking at the house for several hours, and on his entering the room a quarrel ensued as to which was the best workman, which terminated fatally to Peter Darlington. At the coroner's inquest, held on Monday before Faithful Thomas Esq, **John Davies**, a flatman, deposed that he was in the parlour of the Gardener's Arms at three o'clock on Saturday morning. Deceased was sitting near witness ; he was quite drunk. Witness had taken some drink, but was quite sober. Matthew Darlington, the brother of the deceased, was standing there. A table was between him and his brother. He had drunk to some extent. The deceased began blackguarding his brother, and they both cursed one another. Matthew upon this struck the deceased upon the face, and made his nose bleed. After a little time, the deceased got up and, stripping off his clothes, offered to fight his brother. Matthew accepted the challenge. He was dancing at the time, and on seeing the deceased come towards him he desisted from dancing and, stepping towards deceased, struck him a blow under the right ear, and he instantly fell to the ground. Witness immediately procured the assistance of Mr Calverley, surgeon. The deceased died shortly afterwards. The jury gave a verdict of "Manslaughter" against Matthew Darlington and, he having absconded, the coroner forthwith issued a warrant for his apprehension and committal to Chester Castle for trial at the next spring assizes.

### 28 July 6 1839

ROBBERY IN A BOAT Yesterday, a boatman named **Thomas Roach** and a prostitute named Mary Hampson were brought up at the Borough Court, charged with having stolen a gown piece out of a parcel in a boat called the *Elizabeth*, plying between Manchester and Whitchurch. It appeared that the robbery was committed on the night of Tuesday week, the captain having had two sovereigns and some silver taken out of his pocket, and also a pair of boots from the cabin. The gown piece and the boots were found in the prisoners' possession. Two or three parcels were also opened and goods taken out. The prisoners were remanded till Friday next.

### 29 August 3 1839

DEATH BY DROWNING An inquest was held on Wednesday last, before James Chapman Esq, coroner, on view of the body of a lad named Robert Rosewarren, aged 13 years, and son of Robert Rosewarren, Gaythorn Street. From the evidence elicited on the inquest, it appeared that about nine o'clock on the preceding evening, John Wardle, a lad of 11 years of age, was watching one of Mr Bellhouses's floats coming down the Rochdale Canal. Another boat was on the other side of the canal, and a boatman in it, who being in a hurry to get through the lock, desired the deceased to draw up the paddle in order to let off the water. He did so, and fell into the lower part of the canal. Two of the boatmen tried to get him out with a shaft, but did not succeed until about twenty minutes had expired, when all efforts to restore animation were useless. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

### 30 August 31 1839

#### Warrington

PREPARING TO BE BURIED An "oddity" of the name of **John Leigh**, who for a number of years filled the honourable office of master of a flat navigating the river Mersey, and by industry and a rather more than an ordinary share of "good luck" has accumulated a small independence, is spending his latter days in Warrington in making preparations for his funeral, which to appearance seems to occupy the whole of his thought. Some years ago he procured a large oak chest, fastened with secret springs, in which his mortal remains were, after death, to be deposited ; but that idea has now been abandoned, and a new coffin has been procured. In shape it is a beautiful model of a pleasure yacht, and was built by Mr Clare of Sankey of old English oak plank 1 1/2 inches thick. It is provided with main sail, fore sail, gib and gaff topsail ; and on the stern is inscribed the name of "Admiral Nelson". In length it measures eight feet two inches. Last week it was brought into Warrington mounted on wheels and accompanied by its owner and a fiddle, and followed by a crowd of wondering spectators. Its final destination is presently fixed upon to be the St James's Cemetery, Liverpool, to which place, on its "bill of lading" being complete, it is to be drawn by horses, and followed by a certain number of John Leigh's fellow flatmen, for whose refreshment on the way a large cask of ale is to be placed on the deck of the vessel. John Leigh's tombstone is also provided. It is ornamented with a picture of the flat "*Victory*" in full sail, and a rather rude representation of the sun, moon and stars. Underneath are some twenty lines of poetry, of which the last four may be taken as a specimen. They run as follows :-

"May God be our pilot and steer us the right way,  
And all our fleet anchor in heaven's bright bay,  
The seas I have seen, and the ships I have passed,  
But the Lord will call us all down to our graves at last."

### 31 November 16 1839

CHARGE OF ROBBING A BOAT **David Shaw, John Mason, John Brierley, Thomas Waltham** and **John Waltham**, all boatmen, were brought up at the Borough Court on Wednesday, charged with opening packages committed to their charge for carriage between Yorkshire and Lancashire. Mr John Law appeared for Mr Carver, carrier, prosecutor in the case. He said it was one of a very complicated character, and perhaps it might be a question whether it would be a case for the borough or the county, as it was not known whether the offence was perpetrated within the borough.



Mr Law stated the case to the effect that on the 5<sup>th</sup> instant, a wooden case was delivered to John Waltham, the master of the boat, at Thurstonland, containing three packages to be conveyed to Huddersfield, and thence to Manchester. On the passage, the case had been opened, and a piece of cloth abstracted. He could not clearly trace the felony to the prisoners, but he would call a number of witnesses, and then the magistrates might judge the case. William Eastwood stated that on Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> instant, he packed some goods for Mr Shaw, in three trusses. No 1 had eight pieces of cloth, No 2 also eight, and No 3 seven. He delivered those pieces to Joseph Walker of Thurstonland. They were stitched up. Joseph Hirst deposed that he received three packages at the warehouse in Huddersfield. He made cases for Mr Shaw, such as are used for transporting goods to a foreign market. He received three packages to put into each case. They were perfect when he received them. He put them into a case. Thomas Sharpe is one of the men in the warehouse. Thomas Sharpe deposed that he delivered this package to Mr Ramsden. When he delivered it at nine o'clock in the evening, it was perfect. Richard Ramsden stated that he received the cases in question from Thomas Sharpe. Before it left the warehouse, he weighed it, and the weight was 6cwt 14lbs. He delivered it into the boat to John Waltham. The other persons in the boat were Farnworth John, Thomas Waltham and the pilot. Abraham Wheeler stated that the boat arrived at Mr Carver's place between six and seven on Wednesday night. He took the case from Farnworth John. He put it in the warehouse, and told the marks and number to his clerk. George Proctor said he received the package from the last witness. On its arrival, he observed it was marked "S" in a diamond, and came from Mr Shaw of Thurstonland. On one corner of the case there was a mark of a chisel, as if it had been opened, or attempted to be opened. He delivered it to Miles Hindle that night. Miles Hindle said that he got the case from the last witness, and took it to Mr Carver's warehouse. John Pollock deposed that he received and weighed the case, it weighed 5cwt 3qrs 21lbs. He opened it the following morning. He found that the goods contained in the case were in wrapper. The wrapper was produced, and the place where it was cut open exhibited. Some paper at the bottom was also ripped. Hirst deposed that the wrapper was completely sewn up when he put it into the case. Pollock weighed some of the other pieces before they were sent off, and they weighed exactly 21lbs, which made the difference between the whole weight of the package. Mr Law said he would prove that on the next trip of the boat, several of the men left. They took the boat in the usual manner, but did not perform the voyage. Mr Mullen stated that he searched the boat. The only persons there were the captain and the boy. He found an iron hammer and hatchet, chisels, gimblet, packing needles and packing cord. The case seemed as if it had been opened by the hatchet. Another officer found at the house of one of the prisoners a piece of cloth similar to the cloths contained in the packages. This also corresponded with another piece found at the house of another of the prisoners. The evidence not being sufficient, the prisoners were remanded until Saturday (this day) to give time for obtaining further evidence.

### **32 November 23 1839**

#### **Warrington**

TRAVELLING ON A SUNDAY **William Breakall** was charged with having desecrated the Sabbath by travelling with his boat on Sunday, along the canal; 5s and costs. **John Kershaw**, a boatman, was also charged under a similar complaint, 5s and costs; and **John Harrison**, for the same offence, was fined in the same sum.

### **33 January 11 1840**

BODY FOUND IN THE BRIDGEWATER CANAL An inquest was held before Mr Jas Chapman Esq on Tuesday, on view of the body of William Edwards, turner and earthenware dealer, Downing Street, who had been found drowned in the late Duke of Bridgewater's Canal on Monday morning. **James Oldfield**, a boatman in the service of the trustees of the late Duke of Bridgewater, stated that between half past eleven and twelve o'clock on Monday morning, he discovered the deceased apparently standing in the water with his head first above the surface, between the Oxford Road and the Tib Street locks. He immediately got the body out, which appeared to have been in the water many days. John Barber of Clare Street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, stated that the deceased, who

was 35 years of age, and had left a widow and five children, was at work until seven o'clock at night on the 20<sup>th</sup> December, and had been missing from that time. We learnt he was drinking that night at a beer shop in Chorlton-upon-Medlock, and he would have to go along the canal side on his way home. He usually went that way, and had never been seen since that night. Verdict "Found drowned".

### **34 February 22 1840**

**BODY FOUND** An inquest was held on Thursday at the Nelson Tavern, Mather Street, before J Chapman Esq, on view of the body of a man named William Cash, who was found in the canal on the morning of the same day. As a boatman named **Joseph Wood**, of Sowerby in the county of York, was passing on the bank of the new end of the Rochdale Canal in Brown's Field, Great Ancoats Street, his son cried out that he saw a man's head in the water. The attention of Wood was immediately attracted to the place when, having got a boat hook he, with the assistance of his son and another man, got the deceased out of the canal. The body appeared to be in a rapid state of decomposition, but there were no marks of violence upon it. From the evidence of a man named John Turner, it appeared that he and the deceased had been drinking together on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, and that, as they were going home together about twelve o'clock of the night of that day, he lost sight of the deceased, and never saw him afterwards alive. He was very drunk at the time, and as they were going in the direction of the canal, witness had some suspicion that he might have fallen in. He accordingly caused a search to be made on two or three following days, but without effect, and as the deceased had disappeared in a similarly sudden manner about three or four years previously, witness thought he might have taken a similar freak into his head. The jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased was found drowned.

### **35 March 28 1840**

#### **DIABOLICAL MURDER IN A BOAT**

#### **ON THE ROCHDALE CANAL, MANCHESTER, AND APPREHENSION OF THE SUPPOSED MURDERER**

An inquest was held on Monday afternoon, at the Infirmary, before J Chapman Esq, on view of the body of a man named **William Cheetham**, who was found murdered in his boat on Sunday morning last. The Coroner, in addressing the jury, briefly stated the case into which they were called to inquire as follows :- In stating the nature of the inquiry which they were now met to investigate, he would just observe that this would involve a serious charge against some person or other, and the probability was that the prisoner, **James Hanson**, would be the man they would have to commit. The circumstances of the case were shortly these. On Saturday afternoon last, three men were drinking together at the Brown's-field tavern, Brewer Street, Port Street. He believed they were fellow boatmen in the employ of Mr Shepherd, the owner of the boat in which the deceased was afterwards found. It appeared that they got together in this way : a man of the name of **Clayton**, captain of the boat, and the prisoner were together at an eating house in Tib Street, whence they went to a house in Port Street, and after drinking a quart of ale together they went to their boat, which was plying upon the Rochdale Canal, and was being loaded in Brown's-field. The boat not being loaded as was expected, they adjourned to Brown's-field tavern, where they met with the deceased and drank some more beer. They all continued together till about half past six o'clock, when the deceased left them, the two others continued there till about a quarter before eight o'clock when Clayton left the prisoner at the public house, saying he was going to the Leeds railway to take his place to Mills Hill, but would return the next morning in time for their boat. On returning the next morning, as he passed the Brown's-field tavern, he saw the prisoner standing at the door, and immediately on going up to him the prisoner said, "Poor Will is dead!" "Nay", replied the other, "surely not", and they both went together to the boat. On opening the cabin door, Clayton (the captain) perceived the deceased on his knees on the floor, and the other part of his body on the bed. Clayton called deceased by name but not receiving any answer, he went up and shook him, but still he got no answer. This exciting his curiosity, he took hold of him by the hair of the head, and on looking at his face he perceived that he was dead; that his lips were blue and swelled, and that he

frothed at the mouth. He was also much bruised about the face, and there were several marks of blood upon the floor. Clayton also further deposed that there was a broken slate upon the floor, but nothing else transpired except that they went for a policeman, and having found one near Ancoats Bridge, he and they in company with one or two others, proceeded to the boat, where they discovered the body as already described. They had the deceased conveyed immediately to the Infirmary. One of the policemen, when the body was got on shore, found part of a brick which was covered in blood. These were the circumstances of the case, so far as he yet knew; and it would be the duty of the jury to inquire who had committed the awful deed.

**John Clayton** was then called and, in addition to what is stated above, further deposed that the deceased was without his hat, which was lying on the floor, broken in pieces. In other respects he was dressed. He had two black eyes, the upper lip was much swollen, and the end of his chin was scratched, and the left cheek was much scarred, as if he had been dragged along the ground. His nose was also bloody. He did not look at him so as to speak further as to the injuries, but blood was upon several parts of the floor. One of the marks was about the size of half a crown, and appeared as if it had been occasioned by repeated dropping. It was not dry, but stiff. There was a broken slate in the cabin, which witness had not seen before that morning. He did not notice the prisoner's clothes, or his appearance, and did not suspect him. Did not notice any marks of feet, or of scuffling on the deck, or other parts of the boat.

**James Bold**, a boatman in the employ of Messrs Thomas Boothman and Company of Brown's-field, deposed that about a quarter before eight o'clock on Saturday night, as I was drawing up one of the paddles of the Brown's-field locks for my boat to pass, I observed a man jump from the wall of Mr Bridge's yard, adjoining, upon one of the balance poles of the lock. He cried out after he had jumped upon the pole, "D—n your eyes, I'll cut your bloody head off". He then stooped as if to pick up some stones, and then ran to the stern end of Mr Shepherd's boat, which was in the canal. I then perceived a man having his head out of the cabin, and the first man began to throw slates or bricks at him, and some others which he picked off the ground. After he had done this for about two minutes, he jumped upon the stern end of the boat, and turning towards me, said, "D—n his eyes, Jem, what must I do with him? I'll kill him". The other man was calling out, "Watchman!" I answered, "Leave him alone; I think thou'st done enough at him". Just before this, the man who had been throwing the stones had been leaning over the other, and had given him a kick which seemed to be a heavy one, and I think must have been the cause of the man's death. I did not hear him cry out again, and all was still afterwards. But I observed the first mentioned man, immediately after the kick, jump into the hatchway and throw the stones out of the boat upon the bank, which I thought was curious. I then left my boat, and returned to an empty boat at the Ancoats end of the canal. On my way I called at the Boathouse, and told the woman there what I had seen, and that I thought the man was badly hurt. About an hour before, I had seen the deceased approach his boat and enter the hatchway. He appeared to be fresh, but at the time I could not distinguish the man so as to know him. The prisoner, James Hanson, Oldham Road, Rochdale, was then asked if he had any questions to put. He replied, "No". The witness said he thought the prisoner was a great deal bigger than the man whom he saw throw the stones, and wore a pair of light coloured trousers. A pair of fustian trousers were produced, marked with blood, which the prisoner admitted he had worn; but the witness could not swear to them. He did not know the prisoner, and his voice seemed to be different to that of the man who threw the stones.

John Clayton was again called, and further deposed : I am captain of this boat; the prisoner said he had been that night robbed of some corn, a sack, and some bread, and that two other boats had been robbed besides; which had been done, as stated by the deceased, by four men and a woman. The prisoner also stated to witness that the deceased told him that the four men and the woman had followed him and beaten him. The prisoner had no questions to ask the witness.

George Rose, a private watchman to Mr Binns of Brown's-field, stated that about five or six minutes past seven o'clock on Saturday night, while on duty, he heard a cry of murder two or three times while he was sitting in the boiler house near the canal. He went into the engine house and opened the window opposite to the place where the cry proceeded, and perceived a man jump out of one of

the boats, and get into a slate yard. When this man had jumped out of the boat, witness saw the head of another man from the top of the cabin, upon which the man who jumped out of the boat with an oath swore that if he would find a stone he would cut his d---d head off. He said he would make him remember for throttling him. The man then went and got two or three stones, which he threw at the man in the cabin, and went and picked up others which he also threw at him. The man then went down the yard and got some more stones, and on returning, threatened to murder the man, saying, "D---n your eyes, I'll murder you": and then threw the stones. He again brought some more stones from the lower end of the yard, and on his return, said he neither cared for them nor their boat, for he could get another boat tomorrow. He threw those stones into the boat also, and afterwards he got other stones and jumped upon the top of the cabin and threw them into it (as witness thought) upon the man. Witness did not see the man's head at that time; but shortly afterwards he saw him put it out of the cabin, and the man who had thrown the stones was sometimes half in and half out of the cabin, but he (witness) went away and took no further notice. It was just about dusk when all this happened. The man had trousers on like those produced. He could not swear that the prisoner was the man. Witness did not say anything to the men, because boatmen are often fighting, and witness was afraid that they would throw stones at him. On the following night, having heard that a boatman was dead, he then told what he saw. The man who was throwing the stones appeared to be sober, but the other man appeared to be about three parts drunk.

**James Howarth**, boatman of Boarshaw Clough, near Middleton, deposed that on Saturday night, about ten minutes past nine o'clock, the prisoner shouted out to me to know whether I had any matches, but having none, he went to Mrs Jackson's, which is close by, where he got a light and made a fire in the cabin of Wm Shepherd's boat. I observed Wm Cheetham, the deceased, sitting on the bed. He was very bloody about his shirt sleeves, which hung over his hands. One side of the deceased's face was bloody. He said he had had it done in the cabin, but prisoner said he had had it done in Manchester. When the fire was put on I went on board of my own boat to bed. The deceased said there had been men on board who had done it. I am sure the deceased spoke to me, but cannot swear whether he said it was "men" that had done it, or "a man". Next morning, about six o'clock, I went into the cabin to the prisoner and the deceased, and asked for a rope which Hanson had promised to lend me. Hanson was in bed; he got up and dressed himself, and then went to the deceased, whom he called "Bill", and on his not answering he punched the deceased on his shoes to waken him. The deceased was lying on a different bed from that on which Hanson had been lying. He then got hold of his jacket sleeves and shook him, shouting out "Bill". He then pulled him off the bed, seeing that he did not answer. I am not sure whether the deceased had a hat on or not. I then asked Hanson for the rope which he gave me, and I went away. I was not surprised to see that the man did not move, because knowing he had been drunk the night before, I thought he might still be drunk. I did not notice the deceased any further, and did not go into the boat afterwards. I saw nothing different in Hanson's appearance or his dress. In answer to a question by a Juror, the witness deposed that when he went into the cabin in the morning, he thought he heard the deceased snore, and said to Hanson, "He's asleep yet".

The prisoner being asked whether he had any questions to ask, replied that he had not; that the deceased rolled into the bed again after the witness went away, and said he would have another hour's sleep while Hanson went to seek for the captain, who had not been on board that night.

The jury, at the suggestion of the Coroner, retired to look at the boat, which was not far distant from the Infirmary, and then adjourned until eight o'clock.

Inspector Butcher said : I went to the boat and first asked the prisoner if he knew what had occurred. He told me he had gone to the boat between seven and eight o'clock on Saturday night for a feed of corn; that he got it, and went to the stable to the horse, and afterwards returned to the boat; that he then saw the deceased, who told him that he had been followed on board by four or five men and a woman, who had beaten him and pummelled his head. He said he had asked the deceased if he had known any of them, and he replied that he did not; that they had followed him into the boat, and had served him in that way, and robbed him. The prisoner said that after that he



went to a public house where he got forward in liquor, and remained there till between ten and eleven o'clock, and he then told the waiter that Bill had got a good beating. He said that he then went to bed, and lay until six o'clock in the morning. He then awoke deceased, who told him that he was sleepy and would lie half an hour longer; that he (the prisoner) then left the boat, but found him almost dead; that he then went to find the captain – was with him, and took him to the boat; and that afterwards they came to me. On going into the boat, I saw the deceased lying on his back on the bed, and I ordered him to be conveyed to the Infirmary. The body was quite warm, but dead. Part of a brick, now produced, was found in the yard. [It was marked with blood on one edge and on two of the sides] There were three distinct marks, apparently newly made, on the door of the cabin, as if by stones or bricks.

Mr William Smith, house surgeon to the Infirmary, had made an inspection of the head and body that morning, and stated that there were two or three slight lacerations on the scalp, and effused blood under the scalp. There was a fracture of the skull extending from the top of the head to behind the left ear. Inside the skull there was a very large quantity of blood effused, which pressed to a considerable extent on the brain, and caused death. There was nothing in the chest or abdomen to account for death. There were appearances in the stomach as if the deceased had been drinking. A fall or a blow might have produced the injuries on the skull, but not from the fist. The injuries might have arisen from more blows than one. Deceased could not long have retained his senses after having received these injuries. There were no other external appearances except slight bruises on the face.

James Sawley, superintendent of police, deposed that on going into the cabin of the boat, he found a wooden mallet with several spots of blood upon it, and the clothes on the left hand side of the bed had several marks of blood upon them. On the canal bank there was a stack of slates, against which there was a flag about a foot square on which there was a spot of blood. On taking the prisoner to the Town Hall, he stated that he had left the boat at seven o'clock on Saturday evening to go a drinking; that he went to supper his horse, and did not return to his boat till eleven, when he found the deceased as described, and he told him that he had been followed and beaten by four men and a woman. After relating the conversation which further passed, the substance of which has been stated above, the witness further deposed that he examined the prisoner's trousers, on which there were spots of blood, some of which appeared to have been attempted to be rubbed off.

The prisoner accounted for the blood being on his trousers by saying he had cut his finger a few days before, or he might perhaps have got the blood on them by assisting to lift the deceased out of the boat.

The inquest was adjourned until Friday,

ADJOURNED INQUEST Yesterday morning the adjourned inquest in this case was held at the Infirmary, when several other witnesses were examined.

Thomas Hammersley deposed to having been at the Brown's-field tavern at the time the deceased was there with the prisoner and Clayton, the captain of the boat; and also that the prisoner and deceased were quarrelling, all of them being very drunk, and that prisoner used abusive language to the deceased and threatened to kill him.

Thomas Sidebottom, who worked at Mr Bridge's slate yard, deposed to having seen the prisoner leave the yard about half past six o'clock the same evening, with a sack on his back.

William Paton deposed that about seven o'clock on the evening of Saturday, he shut the gate of the slate yard of Messrs Bridge, when a man about the size of the prisoner passed to Shepherd's boat, and he knew of no other person being about the yard except that man, and another who was in the boat at that time. He did not see four strange men and a woman about the yard.

**Sarah Taylor**, the keeper of the lock house, deposed to having heard a scream of "murder" from a man, about five minutes before eight o'clock on the night in question, which was repeated three times; but, as such screams were common on the canal, she took no further notice of it.

One or two other witnesses were examined, but nothing material was elicited, and the inquest was again adjourned to Monday next.

### 36 April 18 1840

AN EXPENSIVE RELISH **Peter Plumpton**, a flatman, was on Monday charged with trespassing in pursuit of game, on the lands of the Rev J J Hornby, rector of Winwick, in the occupation of James Hatton. John Hunt, the keeper to J W Patten Esq MP, stated that he saw the defendant, on the 6<sup>th</sup> instant, in Mr Hatton's field with a greyhound. Witness watched him for about a quarter of an hour, and observed him stoop down on his knees for the purpose of setting some tackle. The defendant then made the best way to his boat, and witness took up the nets he had caught the defendant in the act of setting. The defendant, when called upon for his defence, said that instead of stooping down to set nets, he had merely got a few water cresses for a relish to his breakfast, and that his dog, instead of hunting for game, had only worried a weazle. The magistrate, not crediting the tale, fined the defendant £2 and costs, which he instantly paid. People yet pay "too dear for their whistle" as Dr Franklin did when a boy.

### 37 May 2 1840

MANSLAUGHTER An inquest was held on Monday at the Carders' Arms public house, before J Chapman Esq, coroner, on view of the body of a man named **Isaac Higham**, a boatman aged 38 years. Ann Peters, Queen Street, Hulme, deposed that about half past twelve o'clock on the preceding Friday morning, deceased came into a cellar in which he lived, in Eltoft Street, very tipsy, and asked the prisoner Alice Wroe, with whom he cohabited, to let him go to bed; upon which she replied that there was no bed for him, and charged him with having spent her money in drink. Her son, George Wroe, who is twenty years of age, being present at the same time, observed that the deceased should not be there – that he would be master for that time; upon which both he and the deceased stood up and stripped, the deceased saying he would see who should be master; he then struck Wroe, and a regular fight ensued, deceased receiving a black eye. Mary Ann Wroe, a daughter of the prisoner, then got out of bed and cried out, "Murder!", upon which the deceased and Wroe both sat down by the fire. Shortly afterwards, a man named James Harrop, who lived in the room above the cellar, came in and cried out for "fair play" and he would see it out. The deceased then jumped from his chair and struck at Harrop, who said he would not fight him there, but challenged him to go into the street, whither they both immediately went. Witness was then standing at the top of the steps. Harrop struck the deceased, who immediately fell from the blow, but rose again and struck Harrop, who again knocked him down. George Wroe, who had followed them out, then kicked the deceased over the mouth and in the stomach, upon which the deceased rose from the ground and reared himself against the wall on the opposite side of the street, when Wroe again kicked him in the bowels, and he called out for "fair play". Harrop then went to him and said he would see him in the morning when he was sober, and have it out. Deceased and Wroe then went into the cellar, the former observing to Wroe that he had knocked out his teeth, and he would have satisfaction, to which Wroe replied that he did not care even if he had knocked the life out of him. Alice Wroe, the prisoner, then went for some beer, but the deceased was not able to take more than one glass, and about half past two o'clock, they went to bed. About half an hour after, the deceased complained of being very ill, and witness and the prisoner Wroe went for a doctor, returning shortly afterwards with Mr Barlow, a neighbouring surgeon, who gave him castor oil and applied an oatmeal poultice to his stomach, where he said the pain chiefly was. This was about five o'clock; but the deceased not getting better, the prisoner Alice Wroe then went for another surgeon, Mr Handforth, who attended the deceased till his death, which took place about eight o'clock on Saturday morning. The prisoner Wroe strove to pacify the parties, and never further interfered than as already stated. None of the other parties were tipsy. Mr H Ollier, surgeon, deposed that he had made a *post mortem* examination of the body of deceased on Saturday morning last. The left eye was black; there were slight bruises on both ears; bruises on the right side of the belly, and three teeth in the front part of the upper jaw had been recently destroyed. Internally, there was severe inflammation of the bowels, and laceration of one of the small intestines, through which large quantities of fluid had escaped. This was the cause of death, and inflammation was doubtless produced by external violence on the belly. Mary Kay, of 28 Eltoft Street, deposed to having seen

the row from her bedroom window; that the deceased and Harrop fought for five minutes, when they were parted by Harrop's wife; that the deceased then went to George Wroe and offered to fight him for "ten bob", and on his refusing, struck him. They then fought, and Wroe's mother several times cried out. "Lay into him Jud" as if encouraging him. The fighting continued for about five minutes, when the deceased fell, and Wroe both boxed and kicked him several times when he was down. After Wroe had kicked and beaten the deceased in a brutal manner, the police came up and put a stop to the quarrel, and all of them went into their house. Wroe and his sister Mary Ann for some time refused to go into the cellar unless deceased was taken to the lock up, but after some persuasion they consented to go in. Witness saw the sister for a considerable time in the street in her chimes, running up and down and crying "Watch" and "Murder". A woman named Ann Malin corroborated the testimony of the last witness. A man named Thomas Hazlehurst deposed that on Friday morning, James Harrop was with him in the fair; that he told him of the row in the cellar; that he had interfered and laid into the man, and had knocked out two of his teeth. The jury returned a verdict of "Manslaughter against Wroe and Harrop, and of aiding and abetting on the part of Alice Wroe".

**38**      **May 16 1840**

### **Warrington**

SINGULAR DEFENCE    On Monday, **Sarah Naylor**, the wife of a flatman in the employ of the Old Quay Company, surrendered in discharge of her bail to answer the charge of stealing the half of a leg of mutton from the shop of Mr James Wainwright, butcher of Warrington. The case created considerable interest from the fact of the Hon and Rev Horace Powys, the rector, having been bail for the accused on her being taken into custody on the previous Saturday, and also from the novelty of the defence sought to be established, viz, that she being in that enviable state "in which all ladies wish to be who love their lord", had longed for the mutton, and had taken it in order to prevent those consequences which are said to be the result of disappointment in such cases. The accused is rather an interesting young woman, and had filled the situation of one of the teachers in the parish Sunday School. Her residence, a cottage in Latchford, was described by the police as "the very pink of neatness and comfort". The prosecutor deposed that the prisoner came to his shop on Saturday and purchased a pound of bacon, for which she duly paid. Another female, named Hannah Kay, was in the shop at the time, and while the prisoner was there, purchased and paid for half a shoulder of mutton. Witness placed it on a block, and as soon as the prisoner had gone out of the shop, the mutton was missed. His suspicions immediately fell upon the prisoner, and he sent Hannah Kay after her. She soon met with the prisoner, and came back to witness, saying that the prisoner denied having the mutton. Witness then went after her himself, and was about to look into her basket, when she said, "Don't, I'll come into the shop". She did so, and witness took the mutton out of her basket. Hannah Kay corroborated this testimony. On cross-examination by the Rector, she said, I asked the prisoner if she had bought any mutton, as if she had she had taken mine in mistake. The prisoner said she had not. This, the Rector contended, did not amount to a denial of her having any mutton in her basket. Mr James Jones, deputy constable, deposed that when he went to Latchford in search of the prisoner, he saw her standing at the corner of the street. She ran away, and he found her concealed in a house in the Old Road. She begged of witness to take her to Mr Wainwright's shop, and said she would pay for the mutton, but he declined and brought her to Bridewell. This being the whole of the evidence on the part of the prosecution, the prisoner was asked what she had to say by way of defence. She replied, "I fixed my eyes upon the bit of meat and put it into my basket, it was the only piece I fancied". The Rector said it had been currently reported that Mr Brotherton, another butcher, had a similar charge to prefer against the prisoner, and he therefore wished, by permission of the bench, that Mr Brotherton, who was present, might be examined, in order to prove or disprove the accusation. Mr Brotherton was accordingly put into the witness box. He said he had nothing to state against the prisoner. What happened had passed some months ago. He was rather suspicious about her having taken a piece of pork, but he could not say she took it. He did not know whether she did or not, but he saw her coming out of his shop with a piece of pork under her shawl, and he thought she took it. He also thought he missed a piece of





the trustees of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation, requesting them to cause the bridge over the sewer, at which the deceased was supposed to have met his death, to be made more secure, as they were of opinion that it was at present in a highly dangerous state.

#### **41      October 17 1840**

**CASE OF STABBING** A serious case of stabbing was brought before the magistrates at the Borough Court on Tuesday, the particulars of which will be gathered from the following evidence. The name of the prisoner was Thomas Watts, formerly a licensed victualler in Manchester. Mr Greene, the barrister, appeared for the prisoner.

Robert Heathcote, the prosecutor, said : I am a book keeper in the employ of Mr George Higginbottom of the Ashton Canal Wharf, Piccadilly. On Saturday last, as I was making out our weigh bills with Mr William Higginbottom, in the counting house at the wharf, the prisoner, Thomas Watts, came in, and commenced a conversation with Mr Higginbottom. In a few minutes, he addressed himself to me, and said, "How are you, Mr Heathcote?" I said, "I am very well, thank you Mr Watts, how are you?" He replied, "You are a d---d scoundrel, you are a d----d thief, I have brought you out of prison many times". I said, "Mr Watts, did I ever rob you of anything?" He answered, "Yes, you have, by ---". He then said to Mr Higginbottom, "I believe Mr Heathcote is going to leave you". "Indeed!" said Mr Higginbottom. He then asked Mr Higginbottom if I had not told him I was going to leave him, and gave him to understand that I was going to leave him clandestinely. Upon which I asked the prisoner where I was going to. He said, "That is my business and not yours, Heathcote". I told him what he had stated was a falsehood. He said, "You are a d---d liar, I'll bet you a sovereign – I'll bet you five – I'll bet you ten". I then consented to bet a sovereign, and put the sovereign down, and asked Mr Higginbottom to take the two sovereigns up, and give them to the winner. The prisoner took up my sovereign, when I went to him, and caught hold of his hand with the intention of taking it back. He forced me against a desk with great violence, and we gave each other several blows. Mr Higginbottom then came and interfered, and we desisted, and I went on with my writing. In about five minutes, Mr Higginbottom said he was going home, and asked Watts to go with him. The prisoner then snatched up a ruler and gave me a violent blow on the head with it. I returned the blow several times, and took the ruler from him. Mr Higginbottom and a private watchman came in, and parted us. My head bled very much from the blow I received with the ruler, and I went into the yard to wash myself. I walked about the yard five or ten minutes, and then returned to the office. On opening the door, the prisoner was standing in the passage, and he partially turned round, and on seeing it was me he turned quite round, and I saw something glitter in his left hand as he turned round; he asked me where his books were. I said, where is my sovereign? Upon which, Mr Higginbottom said he had got it. I then said to Mr Higginbottom his books are in the bottom drawer. These were books belonging to the prisoner, which had been left at our office for a considerable time. As soon as I said the books were in the bottom drawer, he said, "D---n you, Heathcote, I'll stab you". I said, "Mr Watts, you are not going to turn butcher are you?" He replied, "I'll go to hell if I don't stab you". I closed the door and went into the yard, and walked up and down for about ten minutes. Mr Higginbottom and the prisoner then came out of the office into the yard, and I went up to Mr Higginbottom to deliver a message before he went home, upon which the prisoner ran round me and stabbed me in the side with some sharp instrument saying, as he did so, "Take that, you d---d b---r". He then ran away. I called out, "He has stabbed me". He was pursued, and taken into custody the same evening.

Mr William Higginbottom said he was present on this occasion, and saw and heard nearly all that had been described by Heathcote. He said he and the prisoner had left the yard together, and he had wished them all good night, when he heard a cry from Heathcote - "I am stabbed". He then saw the prisoner running down the street.

**Thomas Read**, a boatman, deposed that he heard the prisoner say, "There, you b---r, take that", and he struck Heathcote in the side with his left hand. Heathcote said he had stabbed him, and then the prisoner ran away, and witness followed him to the Plume of Feathers, where the prisoner turned round and faced him. His hand was bloody, and he had a knife in it, and some books under his

other arm. Witness was afraid to take hold of him.

John Porter witnessed the transaction also, and followed the prisoner, but was afraid to touch him.

Policeman Gifford said he subsequently apprehended the prisoner at his own house. He said, "I don't care if I am hanged for it, if I have killed him". I found the knife upon him, which was bloody. As witness was taking him to the police office, the prisoner said, "This man has been living upon me for the last ten years; I have been his whole support, and he has ruined me and robbed me, and I did not care if I was hanged, if I had killed him."

Mr Henry Ollier, surgeon said, on Saturday evening he was called upon to visit Mr Thomas Watts. He found his face much bruised, and a lacerated wound on the right side of his head. He then went to Heathcote's, in Mill Street, Great Ancoats Street. He found a stab on the right flank of his body. The wound was an inch and a half long, and extended obliquely to a depth of three inches. The knife produced would have occasioned such a wound.

The prisoner was committed for trial at the next Liverpool assizes, but was subsequently bailed out in two sureties of £100 each.

#### **42 December 5 1840**

**FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE LEEDS AND LIVERPOOL CANAL** On Tuesday an inquest was held at the Roebuck public house, Ashton Street, before Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, on the body of a man named **Robt Jackson**, who died from injuries sustained by being thrown against a wall by the tightening of a rope on the towing-path. It appeared from the evidence of **Edward Wilson** that the deceased, who was in a boat which was waiting at the Baldwin Lock on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, near Wigan, requested witness, who was also waiting with a boat, to go to the horses and he would mind the lines. Witness's line was on the full stretch and right, and he told deceased to put his line under the paddle of the lock, the screw of which would have prevented it from flying up; but on witness going to the horses, he perceived that the line was broken, on which he called to the deceased twice to rectify it; but his mate cried out, "Oh dear! He is in the lock". Witness went to look for him, and found him on the towing-path. He had a mark on his stomach made by the line, from which witness supposed that it had caught him as he was endeavouring to put it over the gates, in order that the horse might draw better. His head was injured under the left ear, and there was a scraper in the wall, against which witness thought he had been thrown by the tightening of the rope. Witness put him upon the boat, and they took him to the Bridge Inn, Wigan, where he was attended by a surgeon. He was brought to Manchester by a boat the next day. Sarah Cook, who attended the deceased after he was brought to Manchester, at the Railway Coffee House, Dumville Street, stated that he was brought there on Tuesday evening; he was insensible, and died about four o'clock the following afternoon. Mr Stephens, surgeon, who had attended him, said he was suffering under a concussion of the brain from the accident. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death". The deceased was 28 years of age. He was a boatman and had lived at Tarleton; he was a single man, and the chief support of an aged father and mother.

#### **43 December 12 1840**

**DEATH FROM EXPOSURE TO COLD** About seven o'clock on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> ult, a man was found in the yard of the Blue Ball public house, Chester Road, Hulme, in a sitting posture on the ground, with one of his arms across a wheelbarrow, quite cold and stiff; his head was lying on his breast, and his hat was on the ground. The body was taken into the house, and the deceased was recognised in the course of the day to be **John Yates**, a boatman, who formerly lived in a cellar under No 28 Berry Street, Manchester. An inquest was held upon the body on the Monday following, when evidence was adduced of the above circumstances; and Mary Ann Romney, wife of William Romney, Berry Street, spinner, stated that the deceased was her stepfather, and lived with her between four and five months ago, since which time he had no settled home. They could not keep him, because he had nothing, and would not work to get anything, and was very drunken and disorderly. He left saying he would go to Flixton workhouse. For the last nine years he had been troubled with asthma. They still kept her mother for one shilling a week, which she had from

the parish. The jury returned a verdict "That the deceased died of asthma, accelerated by exposure to the atmosphere".

#### 44 December 12 1840

DESPERATE ENCOUNTER WITH THREE BURGLARS AT BURY One of the most desperate affrays we have heard of for a long time occurred between the rural police and three burglars at Bury on Saturday morning last. It has, for some time past, been known to Mr Baker, the superintendent of the Bolton division of the county constabulary, that a gang of burglars had concocted a scheme, in Lancaster Castle, for the robbing of various houses in and about Bury, as soon as they were liberated. He, therefore, made arrangements with the several parties threatened, including Richard Hamer Esq (who resides in Bolton Street, Bury) for their protection, and the apprehension of the robbers. In pursuance of this arrangement, Mr Baker, for the last ten nights, has kept up a constant watch on Mr Hamer's premises; and about one o'clock on Saturday morning, he heard the steps of the depredators in the yard of the dwelling house, upon which Mr Baker, with his inspector and sergeant, secreted themselves behind the curtains of the drawing room window. After a delay of about twenty minutes (during which time they distinctly heard the crashing and cracking of the window through which one of the gang entered), three ruffians entered the house by the back kitchen door, which was opened by the first mentioned offender. Having lit a candle, they proceeded to the sorting house door, the lock of which they soon picked, and entered. In a short time afterwards, one of them exclaimed, "Here's the cash box, by ---"; and a move being heard, as though they were going off with it, Mr Baker thought it time to be up and doing; so, shouting out to his men, "Now lads", he sprung upon the thieves. Mr Armitage, the inspector, was the first who came into contact with the depredators; and, in attempting to seize the nearest to him, was saluted with a terrific blow on the ear from a life preserver and, while staggering from its effects, got another favour on the head which, had it not caught the edge of the door, would most assuredly have killed him. Being a powerful man, Armitage closed with his opponent, and soon gave him a quietus. All this time the others were not idle – one of them fighting his way, through the midst of the police, down a long passage leading from the counting house to the back door, at which place he gave Mr Baker a dreadful kick in the stomach, which laid him on his back, and while in that position gave him another in the groin, and then fled. The third fellow had possession of the cash box which, in spite of the efforts of the inspector and sergeant, he pertinaciously kept possession of, until a blow from the but-end of a large horse pistol, lent Mr Baker by Armistead (*sic*), laid him prostrate in the kitchen, which presented more the appearance of a butcher's shop than a room in a private gentleman's residence. The desperation with which the two ruffians fought may be conceived when it is known that, in spite of the police, they forced their way out of the counting house, which was guarded by Sergeants Williamson and Moody, both well armed, and having Mr Baker and the inspector pummelling away in their rear, down a very long passage into the kitchen, and to within a few yards of the place where they effected their entrance. As soon as the captured thieves were secured at the police office, Mr Baker, accompanied by his inspector, started for Manchester; to which place they traced the fellow who had escaped and, after a diligent search, captured him in bed at his lodgings. He was in a high state of perspiration, and splashed up to the shoulders with mud from running. On being taken into custody, and spoken to on the subject of the entry into Mr Hamer's, he exclaimed with the utmost *sang froid*, "You need not kick up such a row, Mr Baker; you can only transport me for it". He was immediately brought back to Bury and, with his companions in villainy, committed by Abraham Wood and Edmund Grundy Esqrs to take their trial at the next assizes at Liverpool. They gave the names of **George Brindle**, Thomas Stopford and Robert Wilkinson, but are known to the Manchester police by other names, and as desperate and previously convicted felons. We are glad to add that none of the police are dangerously hurt; and that after the application of a dozen leeches to the stomach of Mr Baker, he is doing well. Mr Hamer is nearly 70 years of age, and has no one residing with him but two female servants; so that, but for the vigilance of the police, the house would have been ransacked; and, if he had been alarmed and attempted to interfere with the robbers, he would probably have been murdered. There

were generally from £1000 to £1200 upon the premises every Friday night, for the payment of wages on Saturday; and this fact, it is supposed, was known to the prisoner Brindle, who was formerly a boatman and had frequently occasion to go to the counting house. The prisoners were only liberated from the gaol at Lancaster five weeks ago and yet, notwithstanding their imprisonment, had planned this and a number of other burglaries on gaining their liberty.

#### **45 January 16 1841**

**MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT – A FATHER DROWNED IN ATTEMPTING TO SAVE HIS SON**  
An inquest was held on Monday before Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, on the body of **Henry Halstead**, who was drowned under the following circumstances :- On Friday se'nnight, about four o'clock, deceased's son, a boy fifteen years of age, was on a boat near one of the locks on the Ashton Canal where, owing to the top of the boat being covered by a coating of ice, he slipped off into the lock. Deceased, who was on the canal bank, immediately threw off his frock and jumped into the water to save his son, but being unable to swim he soon disappeared below the surface. In the meantime, the boy, who had clung to the boat on rising, was saved by another boatman. The body of the unfortunate man had been under water half an hour before it could be recovered, and of course was lifeless. Verdict "Accidental death".

#### **46 January 23 1841**

**BARGEMEN AND BOATMEN** A meeting was held at Stafford on Tuesday, the 5<sup>th</sup> instant, to establish a County Association for promoting the moral and religious improvement of this neglected class. The chair was taken by the Bishop of Lichfield, who in an able speech advocated the claims of the Society, pointing out the demoralised state of the watermen in general, and the necessity of using every effort for their instruction. His Lordship urged the importance of petitions from magistrates, canal proprietors and carriers, merchants, manufacturers, tradesmen and others, as well as parishes and public bodies, for a legislative enactment to put a stop to Sunday traffic on rivers and canals throughout the kingdom. He mentioned that a petition from 300 boatmen had produced a powerful effect in the House of Lords; that Lord Normanby had promised the appointment of a committee next session to investigate the subject, and Lord Hatherton to obtain the necessary information from evidence. The Bishop enforced upon the meeting the duty of supporting this good cause as *men*, as *patriots*, and *Christians*. Archdeacon Hodson read a most interesting and encouraging report from the chaplain appointed to instruct the boatmen employed in the Trent and Mersey Navigation, which was listened to with great attention. Earl Talbot, the lord lieutenant of the county, Lord Sandon and others, moved and seconded the various resolutions. The Duke of Sutherland, Lord Dartmouth and Lord Bradford sent donations, and stated their regret at unavoidable absence from the meeting. The Bishop, after acknowledging the usual vote of thanks, as chairman, expressed his high gratification at the excellent spirits which had pervaded all the proceedings of the day, and his assurance of a final success through the Divine blessing. We understand that the resolutions embraced three objects 1. The appointment of canal chaplains. 2. The building of schools and small churches on the different navigations. 3. Petitioning Parliament for the cessation of Sunday labour on rivers and canals. Among the subscriptions, it was gratifying to see £40 per annum from the proprietors of the Trent and Mersey Navigation; an example well worthy of imitation. It was recommended by some of the speakers to include in the petitions Sunday traffic on railroads, by the *carriage of goods*, not interfering with passengers. We feel assured that all classes will cordially unite in endeavouring to secure for their poor brethren, the watermen of the United Kingdom, the privileges attached to the day of sacred rest. Instances have occurred of the greatest benefits resulting to this neglected class from having had religious instruction imparted, and we cordially wish success to the benevolent exertions which are now called forth on behalf of so numerous and useful a body of our countrymen.

#### **47 January 23 1841**

**ALARMING INUNDATION AT BRENTFORD** Great alarm was created in Brentford on Sunday

morning, by a overflow of the Brent River and the Grand Junction Canal. The canal joins the river Thames southward of New Brentford, running at the rear of the town on the south for some hundred yards. On the north side of the high road, which crosses the canal by means of a strongly built stone bridge, it is joined by the river Brent. The general belief is that it was the immense body of land water occasioned by the rapid thaw, which poured down from the country, swelling the stream of the Brent, which caused this catastrophe. The scene is thus described by a reporter of the *Times* : “The water, it appears, was first observed to be slowly rising about half past twelve o'clock on Saturday night; but no fears of an inundation being entertained by the persons residing near, they retired to rest, little dreaming that they would be so soon aroused from their slumbers. Towards two o'clock, however, Police-constable Smith, who was on duty near the bridge, observing the water still increasing and rushing with great force to the Thames, awakened some of the boatmen belonging to what are called “monkey boats”, large numbers of which were moored off the different wharfs abutting the canal, and cautioned them to be on the alert for their own security. At that time, and even up to half past three o'clock on Sunday morning, immediate danger was not apprehended; but a few minutes before four, a loud noise was heard to the north of the town, which momentarily approached nearer and nearer; and it was soon ascertained that the narrow stream of the Brent had swelled into a mighty river and, overflowing its banks, was pouring itself into the already increased waters of the canal. Numbers of boats, barges and lighters were instantly torn from their moorings, and driven with great force through the bridge towards the Thames. At the same instant, also, the accumulated waters, having overflowed all the premises north of the high road, burst with frightful force through two avenues by the houses of Mr Brasher near the bridge, and Mr Farrell, directly opposite the church, filling the lower rooms of the houses. The police immediately sprang their rattles, and lost no time in awakening the inhabitants to a sense of their danger; and where some were too deeply buried in sleep to be aroused by the knocking, they forced the doors open. The scene at that moment it is impossible to describe; men, women and children (many of them in their night clothes) were running in all directions for places of shelter; while the roaring of the water, added to the screams of the wretched inhabitants of the boats, and of the individuals inhabiting the numerous cottages running south of the town down to the waterside, were most appalling. In a very short time, all the houses at that portion of the town were flooded, and the water rising rapidly, the occupiers of the houses near the market place commenced damming up their doors; and there is no doubt that the whole not only of New Brentford but also of Old Brentford would shortly have become under water, had the stream not found itself an outlet at the bottom of Church Alley, by razing the wall of the extensive nursery grounds of Messrs Ronalds, and another wall at the southern extremity of the grounds, by which it joined the canal near its outlet to the Thames. Every possible assistance was immediately rendered by those of the inhabitants who had not been reached by the inundation. About five o'clock the water was at the highest, and the only means of communication between the houses near the bridge was by a boat. Towards six o'clock it was ascertained that the water was gradually decreasing; and daylight was anxiously looked for, that the extent of the effects of the inundation might be ascertained. The damage to the barges and houses was very great, but the loss of life was less than might have been expected. A boatman was drowned; and on Monday the body of Mr Morris, a market gardener, was found in a stream near his house. It is supposed, however, that more bodies will come to light. Some of the escapes were curious. During the early part of the day, fears were entertained that the whole of the crews of the boats, &c, which have been wrecked, were drowned; but much interest was excited to ascertain the fate of a family of seven children who, with their father and mother, named **Tolley**, it was known were on Saturday evening on board one of the boats belonging to Messrs Price and Sons of Brierley Hill, which boat is one of those sunk. It was, however, in the afternoon ascertained that they had been most miraculously saved, as the boat was being driven along by the current, by the exertions of a family named Ayres, living in a cottage at the bottom of Boar's Head Yard who, as the boat passed the window, succeeded in dragging in the seven children, where our reporter saw them, and where he learned that the father and mother had also been saved. At the next cottage were also two sisters by the name of **Forster**, each with one child, who were rescued from another boat. It has



also been ascertained that no fewer than twenty one men, women and children saved their lives by climbing over the wall of the Duke of Northumberland's grounds and taking refuge in a cow house, where they have been since found." The inhabitants of the neighbourhood exerted themselves to assist the sufferers. The infant schools were thrown open for the admission of the boatmen and their families to the number of ninety persons, who were provided with good food.

#### **48 January 30 1841**

**SHOCKING OCCURRENCE** On Tuesday evening an unfortunate girl, named Eliza Hadfield, was drowned under the following circumstances. She had been drinking at a public house with a boatman named **Edward Maude**; and in a state of intoxication, they set off to go on board his boat, in the Ashton Canal at its junction with the Rochdale Canal, in Ancoats. They had to pass along a very narrow towing-path (not two feet wide) under the bridge near the junction, which was partly worn away and very dangerous, and the man's account of the transaction is that the girl in the dark slipped in, and he followed, but was unable to get hold of her, and after remaining till he was exhausted by the coldness of the water, he called for help, and was got out by a boy in his own boat. He then told the lad about the girl, but his story was treated as a fabrication, and he was put to bed. No means were consequently taken to get the girl out till next day, when her body was found by means of drags, and an inquest was held yesterday, before Mr Rutter, and afterwards before Mr Chapman. There being no evidence respecting the matter but Maude's, a verdict was returned of "Found drowned". There was no ground for supposing the girl had been treated unfairly; but the jury thought Maude very blameable for not giving the alarm and having the girl got out of the water as soon as possible.

#### **49 May 1 1841**

**THE NEW ACT FOR REPRESSING EMBEZZLEMENT BY BOATMEN** On Wednesday at the Borough Court, two men and a boy named **Thomas Beck, Spencer Meadowcroft** and **Francis Rolls**, were placed at the bar under the following circumstances. Inspector Irwin stated that he had apprehended the prisoners in consequence of hearing that they had been offering for sale a quantity of yarn. He went to a boat of which Beck was the captain, at the Merchant Company Wharf, Dale Street, where upon search he found 20lbs of yarn concealed under some coals, and under a bed he found a quantity of tea in a handkerchief. He asked to whom the handkerchief belonged and Meadowcroft replied that it belonged to him *sometimes*, but not now. On searching the after cabin, he found a tube, such as is used by boatmen for drawing liquor from casks, two tun dishes, a sheep's foot for unhooping tubs, and a crow bar. Mr Maude : Have you discovered who the yarn belongs to? Irwin : No; we find that among the last cargo of goods they took from Manchester, there was yarn like this, but there is no means of proving that this is part of it. Mr Maude : Well, what am I to do with the prisoners? Irwin : I understand there was an act passed last session, sir, for punishing boatmen found with tools in their possession which it might be supposed were intended for enabling them to effect embezzlements. Mr Maude, after a short delay, said that he found that Irwin was right; by the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Victoria, cap 50, sec 7, boatmen found having in their possession tubes, gimlets, and other implements for extracting wine, spirits, &c, were liable to a penalty of £3 or imprisonment for one month. Under these circumstances, Beck would stand committed for a month; and he was sorry that the proof of possession did not extend to his companions, who were doubtlessly equally guilty with himself, for he would assuredly have committed them also. We understand that the boy Rolls' father was captain of the same boat before Beck, and was convicted of embezzlement at the last sessions, and sentenced to be transported for seven years.

#### **50 May 15 1841**

**ANOTHER CANAL STEAMER FITTED WITH MR P TAYLOR'S REVOLVING SCREW SCULLERS** On Wednesday the fifth instant, we had the pleasure of inspecting a new steam boat on the river Irwell, fitted by Messrs Peter Taylor and Co of Hollinwood, near Manchester, with steam engines and propellers of an entirely new construction, both inventions of Mr Peter Taylor,

and for which he has obtained patents. The vessel is 75 feet long and 10 feet wide and built (with the exception of the gunwhale and paddle box) entirely of iron. She appeared to perform very satisfactorily; at a speed varying according to the depth of water from about eight to nine miles per hour, which upon a confined water we believe has never been attained by any steam vessel. In noticing a trial some months ago of another vessel belonging to Messrs Taylor and Co, which had then been newly fitted with similar propellers, we gave a description of the apparatus, which consists of a number of continuous curved vanes or segments of screws, or wings, on two axes. In the instance now under notice five pairs are affixed upon one axis, and five pairs upon the other, the number being regulated by, and varied according to, the power of the steam engines and the extent of surface of the vanes or blades, which have the appearance of small windmill sails, and have been very appropriately named revolving screw scullers; each set consisting of five pairs are six feet in diameter. The vanes of one set work betwixt the vanes of the other in the same manner as the teeth of cog wheels; by this arrangement the two sets, although six feet in diameter, are together contained in a paddle box (there being only one) ; it is 9 feet 8 inches in width, and placed at the stern of the vessel; the smallness of the space occupied offering great convenience for passing locks. The scullers are well protected from the banks or sides and bottom of the canal, with which it is almost impossible they can ever come in contact. The paddle box occupies seven feet in length, and has the effect of extending the boat so much. The width or breadth is regulated by the width or breadth of the boat, which in the present instance is ten feet outside. The two shafts or axes are placed at an equal distance from the sides of the boat or box containing them, and with which they run parallel; and as we have before observed, the shafts or axes are so arranged in respect to each other, that the vanes or oblique surfaces of the one can enter between the vanes on the other shaft or axis, thus obtaining a great extent of propelling surface within a very confined space. The axes are placed considerably above the water line, and the curved oblique vanes or scullers are affixed upon the shafts or axes in opposite directions, that is, they are fixed upon one shaft or axis in such a manner that they may be said to form parts of a right-handed screw, and upon the other shaft or axis, so that they may be said to form part of a left-handed screw. This novel propelling apparatus is worked by a pair of semi-rotatory steam engines, also Mr Taylor's invention and for which, as well as the propelling apparatus, he has obtained patents. The steam boiler is of the same description as those used upon the railways. It is placed towards the stern of the vessel, and the steam engines close up to it. To one axis of the propelling apparatus is coupled a shaft, which runs lengthwise to the steam engines. The starting, reversing and stopping apparatus is connected with the regulator of the steam engine, and affixed at the stern of the boat, within reach of the steerer, who manages the whole when necessary. This is a most simple and beautiful arrangement, the helmsman being altogether independent of the engineer. He can start, stop or reverse the engines at his pleasure. The helm or rudder is placed in the usual position, and is immediately behind the propellers.

On Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> instant, we understand this new steamer made her first appearance on the Bridgewater Canal, taking in tow and tugging a timber float from Manchester to Preston Brook, distant about 25 miles, which she performed, including all stoppages and interruptions from other boats, in about six hours. She returned the same day to Manchester with three fly boats belonging to the Bridgewater trust, viz, the *Harriet*, the *Frank* and the *Granville*, all deeply laden and containing 60 tons of merchandise. The first and second six miles were each respectively performed in one hour and twenty three minutes. She was accompanied for a considerable distance by several gentlemen connected with the Bridgewater Trust, who kindly afforded every assistance in conducting both that and the subsequent trials. At Lymm she was inspected by Trafford Trafford Esq, who got on board, to whom the machinery was shown and explained. He expressed himself much pleased with the contrivance and arrangement of the machinery, and there seemed to be but one opinion as to the successful performance. The little agitation produced by the propellers is confined to the middle of the canal, and consequently does not wash the banks so as at all to injure them.

On Tuesday the 11<sup>th</sup>, the steamer again left Manchester at six am, and arrived at Preston Brook at a

quarter past eleven – say 25 miles in five hours and a quarter. She proceeded to Runcorn at twelve o'clock precisely, taking in tow and tugging five large flats, viz, the *Manchester*, the *Diligent*, the *Surprise*, the *Busy* and the *Mersey*; a sixth, belonging to Messrs W Jackson and Sons, was added on the way. The weight of the hulls and lading of these vessels was stated to amount together to nearly 400 tons; the time occupied in tugging, which was one hour and fifty nine minutes, being at the rate of about three miles per hour. Immense crowds of persons assembled on the banks of the canal at Runcorn, attracted by the novelty of the scene. The long train of huge vessels, the smallness of the steamer, the speed, and the almost entire absence of commotion in the water, were alike matters of surprise and astonishment. The steamer immediately returned to Preston Brook, taking in tow a packet boat laden with about sixty passengers. The last three miles of the distance was performed in twenty two minutes, or at the rate of about eight miles per hour.

**TUNNEL EXPERIMENT** It was next proposed to try to pass the steamer through the Preston Brook tunnel (which is three quarters of a mile in extent) with the boats waiting the five o'clock turn. It is well known that considerable delay is experienced in passing the tunnels of canals, and the attention of scientific men and gentlemen connected with canal navigation has long been directed to the subject of contriving a remedy; that remedy is now provided. Mr Taylor's steamer, as a tunnel boat, is signally successful. It was at first feared that the absence of flues or perpendicular ventilating shafts would occasion an almost suffocating sensation to the engine drivers, steersmen and boatmen, owing to want of vent for the steam and heat, and therefore in the first attempt the steam and fire were kept down as low as possible. This occasioned the boats to be a much longer time in passing through than would otherwise have been the case; the time occupied in the first attempt, with two boats in tow, being 25 minutes. A considerable number of persons were in the steamer, little inconvenience was experienced, the steam and vapour being weak, and impending from the roof of the tunnel. On returning, however, with three narrow boats in tow, and the steam a little stronger, the helmsman of the steamer was a good deal affected by inhaling the steam, and it was feared at first that he would not soon recover from the effects which it appeared to have produced upon his lungs; he soon came round, however, and it is gratifying to be able to state that out of twenty other individuals who passed through at the same time (Mr Taylor himself being one of the number), no other individual felt any serious inconvenience, and the helmsman's indisposition is entirely attributable to his not taking a lower position in the boat. He was requested to change his position, but having felt little inconvenience on the first trip, he persisted in remaining. We understand that Mr Taylor recommends the reopening of several shafts which at present are closed, and this, it is expected, will thoroughly ventilate the tunnel and obviate every difficulty. Otherwise he has a plan for passing the trains of boats through the tunnel without any attendants, and as quickly as upon any other portion of the canal. The time occupied in passing a train is frequently three quarters of an hour. On the second attempt, the steamer passed through, with three boats, in about sixteen minutes.

On Wednesday the 12<sup>th</sup>, the steamer returned towards Manchester at 6.41, taking in tow and tugging four fly boats, all laden, belonging to the Bridgewater Trust, viz *The Granville*, **James Lunn**, master; *Countess Grosvenor*, **Thomas West**, master; *Countess of Surrey*, **W Woods**, master; *Blanche*, **Isaac Speed**, master; united cargoes 60 tons. The steamer arrived in Stockton Quay, say six miles, in one hour and sixteen minutes; at Lymm, a similar distance, in about the same period of time. Owing to one of the boats getting aground, and to some interruption from a laden timber float, the time was not afterwards particularly noted. On arriving at the junction of the Worsley Canal, the steamer disengaged her train of boats, taking one fly boat only to Worsley; she there took in a fresh supply of fuel, returning to Manchester on the same day, where she now remains. Notwithstanding the signal success of this canal steamer, Mr Taylor is of opinion that he shall be able to attain a much greater speed with a boat of lighter draught of water, the present boat, owing to her build, being in the opinion of boat builders, fully one foot deeper than would be the case with a hull of the same dimensions but proper shape.

**51 May 22 1841**

**INGENIOUS SYSTEM OF PLUNDER ADOPTED BY BOATMEN** The following account of an ingenious mode of embezzlement adopted by the captain and company of a boat belonging to Messrs Morris, Herbert and Co, canal carriers, Castle Field, was given at the Borough Court on Thursday. Mr Beswick stated that on the 14<sup>th</sup> instant, cases of China silk (raw) were consigned by a house in London for carriage by one of Messrs Morris and Co's boats, to Mr Thomas Percival of Sandbach. On the arrival of the boat at the wharf at Sandbach, the cases were weighed and found to be 1 3/4lb under the invoice weight, in consequence of which they were opened, from a suspicion that pilferage had taken place by the boatmen. On examining them, the suspicion proved not to be unfounded, for a considerable quantity of silk had been removed, the thieves having saturated the rest with water to make up the weight! When this discovery was made, the company's boat having left for Manchester, the agent wrote to Messrs Morris and Co, to get the captain and men apprehended, and he, Mr Beswick, having been applied to in consequence, had attended to the request, and the men were now in the dock. The boat had been searched, but no silk found in it; from three to four pounds of tea, supposed to have been embezzled, had been discovered concealed in the cabin. The object in bringing the men before the court was to obtain authority to take them forward to a magistrate at Sandbach for examination. Mr Maude said there could be no objection to the order; and the men, whose names are **George Hodgson, Edward Walton and George Hodson**, were then removed.

**52 July 31 1841**

**Wigan**

**CORONER'S INQUEST – CHILD DROWNED** On Saturday evening last, an inquest was held at the Canal Coffee House, before J Rogerson Esq, coroner and a respectable jury, of which Mr William Barton was foreman, on the body of **Robert Snape**, the child of a boatman, who met with its death by drowning in the canal nearly opposite the Pottery Steam Mills. It appeared from the evidence that the child had been playing on the deck of one of the canal boats, and that it had accidentally fallen into the water. When taken out, the vital spark was perceptible; but owing to the want of prompt and proper surgical assistance, the little innocent soon afterwards expired. Verdict, "Found drowned."

**53 August 21 1841**

**Liverpool Summer Assizes**

**FRIDAY** Edward Kelly, 27, was indicted for stabbing **John Baron** at Blatchenworth and Calderbrook. The prosecutor was a boatman at Littleborough, and had been at some wakes and a boat launch on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, but was not drunk. The prisoner, a fiddler, had attempted to rob him in the night, as he lay in bed in the house of a publican, where they were both sleeping. The prisoner attempted to draw his trowsers from under his pillow, when the prosecutor seized hold of him and called for assistance, but received a heavy blow with a pint pot, and several stabs with a knife. The prisoner, in his defence, made a charge against the prosecutor which he had never hinted at before, and which aggravated the crime in the opinion of the judge, who sentenced him to banishment for life.

**54 November 6 1841**

**Oldham**

**ACCIDENT ON THE ROCHDALE CANAL** On Monday night last, two boats on the Rochdale Canal, at Whitegate End, near Oldham, ran against each other, when a boatman named **John Lamb** from Brighouse, Yorkshire, who was in a complete state of intoxication, fell from one of them on the occurrence of the collision, and, dropping into the canal, was instantly drowned.

**55 December 31 1841**

**CHARGE OF MANSLAUGHTER** On Tuesday evening, an inquest was held before James Chapman Esq, borough coroner, at the Boat House, Knott Mill, on view of the body of **William Graves**, a boatman, who had been drowned in the Bridgewater Canal. **John Chadwick**, a boatman in the employ of the Merchant Company, on board the boat *Emma*, plying on the Duke's Canal, was

in custody charged with having thrown the deceased into the water.  
The following is the evidence of the witnesses examined before the coroner :-

Joseph Farrington, private watchman in the service of the Duke of Bridgewater's Trustees, stated that about half past twelve on Monday morning, he was on duty at the wharf, on the Hulme side of the canal, and at the part nearest to Chester Road and Jackson's Lane, he heard two men quarrelling on one of the Merchant Company's vessels. That vessel was the *Emma*, the property of the Merchant Company, and plied on the Bridgewater Canal. There were several boats on the canal. He observed the prisoner who, addressing deceased, said, "If you come here, I'll knock you overboard". Soon afterwards, witness saw both deceased and prisoner on board the *Emma*, and saw the prisoner lift his hand and knock deceased overboard into the canal. Deceased cried, "Oh, Dick, Dick, help me out", and the prisoner said, as if to himself, "I'll not pull him out by G—d". The captain of the *Emma* then came out of the cabin, and got a boat hook to assist the deceased, but he had disappeared. The captain asked the prisoner where deceased was, and he said he was gone under water, but did not seem disposed to assist in getting him out. It was moonlight, and witness could see all that was going on. Some watchmen and policemen came up soon afterwards, and Chadwick was taken into custody, after which the deceased was got out of the water. He had been in the canal about three quarters of an hour when taken out, and was quite dead. Witness was quite sure he was knocked in, and did not slip of his own accord.

**Joseph Lamb**, captain of the *Emma*, stated that he had been in bed from ten o'clock on Saturday night. He heard the prisoner and deceased quarrelling after he was in bed, and went on deck once to order the prisoner into his berth. It was half an hour after this that he heard the deceased in the canal crying out, "Dick, Dick, pull me out of the water!" He went and got a boat hook to assist him out, but deceased had disappeared below the surface. The deck was frozen over and slippery at the time, and deceased might have slipped in.

**James Ditchfield** said he was cabin boy on board the boat *Albert*, which was in the Bridgewater Canal on Sunday night, and had been with deceased and prisoner at a public house before they quarrelled. They had both had liquor and were rather drunk. Deceased was a boatman out of work, and when they left the public house, he went with them down to the canal. When they got there, the *Duke*, the *Albert* and the *Emma* were lying alongside each other. Deceased asked for a job on board the *Duke*, but the captain said they did not want hands. Deceased then went on board the *Albert*, and was invited to stay the night, but declined, saying he would go on board the *Emma*. The prisoner then said he should not, and they quarrelled. The prisoner was ordered by his captain into his berth, and the quarrel ceased for a time, but afterwards recommenced. Witness at this time went into his own cabin, and did not see the fatal occurrence which led to this inquest.

The prisoner, who was present during the examination, said he had nothing to say in defence, except that he was ordered by his captain not to let deceased come on board.

The jury found a verdict of "Manslaughter" and the coroner made out his warrant for the committal of the prisoner to the assizes.

## **56 February 19 1842 Warrington**

NIGHT POACHING On Wednesday, **Thomas Woods** and **John Thorley**, two Manchester boatmen, were committed for three months to the House of Correction for night poaching on the preserves of James Heath Legh, Esq, at Grappenhall.

## **57 March 12 1842**

FRAUD ON THE MANCHESTER AND SALFORD JUNCTION CANAL COMPANY  
NEW BAILEY – THURSDAY

A man named **Thomas Chadwick**, captain of a barge called *The Hope*, appeared to answer a charge preferred against him by the proprietors of the Manchester and Salford Junction Canal, for defrauding them of toll by returning a false account to the toll-takers of his tonnage. Mr Law, sen, solicitor, appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Myers appeared for Chadwick. In opening the case,



Mr Law said he applied for a penalty against Thomas Chadwick under the act of the company for evading tolls. The circumstances were these :- The defendant had left Liverpool with a cargo of meal in a vessel called *The Hope* and, on passing Runcorn, being asked the weight of his vessel and the draft, gave the draft as 3ft 8in fore, and 3ft 11in aft; weight 21 tons. He arrived at Manchester, and on presenting himself to pass the junction canal made the same return, and when Mr T O Lingard, suspecting from his knowledge of the man before that the return was wrong, offered to unload and weigh the cargo, he made an excuse that the meal, which was for Mr Richard Smith of Todmorden, miller, was much wanted, and that the stoppage would be a serious inconvenience. He was then allowed to pass his boat, but it had since been found that, on arriving in the Rochdale Canal, where he was better known, and where they were suspicious of him, he gave a return next day of 28 tons 12 cwt, and this return he also gave to the toll-keeper near Todmorden. Mr Law then entered into a circumstantial detail of the trouble, inconvenience and expense the Old Quay Company had been put to in bringing the defendant to justice, in consequence of Mr Smith, who had been written to and summoned to appear in this case, refusing information as to the weight of the meal he had on board *The Hope*. The junction canal was of great convenience to the public, and the proprietors were entitled to their toll, and Mr Lingard, having been desirous to bring Chadwick to justice, he certainly thought that any gentleman partaking of that convenience should have been anxious to render them every possible assistance in giving that information. Mr Law then read four letters from Mr Lingard to Mr Smith on the subject.

The following is the first letter, dated Old Quay office, Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> 1841 :-

Sir – Thomas Chadwick, captain of *The Hope*, passed here this morning with a cargo of meal for you. His draft was 3ft 8in forward and 3ft 11in aft. I intended keeping her in order to have her weighed, but as he stated that you were particularly in want of the meal, I consented to let her go forward rather than disappoint you. I have sent the bearer over, and shall be much obliged if you will render him your assistance in correcting the mistake, if it is one. The weight he, Thomas Chadwick, returned is 21 tons. I should also be much obliged if you will inform me the weight of a cargo he brought for you on or around the 13<sup>th</sup> ult. I am, Sir, your very obedient servant.

THOMAS OGDEN LINGARD

The second letter, dated Old Quay office, Manchester, November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1841, is as follows :-

Sir – I find from the messenger I sent over to Todmorden this morning that Chadwick's return is about nine tons deficient, and from what I can hear, this is not the first time he has been detected in making wrong declarations. As it was for your convenience that I did not keep the boat in Manchester, I hope you will oblige me with the other information I ask; that is, as to the cargo on or about the 13<sup>th</sup> of last month (October). In justice to you, I think I ought to say that Chadwick told me he always delivered up to you the note he paid for tonnage, and that you only paid him 5s 4d per ton on that quantity. Of course, after what I have discovered, I cannot believe anything that he says, particularly as it would implicate you in being acquainted with his making false declarations. I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

THOMAS OGDEN LINGARD

The third letter, dated Old Quay office, November 29<sup>th</sup> 1841 :-

Sir – I have Chadwick with me again this morning, but of course not able to settle the matter with him, because you had not answered my inquiry of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> inst. I cannot help expressing my surprise at your not having done so, unless I am to believe that you are really interested, as I told you he said you were, in keeping back the information I ask of you. I shall be glad to hear that the cause of your not having written arises from any other circumstances. Remaining, Sir, your very obedient servant,

THOMAS OGDEN LINGARD

The following is a copy of the fourth letter :-

Old Quay office Nov 29<sup>th</sup> 1841

Sir - Your conduct is certainly the most strange I ever met with, and I can now only conclude that you are, as Chadwick stated, a party interested in the fraud. However, unless I have a satisfactory reply to my letters before the 31<sup>st</sup> instant, you may depend upon it that such proceedings will be instituted as will materially affect the credit of any respectable man concerned. Your obedient servant,

THOMAS OGDEN LINGARD

To these letters, Mr Lingard had received no answer, and Mr Law said he should proceed to call witnesses, and then ask for a penalty upon both parties.

**Mr Ward**, a servant in the employ of the Old Quay Company on the Mersey and Irwell navigation at Runcorn, proved that the defendant's boat passed at Runcorn on the 21<sup>st</sup> September. The defendant called at the office and gave a declaration of the weight of his cargo, which represented it at 21 tons. Witness then gave him a pass, by which he was entitled to travel along the navigation. One of their workmen took the draft, and it was 3ft 8in fore and 3ft 11in aft.

**Mr J Whitehouse**, toll-taker on the Manchester and Salford junction canal, stated that the tonnage on that canal was 6d per ton. He returned his tonnage at 21 tons, and received his pass.

**Mr Wm Dudge** said he took the draft of the vessel at the junction canal, and it was as before stated. He did not unload the vessel, because Chadwick said Mr Smith was much in want of the meal, and the delay would inconvenience him.

Mr Thos Ogden Lingard said he had reason to suspect Chadwick's honesty, and believing his declaration false, he ordered the vessel to be stopped and unloaded, but allowed it to pass on his representations of inconvenience. Cross-examined by Mr Myers : Chadwick had since called at the office, but had not offered to pay for 28 tons.

John Fletcher, a boy employed as a clerk at the Rochdale canal office. Manchester, said the defendant produced a return of weight on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, at their office, representing it at 28 tons, 12 cwt.

**Mr Samuel Greenwood**, in the employ of the Rochdale Canal Company at the office near Todmorden, said he remembered Chadwick coming up on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September. Took his gauge. Had reason to be particular with him. He produced the duplicate of a ticket signed by the last witness, representing the tonnage to be 28 tons 12 cwt.

Mr Thurlow said he took the money from the defendant on 28 tons 12 cwt. He took his draft, which was as stated before. He had calculated the tonnage by the draft, and made it 28 tons. Could tell by that means within a ton.

Mr Richard Smith was next sworn, and stated that the tonnage of the vessel referred to was upwards of 28 tons. The weight of the meal he received by it was 28tons 10cwt. He acknowledged receiving a summons in this case, and not obeying it; he had other business; he did not refuse information as to the amount of the tonnage, and the prosecution were now acting on that information. [Mr Lingard : I deny that we had any information from you.] Cross-examined by Mr Myers : It sometimes happened that goods were put on in the Grand Junction Canal, which increased the tonnage, and the tonnage at Manchester might be less than at Todmorden. Vessels often left Liverpool, and the captain did not get the weight till they arrived some distance on the way, when they were forwarded by post. By Mr Law : You say extra weight is sometimes put on vessels after they get on the Grand Junction; do you mean to say that the 29 tons 10cwt you received was not that weight when it left Liverpool? I do not say so; it was.

Mr Myers said in defence that the defendant was an illiterate man, and might not know the weight by the draft of water, and that he did not get his notes from the office at Liverpool till he reached Manchester, and he had then passed the junction canal.

Mr Law said this was an inconsistent statement, because if he got his letters here, he could have gone to the canal office and rectified the mistake. He begged also in considering the conduct of Mr Smith, that the court would take into account the great expense incurred in going after him, and of

other witnesses being brought into court several times from a distance.

In answer to a question from Mr Maude, it was stated that the extra expense of witnesses was 50s.

Mr Maude said there could be no doubt of the fraud on the part of the defendant, Chadwick, because as an old boatman, he must have known the weight of particular drafts of water. With regard to Mr Smith, he thought there was no ground for saying he was acquainted with the fraud, but he did not think he had acted with the candour and frankness he ought to the company. There could not be a doubt, if the boatman had cheated him by putting any of the load overboard, they would have protected him, provided it came to their knowledge, and he ought in courtesy and fairness to have rendered assistance to a public company like this by answering frankly their queries. Under the circumstances, he thought that he ought to bear the additional expenses consequent on not doing so, and the penalty upon Mr Smith, therefore, for not obeying the summons and rendering information, was 50s.

Mr Lingard wished to say that Chadwick was unable to pay a penalty, and the company would be content with a nominal conviction without enforcing it.

Mr Maude : It is a great deal better than he deserves, that's all I can say.

Chadwick was then convicted in a penalty of £5 which, it was understood, would not be levied.

### **58 April 30 1842**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** On Wednesday, Mr Chapman held an inquest on the body of **James Booth**, a boatman, 42 years of age, residing in White Street, Pollard Street. He was in the service of a person named Lukes, a water carrier; and it appeared that on Tuesday evening, between six and seven o'clock, he was in his boat at the lock at Ancoats Bridge. **David Ogden**, another of the hands belonging to the boat, had left him on the side to go down and make some preparations at the lock further on, the boat having to descend the lock. Ogden and another man returned in twenty minutes, and found the boat below the lock, but the deceased was absent. His hat being seen floating in the water, it was supposed he had fallen in. On search being made, his body was found under the bridge. He was not tipsy, but had had two or three pints of beer. There being no evidence to show how he got into the water, the jury came to a verdict of "Found drowned".

### **59 August 20 1842**

**ATTACK ON A MILL SUCCESSFULLY REPULSED** Since writing the particulars which appear under the head of Wednesday, we learn that an attack was made by a ferocious mob on that day, on the cotton mill of Mr James Thompson, of Hope Street, Salford. Mr Thompson resumed work early on Wednesday morning, the hands having been anxious all along to begin again, and never having had any grievance whatever about wages; in fact, their wages are now the same as they have been for the last eight years. The mill is situate in a neighbourhood where a great many boatmen and loose characters reside, who had used all their endeavours to restrain the mill hands from returning to work; but notwithstanding this, the men came to the conclusion to go in again, and also resolved on defending themselves if attacked. This, it will be seen from the particulars below, they accomplished in gallant style. The number of hands employed by Mr Thompson is about 300, and the whole, with one single exception, a man who was sick, were at their places on Wednesday morning. About eleven o'clock in the forenoon, a mob consisting of several hundreds of men and boys were seen approaching the mill from Oldfield Road. An attack of this kind being anticipated, for three former attacks had been made on this mill, about 60 of the men had been furnished with "picking pegs" and were stationed outside the premises, to defend them in the same way as a police force might have done. The onset of the mob was furious, but the men defended the property most effectually, and prevented any of the rioters from effecting an entrance into the premises. In a conversation which some of them had with the mob, they told them that they were better employed and had a better master than they (the mob) would be, and that they were determined not to leave their work. While the struggle was at its height, a messenger was dispatched to the Salford Town Hall, and in a very short time, a party of police and a company of the grenadiers came in sight, on which the mob scampered off in all directions. The works have since proceeded with the slightest

interruption; the spirited conduct of the men, which is deserving of the warmest commendation, having evidently struck terror into the breasts of the mob.

#### **60 August 20 1842**

**STOCKPORT** On Tuesday, three men named **William Mortimer**, a boatman, James Kershaw, power loom weaver, and William Smith, card-room hand, were brought before two county magistrates at Stockport and committed to Chester Assizes for trial, on a charge of rioting and breaking a lock gate, on the Peak Forest Canal at Marple, on the previous day.

#### **61 October 8 1842**

**INQUEST ON A BODY FOUND IN THE ROCHDALE CANAL** On Wednesday, an inquest was held at the Flower Pot, Deansgate, before James Chapman Esq, the borough coroner, on view of the body of a woman unknown, apparently about 75 years of age, who had been taken out of the Rochdale Canal that morning. **James Bilton** stated that he was a boatman, and about a quarter to six o'clock that morning, as he was going along the canal with his boat, when near the steps of the Gaythorn Lock, next Deansgate, he saw a cap and a bedgown above the water, and with the assistance of the captain of the boat and another man, he got out the body of deceased, which was quite lifeless but seemed not to have been long in the water. She was without bonnet and shawl, otherwise her dress was entire. There was no appearance of violence on the body, but the face was dirty from having been in the water. No one about seemed to know anything of the matter, and the deceased was not owned. On the body being searched by the officer, a little green tea was found in a bag, also a short pipe and a tobacco box. Deceased presented the appearance of extreme poverty. Verdict "Found drowned".

#### **62 January 28 1843**

**CHARGE OF ROBBERY** On Sunday evening, a collier from Mirfield Moor near Leeds named Joseph Whitehead, having been in company at the Egerton Packet Office, Deansgate, with some boatmen till the house closed, was induced to return with them to a boat at the Duke's Wharf, where they remained drinking until a late hour, when Whitehead went to rest on the master's bed. On awaking next morning, he missed his watch, and on Wednesday morning, **John Holmes**, one of the boatmen with whom he had been drinking, was brought before Mr Maude, at the Borough Court, charged with the robbery. Mr Stirrup, pawnbroker, Great Bridgewater Street, stated that the prisoner pledged the watch with him on Monday morning. The prisoner was committed for trial at the sessions.

#### **63 February 4 1843**

**DEATH FROM DROWNING** On Thursday morning, the body of a man named **John Rhodes**, a boatman on the Rochdale Canal, in the employ of the Orrell Company, whose wharf is in Great Ancoats Street, was taken out of the Rochdale Canal near to the Brownsfield lock. The body was in an advanced state of decomposition, and had evidently been in the water several days. It was conveyed to the house of Mr Wormalds, the Brownsfield Tavern in Brewer Street, where an inquest was held before Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, on the same day. It appeared from the evidence that the deceased had not been seen by anyone since the evening of the 21<sup>st</sup> ult, when he was in liquor, and it is supposed that he had fallen into the canal in trying to get into his boat, where he generally slept. The body was discovered floating in the water by a young man named Samuel Pearson, in the employ of Messrs W Jackson and Sons, carriers, Piccadilly Wharf. Verdict, "Found drowned".

#### **64 May 13 1843**

**DEATH FROM DROWNING** On Tuesday, an inquest was held at the Flower Pot public house, Knott Mill, before Mr Chapman, on view of the body of Mary Davies, supposed to be about 85 years old. It appeared that about twelve o'clock on Sunday night, as a boat belonging to **Mr**

**Jackson** of Piccadilly Wharf was passing through one of the Gaythorn Locks, the boatman could not close the gate, and suspecting that a body was there, he called the watchman on the beat, with whose assistance the deceased was got out. She had been seen near twelve o'clock at night going in the direction of the place where she was found. She had been many times in the custody of the police, and had only come out of the New Bailey on the 30<sup>th</sup> ult. Verdict, "Found drowned".

**65 July 15 1843**

**Wigan**

**ASSAULT James Kitchen**, a boatman, was charged on Wednesday last with assaulting William Walker and his wife, as they were passing along the canal bank from the Bridge Inn to the Britannia on Sunday night at eleven o'clock. Walker swore that Kitchen took hold of his wife, used her very roughly and, when called upon to desist, he said, "she was a d----d ----, and he would pitch her into the canal". He was ordered to find sureties to keep the peace.

**66 July 29 1843**

**SHOCKING CASE OF STABBING** At the Borough Court on Wednesday, a boatman named **T Dunbobbin**, lately discharged from the service of the Merchants' Company, Castle Field, was brought before D Maude Esq, charged with stabbing an ostler in the employ of the same company with a pitchfork. The ostler, whose name is Edwin Rafter, stated that on the night of the 8<sup>th</sup> inst, between eight and nine o'clock, the prisoner came with some friends into the stables of the Merchants' Company and accused him of having got him turned out of his situation. They used high words, and at length prosecutor threatened to send for a policeman. At this Dunbobbin was much enraged, and attempted to strike him, but prosecutor retreated, threatening to return the blow with a pikel shaft. Ultimately he struck the prisoner with the pikel shaft, upon which the prisoner ran and fetched a pikel and struck him in the face with it, and he fell down on the floor of the stable. Dunbobbin's wife then tried to persuade her husband to leave him, but he struck and kicked prosecutor several times very violently first. Prosecutor afterwards left the stables alone, but met with a private watchman, who took him to a surgeon's. On the examination, one prong of the pikel was found to have entered through the eyelid of one eye, and to have penetrated the ball of the other eye. The result of the injury was that one eye was broken up, and the sight entirely destroyed; and the prosecutor had been laid up in the Infirmary ever since the 8<sup>th</sup> instant, and suffered much pain. Mr Bent said the prisoner considered that Rafter had got him out of his situation. Mr Maude said that was no justification for such an assault. A gentleman named Bottomly, in the service of the Merchants' Company, said the prisoner had not been discharged through Rafter. The prisoner was fined £5, and in default of payment, committed for two months.

**67 October 14 1843**

**Wigan**

**CHARGE OF STEALING COALS** On Wednesday, Wm Dawber was charged before the magistrates of this town with stealing a quantity of coal from some waggons at the pier head at the bottom of Wallgate, the property of Meyrick Bankes Esq, Winstanley. Mr Ackerley appeared for Dawber. The robbery was said to have been committed early on Monday morning. **Luke Parkinson**, a boatman, swore that he saw a person resembling Dawber, between two and three o'clock in the morning, go to the carriages three times, and from thence to Dawber's house, and he appeared to be carrying something in his hands before him. Several lumps of coal were found in the prisoner's house of the same description as that upon the waggons. A son of Dawber's said, in evidence, that his father went to bed early on Sunday night, and that when he (the son) arose at six o'clock the following morning, his father had never been out of it, for they both slept together, and he (witness) was awake several times during the night. The coal found in the house, he said, came from Mr Wood's colliery. There was no person present to disprove this, and the charge was dismissed.

**68 November 11 1843**

**Wigan**

**CHARGE AGAINST BOATMEN William Heape**, captain of a boat, and **Henry Harrison**, his



mate, were brought before the magistrates of Wigan on Wednesday, at the instance of **Arthur Martin**, a canal constable, on a charge of stealing coals from a boat which they were taking to Liverpool. It appeared that orders had lately been given to set aside the practice of allowing boatmen to burn what coals they require from the stock on their journey to its destination; but there was no proof that the defendants had been apprised of such new regulation, consequently, they were discharged, the magistrates adding that if they were again brought up on a similar charge, it would be treated as felony.

**69 November 26 1843 Rochdale**

MAN DROWNED Yesterday week, an inquest was held before Ferrand Dearden Esq and a respectable jury, at the house of Mr Lord, Summit Inn, on the Todmorden Road, on the body of **Joseph Reddie**, aged 32 years, a boatman, who was drowned on Thursday morning in the Summit Lock on the Rochdale Canal. It appeared that the deceased was crossing the gate to lift the draught, when his feet slipped and he fell into the water. Assistance was immediately rendered, but upwards of an hour elapsed before the body could be recovered. When taken out, life was quite extinct. Verdict "Accidental death".

**70 January 27 1844**

CHARGE AGAINST BOATMEN Yesterday, two man named **George Brough** and **James Ratcliffe** were brought before Mr Maude under the following circumstances. Sub-inspector McLoughlin stated that he and police-constable Shannon had been sent on Thursday night to watch the rag shops in Hulme, and whilst there they saw the prisoners go to one of the shops, and Brough had something rolled up in his slop, which on seeing them he threw down on the floor and ran away. It turned out to be a quantity of iron; they found on taking them into custody that they were boatmen who had just come from Staffordshire with a load of iron for Mr Prickett. It was supposed that the iron they were taking to sell was part of the property, but it could not be said whether there was any missing from the boat till the cargo had been weighed. Mr Maude gave directions that the prisoners should be remanded until today, in order that the boat's cargo might be weighed, to see if the weight were deficient.

**71 February 24 1844 Ashton**

ASSAULTING A WATCHMAN At the petty sessions on Wednesday, **Robert Lees**, a boatman, was brought up under a warrant, charged with having assaulted one of the town's watchmen, and attempted to throw him in the canal, on Sunday evening the 11<sup>th</sup> instant. Fisher, the watchman, stated that on going his rounds on the above evening, he observed the prisoner and another man near to the canal warehouse at Dukinfield Bridge. He inquired their business, and what brought them there at that hour. They refused to tell him, when he said that he should be under the necessity of locking them up. On his going nearer to them, the prisoner and the other man (who has been out of the way since) seized hold of him, and attempted to drag him towards the locks. He struggled with them, and called out for assistance; he eventually got away and, knowing the prisoner, got a warrant for his apprehension. The prisoner, who denied the charge, was convicted in the penalty of 10s and costs, and in default of payment, one months imprisonment.

**72 March 16 1844**

DEATH FROM DROWNING On Wednesday, an inquest was held before Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, at the Grapes Inn, Union Street, Manchester, on view of the body of Teresa, wife of A Baker, tailor of Ridgway Street. It appeared that the unfortunate woman, who had been for some time past in a desponding state of mind, had left her husband's house a fortnight ago, and no tidings could be obtained of her till Wednesday morning, when her body was taken out of the Rochdale Canal, near to Union Street, by a boatman in the employ of Messrs Lees and Booth. There being no evidence to show how she came into the water, the jury agreed to a verdict of "Found drowned". A letter was produced, which she had sent to her husband two or three days after

she left home, from the following passage of which it would appear that she meditated self destruction :- "The world must not blame you for this rash act of mine; 'tis my own fault, and a depression of spirits is come across me that I cannot avoid it".

**73 April 13 1844**

**BODY FOUND IN THE BOLTON CANAL** On Monday, Mr Rutter held an inquest at the Windsor Castle, Pendleton, on view of the body of a man unknown, apparently about thirty five years of age, who had been taken out of the canal near Windsor Bridge, on the same day, by a boatman named **Philip Lund**. The body had evidently been in the canal several weeks. The deceased appeared to be a mechanic, was dressed in a moleskin jacket, waistcoat and trowsers, and had on a check shirt and old Wellington boots. On the right side of his trowsers was a pocket for a carpenter's rule. He was of about middle stature, with black hair and whiskers. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned". The body has not been identified.

**74 May 4 1844**

**Oldham**

**ASSAULTING A CONSTABLE** At the Monday's sessions, a boatman, who gave his name as **John Gaunt**, was brought up by parish constable Whitaker of Chadderton, charged with drunken and disorderly conduct, and with seriously obstructing him in the execution of his duty on Sunday evening last, at Walk Mill. It appeared from the statements of the constable and two witnesses that the defendant and four other similar characters were extremely abusive and violent in their conduct, and had been abusing two aged females. Gaunt was fined £1 and costs, and in default of payment was committed to twenty one days imprisonment.

**75 May 18 1844**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** An inquest was held on Wednesday before Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, at the Atlas Inn, Oxford Street, Manchester, on view of the body of **William Robinson**, aged 11, son of **John Robinson**, boatman in the employ of Messrs Ackers, Whitley and Co of Bickersteth, near Leigh, coal proprietor. The deceased, it appeared, sailed in the same boat with his father; on Tuesday night, as a boat was passing through the Oxford Street lock of the Rochdale Canal, he was engaged in drawing the paddles, and whilst stepping from the side of the boat to the lock, as was supposed, fell into the canal. His father searched for him, and procured assistance in doing so, but near an hour and a half was lost ere his body was found, and life was then extinct. The jury found a verdict to the effect that deceased was accidentally drowned.

**76 June 22 1844**

**Runcorn**

On Saturday last George Egerton Esq, the eldest son of Lord Francis Egerton, attained his majority, and this interesting event was celebrated in a style of old baron-like liberality worthy of a family whose extensive landed and commercial possessions place them in the first rank of the English nobility, and connect them intimately with the prosperity of the two great interests of the country.

In Runcorn, Saturday was observed as a holiday by nearly the whole of the inhabitants, and devoted by them to a participation in the festivities consequent upon this event. Some few of the shops were closed during the whole of the day, and although many remained open and the market was held as usual, the amount of business done was extremely limited. The population of the town, too, received a very large accession of holiday and festive folly, consisting almost exclusively of the *employees* of Lord Francis Egerton at various stations on the two canal properties now in his possession.

In the course of the morning, large numbers of persons in the employ of Lord Francis Egerton came into the town of Runcorn from Ellesmere Port, Stockton Quay, Warrington, Preston Brook, Altrincham, Lymm, Chester and Broad Heath, The boat from Warrington brought with it a band of music from that town. About half past ten o'clock, about fifty of the tenants and farm labourers of Lord Francis Egerton entered Runcorn in procession. They had also come to partake of the festivities of the day, and they formed nearly, if not the whole, of the agricultural dependants of the

noble lord who were present.

The outdoor amusements commenced shortly after eleven o'clock, in Cooper's Meadow, a large and beautiful field at the western extremity of the town, and near to the river. These sports consisted chiefly of the least objectionable of the outdoor amusements of the English people up to a comparatively recent period and which, even at the present day, are sometimes seen at country wakes and merry makings, namely a barrow race by blindfolded men, donkey races, in some of which the last and others the first was to win the prize, sack races, pole climbing, a pig race, &c. The principal feature of these amusements was, however, "a grand aquatic tournament" between six Bridgewater Trust flatmen and six Old Quay flatmen. A little after four o'clock, the agents, clerks and men in the employ of Lord Francis Egerton marched off in procession to the dinner pavilion, accompanied by a band of music.

This pavilion was erected for the occasion in the Old Quay yard, and covered a space of 1080 square yards, its length being 120 feet and its breadth 81 feet. It was calculated to accommodate 1200 or 1300 persons, and about five o'clock the whole of the persons had taken their seats. In one corner of the hall, on an elevated stage, Stubb's quadrille band was placed. The dinner itself was plain, excellent and abundant, consisting of barons of beef, sirloins, rounds, boiled and roasted, mutton and other pies, bread and ale, and, though last not least, either in general importance or relative size, capital plum puddings. On the chairman's table, besides other fine dishes, there was a roasted lamb, entire and of a goodly size. Before the men had taken their seats, the tables had been covered with ready filled plates of meat, huge slices of bread and pint jugs of ale, and he who wished to have his plate or jug replenished had only to apply to one of the many waiters, and his bidding was promptly done. About 25 cwt of beef was prepared for the dinner ; how much ale we know not ; but any arithmetical gourmand who is curious as to details may form an approximate notion when we tell him that each man was *stinted* to two quarts. Several tables were devoted to such of the men as were total abstainers. The beverages provided for them were lemonade and "water, bright water" in abundance. Mr Pendlebury of Liverpool took the chair, and Mr Stubb's band having played beautifully the vesper hymn, the company commenced operations.

A neat medal, commemorative of the event that occasioned the day's rejoicings, had been struck, and was distributed to every man belonging to the two trusts, as well as to some of the visitors. On the obverse were the words, "George Egerton of age, June 15<sup>th</sup> 1844"; and on the reverse the arms of the family with the motto "*Sic donec*". Great numbers of the company wore these medals, suspended by red or blue ribbons, about their necks, and many had also rosettes or ribbons of the same colours. One of the rustics translating the motto in his own homely way, said he understood it to mean "*Sich doings*" and certainly "sich doings" he never recollected before!

At ten o'clock in the evening there was a grand display of beautiful fireworks upon Runcorn Island, to see which thousands of persons congregated in Cooper's Meadow which, being elevated considerably above the level of the island, commanded an admirable view of the whole pyrotechnic display. The day's entertainments were closed shortly before midnight, with a magnificent representation of a ship on fire at sea. One of the steamers towed out into mid channel an old flat, which was filled with combustible materials, and the vessel having been set on fire, the flames spread with great rapidity, and when they had enveloped the whole vessel, presented a beautiful sight of an hour's duration. For some time after the conflagration commenced, the steam boat remained in her original position of proximity to the burning vessel, and thus added to the interest of the spectacle ; for being behind the flames she seemed, in the lurid light and at the great distance, as though she were a part of the burning mass. When the heat became too intense for her to remain near, she moved off, and sailed several times round the flaming vessel, thus adding greatly to the beauty of the scene.

## 77 July 6 1844

## Rochdale

CHILD DROWNED On Wednesday afternoon, an inquest was held before T F Dearden Esq, coroner, at the Bridge Inn, Oldham Road, on the body of **Alfred**, son of **William Newcombe**, captain of a vessel, aged seventeen months. It appeared that the mother of the deceased had left the

child on the deck near the companion, whilst she went into the cabin to fetch some bread and milk for it. It was her only child. The vessel was drawn close to the shore near the bridge in Oldham Road, waiting of another coming out of the lock. A person on the towing-path saw the child fall into the water, and instantly gave an alarm to the boatman, who succeeded in drawing him on to the vessel with a boat hook, after being in the water not more than three or four minutes. Means were tried to restore animation for three quarters of an hour, when a surgeon, who had been fetched, pronounced the child dead. Verdict "Accidentally drowned".

**78 July 6 1844 Rochdale**

CANAL CASE At the sessions on Wednesday, a man named **Henry Beard**, captain of a vessel on the Rochdale Canal, was summoned under the 81<sup>st</sup> bye law of the company for preventing a boat passing. Defendant pleaded guilty. Fined 25s and costs.

**79 July 20 1844 Knutsford**

FELONIES On Saturday last, **William Fairclough**, a boatman who has been for some time residing in Blackburn in Lancashire, was brought before Trafford Trafford Esq of Oughtrington Hall, charged with appropriating to his own use £10 entrusted to him by Mr Peter Rigby of Altrincham, his then employer, to convey to a third person. The offence was committed in May 1843, but the prisoner managed to elude the vigilance of the police until last week. He was committed to the sessions.

**80 August 24 1844**

MAN DROWNED IN CASTLE FIELD LOCK About ten o'clock on Monday night, an alarm was given in the neighbourhood of Castle Field that a man was in the lock of the Bridgewater canal there, and the private watchman and other servants of the Trust having gone to the spot, succeeded soon after in dragging on shore the body of a boatman named **Samuel Pixon**, who is supposed to have slipped in accidentally, owing to the darkness of the night. Life was extinct. Deceased was thirty years of age, and came from Weston-on-Trent, Staffordshire. He has left a widow and child. An inquest was held on the body on Wednesday, before Mr Chapman, when there being no evidence to show how the man got into the canal, the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

**81 September 7 1844 Wigan**

HORSE STEALING On Monday a lad, about sixteen years old, named Charles Cunliffe alias John Cunliffe, was brought before the magistrates of this town on a charge of horse stealing. The animal stolen was the property of **Edward Shaw**, boatman. Prisoner was also charged with stealing a bridle from the Meadows' Farm belonging to John Ormsher. On Saturday last, the prisoner, who was an inmate of the Wigan Workhouse, and who had been confined and chained for disorderly conduct, on being freed from his fetters, scaled the walls of the workhouse yard, and made his escape. It appears that he at once proceeded to the Meadows' Farm, where he stole a riding bridle, and then went in search of a horse. He was seen near the Seven Stars, at the bottom of Wallgate, about seven o'clock in the evening, with the bridle round his neck, and in the course of the night, Shaw's horse was taken from the inn stable where he (Shaw) had left it at half past eight o'clock. About one o'clock on Sunday morning, the police received information of the prisoner offering a horse for sale to a man named Matthew Chadwick; the pair were then in King Street. Five shillings was the price put upon the animal. Chadwick had no doubt that the horse was stolen but, whilst a person went to the police office, the prisoner made off in the direction of Wigan Lane, whither he was followed by Lowe and Ratcliffe, and apprehended between two and three o'clock. On Monday, Shaw identified the horse and Ormsher the bridle as their respective properties. The prisoner said nothing in his defence. He was remanded to Wednesday, the witness Chadwick not being in attendance. On the latter day, Chadwick deposed to the facts before stated, when the young prisoner was committed for trial at the next Liverpool assizes.

**82 September 14 1844 Knutsford**

FELONY **William Hewitt**, a boatman in the employ of Mr Charles Davison of Hawarden in the county of Flint, was brought before J H Harper Esq, charged upon the oath of Mr Davison the younger with having, on the thirtieth day of August last, in the township of Winnington, feloniously stolen a chain cable, the property of his father. Sufficient was elicited to send the case to the sessions, and the prisoner was committed to the Knutsford House of Correction to take his trial.

**83 October 12 1844 Warrington**

CHARGE OF STEALING A DOG On Monday at the petty sessions, **W Morris**, captain of the Dolphin packet, which sails between Leigh and Manchester, was charged by John Clarke of the Green Dragon Inn, Warrington, with having stolen a dog, his property. It appeared from the evidence that complainant had bought the dog from a person named Abraham Porter, who said he had it from a boatman at Lymm. The defendant, however, said the animal was stolen from him about Christmas last; he produced the mother of it in court, and said he could prove it to be the same as that stolen from him, the gentleman who gave it him being then present, and having been given to him, he did not wish to part with it. At the time defendant took away the dog from complainant's house, he left his address, in order that they might know where to find him. The case was dismissed.

**84 December 14 1844**

EXTRAORDINARY CASE On Wednesday, a poor woman named **Catherine Owen**, the widow of a boatman who died a short time ago, was safely delivered at her cottage in Rusholme, near Platt, of three fine boys who, with the mother, are doing very well. The children were baptised the following day, the names of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob being given to them. Before this event, the widow was in extremely destitute circumstances, but from the kindness and attention of neighbours she has been rendered somewhat comfortable; and we trust that this notice of her distressing case will awaken in some of our wealthy and benevolent townspeople a desire to assist in her further relief.

**85 March 8 1845**

CHARGE OF EMBEZZLEMENT At the petty sessions held in the Town Hall, Ashton, on Wednesday, **William West**, a boatman in the employ of Mr J Boulton, was brought before J Jowett, J Lord, J Harrop and J Grimshaw Esqs, charged with embezzling various sums of money, the property of his employer. Mr R Newton, chief constable, stated that a few days ago Mr Boulton, the proprietor of the swift packet boats plying from Ashton to the Guide Bridge railway station, mentioned to him that he had some reason to doubt the honesty of the prisoner, who was captain of one of the boats in question. He had therefore taken means to ascertain the fact. The prisoner was provided with a book by his master to put down the various sums of money he might receive during each trip to the station and back. The prisoner had regularly made entries in the book, but had not put down the whole of the money he had received. Mr Newton said that he had gone down by the boat himself during the last six days, and he had also sent several other persons to count the number of passengers in the steerage and in the cabin. He had then the numbers before him during twenty three trips, and on comparing them with the prisoner's book, he found that the difference in the numbers entered by him would amount to 14s. Considering that the number of trips were twenty one per day, and supposing that the prisoner had pocketed the fares in the same ratio as he had done during the trips he had noticed, it would in the course of a week amount to a considerable sum. The bench directed that the depositions should be taken, after which the prisoner was committed for trial.

**86 May 31 1845**

LYMM At the petty sessions held at the Ring O'Bells, Daresbury, before Thomas Lyons, William Hall and William Stubbs Esqrs, **George Siddall**, boatman, appeared to a summons charging him



with cruelty to his horse at Appleton on the 9<sup>th</sup> instant. The constable stated that on the above day he was on the banks of the Bridgewater Canal, in the above township, and saw the defendant beating his horse with a piece of wood which he produced, and which appeared to be part of a pole, about a yard in length, cut small at one end so that he could hold it in one hand, with which he beat the horse most savagely. The constable further stated that both horse and boat belonged to the defendant. Fined 20s and costs, or to be committed for fourteen days. The fine was paid in court.

**87 June 21 1845**

**FATAL ACCIDENTS** An inquest was held before Mr Chapman, borough coroner, on Thursday, at the King's Arms, Union Street, Ancoats, on view of the body of William Hall of Back Woodward Street, calico printer. On Thursday afternoon, the deceased was walking along the coping which runs inside the wall of the Rochdale Canal, near to the swing bridge, when his foot slipped and he fell into the water. He was got out in four minutes, and showed signs of animation, but owing to the long time which elapsed (three quarters of an hour) before medical aid could be obtained, he died. Verdict "Accidental death". The same afternoon, an inquest was held on George, son of **Morris Webster** of Pigcote Street, boatman, five years of age. The deceased had also been drowned in the Rochdale Canal; he had fallen in by attempting to get a dead cat out of the water. Verdict "Accidental death". On Wednesday, an inquest was held on the body of Thomas son of Thomas Johnson, labourer of Beatson Street, aged six years. On Tuesday afternoon, the deceased was bathing in a branch of the Rochdale Canal near to George Leigh Street; the water was very shallow where he went in, but having stepped over the wall which bounds the canal, and which was under water, he sunk, and a half hour elapsed before he could be got out. Verdict "Accidentally drowned".

**88 July 12 1845**

**Runcorn**

**FRAUD BY A BOATMAN** At the petty sessions, held at the Town Hall, Runcorn, on Tuesday, before William Stubbs and Gilbert Greenwall Esqs, **John Allen**, boatman, appeared to a summons charging him with giving a false account of the tonnage of his boat on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May last. Mr Foulkes appeared on behalf of the trustees of the Bridgewater Trust and stated the case, from which it appeared that on the day above mentioned, Allen had a cargo of twenty seven tons of coal, and when passing through the locks (.....) was asked what some casks contained, and replied they were empty, but upon being examined were found to be full, and very weighty. Mr Crippin, the agent, ordered them to be weighed, and they were found to be 5 tons 18 cwt, thereby defrauding the trustees of the amount of dues upon that weight, and rendering himself liable to a penalty of £5. The magistrates gave Allen a severe reprimand, and fined him £2 19s and costs, being 10s per ton for 5 tons 18 cwts.

**89 July 19 1845**

**Wigan**

**NARROW ESCAPE** A very narrow escape from drowning happened to Joseph Leyland, a boy about seven years of age, on Tuesday last at the Turnbridge, Westwood, near Wigan. It appears that a number of children were amusing themselves by turning the bridge, when Leyland, who was near the end, was thrown into the canal. Had it not been for two boatmen who saw the child fall off the bridge, and who were promptly on the spot with a large pole by which they succeeded in hauling him out, the child, most undoubtedly, would have met a watery grave. He was immediately conveyed to the residence of his parents in Millgate where, we are happy to say, he is in a fair way of recovery. We feel surprised that parents and guardians are not more careful than to allow children to visit such a dangerous place as the above. We also think the canal company ought to take some measures for preventing youth from visiting the said bridge.

**90 July 19 1845**

**Wigan**

**SERIOUS CASE OF RAPE** Yesterday week, **John Sankey**, a boatman, was brought up at the Town Hall in Wigan, charged with having committed a rape of the most revolting nature on Sarah Barlow, a girl between nine and ten years of age, in the month of February last. The magistrates

present were the Mayor, Reece Bevan and Joseph Acton Esqrs. It appeared that the prisoner first accomplished his brutal object in the boat in the canal basin at the bottom of Wallgate, and then again near Runcorn. On each occasion, he told the poor girl that "if she mentioned it, he would cut her throat". The other part of the evidence was wholly unfit for publication. The villain was awfully afflicted with a certain disease, of which the girl has been suffering ever since. Mr Philips, surgeon, and other witnesses were examined. At the close of the evidence the magistrates, finding the case to be very clear, committed the prisoner to take his trial at the next Liverpool assizes upon the capital charge. Sankey, who has been out of the way ever since the transaction, was apprehended by policeman Smith about five o'clock in the morning of the day that he was examined, in a boat at the bottom of Chapel Lane.

**91 September 13 1845 Runcorn**

PETTY SESSIONS – SEPTEMBER 9 Before Sir Richard Brooke, Bart and Gilbert Greenall Esq. **Philip Wroe**, boatman, in the employ of Messrs Wheatcroft, carriers, was brought before the magistrates charged with stealing a quantity of hay, the property, and from the stables of, the trustees of the Bridgewater trust, at Preston Brook, on the morning of the 9<sup>th</sup> instant. The evidence adduced was as follows :- William Risley, a driver in the employ of the trust, stated that he left a quantity of hay on Monday night at the stables, and on Tuesday morning missed it. Samuel Thomson, watchman in the above employ, saw the prisoner carry some hay early on Tuesday morning from towards the stables, and place it on his boat; he gave information of what he saw. Isaac Hutt, in the same employ, sampled the hay found on the prisoner's boat with some left in the stables, and both corresponded. Thomas Varnham, constable, searched the boat and found a quantity of hay on board; he also apprehended the prisoner, who admitted stealing it. Mr Charles Mitchell, agent in the above employ in Preston Brook, stated that he never gave the prisoner leave to take any hay. Committed to the sessions for trial.

**James Shaw**, boatman, appeared to a summons charging him with assaulting his wife on the 17<sup>th</sup> August last. The case was proved. Ordered to find sureties to keep the peace.

**92 October 11 1845 Wigan**

CASE OF POISONING On Friday last an inquest was held, which had been adjourned for the purpose of having a *post mortem* made from the day previous, before the borough coroner, at the Fox Tavern, Chapel Lane, Wigan, on the body of **Robert Draper**, a boatman, who had expired suddenly on Wednesday. It appeared from the evidence of Mr Guest, druggist, Wallgate, that the deceased, along with a person named Taylor, called at his shop on the Monday, and deceased asked for two pennyworth of arsenic for the purpose, as he stated, of destroying two rats which were on board of his boat, but Mr Guest thinking the quantity too large for the object he had in view, declined to let him have it. The deceased called again shortly afterwards, and asked for the same quantity as before, but was again denied. Mr N C Latham, surgeon, stated that he had made a *post mortem* examination, and had found a corrosive poison in deceased's stomach. A piece of paper was produced, which was found in deceased's pocket, labelled poison, but where and when he had procured it, no person knew. The jury returned the following verdict, "Died from the effects of having taken poison, while in an unsound state of mind".

**93 November 1 1845 Stockport**

CRIMINAL ASSAULT A boatman named **Robert Robinson**, alias "Rough Robin" was charged on Monday with a criminal assault committed on the person of a married woman named Mary Wolliscroft, in the township of Romily, at eleven o'clock on the night of Wednesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The capital charge was fully proved, and the prisoner was committed for trial at the next Chester assizes.

**94 February 28 1846 Leigh**

BREACH OF THE PEACE **Joseph Gore**, a boatman, was charged by the police with committing

a breach of the peace on the previous Tuesday. He was beating a woman opposite the Eagle and Child Inn, in Leigh, when the police interfered and took him into custody. He was very violent, and tore one of the policemen's coats. Reprimanded by the Bench, and fined 5s and expenses.

**95 August 7 1846**

**SUICIDE BY DROWNING** On Tuesday, an inquest was held at the Atlas Hotel, Oxford Road, before Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, on the body of Sarah, the wife of James Leatherbarrow of Mount Street, labourer, aged 26 years. It was stated by **John Heath** of Astley, a boatman, that as he was crossing the Tib Lock of the Rochdale Canal at about eight o'clock that morning, his boat caused the body of deceased to rise to the surface of the water, and with the assistance of two men who were present, it was got ashore. Life was quite extinct. Ellen Williams, of 18 Mount Street, stated that deceased was her sister, and having been beaten on the previous night by her husband, she had slept at the house of witness, but had stolen out at an early hour, whilst the family were asleep. She had said on the previous night that her husband should never see her again. It appeared that her husband had been taken into custody by the police for creating a disturbance at the time he had beaten the unfortunate woman, and was still in custody when the inquest was held. Verdict, "Found drowned".

**96 August 14 1846**

**CORONER'S INQUESTS** An inquest was held at the Brown Cow public house, in Woodward Street, on Tuesday, before Mr Chapman, on view of the body of Samuel James, son of George Clegg, sawyer, deceased, aged nine years, who came by his death as follows :- **Robert Heeds**, a boatman, stated that about half past five o'clock in the afternoon of the previous day, he was told by some children that a little boy was in the canal close at hand; and that they (the children) had seen the body come up to the surface three different times, and then sink to the bottom. Witness immediately went to the lock house for a drag, and on his return soon found his body, but not being able to lift it with the drag, he was obliged to go back and obtain grappling irons. He then succeeded in bringing the body ashore, and every attempt was made to restore animation, but without avail. Other evidence was given, showing that deceased had fallen into the canal whilst trying to reach some floating sticks, and the jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

**97 August 14 1846**

**CHARGE OF FELONY AGAINST A WORKWOMAN** A well dressed, good looking girl named **Martha Shaw** was brought to the Borough Court yesterday, charged with stealing a pair of stays, the property of Mrs Brown, Deansgate. Mrs Brown stated that the prisoner had been working for her for about two months, and she had missed several pairs of stays lately, which leading to a suspicion of the prisoner, had induced her to keep a watch on her. On Wednesday, the stays were counted before and after the prisoner went to dinner, and the number before dinner, thirty six, was written down. When the prisoner was gone to dinner, there was one pair missing. A boy at the shop of Mr Hunt, pawnbroker, Cumberland Street, proved that on Wednesday afternoon, a woman pledged the pair of stays produced at their shop for 7s, in the name of **Mary Barrow**. Mrs Brown proved that the stays so pledged were those taken on Wednesday. Mr Maude asked if there was any evidence to prove that the woman pledging the stays was connected with the prisoner. A policeman said that Barrow was known, but had gone off by boat to Liverpool. Mr Maude asked if the prisoner was married. The police officer said that she stated that she was married, and that her husband was a boatman and had gone to Runcorn. Mrs Brown said the prisoner had confessed having taken the stays, and had offered to bring them back, or pay for them. Mr Maude asked the prisoner if she had any family. Prisoner : Not yet. Mr Maude asked if she had any evidence to character. Prisoner : None of my friends know that I am here. A young man here stepped forward and said he had known the prisoner some years, and always believed her to be honest. Mr Maude then ordered the prisoner to pay a fine of 40s for unlawfully pledging, and 7s, the value of the stays, and in default she was committed for fourteen days to hard labour.

**98 September 18 1846**

**Rochdale**

**CHARGE OF ASSAULTING A WATCHMAN** At the petty sessions, on Wednesday, **Thomas Milne**, captain of a boat, was brought up under the following circumstances :- William Taylor, alias Bill Sye, an eccentric character, who is a watchman at the canal yard, Rochdale, stated that about two o'clock that morning, the prisoner was attempting to get over the wall at the canal yard, when witness told him he should be obliged to shoot him if he did not return; however, he was prevented shooting by the defendant getting over the wall and assaulting him, and whilst scuffling together, county police-constable No 270 came to his assistance, took the man into custody, and in all probability secured him from being shot by the watchman. The defendant stated that he had a vessel, and was going to sleep there. He was fined 5s and costs. About seven years ago, a boatman was shot by the watchman at the Rochdale Canal yard under similar circumstances, so that he died in a few days afterwards, and the coroner's jury returned a verdict of justifiable homicide.

**99 November 20 1846**

**Ashton-under-Lyne**

**OBSTRUCTING THE FOOTPATH** On Monday at the Stalybridge petty sessions, a boatman named **Samuel Hatfield** was charged with obstructing the public highway at Staley on the 20<sup>th</sup> October, by allowing his horse to stand half way across the road, the rope of the boat being held tight by the horse. Mr Charles Cheetham Bayley appeared to prove the case, and stated that the obstruction caused by the boatmen at this place was such as to call for the especial attention of the magistrates. On asking the defendant his name, he had refused to give it, and it had been necessary to send a constable after him to Bugsworth. The defendant was fined 10s and costs, amounting to £1 6s.

**100 January 8 1847**

**Ashton-under-Lyne**

**STEALING A WATCH** Henry Whitely, a boy about 17 years of age, was charged with stealing a watch, the property of **William Buckley**, a boatman. It appeared that on Sunday last, the prisoner was on the canal side near Marsden, Yorkshire, and asked for permission to ride to Stalybridge, which was granted, and when the boat arrived the next day, he left, taking with him a watch, which he offered to pledge at the shop of Mr John Gregory who, thinking that the tale told by the boy was not correct, called in constable Saxon, who went with the boy to Stalybridge, when he confessed to having taken the watch from a boat at that place. He was then committed to take his trial at the Knutsford sessions.

**101 May 16 1847**

**FRUITS OF INTOXICATION - A MAN FOUND DROWNED** An inquest was held on Monday last before Mr James Chapman, the borough coroner, at the Moulders' Arms in Great Ancoats Street, on view of the body of Michael Doyce, a factory overlooker of Hayes Street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, aged 30 years. **Elizabeth**, the wife of **James Hunt**, lock-keeper of Pickford Street, stated that about two o'clock on Sunday afternoon, a boatman came to her house, and said he believed there was something in the lock, as the water would not level. Her husband accompanied him with a grapnel, with which he for some time searched in the lock, when he at last laid hold of deceased, whose body, with assistance, he dragged to the side. Deceased had no hat on, though in other respects he was fully dressed. He had a large cut on the top of his head, extending from the crown to the middle of the forehead, and laying bare his skull, which was dreadfully fractured. There was also a larger cut near the deceased's left ear, and his left thigh was broken; she believed these injuries had been done by the lock gates. Pickford Street was not a thoroughfare, the canal crossing the street, but people frequently passed over the lock gates. Another witness, a female, spoke to seeing deceased intoxicated in the street about twelve o'clock on Saturday night when, as she imagined, he was in search of lodgings and tried to enter her house, but being repulsed by her, he passed on in the direction of the canal. Other evidence was given, showing that deceased had been seen drunk in the neighbourhood, and his acquaintances stating that he was a man fond of liquors,

the conclusion come to by the jury was that the unfortunate man had fallen into the canal whilst in a state of intoxication. Verdict, "Found drowned".

**102 June 4 1847**

**WOMAN FOUND DROWNED** On Wednesday, the body of a woman, name unknown, was found in the Rochdale Canal near to Oxford Road, by a boatman named **Francis Syddal**. She is supposed to be upwards of 50 years old, and having on neither bonnet nor shoes, but merely a handkerchief tied over her head, it has been conjectured that she had thrown herself in. An inquest was held by Mr Chapman on the body the same day, at the Atlas Hotel, Oxford Road, when the jury returned an open verdict merely of "Found drowned".

**103 July 2 1847**

**BREAK O'DAY BOYS** Patrick Griffin, Patrick Connolly and John Nugent, three stout athletic Irishmen, who said they were "break o'day boys" from the county of Galway, were brought before the mayor and Messrs Greenall and Green, on Monday, charged with committing a violent assault upon **John Yates**, a boatman. The prisoners, who had struck Yates with bludgeons without provocation, were committed to the House of Correction for six months.

**104 July 16 1847**

**Oldham**

**AN UNKNOWN PERSON FOUND DROWNED** On Wednesday, Mr Clarke, deputy coroner of Rochdale, held an inquest at Hollinwood on the body of a middle aged man (name unknown) who was found drowned in the Oldham Canal at Hollinwood at an early hour on the same morning. There being several bruises on different parts of his body, a report was spread that deceased had been murdered and thrown into the canal. From information since received, it appears he was a person from Manchester, who was a boatman or assistant to a boatman. He appears to have accidentally fallen into the canal. Verdict, "Found drowned in the Oldham Canal".

**105 August 7 1847**

**Oldham**

**CHARGE OF APPLE STEALING** At the petty sessions on Thursday, a miserable looking youth, apparently employed in connection with coal boats, who gave his name as **Henry Scotton**, was brought up by county police Sergeant Jackson, charged with having stolen a small quantity of apples from the orchard of Mr Royle, of Alkington Cottage near Middleton. The policeman stated that a young man who was present had seen the prisoner steal a number of apples, the person he alluded to being a watchman employed on Mr Royle's premises. The watchman stated that about five o'clock the same morning, he had detected the accused busily occupied in stealing apples from Mr Royle's garden, and on examining his person, he found all his pockets loaded with apples. The prisoner, when asked what he had to say, stated that he was a native of Scotland, and acknowledged that he had picked up a few of the apples. In answer to further questions, the young offender admitted that he had been employed as a boatman's assistant. He was convicted in a penalty of one penny damages and costs, and in default of payment was committed to one months imprisonment and hard labour.

**106 August 7 1847**

**Rochdale**

**CAUTION TO BOATMEN** At Rochdale petty sessions on Monday, the following boatmen were fined 10s each and costs for acting contrary to the rules and regulations of the Rochdale Canal Company :- **James Lukes** of Manchester; **Thomas Isherwood** and **Samuel Garforth**, both of Rochdale.

**107 August 7 1847**

**Rochdale**

**ASSAULT** At the Rochdale petty sessions on Wednesday, **John Greenhalgh**, boatman, for having assaulted **John Isherwood**, another boatman, on Sunday morning, and kicking him over the head and face so that he lost two of his teeth. Defendant agreed to pay £1 and expenses, which was



agreed upon.

**108 August 21 1847 Bolton**

SERVED OUT At the Borough Court on Thursday last, a young woman named Elizabeth Burns was brought up, charged with stealing four sovereigns belonging to **George Hammond**, a boatman, who stated that he came from Cheshire. The prosecutor, a young man, came to Bolton on Sunday, met the prisoner in Bridge Street, who found him with lodgings, eased him of four sovereigns, and in return the borough found her lodgings for a month in the New Bailey. A portion of the money was found upon her, but it was ordered to be kept towards her maintenance, and the prosecutor was recommended to keep better company.

**109 January 15 1848 Rochdale**

MAN DROWNED On Tuesday evening, Mr Clarke, deputy coroner, held an inquest at the Navigation Inn, Drake Street, Rochdale, on the body of **Thomas Buckley**, boatman, aged 31 years. About half past six o'clock on Tuesday morning, the deceased accidentally fell off his boat into the canal near the Navigation Inn, and it was upwards of twenty minutes before he could be got out, when life was extinct. Verdict accordingly.

**110 February 12 1848 Rochdale**

CHARGES AGAINST BOATMEN At the petty sessions on Monday, two boatmen named **James Dawson** and **William Dawson** were fined in penalties of 10s each and costs for having wilfully wasted water belonging to the Rochdale Canal Company.

**111 November 4 1848 Ashton**

CHARGE OF STEALING A BOAT **Miles Slater**, a boatman, was charged with stealing a boat. It appeared from the evidence that on Friday last, the boat was taken possession of by two bailiffs in the employ of Mr Martin Newton, under a process from the Salford Hundred Court of Record, when, during the night, defendant, in company with others, took the boat from the wharf and was proceeding towards the tunnel, and when at the mouth thereof the bailiffs begged to be allowed to get out, which was willingly acceded to on the part of the defendant, who went off with the boat. Defendant said it was not his boat, and expressed his belief that he was acting right. Mr Brooks, who appeared for the prosecutor, said he was not anxious to punish the defendant. The bench adjourned the case until this day, and it was understood that if the parties could agree, the case would not be proceeded with.

**112 June 30 1849**

MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT The body of Louisa Sowerbutts, a girl about 14 years of age, who lived with a female named Ann Pierce, 73 Portland Street, Manchester, was, on Wednesday morning last, discovered floating in one of the locks of the Rochdale Canal by **James Blike**, a boatman. Blike succeeded in taking the body, which was in a state of decomposition, out of the water, and it was removed to the Flower Pot Inn, Deansgate. It appears that the girl had left home in a pet on Monday morning last, having been reproved by Ann Pierce for taking money out of the till and spending it on sweetmeats, a practice of which she had more than once previously been guilty. Being of a hasty and passionate disposition, the girl left her home and was never seen by her friends until after the discovery of the body as just related. Decomposition had been hastened by the warm water which had flowed into the canal from the various mills on the banks. An inquest was held on the body on Thursday by Mr Herford, when a verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

**113 September 19 1849**

IMPRUDENT DARING – FATAL ACCIDENT On Monday at the Infirmary, Mr Herford held an inquest on the body of **William Havard**, a youth eleven years of age, the son of a boatman living in Runcorn. About a fortnight ago, the father of deceased had occasion to leave the flat, which was

lying in the canal near Knott Mill and, during his father's absence, deceased went to the windlass and attempted to lower the mast. When he had succeeded in bringing the mast about halfway down, its whole weight beginning to bear upon the windlass, the lad could not hold up against it; the handles were wrenched from his hand, and being whirled violently around, they struck the poor fellow violently on the head and fractured his skull. He died on Saturday last. Verdict, "Accidental death".

**114 November 28 1849 Ashton**

**CORONER'S INQUEST** An inquest was held before Mr Rutter on Saturday afternoon at the Navigation Inn, Ashton, on the body of a boy unknown, which was found the night before in the tunnel of the Huddersfield Canal. It appeared that a boatman gave information at the warehouse that he had found a boy's cap on the water, and that he thought a boy was drowned in the tunnel. Search being made, the boy was found. For want of further evidence, the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned". After the coroner had left, the jury consulted respecting the number of deaths which have occurred under this tunnel, when they passed a resolution to forward a letter to the directors of the Huddersfield canal, of which the following is a copy :-

*To the Directors of the Huddersfield Canal*

"Gentlemen – We the jury assembled to inquire into the cause of death of a boy unknown, who was found in the canal under the tunnel at Ashton-under-Lyne, on Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> instant, respectfully beg to call your attention to the great number of foot passengers passing to and fro under the tunnel, and also the number of accidents which have occurred thereunder (this being the third body found under or near the tunnel); and we would most respectfully suggest that you would cause the passage to be stopped, so far as regards the public, as a means of preventing a recurrence of such accidents. Signed on behalf of the jury, J CORRY, Foreman".

**115 January 2 1850 Rochdale and Middleton**

**BURGLARIES** At the Rochdale Petty Sessions on Friday, **William Bastow**, captain of a vessel, and **John Wild**, a boatman, were placed in the dock under the following circumstances. County Police superintendent Carswell stated that during the last week, two burglaries had been committed – one at the Hopwood Arms, and the other at the George and Dragon Inn, both on the Rochdale and Middleton Road. From information received, search had been made in a boat on the canal at Slattocks, near Middleton, and at the bottom of the vessel a large quantity of the stolen property had been found; also a dark lantern, and keys suitable for robbers. The prisoner, William Bastow, received an excellent character from his employers, Messrs Thomas Davies and Jackson, salt merchants in Manchester. It appeared, also, that the stolen property had not been found at that end of the vessel occupied by the captain and his wife, but in the cabin occupied by Wild. Wild was remanded to Monday, and Bastow was bound, himself in £50, and two sureties of £25 each, to appear on Monday. On that day, Wild, along with **William Sharpe** and James Shoesmith, were placed in the dock. Bastow, the captain, having been discharged, proved that Wild and Sharpe had charge of the fore-castle of the boat when the property was found, and that they slept there. Sharpe, when apprehended at Wakefield, had on a pair of boots which had been stolen from the above public house. Wild was apprehended near Middleton, and had a knife and a pair of boots that had been stolen from the same house. The prisoner Shoesmith was at the Rochdale station inquiring for his brother-in-law Sharpe, when a silk handkerchief, taken from the George and Dragon Inn, was found upon him. The three prisoners were committed to the Liverpool assizes for trial. The prisoner Sharpe was committed on a second charge of having burglariously entered the counting house of Mr Holden, corn miller, Rochdale. A particular knife that had been stolen was found upon him when apprehended.

**116 February 2 1850**

**EXAMINATION OF THE RIVINGTON BURGLARS** The examination of the persons in custody

for the burglary at the house of Mr Marsh at Rivington on Sunday morning week, commenced on Monday before the Rev J S Birley, W F Hulton, Peter Martin, R Andrews and Harrison Blair Esqrs at the Town Hall, Little Bolton. The court was crowded to excess, and the proceedings were not adjourned until seven o'clock in the evening. The prisoners arraigned were eleven in number, and were described as follows :- Jonathan Taylor, Wigan, collier; Thomas Ball, Chorley, labourer; William Hindley, Wigan, labourer; Jas Unsworth, Wigan, collier; Edward McKnight, Wigan, weaver; **Peter Taylor**, Wigan, boatman; **Samuel Leyland**, Wigan, boatman; **Jas Taylor**, Wigan, boatman; Chas Fielding, Habergham Eaves, collier; Patrick Corrigan, Wigan, weaver; Thomas Henry, Wigan, weaver. Mr H M Richardson declared that he appeared for James Taylor, Peter Taylor, Samuel Hindley, Unsworth, Ball and McKnight. The Magistrate's Clerk said there was no evidence against Leyland and Fielding, who were at once discharged. Mr Milne, superintendent of the Bolton division of the county police, stated that on Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> ult, he received information of a burglary committed at the house of Mr John Marsh of Rivington. He went to the house on the same day, and in examining the building, he found that two squares of glass, together with the frame, had been broken out at the east end of the house. He measured the place, and found the aperture to be 10 inches by 16 inches, so that a man could get through it. He found that Mr Marsh had received a severe cut on the head, and both his eyes were blackened. Mr Marsh was too ill to be present at the inquiry that day. Mrs Marsh had a severe cut across one hand. In consequence of information received, he went to Wigan on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and apprehended Peter and James Taylor, who were father and son. Both denied all knowledge of the burglary. On Thursday (the day following), Sergeant France of Hindley delivered to him the key (produced) of a safe, and upon that, he went to the house of Mr Marsh where, on trying the key, it exactly fitted. Mr Marsh gave him another key, which is exactly similar. By Mr Richardson : It was about twelve o'clock that he apprehended Peter and James Taylor – one was upon the sofa and the other in bed. He searched the house, but found nothing.

Norman France, sergeant of police at Hindley, stated that he went to Jonathan Taylor's house at Wigan about five o'clock on the morning of Tuesday. William Fisher and John Smith of the Wigan police, accompanied him, and they found Taylor in his own residence, in an opening near the Brown Cow in Green Street. On entering they found him standing near the fire, with a cut nose and a black eye, and immediately charged him with the offence. He said he knew nothing about it, and had been at home all night. They commenced a search, and found a large clasp knife in his pocket, and 6 1/2d in copper. Witness then asked him where the money was that he had been exhibiting at the public house on Saturday morning. He said, "What money" and the officer joined, "Why, those sovereigns". He then said, "I have none". The officer, turning to the wife, asked if she had any, and she replied that she had a sovereign, and pulled out one and a fourpenny piece. They then commenced a search, and found some new check print, a dark lantern and a hat in a box upstairs, and upon this removed them to the police station, locking the house up. They returned to it again, and found a safe key, some gold hid behind the grate slate, and some bludgeons in the cellar. J Taylor cross-examined witness at considerable length, but did not shake his testimony. He added that he apprehended Corrigan and Henry, and found £1 16s 5 1/2d upon one and £1 10s upon the other.

William Fisher, another officer, corroborated France as to the search made at Jonathan Taylor's, and said that on pulling down the grate, he found 18 sovereigns concealed. He apprehended Ainsworth and McKnight, but found nothing upon them.

The inspector spoke in corroboration.

John Paulett of Wigan, publican, proved that Jonathan Taylor came to his house, in company with William Hindley, on Sunday morning, and paid for several glasses of rum and took two bottles away with him. He was drunk at the time, and exposed a quantity of gold. Prisoner cross-examined him at some length, but elicited nothing to improve his own character.

Thomas Birchall of Wigan proved that Peter Taylor, James Taylor and William Hindley were in company with Jonathan Taylor at his house, but nothing happened beyond a dispute amongst them. Evidence was then gone into to prove that Thomas Ball went by the railway from Wigan to

Farrington on the Sunday morning about nine o'clock, and was then in liquor. On arriving at Farrington, he said he wanted to go to Chorley to see a child of his, and ultimately got a lift with a cart, and arrived at the Parker's Arms in Cuerden, where he got out and fell asleep. The landlord having observed money upon him, called a witness, and they took his purse from him whilst asleep, and found it to contain twenty five sovereigns and two spade ace guineas. He awoke about six o'clock, when his money was returned to him. He left behind a seal, which proved to be one stolen at the burglary.

The magistrates at this stage of the proceedings said that, as Mr Marsh was dangerously ill, they should adjourn to the following day (Tuesday) when, if Mr Marsh could not attend, they must examine him at home. The following is a copy of Mr Marsh's statement :- "I live in Rivington, out of business, and keep a few cows. My house stands by itself. The next inhabited house is occupied by a farmer named Mangnall, and is two fields from my house. My house is about two hundred yards from the highway. Myself, wife and sister in law, Martha Eatock, were the only persons living in the house. On Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> January, I and my wife went to bed about eight o'clock, leaving Martha Eatock up. After I had been in bed about four or five hours, I heard a noise outside the house; and I and my wife got out of bed, and I slipped on my trousers. I opened the bedroom door and went downstairs, my wife following. I lighted two candles and left them on the kitchen dresser, and then returned upstairs, and looking through the bedroom window, saw several men in the yard. My wife then gave me a hand bell and the gun, but before I could charge the gun, I heard a crash of windows breaking and steps upon the stairs. I went to the top, and saw several men coming upstairs, some of them armed with staffs, and others had old rusty swords. They had also lighted candles. They had covering over their faces, with holes to see through. As the first man came up, I struck him with the bell, as savage as I could, and cracked the bell with the blow. He fell back. I plucked a staff out of one of their hands, and fought with the staff until the lights went out, and two men closed in upon me and got me down, and a third came to help them. They swore, "Kill him, kill him". I said, "That you haply have done already". I was then a good deal beat and cut about the head, and bled a good deal from the head, and made no further resistance. I lay on the floor, and two men kept guard over me some time. One man came and asked me to open the closet door. I opened the closet door; it opens from the staircase; and some of them went into the closet, leaving me alone. Before they left me, some of them asked if I had any refreshments in the house, and I said I had some ale in the cellar. Whilst the men were rummaging about, I slipped into a room which has a window looking onto a portico. I opened the window, and slid down onto the portico, and then slid down one of the pillars into the garden. I then got over the garden wall, and went right on to Mangnall's, with nothing on but my shirt and trousers. I knocked Mangnall and his two sons up; but my shirt being smeared with blood, they were frightened and durst not go back. Mangnall lent me a coat, waistcoat and shoes, and one of his sons went off for further assistance. I staid at Mangnall's about half an hour, until some other men came to assist, when we went back to my house. I found some of the county police there, and the thieves gone. There were six or seven men in the house, and some of them said there were as many waiting outside. After I returned home, I kept some of my friends with me. We did not go to bed again that night. I went upstairs, and found a drawer open in which I kept money. It was all gone. I had received £50, £13 10s and £9 for rent about the 1<sup>st</sup> January, which I had placed in the drawer amongst some silver I previously had. There was £6 in half crowns; all the rest were in sovereigns. I also missed a silver snuff box out of the drawer; I saw them two or three weeks ago. There was a bank book and other things removed out of the drawer, which I afterwards found in another drawer. I also missed my hat. The seal produced is also mine. The hat lining has been torn out since missed; it had two letters, "J M", on the side, and the same at the bottom. I have an iron safe in the house. I had two keys to it, and my wife kept one, and the other was kept in some oiled paper in the safe. On Thursday, Mr Milne brought the key now produced, and compared it with the one kept with my wife; they are both alike. I also missed a knife, a bottle of brandy, two bottles of rum and a bottle of port wine".

The magistrates again met yesterday morning, and it was at once arranged to take the prisoners to the house of Mr Marsh, about seven miles from Bolton, in order that the depositions of the family

might be taken. The house is nearly new and built of stone in a secluded spot in the vale, below the towering heights of Rivington Pike, and the very site that might be imagined for the commission of an outrage upon a family in wealthy circumstances, and not guarded by any domestics. Mr Marsh appeared to be much bruised about the head, which was swollen, but his faculties not the least impaired. Two other men had been taken into custody at Wigan yesterday morning by Mr Superintendent Milnes and Inspector Scott, but were not arraigned on this occasion. The evidence of Mr Marsh was taken, and was precisely as above given in his statement. Alice, wife of John Marsh, stated that she recollects looking through the kitchen door and bolting it on the night of Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup>. The front door is generally kept locked. We went to bed about eight o'clock at night, and my sister Martha Eatock went shortly afterwards. We had been in bed some hours when we heard the breaking of windows, and got up. My husband went out and returned, and on finding they were coming upstairs, I gave him the hand bell, and he used it so actively that the men blew the lights out; and when he had lost the bell, I took him the gun. I heard them say, "Now, d---l, we'll do for thee". They closed upon him in the dark, and I called out, "Oh, do let my dear John alone", and they said, "If you don't desist, we'll kill you", and I received a blow on the hand, which cut it. They then said they would desist from hurting him if I would not cry out. My husband then escaped by the closet, and one of the men compelled me to find the key of the safe, which I furnished from the escritoire. When I unlocked the escritoire, they pulled the drawer out and took a silk purse containing about £20 in gold and silver. There was also a pair of new boots that I have since missed from the escritoire. They could not open the safe with the key, and I told them they must pull the stopper out. I assisted them in opening it because I knew there were nothing but writings in it, and told them so. They emptied the boxes of the deeds and papers but, as I had told them, found no money. They then began to pull linen out of the drawers, and I said you are making rough work, when one of them replied, "Mistress, you have nothing to do but straighten it". They then went to my sister (Miss Eatock's room) and thrust it open; some of them rummaged the drawers, and some the chest, and I told them there was nothing in but old things. They measured the chest both inside and out, as if to see if there was a false bottom. They told us to get to bed, as they had ways in their trade we must not look at. I heard them go downstairs, and in a short time after, I went down, and finding the kitchen door unfastened, I locked and bolted it, and shortly after, my husband returned. On the following day, we missed the gun, and a watch from the escritoire. I gave the key of the safe, and the bell produced, to Mr Milne, of the police, on the following day. J King of Chorley, superintendent of police, produced the brooch which Ball lost in the public house. On Thursday, he was in his office and heard Mrs Ball inform her husband that the child was dead – alluding to an illegitimate child at Chorley – and which might in some degree account for Ball's anxiety to get to Chorley on the day of the robbery. Miss Eatock corroborated the statement of her sister, Mrs Marsh, and said that after they had gone to bed, she made the windows, and saw all was fast. She said that three or four men, on entering her room, ransacked the drawers, having candles without sticks in their hands. They took a quantity of sovereigns, but she could not tell the exact number. A silver tankard, a snuff box and brooch were also taken out of the garret, and some money out of a corner cupboard, in different parcels, as I had received them, and a lot of silver, made out of a stocking bag. I had some guineas missing and a quantity of old silver coin, but she could not say of what reign. She could not tell the exact sum missing, but had above £100 in sovereigns. Mr Marsh further added that he saw one of the men with his hands in the drawer in which Miss Eatock's brooch was placed.

Mr Richardson pressed for the discharge of Peter Taylor, James Taylor and Hindley, which was acceded to, and the other prisoners were remanded back to Bolton at four o'clock. They were brought up again on Tuesday evening at the Town Hall, and further remanded to Thursday, when Jonathan Taylor, Thomas Ball, Jas Unsworth and Edward McKnight were again brought up (the other prisoners, Patrick Corrigan and Thos Henry, having been discharged on Tuesday night), and a further remand to Monday was applied for, Mr Marsh being still unable to attend. Mr Richardson opposed it on behalf of Unsworth and McKnight, alleging that he was prepared to prove an *alibi*; but that was overruled, and they were consequently remanded to Monday, at twelve o'clock.



Thomas Tootal of Wigan, sinker; John Pearce alias Nuttall of Wigan, weaver; and William Taylor, also of Wigan, labourer, who were apprehended on Tuesday, were then arraigned as being concerned in the burglary, and were also remanded to Monday. Ball had made a statement which, if admitted, will implicate all the parties, together with one not yet in custody. The gun has been found about three fields from the house, and there is other evidence against them not yet given.

### **117 March 2 1850**

**DISTRESSING ACCIDENT TO A YOUTH** At the Royal Infirmary on Tuesday afternoon, an inquest was held by Mr Herford on the body of a youth, thirteen years of age, named Martin Brennan. The circumstances connected with the death of the boy are these :- On Thursday week, he and some other lads were playing on the banks of the Ashton Canal, near the seventh lock, and as a boat was passing through the lock, the deceased caught hold of it, and swung from its side. Almost at the same moment, however, owing to a lurch of the boat, he was crushed between the boat and the abutment of the bridge. He contrived, however, to raise his legs, and throw himself over into the boat, and when it had risen by the influx of the water, he was lifted out. He was so much injured that he could not stand, and another boat coming up, he was taken down to Manchester and conveyed to his father's house. Next day he was removed to the Infirmary. Such was the statement of one of deceased's companions. It appears somewhat strange that the man who was steering the boat, who must have seen the deceased, did not caution him to keep away. One of the boatmen gave a somewhat different version of the affair. He said that when the boat was passing under the bridge, he supposed the deceased had made a jump, and caught hold of the stern of the boat. Hearing one of the deceased's companions calling out, he (the boatman) alighted to see if anyone was in the water, but he afterwards found that deceased was in the boat. This witness said that the deceased himself got out of the boat; and that, after kneeling on the ground a short time, he went away. He also stated that he (the witness) had threatened to punish the lads for playing about the boat. Mr Dyson, surgeon to the Infirmary, said that deceased was admitted there on the day of the accident, and that he died on the Monday following. His stomach was much bruised, and a post mortem examination had shown that the pelvis was fractured, a portion of the bone having ruptured the bladder. This was the immediate cause of death. Verdict, "Crushed by a boat".

### **118 August 3 1850**

#### **Ashton**

**CAUTION TO BOATMEN** **James Wilde**, a boatman, was charged with running his boat on the lock gate of No 3 lock on the Huddersfield Canal, at Ashton. Mr Batley of Huddersfield, solicitor to the company, appeared to support the charge, and called **Joseph Sykes**, the lock-keeper, who proved the case. Defendant promised not to offend again, and was allowed to pay the costs.

### **119 August 14 1850**

**DEFEAT OF PROTECTIONISTS** The proverbial stillness of the town of Ledbury, Herefordshire, was violently interrupted on Tuesday. A Mr Candy, a protectionist lecturer, and an essayist upon safeguards to native industry, was announced to give an address on the "Fallacies of Free Trade". The protection party assembled on the occasion in good numbers, but their views were unexpectedly frustrated by a violent opposition upon the part of the canal boatmen and their wives, and others, who seemed bent on defeating any attempt of the lecturer being heard. The formidable and threatening aspect of the populace prompted the farmers to forego their speech making, and deprived them of the advantages of Mr Candy's harangue. It would be difficult to describe the commotion in the town. One strenuous protectionist fled from the hotel in a postchaise, in full gallop, taking the opportunity of the crowd being drawn away by a fight some distance off.

### **120 August 21 1850**

**ROBBERY FROM THE PERSON, WHILST ASLEEP** A little before one o'clock on Sunday morning last, a police-constable on duty in Great Dacie Street saw a man asleep, and apparently intoxicated, lying upon a door step. Shortly after passing him, he observed a person approach the

sleeper, and suspecting that his object was dishonest, the officer went to see what he was doing, and inquired of the man upon the step if he had been robbed. He was then sobered sufficiently to take an inventory of his personal effects, and on examination, said he had lost his tobacco box from his trousers pocket, containing a sovereign. Several other articles were also missing from his other pockets, or, to use his own comprehensive expression, he was "completely cleaned out". The policeman then seized the man who had been in contact with him, and found upon him the box and sovereign. He proved to be a boatman named **George Kay**, and was charged with the offence at the Borough Court on Monday. In his defence, however, he gave a different account of the occurrence. He said that he saw the policeman robbing the man, and on going up to the place, the policeman dropped the box, which he (the prisoner) took up and put in his pocket. The man who was robbed confirmed the policeman's statement respecting his awaking him and asking him if he had been robbed, and the prisoner was committed to the sessions for trial.

**121 August 28 1850**

**Ashton**

**MALICIOUS DAMAGE** **George Woolstencroft** and **Peter Jepson**, boatmen, were each fined 2s 6d for killing a turkey, the property of John Sidebottom Esq on Saturday last.

**122 August 31 1850**

**FOUND DROWNED – SUPPOSED SUICIDE** On Tuesday morning at six o'clock, a boatman named **Walker**, while watering his horses in the Rochdale Canal at the bottom of Granby Row, found in the water the lifeless body of a woman who, on subsequent inquiry, proved to be one Mary Bradley, a widow, fifty six years of age, whose place of residence was in Granby Row. At the inquest on the body, which was held the same day at the Bull's Head, London Road, the woman with whom the deceased lodged stated that the latter had gone out the previous night at about eleven o'clock, saying she would visit a neighbour; since which time nothing had been seen of her till the body was found in the canal the following morning. The deceased was described as having been in low spirits for a considerable time, depressed by the fear of being reduced to starvation; and it was said that about three weeks ago, she attempted to poison herself, and had on one or two other occasions threatened to put an end to her existence. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

**123 November 13 1850**

**UNPROVOKED ASSAULT UPON A POLICE OFFICER** Yesterday, a powerful boatman named **James Sawley** was charged at the Borough Court, by policeman No 11 of the C division, with committing an assault upon him. He stated that he was walking along Great Ancoats Street, when Sawley came near him and, without speaking a word, struck him a violent blow on the head and knocked him down. He made his escape at the time, but was afterwards apprehended near the Bolton Canal. He was fined 20s which he seemed inclined to pay rather than be committed for a month.

**124 December 7 1850**

**Warrington**

**INQUEST** An inquest was held on Monday last at the Bridewell upon the body of **John Woodward**, who came to his death under the following circumstances :- The deceased was a flatman in the service of the Old Quay Company. On Saturday evening last he was with his flat, and whilst in the Cadishead locks, it appears that, by some means or another not known, he fell from the flat, and being caught between the flat and the lock side, was crushed to death. He was between fifty and sixty years of age. Verdict of "Accidental death".

**125 December 11 1850**

**ROBBERY FROM A VESSEL** At the New Bailey on Wednesday last, **William Millington**, a boatman, charged **James Percival**, who had been a short time in his service, with stealing his watch from the cabin of his vessel. The watch was suspended in the cabin on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November, the

boat being then in the Bridgewater Canal at Patricroft. The prisoner, after taking a meal alone in the cabin on that day, went ashore, and the watch was missed shortly afterwards. He was apprehended at Lymm in Cheshire on Monday last, and conveyed to Salford. He was committed to the sessions for trial.

### **126 January 15 1851**

**ASSAULT** Yesterday at the Borough Court, two men named George Jones and William Cheetham were charged with this offence by a boatman named **Shallcross**. It appeared that the complainant had been drinking in a public house in Deansgate on the previous night, where were also the two defendants. Jones had taken the complainant's cap from his head, and on his claiming it back, he refused to give it up, and said it was his own. Cheetham also knocked him down and kicked him. The complainant had called the aid of a police officer, who stated that he got hold of Cheetham, but the latter kicked him severely and got away; both the men ran towards Fleet Street, where he followed them, and having got assistance, they captured them descending from a high wall. Complainant had recovered his cap from Jones, on consenting to pay him sixpence for it. Jones was fined 10s or 21 days imprisonment, and Cheetham 20s or to be committed for one month.

### **127 January 15 1851 Rochdale**

**SUDDEN DEATH** On Wednesday last, a person named **Michael Ackroyd**, a boatman, suddenly fell down dead, at Lower Place, near Rochdale. An inquest was held the same day on the body, at the White Lion Inn, Lower Place, and a verdict of "Died by the visitation of God" was returned.

### **128 March 15 1851**

**MISTAKEN IDENTIFICATION – CHARGE OF SHOOTING AT A WOMAN** At the Salford Borough Court on Thursday, a boatman named **John Chantler** was placed in the dock on a charge of having twice fired a pistol at **Elizabeth Rothwell**, the wife of a boatman residing in Rupert Street, Ordsal Lane. The prosecutrix stated that a short time since, the prisoner worked for her husband, but was discharged. Three weeks ago, he came to the house for some money which was due to him. She told him that he owed her husband more than was due to himself, and he must let his own debt stand against theirs – he should not have it. To which he replied, "I will have it, one way or another". On Tuesday night last, about seven o'clock, she was going to her father's, along Cross Lane, Salford, and when passing Blackburn's Buildings, she noticed a man standing, but on seeing her, he stepped out of the way to let her pass. When she had walked a short distance, she observed that he was following her, and saw him put his hand into his pocket, to take out, as she thought, a pigeon, to let fly in the air. Instead of a pigeon, however, he brought from his pocket a pistol, and discharged it at her. He was about ten yards off, and the flash went towards her. She believed the man to be the prisoner. She was alarmed, and ran to her father's, and told her father and mother that she had been shot at. John Crook, father of the prosecutrix, said that about seven o'clock on Tuesday night, his daughter came to his house and said she had been shot at. She remained about three quarters of an hour, and witness went home with her for protection. When they had passed Blackburn's Buildings, he saw a young man loading a pistol, to whom he said, "What art thou doing with that pistol?" To which he replied, "I don't know". When they had got about twenty yards from him, he fired the pistol at them; he then seemed as if he was throwing the pistol away towards some grass; and crossed the road and ran off. Witness followed him twenty or thirty yards, but being himself much excited and alarmed for his daughter, he returned, and found that she had got into a neighbour's house. Neither of them had sustained any injury. The report was a loud one, but he could not say that he heard any whizzing noise as if a ball or shot had passed him. He only saw the side of the man's face, and would not undertake to swear to him, but he believed he was the man, and his general appearance in every respect resembled him. When he saw the man loading the pistol, his daughter said to him, "That's Canney", meaning Chantler. A police officer stated that he apprehended the prisoner in White Cross Bank, on the previous day, and desired him to accompany him to the office, which he did, when the chief constable told him that he was

charged with shooting at a woman, when prisoner said he was innocent of it. Mrs Rothwell was fetched, and she identified him as the man who had shot at her. When being locked up, he said, "I am innocent of the charge; they should have paid me, and then". The prisoner said in defence that on Tuesday night he left his work at six o'clock and went to his lodgings, where he remained until eight o'clock, when he went out with some corn to feed a horse; he returned in about twenty minutes, and then played at dominoes until ten o'clock, and was not out again during the night. He then called Mrs Alice Stretch, of No 2 Canal Street. She stated that the prisoner lodged at her house; that on Tuesday night he came home at dusk, and was only out from eight o'clock to twenty minutes past. There were several other persons in the house at the time, and she said they could testify the same. The prisoner was then remanded to yesterday morning, when he was again brought up. Mr W P Roberts appeared for him, and the evidence given on the previous day was repeated. Mrs Ramsbottom was next called, and stated that she lived in Blackburn's Buildings. About seven o'clock, and again at eight o'clock, on Tuesday night last, she heard a report as if from a gun. In a few minutes after the second report, the prosecutrix came to her door in a state of great agitation, and asked her to allow her to come into the house, stating that she had been shot at. She said she knew the man who had done it, but did not give his name. After remaining a short time, her father came for her, and she went away with him. Mr Roberts then addressed the Bench on behalf of the prisoner, urging that he had to contend against a powerful tendency in the human mind to get up a great case, and to make the most of whatever crime was supposed to be committed. Mr Trafford said that he might state that no evidence had been given that the pistol was loaded; if, therefore, the prisoner was proved to be the man who fired it, he should only deal with him under the act for "wantonly and maliciously firing a pistol in the street". Mr Roberts said that if the evidence of identity were not sufficient to prove him guilty of an attempt to murder, it was not sufficient to prove him guilty of any offence at all, and he should be able to prove that he was not the man who could have committed it. Mrs Alice Stretch, the landlady of the house where the prisoner lodged, repeated her previous statement, to the effect that the prisoner went home at six o'clock, remained until eight, then left for about twenty minutes to feed a pony, when he returned, and was not out of the house again during the night. Thomas Stretch, her son, Elizabeth Stretch, her daughter, and a young man who stated that he played at dominoes with the prisoner until ten o'clock, gave evidence to the same effect; upon which Mr Roberts submitted that a case of alibi was established. Mr Trafford said he had no doubt but that the prosecutrix conscientiously thought that the prisoner was the man who had shot at her, but he believed that she had mistaken him for some other individual. He regretted that the man who really perpetrated the act had not been apprehended. He was inclined to think that, whoever he might be, his intention was not to kill, but to frighten, and he had seriously frightened the person at whom he shot. The prisoner was then discharged.

### **129**    **March 26 1851**

**CHILD FOUND DROWNED IN GAYTHORN**    On Thursday, Mr Herford held an inquest at the Cross Keys in Camp Street on the body of a lad, ten years of age, son of William Hingley, porter of Kay's Court, Jackson's Row. The lad was found quite dead, at six o'clock on Thursday morning, in the Rochdale Canal in Gaythorn, by a boatman named **Walker**. Verdict, "Found drowned".

### **130**    **March 26 1851**

**STEALING COPPER COIN**    A boatman named **Samuel Lamb**, and an elderly woman and her daughter, named respectively Ellen and Elizabeth Hyde, were placed in the dock at the Borough Court on Monday last, on a charge of being concerned in stealing copper coin to the value of £14 10s from the warehouse of the Grocers' Company in Castle Street, Knott Mill. John Grant, a clerk in the establishment, proved that he left the copper safely locked up in a box on Friday night. Nicholas Holloway, private watchman, stated that the doors were properly fastened on Friday night, and about one o'clock on Saturday morning, he discovered that one of them had been broken open. He entered, and went over the warehouse, but could see no one, but found that a box had been

broken into, and the copper which it contained taken away. John Shaw proved that he had delivered £8 10s of copper to a carter of the company, and identified two penny pieces amongst the copper produced in court as being part of the £8 10s which the carter had delivered to the clerk of the company. Sub inspector Partington stated that he heard of the robbery on Saturday morning, and having ascertained that the prisoners had been changing a quantity of copper into silver, he went to the house of the old woman and her daughter, where Lamb also lodged, and under a flag in a back cellar, he found £9 in copper, and learned that at least £3 had been changed. Mr Superintendent Taylor then called Elizabeth Hyde, who stated that the elder prisoner was her mother, and the younger one her sister; on Saturday morning, she saw Lamb take up a flag in the cellar and afterwards put it down again; she also saw a quantity of loose copper, and he gave her 9s to get changed, which she did by getting three shillings in silver for it at three different places. Mr Taylor said he did not press the case against the old woman, who declared her ignorance of the transaction; but as the copper stolen weighed more than a hundredweight, he thought it probable that some other party had been concerned in it, and applied for a remand. Ellen Hyde (the mother) was then discharged, and the other two prisoners were remanded to Friday next.

[Must be an error with names here, as both the accused and one of the witnesses are shown as Elizabeth Hyde]

### 131 April 16 1851

#### Blackburn

SHOCKING ACCIDENT ON THE EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY On Thursday night, an accident of a painful nature occurred on the East Lancashire Railway, near to the Blackburn station. It appears that a man named **Thomas Holden**, a boatman residing in Ninepenny Row, in this town, was found in the tunnel, with his right leg broken and his head much crushed. It appears that he had been in Accrington that day, and by some means had got onto a luggage train. On the train nearing the station house at Blackburn, through the tunnel, he made an effort to get off, when he must have fallen. At about twelve o'clock, a man at the station heard a moan, and on searching found him with his head lying on one of the rails, over which a luggage train was in a few minutes to pass; he was immediately conveyed to the house of Mr Riding, the White Bull Inn, Church Street. A medical gentleman from King Street was called in, and removed several fractured bones from the front part of the skull, bandaged it up, and then left the man. Mr Riding and many others endeavoured, during the whole of the following morning, to induce the medical gentleman to set the fractured limb, or to get an order from the relieving officer to convey the poor man to the workhouse, where he might be at ease, and have every assistance which such an establishment and a surgeon could give. Strange to say, neither one nor the other could be accomplished until twelve o'clock on Friday. Mr Ashton, the relieving officer, inquired of the medical gentleman if Holden was fit to be removed to the workhouse. "Yes," was the reply, "but wait a little longer until I make some inquiries" thus the man lay in the kitchen of the White Bull from twelve on Thursday night until a little after twelve on Friday morning, at which hour Mr Ashton determined to relieve the poor man's misery. Mr Rogerson, the surgeon from No 2 district, was dispatched to the White Bull, and had the man immediately conveyed to the workhouse, and placed under proper and careful nurses, and all that medical skill could suggest was done to cure or relieve his bodily sufferings. The whole circumstances connected with the case created great indignation amongst the inhabitants, and during Friday it was the chief topic of conversation. Too much praise cannot be given to Mr and Mrs Riding for the care which they bestowed on the man. After the man's removal to the workhouse, the company sent a medical gentleman from Manchester to visit him. We have since ascertained that Holden died on Sunday evening,

### 132 May 14 1851

CHILD KILLED BY FALL OF DEALS IN A BOAT On Monday, an inquest was held at the Blue Ball, Chester Road, Hulme, touching the death of **Thomas Walker**, four years of age, son of a boatman of Latchford, near Warrington. On Friday evening, the boy's father was discharging deals from a flat at Mr Hunt's yard, in the Old River, and the deceased and another little boy were playing



in the hold. The passage of another boat caused a roll in the water, which made a quantity of deals fall into the hold. The other little boy escaped free from injury, but Walker was killed by the wood which fell upon him. Verdict, "Accidental death".

### **133 May 24 1851**

**ROBBERY FROM A COAL BOAT** During the afternoon of Wednesday, as a youth was coming with a coal boat towards Manchester on the Rochdale Canal, having no one on board but himself, a powerful man got upon the boat, and taking the shaft with which he was pressing it along out of his hand, the newcomer forced the boat towards the shore, when another two men made their appearance and carried off a quantity of coal. On arriving at Manchester, the youth informed Mr Birch, to whom the coal was consigned by Messrs J Harrop and Co, of what had occurred, and the man who first boarded the boat in the canal was apprehended. His name was **John Johnson**, a boatman, and he was charged with the offence at the Borough Court on Thursday. He admitted being present but denied the robbery. He was committed for one month.

### **134 June 28 1851**

**ATTEMPTED MURDER AND SUICIDE IN WORCESTER** On Saturday night last, **John Waters**, a man who plies as a boatman in Worcester, made a murderous attack upon a woman named Mary Ann Burk, who has been living with him for several months. Having quarrelled with her, he inflicted a serious wound upon her neck with a knife, and subsequently stabbed himself in the throat in two places. An enquiry into the circumstances took place at the police station on Monday before two of the city magistrates, who remanded the prisoner Waters for a week, in consequence of his being too ill to undergo an examination. The woman Burk is recovering from the effects of her wounds, and is considered out of danger. It appears that the prisoner Waters had been heard to say several times in the course of Saturday that he would murder the woman, and was seen to sharpen his knife (a pocket one), which was found covered with blood on the floor of the room.

### **135 July 12 1851**

**A MAN BURNT IN A LIMEKILN** On Tuesday, Mr Herford held an inquest upon the body of **James Buckley**, a boatman 58 years of age, whose death in the Infirmary had taken place on the previous day, in consequence of burns on the feet and back which he had received through falling into a lime kiln. A labourer named Johnson stated that on Wednesday morning he went to work at a lime kiln belonging to Mr Brocklehurst, at Pinmill Bridge, and found deceased lying inside; he threatened that if he found him there again he would take him before the magistrates, and deceased promised that he would not return. Witness then went to the other side of the kiln, and soon heard a loud scream, and on looking down saw the deceased at the bottom of the kiln amidst the fire. With the help of some men, he drew him up, and had him conveyed to the Infirmary, where he died as above stated. Verdict, "Accidental death".

### **136 August 2 1851**

**VIOLENT ASSAULT ON A MAN IN THE STREET** In our last publication, we gave some particulars respecting a brutal attack which was made upon Patrick Lyons and William Bridger, between two and three o'clock on Tuesday morning last, near the Caledonian Vaults, Great Bridgewater Street, by a party of boatmen, one of whom, named **Robert Culshaw**, was apprehended, and charged with the offence at the Borough Court the same morning. Patrick Lyons, who is the keeper of a beerhouse in Chester Street, Hulme, was disabled from attending to give evidence, and the prisoner was remanded to Thursday. On that day he appeared, although still suffering from the loss of blood and ill-treatment. He stated that he was, for some reason unknown to himself, suddenly knocked down by the boatmen, and kicked whilst perfectly insensible. He could not identify the prisoner as being one of the assailants. A person residing near the place stated

that he heard a noise, and on looking out of the door of his house, he saw the prosecutor lying on the flags, and five men kicking him. He went towards them, and they ran away; if he had not done so, he believed they would have kicked him to death. He was laid on his left side, with his head in a pool of blood, there being a deep wound on the forehead. Bridger, who had also been violently struck and bitten, said that the prisoner was one of the party. It appeared from the statement of the landlord of the Rose and Crown Inn, Lombard Street, that the prisoner and his companions had been drinking there; that some man had stolen a pair of shoes from a person in the house, and that the boatmen went out of doors, saying they would punish the first man they met for it. Bridger and Lyons happened to come up, and though they had nothing to do with the shoes, the men attacked them, and he could distinctly swear to the prisoner being the ringleader of the party. The prisoner denied the charge against him, but could assign no satisfactory reason for his running away and leaping into the canal at Gaythorne, from whence he was piloted to the (dry) dock. He is believed to be from Wigan, and he was committed to the sessions for trial.

### **137 November 22 1851**

**MELANCHOLY DEATH OF A BOATMAN** On Tuesday night, at about a quarter past six o'clock, **Jas Schofield**, 26 years of age, a boatman from Rochdale, fell into the canal at Allport Town. His father and brother, who were on the lock gates, saw him standing on a bench in the boat, pulling the boat out of the lock with a boat hook, and presently heard a fall and a splash, which denoted that the deceased had fallen into the water. Three times did the deceased cry out for help; a rope was thrown to him by his father, and a life buoy by the lock keeper, but the night was dark and the deceased could not be seen, and the consequence was that these appliances never reached him, and he was drowned. His body, recovered by means of grappling irons, was soon afterwards got out, and was taken to the Black Horse, where a surgeon endeavoured to restore animation, but in vain. The jury who sat on the inquest held on Thursday, at the Black Horse, gave it as their verdict that the deceased had "Accidentally been drowned".

### **138 December 6 1851**

**INQUESTS** On Monday last, an inquest was held on the body of **William Carey**, a boatman who accidentally walked into the canal between Ashton and Stockport during a heavy mist on Friday night week. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

### **139 December 20 1851 Ashton**

**CHARGE OF FELONY** Mary Manley and Thomas Makin were charged with stealing half a cwt of coals from a boat, while passing along the canal at Clayton. It appeared that the male prisoner had been employed by the boatman, **Wm Ogden**, to assist him with the boat through the locks, for which he paid him 4d; and the female prisoner said she had paid the male prisoner 1d to be allowed to take them. They were committed for a month each to Salford New Bailey.

### **140 January 10 1852**

**RAILWAY FESTIVITY** Nothing has caused a greater change in the social and commercial part of this country, in modern times, than the establishment of railways. Men of latent talent, that required only an opportunity for its development, rose into fame through the means of cutting and constructing railways and their requirements. One of such men was Stephenson. But the development of talent is but one of the least benefits that railways have conferred upon England. They have wrought great moral changes in the characters of those employed by inland carriers. Canals of late were the greatest facilities that were offered to the mercantile community for the transit of their goods. Six days were considered a very reasonable time to convey merchandise from Manchester to London; whereas, now, goods that were in the manufacturer's warehouse last night are in London today. The power of steam performs this. But how was it a few years back? Boats were used for this purpose, varying in tonnage, hauled by horses in the voyage between Manchester and London. The brutal cruelty of the drivers in whipping the poor animals forward,

and the horrid oaths that almost accompanied every lash, can only be fully known to those who have been intimately connected with canal carrying. A more fearfully demoralised class of men than canal boatmen could not be found in England. Their occupation was a nursery of vice. The cabins of the boats contained three berths or bed places for the crew, who consisted of half a dozen males, the chief of whom were mostly accompanied by women, who frequently were females of infamous characters. Gross wickedness characterised these men, to whose custody were committed goods of all kinds and value. They were inveterate sheep stealers and poachers. A day of rest was unknown to them, except when a stoppage took place upon the canals for repairs. Then these holidays were spent in every species of available vice. The name of Jesus, except as an oath, was unknown to a number of them, and to divine service, as a religious worship, they were equally strangers. Being born the children of boatmen, they were employed in that capacity as soon as they had acquired sufficient physical strength to be useful; and although called Christians, they grew up and lived in a state of greater religious, moral and intellectual darkness than the poor heathen who "sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind". None seemed to care for their welfare, except here and there a good man would rise up and feel for them. Of this character was Mr Samuel Salt, now goods manager to the London and North Western Railway, London Road, Manchester, who still retains in his present high status the same regard for the happiness and welfare of all the persons employed under him in the carrying business. At his own cost, he has established for the use of those persons a library containing upwards of four hundred valuable books, treating upon history, philosophy, biography, travels, chemistry, &c, allowing a period of time for reading according to the nature and size of the book. We believe that none can be more anxious for his workmen's welfare than Mr Salt. But he is a strict disciplinarian, so that the whole establishment under his management is moved like one vast well regulated machine. Every year, he provides a social banquet for those employed under him, and on Saturday evening last, at seven o'clock, 180 persons sat down to dinner at Hayward's Hotel, Bridge Street. Mr Thomas Kay, the goods superintendent, presided, and Mr Adshead occupied the vice chair. After the enjoyment of good roast beef and plum pudding, Mr Kay proposed as the first toast, "The Queen, Prince Albert and the royal family", which was loyally responded to. The next toast was "The directors of the London and North Western Railway". He (Mr Kay) observed that the servants of that company, as well as the shareholders, were greatly indebted to the directors for the very successful manner in which they had conducted the affairs of the railway. Through many a storm and critical crisis, they had steered the good ship, safely guiding her past the shoals and quicksands, when the hurricane of speculation roared loudly and agitated the sea of railway commerce; but now she sailed steadily under a light breeze and spread sails, bringing every year a good and sure freight to the owners. But it could not be without great care and anxiety that the directors stood at the helm of the affairs of that company, which represented a capital, including loans, of thirty seven millions of pounds sterling, and a length of railway measuring five hundred and sixty miles. He would liken them to the governor bails of the steam engine, that regulate the working of the entire engine. It was the interest of all employed to work harmoniously with the directors, from the highest to the lowest servant in the service, each party performing his duty honestly, faithfully and efficiently. He (Mr Kay) was glad to say that he believed such was the case with those whom he addressed, and trusted it ever would be so, as it was the surest means of promoting their individual welfare and happiness. The toast was drunk with applause. Mr H Spencer Harrison, superintendent of the passenger department, being called upon to reply on behalf of the directors, briefly returned thanks for the enthusiastic reception that the meeting had given the toast, stating further that, as the directors had great anxiety in promoting unity of purpose and harmonious feeling between and amongst the several grades of their officers and men, it would, had circumstances permitted, have been most highly gratifying to their feelings to have viewed from the spot where he (Mr Harrison) now stood, the full gathering of happy faces which he saw before him. The next toast was "The health of Samuel Salt Esq, goods manager". Mr Kay observed that it was almost useless for him to preface that toast with many words; they all knew Mr Salt. He was a gentleman of great experience in the carrying business, possessed sound judgement, and an unflinching integrity. If a man did his duty he was sure of

certain employment, and advancement according to his ability and service. He was also a gentleman of a kind, humane heart, which never ceased to feel for the happiness and welfare of all persons employed under him, and had not indisposition prevented arising from a severe cold, he would have been amongst them that evening. The health of Mr Salt, Mrs Salt, and family, was drunk with much applause. Song, "The Old English Gentleman" by Mr Evans, performed with much taste and ability. Mr Adshead responded to the health of Mr Salt, and observed how cheering it would have been for Mr Salt to look upon so many happy faces, and behold such unity, kindness and goodwill. He would, from the grounds of his heart, have wished them a "happy new year". How good and pleasant was it for friends to work together in unity; how delightful to themselves, and satisfactory to the employers. That meeting was composed of different members, but of the same body of which Mr Salt was the head. None could injure another without injuring himself. Let not the head despise the foot, nor the body disrespect the head; but let the blood of unity and goodwill circulate through this body commercial, and all would be happy, healthy and well. On behalf of Mr Salt, his kind lady, and family, he (Mr Adshead) begged to tender to the meeting his hearty thanks for their goodwill. The next toasts were "Prosperity to trade and commerce", "Success to railways, especially the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway", "The ladies", "The workmen", to which Mr Platt of Macclesfield, Mr Lees and Mr Mooney of Huddersfield, Mr Evans, Mr Helm and Mr Spencer Harrison of Manchester, made suitable replies. The healths of the president and vice president were drunk, after which "God save the Queen" was sung, and the meeting separated, well pleased with the evening's entertainment.

**141 January 17 1852 Ashton**

CAUTION TO BOATMEN At the petty sessions held on Wednesday last, **John Spencer**, a boatman, was charged by Mr R Smith, canal manager of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company, with having wilfully caused a large waste of water at the No 17 lock of the Ashton Canal. It appeared that defendant and another boatman met at the above lock, when each wanted to have possession of the lock, and they quarrelled about it, and while so doing, the loss of water took place. He pleaded guilty, and was fined £2 and costs.

**142 February 25 1852**

STEALING LEAD Two boatmen named **Kirk** and **Costello** were brought up at the Borough Court on Friday on a charge of stealing about fifty pounds weight of lead piping from a tunnel crossing the Bolton Canal, near to Ordsal Lane in Salford. The pipe was connected with an engine at the works of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company in Salford. The prisoners, while passing through the tunnel in a boat, were seen knocking at the pipe, and it was missed shortly after they came out. Their boat was stopped in the lock, and on the water being run off, some lead was found in the bottom of the lock which corresponded with the pipe. The prisoners were committed to the sessions for trial.

**143 March 7 1852 Rochdale**

CAUTION TO BOATMEN On Monday last, at the petty sessions, a charge was preferred against **Bernard Oates**, a boatman, for having committed a breach of the canal act by opening the bottom clewer of the lock before the top one was shut. He was fined twenty shillings and costs.

**144 March 10 1852**

FATAL ACCIDENT FROM MISMANAGEMENT OF A TEAGLE An inquest was held on Thursday at the Royal Infirmary, before E Herford Esq, on the body of **William Hicklin**, a waterman 26 years of age, lately residing in Back Quay Street. Mr Hull, manager for the New Quay Company, stated that on Thursday evening some men were loading a boat at the New Quay wharf, with bales to carry to Liverpool. A bale was being lowered by means of a teagle from an upper room to the boat, which was moored at the bottom of the teagle hole ; the bale by some means or another got free from the hooks and fell, knocking off witness's hat, and falling on the

deceased, who was acting as flatman below. Deceased was conveyed to the Royal Infirmary as soon as possible, but he had received a concussion of the brain from which he failed to recover. His death took place on Tuesday week. No blame was attached to anyone by the jury at the coroner's inquest.

#### **145 April 28 1852**

**ROBBING A PUBLIC HOUSE** At the Borough Court, on Monday last, three men named Henry Hague, **George Whittaker** and **John Calvert** were placed before the magistrates, charged with being concerned in breaking into the Brownsfield Tavern, Port Street, kept by Mr Robert Halsall. A policeman stated that at twenty minutes past four on Sunday morning he met the prisoner Hague in Leech Street, carrying two large bottles. On asking where he had got them, Hague replied that he was carrying them from the Brownsfield Tavern. Thinking this might be without the consent of the owner, he compelled the prisoner to return with him to the public house. On awaking the landlord, it was found that one bottle of brandy, two bottles of port, and one of sherry were missing from the cellar, and that the kitchen window had been broken open, by which access had been obtained to the cellar. The value of what was taken was about £4. The prisoner pointed to the stable connected to the premises, and said there were other men there, and the policeman found Whittaker and Calvert there asleep. They were boatmen, and it was stated that men from the boats frequently entered the stable to sleep. There was no conclusive evidence against them, and they were discharged, but Hague was committed to the assizes for trial for the burglary.

#### **146 May 19 1852**

**FATAL ACCIDENT TO A BOATMAN** On Monday, Mr E Herford held an inquest at the Royal Infirmary on the body of **Thomas Oldknow**, a boatman 48 years of age, who has left a wife and seven children, and who lately lived at 27 New Street, Liverpool Road. On the Monday afternoon previous, the deceased was engaged in the management of a flat on the Rochdale Canal near Middleton; he had just let a "fender" drop to the side of the boat to protect the latter from scraping against the side of the canal; the violence with which the boat struck the side caused him to fall into the water, and the boat, rebounding, went to the other side of the canal, and severely trapped his body before he had time to get away. He lingered for some days suffering much from the crush he had received, and died on Saturday morning. Verdict: "Accidental death".

#### **147 June 23 1852**

**A BOY DROWNED** On Wednesday last, an inquest was held before Mr E Herford, borough coroner, on a boy named William Bostock, aged ten years, son of Thomas Bostock, a porter, living in Back Whitfield Street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, who had come to his death by drowning. It was given in evidence that about half past four o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, the deceased was crossing the gates of the lock on the canal at Gaythorn, when his foot slipped and he fell in and disappeared. A youth named James Boot stripped himself and went into the canal to search for him, but without avail. Shortly afterwards, a vessel came up, and the boatman brought the body to the surface with a boat hook, but life was extinct. Both stated that at the time the deceased crossed the lock gates, there were an alarm raised about the police coming, and he was hurrying to get away when he fell into the water. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

#### **148 August 14 1852**

**ROBBERY AT NEWTON** Two men named Richard Roberts and Charles Rydings were placed before the magistrates at the New Bailey on Wednesday last, charged with stealing a quantity of wearing apparel, the property of William Manley. Mrs Manley, living at Clayton, in Newton, stated that the articles were safe at eleven o'clock in the forenoon of Tuesday, but that they were in a cellar to which access might be obtained without being observed. Subsequently, a boatman named **Sidebottom**, who was passing in his vessel along the canal, saw the prisoners go in the direction of the house which was robbed, and afterwards come along the canal bank. He noticed that Roberts



had then a bundle under his arm. A signal was made to another person, and they contrived to secure both the prisoners, and pass them over to the police. The property found upon them was identified by the owner, and they were committed for trial at the sessions.

**149 August 25 1852**

**Blackburn**

**AN IMPUDENT ROBBERY** On Monday last, at the Police Office before W Eccles Esq MP and D Thwaites Esq, Alice Haworth was committed for trial for having stolen a basket of fruit and other articles, on Sunday morning last about three o'clock, from the wife of a boatman who had incautiously fallen asleep on the steps of a shop in Darwen Street.

**150 September 8 1852**

**FATAL ACCIDENT TO A CHILD** The wife of one of the canal boatmen, named **Anderson**, was taking charge of a barge, a day or two since, her husband being absent, he having been committed to the House of Correction. She had her baby with her, a little boy eleven months old, and no other person was on board the vessel. She was steering it on the canal, and when it came to the Union Mill, near Deansgate, the mother had to throw a rope out ashore, in order that the boat might be hauled in. While doing this, she put her baby down on the deck. There is a hole there, through which the chimney of the cabin passes ; and the child fell down this hole, a depth of only a yard and a half, but its head struck against the cabin floor ; and in so falling, it upset a kettle of boiling water on the cabin fire, so as to be severely scalded. The child was taken to the Infirmary, but died on the next morning.

**151 November 10 1852**

**CHARGE OF MANSLAUGHTER** A stout boatman named **William Abbott** was placed before the magistrates at the Borough Court on Monday last, on a charge of having caused the death of William Walmsley, aged 52 years, a private watchman over a field (belonging to the corporation) in which night soil is deposited, near Dawson Street, Chester Road. John Wilkinson stated that, about ten minutes to three o'clock in the morning of Wednesday last, when in his house in Regent Road, he heard a noise towards the river. He went across the bridge, and saw two men struggling together. One was down, and the other man (the prisoner) kicked the one on the ground three times, saying "I will kill the old ----". Witness called out, "Avast there, what is to do?" The prisoner replied that he had gone over the wall and had fallen asleep, and that the old man (the deceased) was trying to rob him of his watch. Witness said to the prisoner, "Why, don't kick him," to which the prisoner replied, "If you take his part, I will kick you". The face of the deceased was bleeding and very much bruised. The prisoner, who was drunk, went towards the canal. Wm McCloud, a street sweeper, stated that the prisoner came to him at twenty minutes before five o'clock on Wednesday morning, and asked if he knew of any beerhouse open, for he was very cold ; he had been sleeping out, and a man had tried to get his watch out of his pocket. He had kicked the man, but he hoped a doctor would be sent for him. A police officer deposed that he met the deceased in Egerton Street, Hulme, about four o'clock the same morning, who told him that he had found a man drunk and asleep behind a wall, and when he awoke the man, the latter began to kick him, both on the head and body. He took the old man to the Infirmary. William Walmsley, a son of the deceased, stated that on Tuesday night his father was quite well ; on Wednesday he went to see him at the Infirmary, where he died on Friday last. Mr J R Baker, house surgeon at the Royal Infirmary, stated that the deceased, when received into the Infirmary on Wednesday morning, was suffering great pain ; three ribs were fractured on the left side, and the upper rib had penetrated the lung. He had also received some wounds on his face. He died from the effects of the violence on Friday morning at half past eight o'clock. The prisoner had been apprehended to Liverpool, and was committed to take his trial at the assizes on the charge of manslaughter. An inquest had been held by the coroner on Friday, and a verdict returned of "Manslaughter" against some person or persons unknown.

### 152 November 27 1852

**A BOATMAN DROWNED** On Saturday night, a boatman named **Hargreaves**, riding in a boat on the Ashton canal near the middle lock, saw something floating on the water, which proved to be a man's cap. Subsequent enquiry showed that a boatman named **Thomas Wild** was the owner of the cap ; and Hargreaves, suspecting that all was not right, went with a policeman to the middle lock, and thence dragged out Wild's dead body. Deceased had been last seen on Saturday night, at a short distance from where his corpse was found, and he appeared to be somewhat intoxicated. The verdict at the inquest was "Accidentally drowned".

### 153 December 8 1852

**BODY OF A BOY FOUND IN THE CANAL** On Friday last, an inquest was held at the Soho Tavern, Great Ancoats Street, before Mr E Herford, on the body of a boy unknown. **-?- Pollitt**, a boatman, stated that on the previous day, whilst passing along the Ashton canal, he saw a body floating in the water, and got it into the boat. The appearance of the body seemed to indicate the age of about sixteen years, and it had on a pair of cord trousers, a slop, and a new pair of clogs, with iron at the bottoms. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

### 154 January 22 1853

**CORONER'S JURIES – COMPULSORY ABSENCE FROM THE INQUEST OF PERSONS UNDER SUSPICION** In our Wednesday's publication, we gave the particulars of a case of manslaughter, in which **Thomas Greenwood**, a boatman or jobber about the canal, was committed to the assizes from the Borough Court, on a charge of causing the death of Michael Corr, a bricklayer's labourer, by kicking him on the stomach on Saturday night last. An inquest was held on the body on Monday afternoon before Mr E Herford. Greenwood, the accused man, was placed before the magistrates on the forenoon of the same day, and remanded till Tuesday, in order to hear the evidence of the surgeon, when he was fully committed. The prisoner being in the custody of the police at the time the inquest was held, he was not present at the inquest. Some dissatisfaction was expressed by the jury (as on former occasions) at the absence of the suspected party ; and we understand that an address from the jury on the subject is intended to be presented to the town council at its next meeting.

### 155 February 9 1853

**THE FATE OF A RUNAWAY** About three weeks ago, **Henry Entwistle** of Trumpet Street, son of a deceased shoemaker, ran away from his work at a silk mill ; his mother beat him for the offence, and on the following morning, she set out to take him back to his work. On the way thither, he escaped from her, and she heard nothing more of him for a fortnight, except that she was given to understand that he had been seen with some boatmen. In fact he had engaged himself to one of the boatmen of the West Leigh Colliery Company, and was employed to drive a horse upon the towing-path of the Rochdale Canal. On Thursday night, the boat reached the Tib locks in Gaythorn, and the lad there managed, in some way or other, to tumble off the lock gates into the canal. He was missed in a short time, and in about ten minutes was found dead in the canal, near the lock gates. An inquest was held on his body before Mr E Herford at the Railway Inn, Deansgate on Saturday last. The verdict was that the deceased was "Accidentally drowned".

### 156 March 9 1853

**STEALING COAL FROM BARGES** A wharf, rented of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company by Messrs (Brownlelaw?) and Co, coalowners, at the back of Stanley Street, Salford, has been exposed to much depredation of late, so that the stolen coals have been selling in the neighbourhood as cheap as 3d per cwt. The barges which bring the coals from Ringley, being left in the canal all night, had often been robbed, and although a watch was set, the thief could not be detected. About three o'clock last Sunday morning, however, Policeman Davis and another, who were watching the place, saw a man come up with a boat, alongside the loaded barges, and take

some coal out. They arrested him, and found he was **William Smith**, a boatman plying between Manchester and Wigan. He has been committed for trial.

**157 May 28 1853**

**MANSLAUGHTER BY A BOATMAN** A boatman named **James Russell**, travelling between Manchester and Leigh, 28 years of age, arrived in Manchester on Monday last with a pair of boats, and went for refreshment to the Bridgewater Arms Inn in Liverpool Road. He quarrelled with a man named Kitchen, until he was told to "drop it" by another boatman named **Ainscow**, who blamed Russell for some unfair conduct to himself of which he assumed him to have been guilty. Russell then asked Ainscow to pay him a 6d which he owed him ; Ainscow told his wife to pay the 6d, and immediately afterwards said to the deceased, "Is that all you can pick your spite at?" Ainscow then rose, without another word being said, and gave Russell a heavy blow with his fist under one of the ears. Russell fell off the seat on which he was sitting, and lay on the floor scarcely stirring or breathing afterwards. He was dead in a quarter of an hour. Mr Baker, surgeon, who examined his body, found that the vessels in the brain had become very extensively ruptured, and this mischief he attributed to a blow. Russell and Ainscow were both in liquor at the time of the quarrel. Ainscow absconded, but was apprehended at Rivington by a policeman, to whom he confessed at once that he had killed the deceased. He was taken before Mr Herford, the city coroner, at the inquest which was held on Tuesday at the Royal Infirmary ; he then said that he had not thought of doing the deceased any harm. He was committed for trial on the coroner's warrant, the jury finding a verdict of "Manslaughter" against him.

**158 June 15 1853**

**DROWNING IN THE ASHTON CANAL** A boatman's boy named **Joseph Bostock**, 10 years of age, stood the other day on the banks of the Ashton Canal near Goulden's Buildings ; all at once, without apparent cause, he was observed to fall into the lock ; before he could be fished out, animation had become extinguished. At the inquest which was held at the Bird in Hand, the jury found that the deceased had been "Accidentally drowned".

**159 June 18 1853**

**INTOXICATION AND DEATH** At the Bridge Inn, Regent Street, Salford, on Wednesday last, an inquest was held before Mr George Rutter, deputy coroner, on William Orme, aged twenty two years, a labourer, residing in Stott Street, Hulme. Evidence was adduced that, on Tuesday evening, the deceased, along with some other men, was drinking at the Bridge Inn until nearly half past nine o'clock, and afterwards went to the Regatta beerhouse, Regent Road. He left the beerhouse about half past ten o'clock, being then very much intoxicated. What direction he took was unknown ; but a boatman named **Isaac Taylor**, whilst in his boat alongside the New Quay, where the towing path is very high, heard a noise as of someone moaning, about half past eleven o'clock. He could see nothing, and the sound ceased. At one o'clock, he heard a scuffling noise on the bank, and on looking towards the spot he saw a man falling down the bank into the water. He called one of his boatmen, and they immediately dragged the place ; in a few moments, they brought up the lifeless body of the deceased. It was supposed that he was attempting to walk along the path, and being much intoxicated, accidentally fell into the water ; and a verdict to that effect was returned.

**160 July 9 1853**

**Rochdale**

**INQUEST** On Tuesday evening last, an inquest took place at the Navigation Inn, Drake Street, Rochdale, before Mr Dearden, coroner, on the body of **William Moss**, boatman, who was killed on the previous day at the canal wharf, Rochdale. It appeared from the evidence that Mr Grandidge, timber dealer, Rochdale, had a large quantity of oak trees brought out of Yorkshire, and while the men were engaged in unloading the vessel that had conveyed them, the chain of the crane broke, and the tree that was being lifted from the vessel fell, by which the captain, **William Sharp**, was knocked down ; the foreman at the wharf, John Hand, had one of his hands much injured ; a

boatman named **George Donkin** was precipitated from the top portion of the tree, where he was standing for the purpose of balancing it, into a boat on the canal, and was very severely injured by the fall ; and the deceased, William Moss, was struck by the rebounding of the tree, and his head coming between it and the frame of the crane, he was dreadfully injured. He was attended by Messrs Butterworth, Lumb and Crompton, surgeons, but he was too much injured to render medical skill effectual for his restoration. He died about six o'clock the same evening, and the accident had occurred at noon. Before the accident occurred, Donkins expressed an opinion that the chain was not sufficiently strong to bear the weight of the trees, but Mr Hand, who has been in the service of the Rochdale Canal Company twenty six years, calculated that as it was an (3/8?) inch chain, it was capable of bearing the weight of three tons, and he had previously asked Mr Grandidge respecting the probable weight of the trees, and he thought that the heaviest would be about a ton and a half, and he (Mr Hand) consequently was not at all apprehensive of danger from the breaking of the chain. He had been instructed by Mr Halstead, on behalf of the company, not to allow the risk of accident by the employment of chains of insufficient strength. There had not a chain been broken during the last twelve months previous to the one which broke on Monday, and no fatal accident of the kind had ever occurred at the canal company's wharf. The men were employed in lifting the last tree from the boat when the accident occurred, and there had been heavier trees raised that morning by the same chain. It appeared that the trees had been placed in the vessel with a thick and thin end foremost alternately, for the convenience of carriage, and in placing them on the wharf, it was necessary to place the thick ends nearest to the canal ; therefore, one half of the trees had to be turned half round while suspended on the crane, and it was supposed that it might be the twisting of the chain which had occasioned the breakage. If the vessel had been removed from the place, the tree would have fallen into the canal, and no serious accident would have occurred. Deceased was a single man aged 28 years. Both he and Donkins resided at Oil Mill, near Barnsley, Yorkshire. After the conclusion of the evidence, the jury were left to themselves, and in a short time they agreed to a verdict of "Accidental death". Mr Halstead, who had been present during the hearing of evidence, stated that the canal company would pay the expenses resulting from medical attendance.

### **161 August 24 1853**

**THE CONDEMNED CRIMINAL PEDDER** The wretched man, **Richard Pedder**, who has been convicted at the Lancaster assizes of the wilful murder of his wife and sentenced to death, has been attended since his conviction, night and day, by watchmen, but his demeanour has been of the most quiet character, and marked by apparent indifference to his impending fate. The Rev J Rowley, chaplain of the castle, is most assiduous in his attentions to the criminal. Pedder is said to have been a man of violent temper, and when under the influence of intoxication particularly, to have been almost the terror of the neighbourhood. The unfortunate woman with whose death he was charged was also addicted to the same habit, and from this circumstance, and a feeling of jealousy, the prisoner and his wife lived on very bad terms. Pedder is a boatman by occupation, and some years ago was in the habit of visiting Lancaster Quay in a flat bottomed vessel. It is not yet known when the execution will take place, but unless a reprieve arrives – and there is no expectation that any clemency will be recommended – the unhappy man will have to suffer the last penalty of the law within a fortnight, that period generally being allowed to elapse after the departure of the judge.  
*Lancaster Guardian*

### **162 August 31 1853**

**EXECUTION OF RICHARD PEDDER FOR THE MURDER OF HIS WIFE** About six o'clock on the evening of the 18<sup>th</sup> of April, **Richard Pedder**, a man about 50 years of age, formerly employed as a boatman on the Preston and Lancaster Canal, entered the Shovels Inn at Hambleton (the village where he resided) and coolly announced to the assembled company, "I have killed our Bet", alluding to his wife. Scarcely crediting the startling statement, two of the men present proceeded to Pedder's house for the purpose of satisfying themselves upon the matter ; and there, in the garden at the back of the premises, they discovered the lifeless body of the unfortunate woman, lying in a

pool of blood, her head and face being mutilated with gunshot wounds. Meanwhile, Pedder returned home, where he performed various strange vagaries, throwing himself on the ground by the side of the corpse, weeping and making other demonstrations of grief, and finally attempting to terminate his own existence by shooting himself. In a short time, however, a policeman arrived, and the murderer was conveyed to Stalmine police station. On the way thither, he stated that he shot his wife from the kitchen window, adding, "I am a good shot ; I aimed at the killing place, and that was her head". This statement he repeated several times, but without assigning any reason for the deed of blood. The prisoner was arraigned at the late assizes at Lancaster, and after a vain attempt on the part of his counsel to convince the court that the death of the deceased was the result of accident and not premeditated violence, he was found guilty of wilful murder ; the verdict, however, being accompanied with a somewhat vague recommendation to mercy, conveyed by the jury through their foreman. Sentence of death was of course pronounced upon the convicted murderer. The recommendation of the jury was followed up by a meeting convened at the house of Mr J C Slatterthwaite, Castle Park, Lancaster "to take into consideration the steps to be adopted to procure the reprieve of the wretched man, Pedder, from the extreme penalty of the law". A petition was drawn up on his behalf, and with 530 signatures appended (headed by the Vicar and Mayor of Lancaster) was presented to the Home Secretary by Mr Wright, the prison philanthropist. On Thursday an unfavourable answer was received from the Secretary of State, who intimated that he saw no ground for his interference with the course of justice. The execution was accordingly fixed to take place at noon on Saturday, and that dread functionary, Calcraft, arrived in Lancaster on Friday night. We understand that the culprit observed a decorous demeanour since his condemnation. From the time of his entering the gaol, he seemed to appreciate the awful position in which he was placed, and read with attention, and apparently with reflection, the different books placed in his hands by the zealous chaplain, the Rev J Rowley. We have been informed that he lately attributed his wife's death to an accident, stating that he was unaware of the gun, which was the instrument of the fatality, being loaded. There having been no execution at Lancaster for eighteen years (the last sufferer being John Orrell, who was strangled on Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup> 1835), the event was anticipated with intense interest by those who have a morbid taste for such painful exhibitions, as was manifested by the immense importation of strangers into Lancaster. The crowd thronged the Castle parade and the adjacent churchyard, which from its elevation commanded a complete view of the gallows, and there, front places were greatly in request. Mr Wright, this benevolent gentleman, a second Howard, spent many hours in the condemned cell, and states that of the twenty prisoners he had attended under sentence of death, none have afforded him so much satisfaction, in a religious point of view, as Pedder, who was patient, prayerful, and resigned to his fate, and evidently deeply thankful for the instruction and spiritual consolation afforded to him. The convict frequently expressed a hope that his sad end might be a warning to others. He said that if he had a voice which could be heard east, west, north and south, he would declaim against the vice of drunkenness. During several nights, he was very restless, declaring that he could not sleep, for "his sins lay like mountains upon him". He could remember, he said, every sin he had committed since he was seven years of age. During last night, however, he slept calmly for a few hours. About eight o'clock, he partook of a little breakfast, and at nine had an interview with his brother, William, who is a labourer in Fleetwood. The convict, addressing his brother, said something to this effect - "I hope that what thou will see today will be a check to thee, and that thou will attend the house of God". The interview was one of a very affecting character. At half past eleven, the culprit received the sacrament along with Mr Wright. To the latest moment of his life, Pedder persisted in his statement that he did not shoot his wife designedly, but that it was done accidentally. At twelve o'clock, the church bell tolled the criminal's death knell. The door leading to the scaffold opened, the culprit stepped forward with a firm and steady step and took his place under the fatal beam, breathing an aspiration, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul". Calm and collected, though his countenance bore traces of recent weeping, he respectfully made obeisance to the assembled crowd, with a movement of his left arm to the extent the straps which bound him allowed. The executioner approached, adjusted the noose, and drew a white cap over his face. The





deficiency of 202. There were none missing either from the prosecutor's yard, or from that of Messrs Bellhouse, where they also stored deals. John Lister, employed under the Bridgewater Trust to collect river dues, stated that on Wednesday morning last he saw the prisoner Birtles and another man on a boat in the river, and he told them he wanted 2d per ton for river dues, and the other man (not in custody) paid him for twelve tons. The boat was about 800 yards from the wharf of the Harrington Carrying Company. John Harney, in the furniture business, stated that about a fortnight ago, he met Henry Ault in Salford, and whilst having a glass of ale together and talking about the dimensions of timber, Ault told him he had been in Liverpool the day previous, and had bought 300 deals, and witness having said that Ault was more lucky than himself, Ault said that he would let him have 30 of them at very little beyond what he had bought them at. After inquiring several times if they had arrived, he went, on the previous Wednesday morning, down Liverpool Road, and saw a boat with deals in it. He asked the boatman if they were for Henry Ault, to which he replied that they were. Witness said, "I am glad of that, for he has promised me thirty of them. Birtles and Peacock were on the boat. The deals for witness were sent to a sawmill in Jackson's Row, to be sawn up for him. He was to pay 4 3/4d per foot for them. The deal produced in court was one of them. Charles Shaw, a porter, stated that Henry Ault engaged him at 1s 6d per hour to lead thirty deals to the saw mill in Jackson's Row. Inspector Partlington stated that he got 12 deals and 48 planks from the saw mill, and found 181 deals in the yard belonging to Henry Ault in Salford. When he told Ault that the deals were stolen property, he said he had bought them of Peacock. He found that Harney had also purchased some deals. Inspector Maybury stated that as some of the deals were yet missing, he must apply for a remand. Mr Roberts, on behalf of Peacock, and Mr Bent jun for Birtles, applied for and obtained bail for their clients. The case was remanded to Monday next, when Ault was ordered to attend on that day. Yesterday, Henry Ault was placed in the dock. Mr Robinson stated that the prisoner had been before the court on suspicion of receiving a large quantity of stolen deals. His word was taken that he would appear again on Monday next, but the police, from what had since transpired, had thought it prudent to take him into custody. He then called John Shorrocks, foreman to the Harrington Carrying Company, who stated that on Thursday week he missed a number of three inch spruce deals from the wharf. William Cowan, bookkeeper to Messrs Hay, McNish and Co, stated that he had seen another lot of deals at the town's yard, and that they were the property of his employers. Inspector Maybury said that on Saturday last he told Ault that 160 deals were recovered, but that 272 were taken from the boat ; did he choose to give any account of the remainder? Ault replied that he knew nothing of any others. On further inquiry, however, he had ascertained that 80 deals had been sold to Mr Worsley in Quay Street, from whom 72 had been recovered. On mentioning this fact to Ault on Thursday afternoon, he told the officer they were part of the same cargo. Mr Worsley jun stated that his father purchased 80 deals from the prisoner on the 28<sup>th</sup> ult ; 72 had been given up to the inspector, and 8 had been worked up. Mr Robinson applied that the prisoner might be remanded to Monday, and brought up on that day with the other two prisoners. This was acceded to and he was admitted to bail on finding two sureties in £50 each.

## **166    October 19 1853**

**STREET ROBBERY** At the City Police Court on Monday, John Lord alias John Matthews was placed before the magistrates, charged by **Jonathan Wadsworth**, a boatman, with robbing him of his money. The prosecutor stated that on Saturday night last, after he met with the prisoner in Ancoats Lane, who told him that he was badly off and asked for assistance, he gave him a glass of ale, something to eat, a pair of clogs and sixpence, and then left him, having first told him that if he was short of a night's lodging, he would allow him to sleep on his boat. The prosecutor went towards the wharf where his boat was, but when in Store Street, the prisoner came behind him, pushed him down, and robbed him of what money he had, 14s 0d. The prisoner, in his defence, stated that he saw three men attack the prosecutor, and that it was they who robbed him. He was committed to the assizes for trial.

**167 December 14 1853****Bolton**

STEALING A DONKEY At the County Sessions Room on Monday, an old man named Wm Prescott was charged with stealing an ass, the property of **Thomas Lee**, a boatman of Aspull. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of last month, the animal was missing, and it had only been found the day previous. The prisoner had sold it once, and got it back again, and he had then given it to a person named Heyes in lieu of one he had stolen from him on a former occasion. He was committed for trial.

**168 February 15 1854**

A NEW POET AMONGST THE WORKERS Gerald **Massey** is one of the real horny-handed, who have met poverty face to face, yet feared not, but mentally and morally triumphed over a daily crowd of difficulties. That he is a poet, we have the best evidence in a small volume just issued from the press, in which will be found not only an extraordinary flow of language for a self educated man struggling with harsh circumstances, but a fine imagination, a brilliant fancy, and a stern, honest outspokenness against the injuries under which his class have suffered and are still suffering. Occasionally, we are startled by the bitterness which he denounces; but again, turning over the pages, we come to sentiments the purest, couched in language the most gracious, expressive of sympathy with, and faith in, all that is good, and true, and beautiful.

Oh, many and many a day before we met,  
I knew some spirit walkt the world alone,  
Awaiting the Beloved from afar;  
And I was the anointed chosen one  
Of all the world to crown her queenly brows  
With the imperial crown of human love  
And light its glory in her happy eyes.  
I saw not with mine eyes so full of tears,  
But heard Faith's low sweet singing in the night,  
And, groping thro' the darkness, toucht God's hand.  
I knew my sunshine somewhere warm'd the world,  
Tho' I (trod?) darkling in a perilous way;  
And I should reach it in His own good time  
Who sendeth sun, and dew, and love for all:  
My heart might toil on blindly, but, like earth,  
It kept sure footing through the thickest gloom.  
Earth, with her thousand voices, talkt of thee:-  
Sweet winds, and whispering leaves, and piping birds;  
The trickling sunlight, and the flashing dews;  
Eve's crimson air and light of twinkling gold;  
Spring's kindled greenery, and her breath of balm;  
The happy hum and stir of summer woods,  
And the light dropping of the silver rain.  
Thine eyes oped with their rainy lights, and laughters,  
In April's tearful heaven of tender blue,  
With all the changeful beauty melting thro' them,  
And Dawn and Sunset ended in thy face.  
And standing as in God's own presence chamber,  
When silence lay like sleep upon the world.  
And it seemed rich to die, alone with Night,  
Like Moses 'neath the kisses of God's lips!  
The stars have trembled through the holy hush,  
And smiled down tenderly, and rend to me  
The love hid for me in a budding breast,  
Like incense folded in a young flower's heart,

Strong as a sea swell came the wave of wings,  
Strange trouble trembled thro' my inner depths  
And answering wings have sprung within my soul ;  
And from the dumb waste places of the dark,  
A voice has breathed, "She comes", and ebb'd again ;  
While all my life stood listening for thy coming.  
Oh, I have guessed thy presence out of sight  
And felt it in the beating of my heart,  
When all was dark within, sweet thoughts would come,  
As starry guests come golden down the gloom,  
And thro' Night's lattice, smile a rare delight ;  
While, lifted for the dear and distant Dawn,  
The face of all things wore a happy light,  
Like those dream smiles which are the speech of Sleep.  
Then Love lived on, and strengthen'd with the days,  
Lit by its own true light within my heart,  
Like a live diamond burning in the dark.



JOHN & CHARLES WATKINS. PHOT.

*Photo : Gerald Massey, with thanks to David Shaw, whose biography of Gerald Massey is available online at [gerald-massey.org.uk](http://gerald-massey.org.uk).*

Nor are the following less talented, taken from a poem upon “The Chivalry of Labour”.

Come let us worship Beauty where the budding Spring doth flower,  
And lush green leaves and grasses flush out sweeter every hour;  
Or Summer's tide of splendour floods the lap o' the world once more  
With riches like the sea that surges jewels on its shore.  
Come feel her ripening influence when Morning feasts our eyes -  
Thro' open gates of glory – with a glimpse of Paradise :  
Or queenly Night sits crowned, smiling down the purple gloom.  
And Stars, like Heaven's fruitage, melt i' the glory of their bloom  
Come let us worship Beauty with the knightly faith of old,  
O chivalry of labour toiling for the age of gold!

Come from the den of darkness, and the city's soil of sin.  
Put on your radiant manhood, and the angel's blessing win ;  
When wealthier sunlight comes from heaven, like welcome smiles of God,  
And earth's blind yearnings leap to life in flowers from out the sod.  
Come worship Beauty in the forest temple, dim and hush,  
Where stands Magnificence dreaming ; and God burneth in the bush ;  
Or where the old hills worship with their silence for a psalm,  
Or ocean's weary heart doth keep the sabbath of its calm.  
Come, let us worship Beauty with the knightly faith of old,  
O chivalry of labour toiling for the age of gold.

And these lines are written by one who gives the following insight of his early life and associations :-

He was born in May 1828 and is, therefore, barely twenty three years of age. He first saw the light in a little stone hut near Tring, in Herts, one of those miserable abodes in which so many of our happy peasantry – their country's pride – are condemned to live and die. One shilling a week was the rent of this hovel, the roof of which was so low that a man could not stand upright in it. Massey's father was, and still is, a canal boatman, earning the wage of ten shillings a week. Like most other peasants in this highly favoured Christian country, he has had no opportunities of education, and never could write his own name. But Gerald Massey was blessed in his mother, from whom he derived a finely organised brain and a susceptible temperament. Though quite illiterate like her husband, she had a fine, free spirit – it's broken now! - a tender yet courageous heart, and a pride of honest poverty which she never ceased to cherish. But she needed all her strength and courage to bear up under the privations of her lot. Sometimes the husband fell out of work ; and there was no bread in the cupboard, except what was purchased by the labour of the elder children, some of whom were early sent to work in the neighbouring silk mill. Disease, too, often fell upon the family, cooped up in that unwholesome hovel ; indeed, the wonder is, not that our peasantry should be diseased, and grow old and haggard before their time, but that they should exist at all in such lazar houses and cesspools. None of the children in this poor family were educated, in the common acceptance of the term. Several of them were sent for a short time to a penny school, where the teacher and the taught were about on a par ; but so soon as they were of age to work, the children were sent to the silk mill. The poor cannot afford to keep their children at school, if they are of an age to work and earn money.

Here is the first intimation that he had within him of the “fire divine” :-

Now I begin to think that the crown of all desire, and the sum of all existence, was to read and get knowledge. Read ; read : read : I used to read at all possible times, and in all possible places ; up in bed till two or three in the morning, nothing daunted by once setting the bed on fire. Greatly



indebted was I also to the bookstalls, where I have read a great deal, often folding a leaf in a book, and returning the next day to continue the subject : but sometimes the book was gone, and then great was my grief! When out of a situation, I have often gone without a meal to purchase a book. Until I fell in love, and began to rhyme as a matter of consequence, I never had the least predilection for poetry. In fact, I always eschewed it ; if I ever met with any, I instantly skipped it over and passed on, as one does with the description of scenery &c in a novel. I always loved the birds and flowers, the woods and the stars ; I felt delight in being alone in a summer wood, with song, like a spirit, in the trees, and the golden sunbursts glinting through the verdurous roof : and was conscious of a mysterious creeping of the blood, and tingling of the nerves, when standing alone in the starry midnight, as in God's own presence chamber. But until I began to rhyme, I cared nothing about written poetry. The first verses I ever made were upon "Hope", when I was utterly hopeless ; and after I began, I never ceased for about four years, at the end of which time I rushed into print.

**169 February 18 1854**

**Ashton**

**SERIOUS ASSAULT** At the petty sessions, on Wednesday, **John Gallagher** was charged with assaulting **John Jones**, a boatman. It appeared that, on the 7<sup>th</sup> instant, complainant was engaged delivering a boat load of coal at Mossley, and agreed with prisoner to assist. When the work was done, he was offered 9d, being his share of the allowance, which he refused, and complainant was at considerable trouble to induce him to take it. Prisoner, however, refused, and then afterwards met complainant, who again offered the money, which was refused by the prisoner, who then threw a large stone at complainant, which struck him on the head, inflicting a serious wound. Prisoner did not deny this, but declared that complainant refused to give him the 9d. A witness was, however, called, and proved the complainant's statement. The bench, therefore, fined the prisoner 20s and costs, and in default to be committed for one month.

**170 February 22 1854**

**VIOLENT STORM AND LOSS OF LIFE AT LIVERPOOL** Throughout Friday night, and during the greater part of Saturday, Liverpool and its suburbs were visited by a violent hurricane from N and NW, which has proved very disastrous to the shipping in the river and in the channel, and caused a serious loss of life. At intervals during the gale there were heavy falls of rain and hail. The Egremont Ferry steamers ceased running during the whole of Saturday, and the other ferry steamers only plied occasionally, and at times it was dangerous to land on either side of the water. The most serious disaster we have to record happened about noon on Saturday, by which eleven lives were lost. The steam tug *President*, with the Liverpool life boat in tow, and the steam tug *Victoria*, with the Steam Tug Company's life boat in tow, were dispatched to a distressed vessel – the *Cherokee*. It is usual on such occasions for the crew of the life boat to remain in their own boat whilst being towed out, and they did so in this instance. All went well until a bank called the "Flats" was reached, when the life boat was struck by a heavy sea, capsized, and all on board, with the exception of one man, were drowned. In consequence of the heavy sea running, it was utterly impossible to save them. Among those who perished was **Captain William Roberts** of the steam tug *Albert*, who volunteered to command the lifeboat ; he has left a wife and four children. **Henry Archer**, the boatman saved, was in a very exhausted state when got on board the steam tug. The poor fellows who lost their lives were all, with the exception of Captain Roberts, river boatmen, and their families, numbering between twenty and thirty children, have been left without the means of subsistence through the disastrous occurrence, which makes the case extremely deserving of the sympathy of the benevolent. Whilst on the Hoyle Bank, the Hoylake lifeboat succeeded in taking off a part of the crew of the *Cherokee*, and the others were taken off during the afternoon. The *Cherokee* drifted over the bank at high water, and went ashore at Dove Point, where she remains, full of water.

## 171 March 14 1854

THE LATE EXPLOSION AT THE INCE HALL COLLIERY The adjourned inquest, held by Mr C E Driffield, county coroner, on the 89 persons killed in the explosion of the Arley pit of the Ince Hall Colliery, near Wigan, on Saturday afternoon, was resumed at the Navigation Inn, Ince, on Thursday last, when the following evidence was adduced :-

Thomas Graham : I was foreman of the district at the far end of the main north level. I left the mine at half past one ; the air was very good then. That morning, I fired one "shot" at the lower level, and two on the top level. There was no gas, except just a little at the back of cuttings, which would be removed in an instant by the blast of air caused when the shot was fired. I had 12 men and drawers to overlook in that part of the mine, the north workings beyond the No 2 jig. I always fired my shots with touch paper and with a fusee. I had been in No 2 slant that day ; the air there was very good, and I never saw a bit of gas there that day. There was only one man there, Robert Blackledge, and he was allowed to fire his own shot. I had been and bratticed his place up that day ; he was an experienced man, I thought, and Dobison was of the same opinion. Dobison knew that he was allowed to fire his own shot. All the lamps of the men were locked, but I had the key, and could light any of their lamps in their own places for them, if I took care to find that there was no gas ; but if there was any gas there, I should take the lamp out of the place to light it, or else it would blow us both up together. I had lighted a lamp in one of the men's places that morning. I never lighted a fusee with a naked light, but with touchpaper – not often with wire, because the wire is bad to carry. The places, when they were fresh cut down, would make a little gas ; but a quarter of the air we had there would have been enough to clear it. The bratticing was kept up within two or three yards of the face of the coal (the new cut part of the coal, at the far end of the workings). I never fired a shot in the levels, without having the brattice set up within three yards of the end, and within four yards of the up brow (uphill) workings. The men complained if the bratticing was too close up, in the up brow workings, that the dust was slying in their eyes. The height of the seam of coal in that place was about four feet, and about eighteen inches of space was generally left behind the bratticing ; the air was forced to go up into the workings, by a stout partition of tarred cloth, across the level passage below. I think there would be no danger in one of these places remaining half an hour without bratticing ; I think it would take all night for the gas to foul one of these up brow places, if it were left without a brattice ; but a level place would foul much sooner. I never saw the bratticing down in one of the levels ; I saw it down a week or two ago in one of the up brow places, and there was no gas ; it might have fallen down half an hour before. I have been fireman some time ; I was there before the last explosion ; and I have worked a couple of years, off and on, in those north workings. When I say there was a little gas in the fresh cuttings, I mean in the places where a man had just cut into the coal, a hole three or four feet long, and perhaps six inches or so in width ; there, if you put your arm with the lamp far into such a hole, you would find a little gas at the farther end of it ; but I never saw even this in the up brow workings. No man in my beat was allowed to fire his own shots except Blackledge, and he was employed in cutting air courses. I think there were six or seven colliers getting coal that morning in the places to the north of the No 2 jig which were under my care ; and I had seen all those places that morning, and they had good air and no gas. Bromiley, the former fireman, had been reduced from fireman to be assistant fireman, because he had let one of the men fire his own shot, and I succeeded him as fireman, There was no difference, as to danger, between the working that Blackledge did and the work the others did ; but I understood that Dobison allowed him to fire the shots for himself. The air which passed through those places north of No 2 jig had passed previously through a "down brow" (which he pointed out on the map); and there were several men working there; I do not know where the air passed afterwards.

Mr Dickinson, the government inspector, referred to the rules about the construction of the "crossings" or partitions made across the principal passages, to stop the current of air and divert it, and force it to go up into the workings. The rule provided that the foundation of such crossings should be made upon the solid rock, below the coal; but witness said he did not know whether they had been so constructed or not; the book of rules stated that, for want of such a foundation of the

crossing partition, many hundreds of lives had been lost in coalmines, through the passage of choke damp there. With reference to Blackledge, Mr Darlington (general manager of the colliery) stated that he, being an experienced and competent man, and employed only in making air courses through a part of the mine where there were no new workings, and where the coal had not been worked since the last explosion, was allowed by Dobison, the underlooker, with his (Mr Darlington's) consent to fire his own blasting shots.

Robert Blackledge was the next witness : I worked up the No 2 slant, and had been up there for some weeks doing day wage work in timbering for some time, and "meddling", but I had been working in the coal for a week before the explosion. I had been in the habit of blasting for myself; I have had to look after the furnaceman, to see he was keeping a good fire. Another of the day wage men, Robert Wain, working in the metal, was allowed also to fire his own shots. I have had the privilege allowed me, if the fireman was not there, of firing one or two shots, while I was working in the coal; Mr Dobison gave me leave to do so. I had been above, five or ten minutes before the explosion occurred. I had fired one shot for myself that day, and there was no gas to be seen then; there was plenty of good air in that place. I never used touch paper to fire a blast; I carried a wire in my cap, which did as well. I never carried a key to my lamp; but when I was a day wage man, working in the air roads, my lamp was not always locked. When I worked in the "metal" I used to blow up the walling and the roof; it never gave off any gas; I never heard of gas coming from any "swag" of the roof, and I never saw such a thing. I have seen some breakdowns of the roof, and never saw any gas at all; it is a strongish "metal" roof, not of rock. I was fireman for a month or two; I might have had the situation if I had chosen. In answer to questions from Mr Mayhew, attorney for the manager, witness said that, on one occasion, he remembered a fall of the roof 50 or 60 yards long, and four or five yards wide; but he did not see that it gave off any gas; that was four or five months ago, and happened in the new slant, in a place which he pointed out upon the map. Some mines made gas in the roof, and then, when there was a fall of the roof, the gas would be set at liberty; but other mines were different. Witness had never seen any extensive fall of roof in the mine except the one he had spoken of. Witness did not believe there was anything in the northern workings beyond where he was working towards the far end, that could cause the explosion; the air there was return air, but it kept good, and there was no gas in those places when he left them. In general, witness thought, the mine had been so well managed by the underlooker, that there was no one who could mend Dobison's work. There were about ten places beyond where witness was. In answer to Mr Wynn, government inspector, witness said he did not think the Arley mine roof gave off as much gas as some others did. If the roof was ? or not well propped, an explosion would bring it down. Witness was asked some questions by Mr Swallow, agent for operative miners in the district, but nothing important was elicited. He said he did think it was as safe to work in the return air as in the first air, and he never felt it stifling, although it was warm; but knowing what he does now, he should not think it safe to fire a shot in the return air.

The underlooker, Dobison, was asked, then, whether he remembered having ever seen the hand lamp which the boy, the son of Bromley, said he had used in the pit. He said that he had once seen the boy with the lamp, but not lighted, and asked him where he got it; and that the boy answered, he used it to come to his work and to go home. Dobison had not recollected this before. Mr Darlington said the lamp ought not to have been allowed to be carried into the pit as a matter of system, and Dobison had no authority to allow it there; but if it were used by the boy in that place where he worked, it would not affect the safety of the mine, because there were uncovered gaslights in that place.

The boy, Amos Bromley, was recalled, and repeated his statement that he had used that common hand lamp, because the lampman had told him, when he asked for a safety lamp, that Dobison said he did not want one. Dobison denied this.

John Ockleshaw, whose duty was to supply the men and boys with safety lamps before they went below, stated that he had given this boy a safety lamp, or the boy had brought one with him, every day he worked in the pit, except one day, when he had left his lamp top at home.

The boy, however, adhered to his statement that on four days, at least, he had been refused a safety

lamp; and once he told Dobison, the underlooker, who said he must go to "John", the lampman, and get one.

The Coroner did not think it necessary to make any further inquiry about this lamp, and left it to the jury to say which of the witnesses they would believe.

**Thomas Barlow** : I worked in the north workings until Wednesday the 15<sup>th</sup> of February. I left, then, because there was firedamp in my place, and I made a complaint of it to a man named Joseph Rigby, who worked in the next place to me. It was a place about eight yards up from the opening below. Rigby told Brown, the fireman, who came up to me, and went on shamefully; I told him there was gas, and he never examined it himself, but told me I knew nothing about gas, and that I should leave, and should have a summons; but he went and fetched Mr Dobison to the place. The gas was all gone then. Mr Dobison discharged me; he said I must get my tubs filled out and go, but I went away directly. It was about half past nine in the morning when I found the gas there. I came to work rather late that morning, at six o'clock; there was a mark on the coal then, to show that the fireman had been there. I have worked as a collier, I dare say, five years altogether; but I have also been a boatman, and in service, and have worked in a tunnel; I don't consider myself a very experienced collier. I was one of the hands they got in this pit at the time the colliers were on strike; I was what they called a knobstick, but I knew enough of the work. I had never seen gas in a place before, in that mine, but I had seen gas before. It was gas like mixed with black sulphur, and made the flame rise two inches and a half in my lamp, and I smelt the gas. It was three days before the explosion. Mr Darlington said this was not correct; the case of Barlow was reported to him six days before, and he had told Dobison to call Barlow before him on the Saturday, and on the Monday. Mr Darlington himself then gave the following evidence :-

Mr James Darlington : I live at Ince, and am the general manager in charge of the whole of these works, and have been so for the last four years and a half. The works commenced in 1818. I was not present at the time of the explosion. I had left the works about ten minutes before, and I was back about twenty minutes afterwards. I put on the overlooker's coat, and went down immediately and, with the exception of half an hour, was engaged there from that time to Sunday night, when 86 of the bodies had been found. No time was lost. So soon as I got into the pit, I found that it had been ignited for some distance in the north workings. The coal had been ignited by the flame of the explosion. The aircourses were got in a tolerable state again after the extinction of the fires and the erection of two crossings, so as to allow us to explore any district of the mine. On the north and north west side were all the dead who were got out. The north west workings are ventilated by a separate process from the north workings; and all who died in the north west, at higher level, died from suffocation or choke-damp; those who were burnt were all in the southernmost part of the drifts of the No 1 slant, on the north side of the mine. I have since then been through all the workings several times. The site of the explosion has been rightly fixed by the other witnesses. In one of the subsequent inspections I discovered the body of Brown, the fireman, lying near the spot where the explosion is supposed to have originated ; therefore, I think the explosion is to be attributed to the ignition of the gas by his firing the fusee of Pilkington's blasting shot. We have no proof that there was gas in the place at the time he fired it ; the fusee would, no doubt, proceed to burn as soon as he lighted it. [A piece of the fusee was produced and exhibited, and it was stated that, if this were lighted at a blaze, it would probably burn with a blaze, but if lighted with a hot wire it would not] Mr Darlington said a piece of this, about 2 1/2 feet long, was used in blasting. Brown's body was found about twenty yards from the "shot" which proved that the explosion did not occur at the very moment of firing it, or he would have been killed on the spot. The body of Pilkington was found nearer to the "shot". I had the utmost confidence in Brown as a fireman ; I had him from the cannel pit after the last explosion, for I considered him the best man we had in the neighbourhood; the other firemen here came from the north of England. About ten days before this last explosion, the underlooker of the cannel pits applied to have him again, but I refused, knowing the carefulness of the man's character. I have no reason to think differently of him now. The quantity of gas in this case does not seem to have been very large, not extending over more than two or three drifts at the most; but it was highly charged, and in a very explosive state. I cannot

conceive it had come from very far along the aircourse, because it was in so very explosive a state ; but that it had been liberated suddenly, at some point to the north of where the explosion took place, because the air was coming from the north. I think it must have come from very near also, because it had not been seen when shots were fired within 150 yards of that place. Not many days before, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, I inspected the whole of the workings myself, and I am satisfied that no accumulation of gas had taken place. I went into all of the men's places north of No 1 jig, and afterwards went into the air course of No 1 slant on that day, a fortnight before the explosion, and I then met with no gas whatever, and heard of none ; in fact, the men were rather annoyed that I stopped them to examine for gas ; they thought it unnecessary. I have never seen gas in the pit in my life during its ordinary working – not so much as would show on the lamp, except in the derangement after an explosion. I was aware that the new workings there would give off a little gas, but the ventilation was so ample that the gas would be carried off, and would be diluted, so that it could not be seen in the lamp. I have daily reports from the underlooker ; it is his duty to report gas, if he finds it, but I never had any gas reported there by Dobison : only, if the bratticing were deranged, there would be gas. Dobison reported to me the same day Barlow's statement about gas being in his place ; he mentioned it to me verbally, and also made a written report of it, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of the month. [The written report was produced ; it stated that Brown, the fireman, and Dobison, the underlooker, examined the place and found no gas, and that Barlow's statement about there being an inch and a half of gas in the lamp was proved not to be true, because that would cause an explosion] This was nine days before the explosion of the mine. Dobison told me he believed Barlow knew nothing about gas and only wanted to make mischief among the men, and that he had discharged him. I told him it was desirable not to discharge the men in that way, and that he should desire Barlow to come to me and explain it. This I desired several times, but Barlow could not be found. I conceive about 10,000 feet of air per minute is quite sufficient to ventilate the whole of the places of that north district whilst the men were not there, and to keep them free from gas. We had at that time 30,000 feet of air in the north side of the mine, and there were three air splits acting on that part where the explosion happened. The most probable cause of the explosion apparent to me is a sudden outburst of gas from some unusual quarter, and I think it must have been from the fall of the roof in Woodcock's place. If that fall of the roof had occurred a few minutes before, and liberated from a fissure in the roof a quantity of gas which had been there at high pressure, having bugged out the roof previously, I think a quantity of gas would be liberated, sufficient to cause an explosion ; but I am perfectly satisfied that the ordinary production of gas from the faces of the cuttings would in no way account for the explosion. I have examined the roof of Woodcock's place ; it is ragged in the usual way, and I believe the roof of the Arley mine is particularly subject to gas, much more than the coal itself ; but I find no clear fissure or crack that can be actually shown in the roof now. The roof of this mine generally, in every district I have visited, is liable to these fissures and cavities containing gas ; I have heard that some of them could be fired seven or eight years after the roof was made. I am satisfied that the gas has been liberated from some adjacent quarter, and this is the most apparent ; we have not found any other fall of the roof. I conceive that the gas had existed above the roof, and so soon as the props were taken away the gas caused the roof to bag out, and when the roof fell, for such a great extent, the gas, having been compressed, was liberated very suddenly. It may be connected with the hard “post” or rock, which exists about 15 feet above the coal, and which is known to contain immense quantities of gas. I attribute the explosion to some extraordinary discharge of gas from some place adjacent, and this fall of the roof is the most apparent cause of it. I have had no report of any deficiency or interruption of the air. The quantity of air has been increased, almost weekly, since the explosion last year, by doubling the air courses, by decreasing the friction, splitting the air in one or two places, and increased furnace power. The quantity of air was 40,000 cubic feet at the time of the explosion last year, and on the Thursday before the last explosion, it was reported to me, in Dobison's returns, at 77,000 feet. I believe those reports to be correct ; they tally to my own observations from time to time, and I have satisfied myself that 10,000 feet of air is amply sufficient to ventilate those lower north workings – I do not say while the men were there – and they had 80,000 feet. We had a proof of the sufficiency of this



after the explosion, when the natural ventilation of the mine alone kept it clear and safe ; but in case of a sudden outburst of gas, more would be requisite, and to provide against that, we continued to work with locked safety lamps, though in the ordinary state of the mine they would not be necessary; but after the last year's explosion the directors referred it to me, whether it would not be better, taking the advice of Mr Pence and Mr Foster, to prohibit naked lights. The men, previously to that explosion last year, were allowed to fire their own "shots", but that has since been discontinued ; and we have had nine firemen, instead of 4 or 5, as then, to attend to that matter, and to the bratticing, having only that work to do. Only Blankledge and Wain, as air course men, had been allowed to fire their own shots ; they are two of the most intelligent men in the pit, and we have frequently asked them to become firemen, but they would not. There had been eight or ten complaints only of neglect of duty or smoking in the pit since the explosion of last year ; two or three were taken before the magistrates, and the others fined ; one man was sent to prison for taking his lamp off ; and Bromley, the fireman, who was a very respectable man, very intelligent and careful, was reduced to assistant fireman for once allowing one of the men to fire his own shot. All the nine firemen had keys to their lamps, and the underlooker, and the district underlookers ; but I believe no one else. The men at the jigs had open lights, and I do not know that they had keys ; the hookers-on at the bottom of the shaft might have keys. [Several safety lamps with locks of different construction were shown to the jury, and the keys tried] Mr Darlington added that since the last explosion, every man who entered the pit had a copy of the rules read over to him, not to the men in a body, as formerly was the practice, and he was required to sign the rules, and to keep a ticket specifying that the rules had been read to him. After the strike, a great number of the men having got into the pit without signing these rules, he (Mr Darlington), when he discovered it, had the work of the pit stopped for several days, and obliged the men to hear and sign the rules which they had been unwilling to do, because they did not choose to be prohibited from smoking tobacco. There were also double the number of door-tenders now than there were at the time of the last year's explosion, being a boy to each door, instead of one to each pair of doors, as formerly. They were from ten to fourteen years of age, and remained in the pit nine or ten hours a day ; they had to sit at the door all day, and in some cases they had to sit in the dark, but they had lamps if they were not near the light at the jigger ; and men were constantly passing and repassing. Their duty was to open the doors ; the doors were so hung as to shut of themselves. Another improvement was that the "cuts across" for air were made, generally every 30 yards, whereas previously to the explosion of last year, Jones, who was then underlooker, used sometimes to make the intervals of 40 yards. The cage in the up-cast shaft had also been reduced in size that it might not impede the ventilation. The system of working had not been changed, in some respects ; the drifts had not indeed been worked at the far extremities of the levels on the north side, because property intervened which did not belong to the company, and they could not proceed beyond their own boundary ; in the neighbourhood of Wigan, there were very great difficulties in working such a mine, because there were such a number of small properties, which had to be treated for separately. Mr Dickinson asked some questions of the witness with respect to the plan of the mine, with a view to elicit an acknowledgement that the ventilation of the mine would have been greatly simplified if, instead of working so many drafts within one or two hundred yards of the shaft, the coal had been got at the farther extremities of the levels first. Mr Darlington, however, said that there was no danger or disadvantage in working the drifts near to the shaft. The most approved way was to split the air as much as possible ; but this mine could not be worked on the pillar system, because it was under the town except on the north side. Mr Dickinson was about to refer him to his (Mr Arlington's) evidence before a parliamentary committee, in which he had expressed an opinion in favour of working out the coal at the extremity of the levels ; but the Coroner did not think that matter (which was discussed at the inquest last year) belonged properly to this inquiry. Mr Dickinson observed that it appeared everything had been done in the way of management, and every precaution had been taken which was suggested at the inquest last year except altering the system of management which, so long as it continued to be the same, would be likely to result in similar calamitous accidents. Several other questions and remarks passed between Mr Darlington and the inspector,

but mostly of a technical character, or else requiring constant reference to the map, so that we could not easily make them intelligible to our readers. In one particular, Mr Dickinson pressed him very urgently – as to the present state of the mass of roof that has fallen in Woodcock's place ; Mr Dickinson's opinion being that this stuff, and also the part of the roof above whence it fell, are so clear of dust, compared with the adjoining parts of the mine, as to prove that the fall of the roof occurred after the shock of the explosion, and not before it. The witness, however, did not admit this argument because, he said, a blast of wind had evidently passed through that part of the mine, and swept away the dust as with a broom. He said, in reply to Mr Wynn, the other government inspector, that it was from the statement of Dobison he understood that the roof of Woodcock's place had been “swagged” or bagged, as from an accumulation of gas from a fissure above ; and, when the props were removed, he supposed, this roof fell in. He explained, with more precision, the position of the air courses and the quantity of air conveyed by them ; he did not believe it possible that, in the ordinary working of the mine, the return current of air could be foul with gas. One of the instructions in his book of rules was that “the return air should be prevented, so far as practicable, from passing through the men's workings” ; in this instance, the return air did pass through the drifts where the explosion occurred but, under the circumstances, nothing else could be done ; and cuttings had been made for that purpose, since the explosion of last year. The directors were going now to take the best measures that could be advised, at an extraordinary expense and sacrifice, and they had, for that purpose, called in several eminent engineers, to consult with them upon what else should be done to ensure the safety of the mine from such deplorable events in future.

Mr George Elliott of Houghton Hall in the county of Durham, colliery manager for the Marquis of Londonderry, said that he inspected the mine on Monday and Tuesday last, and the place where the most violent effects of fire were visible was in the south workings of the No 1 slant ; but he had great discussion in his own mind whether the fire was not from the furnace, since flame was not very readily communicated from a fusee. He thought there was no conclusive evidence that the fire did not take place from the furnace ; but he might venture to say that, so far as his observation had gone, the fire would appear, from the examination of the action of the blast, to have radiated from the place where Pilkington had been working. It was his opinion that the fire had taken place either in one or the other of these situations, and he could not say in which. He had not heard the evidence in this case ; but when he was down in the pit, he learned where the men were found to be burnt, and where they were choked. I do not think (said he) that the question as to where the gas originated is at all affected by the question of where the fire began ; because the distance from the furnace to Woodcock's drift is not so great, but that the gas might go on to the furnace without being sufficiently mixed with air, if it was a large quantity of gas, although that would also depend on what quantity of fresh air you had ; and a stream of gas might extend all the way to the furnace. If that stream was there, Brown was in it, and might have perceived it with his lamp ; but if there was a current of wind, which he felt, perhaps he might not try for the gas with his lamp. It is my opinion that the gas was accumulated in those No 1 slant workings, or not far off ; but, unfortunately, it is difficult to point out what place it came from. Unless the ventilation of the mine were generally very good, I could account for the accident by supposing the gas from other parts of the mine had accumulated there, the return air being foul, this being, as it were, the last reservoir of the return air before it goes to the up-east shaft to escape. The next supposition is that there was a large fall of roof, and it is by no means uncommon for a great quantity of gas to come from such a fall. It is a very extensive fall, fifty or sixty yards, and supposing the gas to have been much pent up and condensed there, it is possible that it would be discharged in such a quantity as to be quite sufficient to cause the explosion ; I have known gas so pent up to rush out with a roar like a steam engine. But it is my opinion that the part which has fallen is not blackened and dusty like the rest of the pit, but then the fall does not all come down at once, and there might be frequent other droppings from the jagged roof after the explosion ; so that I should not attach so much importance to that argument as Mr Dickinson does. The fall seems to have taken about four feet out of the roof, and the stuff lies on the ground, rather spread, about five feet high. There are often two explosions, as it were, in

these cases – a sort of return blast. In the experience we have in my part of the works, it not infrequently happens that a fall of coal or metal does cause a great deal of gas to be evolved ; and the roof in this case was shattered, not unlike what I have seen in such instances. The mystery is that, now, there is no gas to be seen ; so that, though the bratticing is down, I would venture to take any one of the jury down the pit, and go everywhere with a naked light. That is the most melancholy part of it, that we cannot find where the gas is. The inquest was then adjourned to Monday morning next.

**172 March 22 1854**

**Nisi Prius Court**

OGDEN V BOOTHMAN AND ANOTHER The defendants, Messrs Boothman and Babbington, are extensive limeburners and owners of boats upon the Ashton Canal. The plaintiff was a carrier upon that and neighbouring canals, and on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August, one of his boats was loaded with vitriol at the works of Mr Becker at Fox Denton, to be carried to Macclesfield. It was in charge of two men, and it reached Manchester on the same night, and was transferred from the Rochdale to the Ashton Canal. That was on Saturday night. On the Monday morning, the boat was started to go to Macclesfield, but had to pass through the Ancoats middle and top locks. The plaintiff's boatmen had to stop at the office of Mr Hall, close to the middle lock, to pay the canal dues and obtain a permit. The boat was named the *Lavinia* ; and **Owen**, the man who was in charge of it, left it for a while to go to the office, desiring a man named **Bridge** to take his place at the helm. When the boat approached the Holt Town Bridge, the defendant's boat came after them, the driver apparently urging his horse as fast as he could, to overtake the plaintiff's boat. The Beswick aqueduct, where the canal crosses the railway, was subject to a certain rule of the canal, that whenever any other boat had reached the aqueduct, no other boat should attempt to pass it or to go into the Beswick lock before it. The plaintiff's boat had, however, just got to the lower end of the lock, when the boat belonging to defendants, which was of light burthen and high out of the water, ran into the plaintiff's boat, the *Lavinia*, and sank her. "The lovely young Lavinia once had friends", and those who were interested in her now brought this action to obtain redress of the insult and injury she had sustained. Several witnesses were called to prove the facts ; and on the other side, Mr Serjeant Wilkins, with whom was Mr Cleasby, contended that Owen, the plaintiff's servant, gave the captain of the defendant's boat permission to pass on first with his empty boat, the *Earl Spencer*, and that the collision had occurred through the inefficiency of Bridge, the man left in charge of plaintiff's boat. - Bridge, though an experienced boatman, being in a weak and sickly state of health, and unfit for such a duty. It was alleged that the driver of the horses of the plaintiff's boat, one **Spenser**, would not let defendant's boat come up with him, but laughed at it, and urged on his horse ; in fact, there was a regular race between the two boats, but the defendants declared that their boat was actually the first to reach the lock. There was a different account, however, given by some witnesses, who declared that the plaintiff's boat struck against one of the ironbound guards of the lock, and was thrown back against the defendant's boat, and thus heeled over and sank, and broke her back by resting across a heap of gravel. On the other side, again, it was contended that if the plaintiff's servants had given permission to the *Earl Spencer* to pass them because Owen had been delayed at the office, that was only to pass them at the "Quaker Pool", and not in the aqueduct, where no boat was allowed to pass another. Verdict for the plaintiff for £35 damages, according to arrangement ; the sum first claimed had been £100.

**173 April 15 1854**

**Nisi Prius Court**

A COLLISION CASE *Rodriguez v Melhuish and others* – The plaintiff was **Emanuel Rodriguez**, a river boatman, and owner of an anchor boat called the *John*. The defendants were Messrs Melhuish and others, owners of the ship *Matilda Wattenbach*, and **William Jones**, pilot on board the vessel at the time the occurrence took place which gave rise to the action. The larboard bow of the boat was stove in by a collision and, in consequence of her being pinned down and prevented from sheering also by the vessel's starboard chain and anchor, she careered over and sunk, the crew being thrown into the water, and one of them unfortunately drowned. The boat was well adapted

for the service in which she was engaged, and had been raised since the collision, repaired, and since employed in raising anchors much heavier than that of the *Matilda Wattenbach*. The action was brought to recover the damage done to the boat, and the loss for some time of her services. The jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff. The amount of damages was agreed to be settled out of court.

**174 April 19 1854**

**Police Courts**

**STEALING PIG IRON** Three boatmen named **Britton, Jepson** and **Broughton** were charged at the City Police Court with stealing three pigs of iron from the wharf of the Bridgewater trustees. Jepson was seen to hand the iron to Britton, who deposited it under the bed in the cabin of his boat. All the prisoners were seen together in the cabin, and on Saturday Inspector Neaves was informed, and there found the stolen property. The prisoners made no defence, and were committed to the sessions for trial.

**175 July 5 1854**

**Police Courts**

**EXTENSIVE ROBBERIES OF TIMBER** At the City Police Court today, two serious charges were preferred against men for stealing deals from timber yards. In one case, upwards of 200, and in another 800 were missing, only a small portion of which have been recovered. There were placed in the dock Thomas Whittaker, Thomas Fairhurst, **Aaron Collier** and **William Foster**, charged with being concerned in stealing deals, the property of Mr Charles Hunt, from his yard in Water Street. Mr Francis Robinson was for the prosecution ; and Mr Bent defended Collier and Foster, and Whittaker and Fairhurst had the assistance of Mr Rigge. Mr Robinson stated that the prisoners Collier and Foster, two boatmen, were charged with stealing a large quantity of deals belonging to Mr Charles Hunt, timber merchant, and the other two prisoners, Fairhurst and Whittaker, were charged with receiving the same knowing them to be stolen ; witnesses would be called to show that the two boatmen took another person's vessel to the prosecutor's wharf, and there placed deals in it, and took them away. These, and other stolen deals, would also be traced to the possession of Fairhurst and Whittaker. Mr Charles Hunt stated that he had timber in Manchester and Salford, but the yard from which he had lost timber was in Water Street, Manchester. From information which had been furnished to him, he gave directions for his yard to be watched on the night of Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June. On the following morning, he was shown thirty deals in a boat, which bore his mark "H", which he knew to be his. He had found 87 deals which he could identify; fourteen came from John and Thomas Whittaker's (Thomas Whittaker, the prisoner) in Back Queen Street ; thirteen came from Mr Southern's saw mill ; thirty six from a yard in Hardman Street. John Griffiths, book-keeper and yardman to Mr Hunt, stated that he had taken stock, and found that 816 deals were missing. The stock had previously been taken on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November. George Barrow deposed that he received direction to watch the yard on the night of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June. About half past twelve o'clock on the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup>, he saw a man in the yard, who was in his shirt sleeves ; it was too dark to enable him to identify him. The man went along the edge of the water to the pier head. Witness followed him, but lost sight of him ; he must have either gone in a boat or taken to the water. Witness then fetched Inspector Maybury, and on their return, they could hear the voices of two or more persons : and the noise of sliding timber from the pier head into a boat, and also the stowing of it in the boat. They saw a policeman and a private watchman approach on the opposite side of the river, who called out, "Boat, ahoy!" but no answer was returned. Witness kept the boat in sight ; it was taken to the Hulme Hall arches. He went to it, and found 31 deals ; one of them was in court ; they were the property of his master, Mr Hunt. **John Lawrence**, the captain and owner of a boat, stated that when at Manchester he kept his boat fastened near the yard of Mr McDougall, who frequently employed him. On the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June, the prisoner Foster, whom he knew, asked him if he slept on board the boat. Witness told him he did not, as he lived near. During the night his boat was taken away. On the following morning, he saw Foster in Water Street. Witness said to him, "Somebody has made a job for me ; my boat has been taken away, and I have found it at Hulme Arches with about 30 deals in it".

Foster said he knew nothing about it. During the conversation, Collier came up. Collier had been to witness's house on Thursday night, and told him that he had best keep an eye on his boat as a party were going to take it away to fetch deals from Mr Hunt's yard, and carry them to Hulme Arches, where there would be a cart at five o'clock in the morning. He had heard this whispered by the persons, and that they could sell them at 2 1/2d per foot. When witness found the deals in the boat, Collier recommended him to go and tell Mr Hunt's foreman. On Friday night witness went, with a policeman, to Hulme Hall Arches at half past ten o'clock, and there saw a cart, which had on its board, "George Wilson, porter and coal dealer, Hulme". Witness went to the Town Hall on Saturday evening, and gave information of what had occurred. On his return, Foster met him, and asked him what he had been at the Town Hall for. Witness told him, amongst other things, that he had informed them that he (Foster) had asked whether or not he (witness) slept on his boat at nights. Foster replied that he was a d---d fool for saying that. George Wilson stated that he was a carter. Five or six weeks ago, Foster applied to him to cart some wood. It was six o'clock in the morning, and they went together to the Hulme Hall railway arches. They there took into the cart a load of deals, and conveyed them to Back Queen Street. In a few days afterwards, he was engaged to take a load to Hardman Street. After that, he was told by Foster to leave his cart, about ten o'clock at night, at the arches, as there were some deals coming from Liverpool. In the morning he went to the place, and carried another load to Hardman Street. When he had unloaded at a yard in Hardman Street, he was engaged to reload the deals and take them to Mr Grimes's coalyard – a place to which he afterwards took Inspector Maybury. On one of those occasions, the prisoner Collier assisted Foster. On the night of June 23<sup>rd</sup>, by Foster's direction, he took his cart to the Arches, but next morning he fetched it away, there then being no deals (the police having intercepted them). Walter Watson, keeper of the coalyard of Mr Grimes in Hardman Street, deposed that he was in the yard when a load of deals was brought to the yard. The driver said he was sent by Lawrence Whittaker. (Witness refused to admit them until Whittaker came himself). He came, and leave being given, the deals were placed in the yard, and afterwards given up to Inspector Maybury. Inspector Maybury said that he had some conversation with Lawrence Whittaker, and in consequence of what he heard, he went to the place of the prisoner, Thomas Whittaker, general dealer, Back Queen Street, and told him that he had found a quantity of deals in his possession which were identified by Mr Hunt as his property – what account had he to give of them? He replied that he and his brother John had bought them from Mr Bennett's, in Dale Street. Having caused Lawrence Whittaker and Thomas Whittaker to attend at the Town Hall, he sent for the prisoner Fairhurst, and told him that Lawrence Whittaker had bought from him some deals, stolen from Mr Hunt. Fairhurst said he had sold Lawrence Whittaker no deals, but Lawrence Whittaker said he had. Witness went to a place in Hardman Street kept by Lawrence Whittaker, and there found thirty six deals, which he said he had purchased from Fairhurst. These deals belonged to Mr Hunt. They had been marked with "H" in red raddle ; but this was covered with chalk. On washing off the chalk, however, the red mark was visible. The prisoner Fairhurst was brother-in-law to John and Thomas Whittaker ; John Whittaker had absconded. Inspector Neaves stated that, on Monday week, on going to the place of John and Thomas Whittaker, he saw the prisoner Thomas Whittaker there, and took him to the Town Hall. He afterwards took possession of 40 deals. On Monday afternoon, he took possession of a cart in the street containing deals cut into planks. From information given by the carter, he went to Mr Ellis's saw mill, where he found 11 more sawn up. He found another lot on the premises of Lawrence Whittaker ; they were cut into boards, but some of them bore Mr Hunt's mark, covered with chalk. Witness had been unable to find John Whittaker. Mr Hunt, on being recalled, admitted that he had no means of proving that the deals found had not been sold, although it was not at all likely. Mr Bent urged, on behalf of Collier, that he went to the boatman and warned him the night before the robbery on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, which he submitted was proof that he was not one of the thieves. Mr Riggs, on behalf of Thomas Whittaker, urged that he could not be convicted of receiving, since it was not proved that the deals with which he had dealt were really stolen. Some had been stolen on the night of the 23<sup>rd</sup> ; but, then, these had been intercepted by the police, and had never been into the possession of Whittaker. Against Fairhurst there was nothing beyond suspicion. Mr Maude said it



was clear that the prisoner Foster had on several occasions hired a cart to take away the deals, and there could be no doubt that on several occasions the timber yard had been robbed ; but there was no distinct proof of it, consequently the prisoners Collier and Whittaker could not be convicted as receivers. Collier, Fairhurst and Whittaker were then discharged (Whittaker being detained for another robbery) ; but Foster was committed to take his trial at the sessions.

**ROBBERY OF 800 DEALS** Thomas Whittaker, the prisoner in the last case, was again placed in the dock, and along with him, Thomas Welsh, a carter in the employ of Mr Thomas Penk, builder, Clarence Street, Cheetham. Welsh was charged with stealing, and Whittaker with receiving, a large number of deals, the property of Mr Penk. George Penk, book-keeper to Mr Penk, stated that on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June, he went to Mr Southern's saw mill, in Jackson's Row, and there saw 84 deals, which he believed to be the property of his master ; after that, he went to the premises of John and Thomas Whittaker in Back Queen Street, and there saw 22 deals ; afterwards to Lawrence Whittaker's place, and found five more. The deals came from Mr Anthony Roberts at Liverpool, and not one of them had been sold. It was some time since stock was taken until now, and there were 826 deals missing. The deals found were bought on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May last, and bore the initials "T P M". James Whittaker (brother of the prisoner Thomas Whittaker) deposed that he knew Welsh, and had seen him take seven or eight loads of deals to the place of Thomas Whittaker. The last time was about a fortnight ago. The cart had Mr Penk's name upon it, and there were 30 or 40 deals in each load. Witness's brother paid Welsh 3 1/2d per foot for them. Mr Southern deposed that he had purchased several lots of timber from the prisoner Whittaker. The last lot was bought a little more than a fortnight ago, for which he paid 4 1/2d per superficial square foot. That was rather a low figure. A policeman came to the place with Mr Penk, and said the deals must not be disturbed, and they were afterwards taken away. Constable Handford stated that he went to the saw mill of the last witness on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, and found 84 deals, which George Penk said belonged to his master. He apprehended Welsh, and told him he was charged with stealing deals from his master and selling them to John and Thomas Whittaker, Back Queen Street. He denied that he had done so. On searching him, witness found 22 sovereigns stitched up in a belt which he wore around him. Mr Penk's cashier stated that Welsh had been four years in his master's employment, and had no authority to sell timber, or to receive any money. The timber cost 5d per foot, and the carriage in addition. Inspector Maybury deposed that he told the prisoner Whittaker that a number of deals which he had sold had been found at Mr Southern's, which belonged to Mr Penk, and asked what account he had to give of them. He replied that he and his brother John were partners, and bought them at Bennett's in Dale Street. He also said that he bought some from a carter, and on Welsh being shown to him at the Town Hall, he said he was the carter of whom he bought them. Witness then charged Welsh with stealing the deals and selling them to Whittaker, but he denied the offence. Inspector Neaves stated that he found twenty two of Mr Penk's deals at Thomas Whittaker's, and five more he found in Lawrence Whittaker's possession. Mr F Robinson, who appeared for the prosecution, said he conceived that in this case the evidence was conclusive against both of the prisoners. Mr Roberts, on behalf of Welsh, suggested that the deals he took to Whittaker's might have belonged to some other person, and not to Mr Penk, as it was known carters sometimes used their master's carts and horses for a private benefit which, though improper, was not necessarily a felony. For Whittaker, Mr Rigg contended that a fair price was paid by him to Welsh for the deals, and that his client was ignorant of their being stolen. Mr Maude said there was evidence that Welsh had taken away the timber, since shown to be stolen, in his master's cart, he must therefore go to his trial. Whittaker had been purchasing the same timber at a low price, without invoice, and on his premises was to form a large mass of property, stolen from different timber yards in the town. He must go before a jury. Application was made for bail, but time was taken to consider the matter.

**176 July 19 1854**

#### **The Police Courts**

**ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN** **Mark Derbyshire**, the captain of a canal boat, was committed to the sessions at the City Court, on proof of having stolen a chain, value £1, from the wharf of Mr Matthew Lee. A private watchman at the wharf of the Bridgewater trustees stated that at three

o'clock the same morning, he saw the prisoner come from his boat and go upon the wharf with a bag, into which he placed the chain, and was carrying it aboard when stopped.

**177 August 9 1854**

**Dukinfield**

WASTING THE WATER OF THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL COMPANY At the Stalybridge Petty Sessions on Monday last, **John Jepson** of Dukinfield was charged, upon the information of Mr Hutchinson, inspector of the London and North Western Railway and Canal Company, with having, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July last, at Staley, neglected to shut the lower gates of the lock of the canal before he opened the upper gate, and thereby wasting the water of the canal. Mr Freeman, solicitor, Huddersfield, said the charge was laid under the Huddersfield Canal Act, and the penalty for the offence was 40s. He would leave the penalty in the hands of the magistrates, but at this time of year it was very important to the company that the water should not be wasted and, therefore, it was requisite that an example should be made, and he thought they would not feel justified in mitigating the penalty in this instance. He then called the lock-keeper, **Heaton**, who proved that the defendant had committed the offence, and that the paddles of the lower end of the lock were open until closed by the strength of water which was running away. The magistrates' clerk, on looking at the act, said there was no mitigation clause in it ; the words were "shall forfeit 40s". Mr Freeman explained that he had wished the magistrates to understand, that as the fine was the same for all offences of this kind, great or small, that if the magistrates considered there was any ground to recommend that the full fine should not be inflicted then, if they stated to him their wish on the subject, he would lay it before the company for their consideration. The magistrates said they did not consider the offence had been committed wilfully to waste the water, and they therefore recommended that the smallest penalty should be accepted by the company ; but, as they had no discretion in the matter, the offence having been fully proved, they inflicted a fine of 40s and costs, or 14 days imprisonment. **John Teal**, boatman for Johnson and Sons of Wakefield, was also fined 40s and costs or 14 days imprisonment for a similar offence, but without any recommendation as to mitigation, he not appearing, and having told the lock-keeper, Heaton, that he both had and would do it.

**178 August 12 1854**

**Rochdale**

DRUNKENNESS On Wednesday last, at the petty sessions, Charles Dearden, collier, Smallbridge, was charged with having been drunk, and was ordered to find sureties for good behaviour, or be imprisoned 21 days. **Christopher Berry**, boatman, Hollingworth, was charged with a similar offence, and was fined 6s and costs.

**179 October 18 1854**

**The Police Courts**

EXCUSE FOR A ROBBERY Three ragged boatmen, named **Cook, Knowles** and **Wyatt**, were placed before the city magistrates, charged with having, by a cunning expedient, got possession of the silver snuff box belonging to an elderly Jew named Levi Levy. The prosecutor could barely make his charge intelligible in English. He said : I come up street, Saturday night. Dis man (Cook) says to me, "Have you lost a knife?" and showed it to me. I said, "No". He said, "It is a nice knife : have you a pinch of snuff?" I helt my box to him, and he ran away with it. I said to de otter man, "If you will fetch de box, I will give you two chilling"; and he fetch it, and say it vos a joke. The prisoners were told that it was not the practice of honest men to run off with a silver snuff box, at night, belonging to a stranger. It seemed that the thief had soon found out that the matter was too perilous, and therefore returned the box. Had this been done less promptly, they would have been committed for trial. They were cautioned and discharged.

**180 November 17 1854**

ALARMING BURGLARY NEAR LIVERPOOL – APPREHENSION OF THE GANG About a month ago, at an early hour in the morning, four desperadoes with blackened faces, and armed with guns and bludgeons, broke into the premises of Mrs Charles, a widow, occupying a solitary house at Halsall, near Ormskirk. Two of them forced their way into the bedroom where the old lady and

another woman, a relative, were sleeping, and with many abusive threats demanded her money. She said she had no money except a few shillings, which were in her dress pocket. With many frightful oaths they said they knew better, that they were aware of the existence of a safe in the house containing £2000 ; and that if she did not show them where it was, they would shoot her. With remarkable presence of mind, she replied that formerly there was a safe in the house, but that it had been removed to another place, giving them an indefinite direction. They then demanded her keys, with which they opened and ransacked all the cupboards and drawers they found in the house, overlooking, fortunately, a second bunch of keys in a little corner cupboard, one of which was, in fact, the key to the safe. They succeeded in finding nothing but two guns, a few shillings in silver, and a verge watch. Information was given to the police, and a few days ago it was ascertained that the watch had been pledged at Mr Shepherd's in Lime Street. On Thursday, a little girl went to the shop to redeem the watch, stating that she had been sent by a man who was waiting at Chadwick's public house in Argyle Street until she returned. She was detained, and intelligence forwarded to the police. Detective officers Murphy and Carlisle went to the public house, where they succeeded in apprehending a flatman, who was subsequently identified as one of the burglars ; and they afterwards apprehended the remaining three at Runcorn. They are all flatmen, and their names are **George Clarke, Simon Barlow, Charles Tomlinson and John Leech**. Barlow has been identified as the man who presented the gun at Mrs Charles, and Tomlinson as the man who held the candle. A gun which, it has been ascertained, was one of those stolen, was found at the house of one of the prisoners. Barlow and Tomlinson have been twice convicted at Knutsford, and Leech has been several times in custody. The prisoners would be taken a second time before the magistrates at Ormskirk for examination on Tuesday (yesterday)

*Liverpool Albion*

#### **181 November 18 1854**

**MURDER AT WOLVERHAMPTON** A boatman named **Robert Leverett**, accompanied by two other boatmen and his wife, were walking up Canal Street shortly before eleven on Saturday night last, with the intention of purchasing some articles of food in the town. Opposite the door of the Admiral Vernon public house, a number of blackguard Irishmen were collected, and these fellows hailed the passing Englishmen with epithets of a most disgusting character, and insulted Leverett's wife in revolting terms. The woman asked her husband to turn back, as she was afraid of these scoundrels, to which the poor fellow replied, "It's as bad to go backwards as forwards, as there are lots of Irish behind us". Immediately after this observation, his wife was knocked down, her head striking forcibly against a pump which is erected on the spot. Leverett was also felled to the ground. Leverett's two "butties", for such his companions were, managed to escape, and communicated to a couple of policemen in Stamford Street the particulars of the savage and unprovoked assault that had just occurred. What followed is not so clear as could be wished ; but we give the version related by Leverett's wife. She says that she was assisted from the ground by a woman and that, accompanied by her husband, she ran towards the Black Horse public house, where they met two policemen, who inquired if they were the parties who had been ill used by the Irish. They replied in the affirmative, and the officers requested them to walk down Canal Street, promising to be on the watch if anyone dared to interfere with them. Unfortunately, they complied with this desire and, on approaching the spot where they had before been assaulted, saw the same four Irishmen again collected, one of whom exclaimed, "Here the ---- come again", and directly ran towards them. The woman was first knocked down, and while on the ground, saw her husband fall heavily on the earth, and while in that prostrate position, receive several severe kicks from the fellows around him. She observed one inhuman wretch hold his head, while another kicked him thereon. She got up, ran to her husband, and screamed, "Murder". A cry of "Police" was raised, and the brutes ran away towards the canal bridge. The injured man was lifted from the ground and placed in a chair, but it was evident to those around that he had ceased to live. He was conveyed to a brewhouse attached to the Admiral Vernon, and Mr Dehane, surgeon, was sent for. That gentleman promptly attended, and pronounced the unfortunate man dead. The deceased man is a native of Oxford, twenty five years of age, and had only been married two months. -

### **182 December 2 1854**

**MURDER AT WOLVERHAMPTON** On Friday the 24<sup>th</sup>, a coroner's inquest, held at Wolverhampton, terminated in a verdict of "Wilful murder" against three Irishmen, named Samuel Moran, a bricklayer ; Anthony Devaney, a collier ; and David Flynn, a slater. The crime of which they are accused was committed upon the night of Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> ult. The victim was a boatman named **Robert Leverett**, in whose company they had been drinking. They attempted, but in vain, to provoke a quarrel with another boatman. Afterwards, they saw the deceased and his wife in Canal Street when, after using insulting language to them, they set upon him (Leverett) with one accord, knocked him to the ground, and kicked him so savagely about the head and various parts of his body that he died before the arrival of a surgeon, who was sent for immediately after he was picked up senseless by some bystanders. The men did not afterwards appear in their old haunts, and in the opinion of the police, they remained concealed somewhere in the neighbourhood. On Friday evening last, printed placards appeared, offering a £150 reward by the government for the apprehension of the parties. This excited a good deal of vigilance, and one of the Irish was apprehended on Monday afternoon. David Flynn was recognised in a public house at Portobello, about two miles from the town, and private information being conveyed to Colonel Hogg, chief constable at Wolverhampton, he proceeded instantly to the place, and took him prisoner. Hopes are entertained that his accomplices will not long remain at large. *Wolverhampton Herald*

### **183 December 16 1854**

#### **South Lancashire Winter Assizes**

**DARING BURGLARY AT HALSALL** **Matthew Barlow**, 40, **Charles Tomlinson**, 31 and **George Clarke**, 38, all flatmen, were indicted for entering the house of Jane Charles on the night of the 18<sup>th</sup> October, and stealing a watch, two guns, and twenty shillings in money. The prosecutrix, a widow living in a farm house, was alarmed about eleven o'clock at night by a noise, and seeing a light in one of the rooms. Before she could give an alarm, the prisoners Barlow and Tomlinson broke into her room, one of them carrying a cart leg, and the other carrying a gun which he had procured from the room below. Their faces were blackened. Barlow broke open a box, and took out a watch which had belonged to prosecutrix's son, and some money. Barlow demanded to know where the safe was, threatening to blow her brains out if she would not tell. She had received some money the previous day for a quantity of hay sold, and she told them the safe was in a neighbour's house. While ransacking the premises, one man shouted to another below stairs, which was responded to by a cry of "All right". The prisoners were traced to a public house in Liverpool, where they had been carousing on their spoils. Barlow was known to prosecutrix, and she identified him. The prisoners were discovered through attempting to redeem the pledged watch. Both prisoners were sentenced to twenty years transportation.

### **184 April 28 1855**

#### **Deaths**

**SPEED** On the 25<sup>th</sup> inst at Preston Brook, aged 82 years, **Mr William Speed**, boatman. He had been in the late Duke of Bridgewater's employ upwards of 70 years.

### **185 May 30 1855**

#### **The Police Courts**

**ASSAULTING THE POLICE** **James Costella**, a boatman living in Hope Street, Oldfield Road, was charged with this offence. On Sunday night, policeman McFarlane went to suppress a disturbance, when he was immediately attacked, knocked down, kicked and his clothes torn, by a gang of disorderly persons. Another officer arrived, and the prisoner Costella, one of the most active of the assailants, was captured. He was fined 20s and costs, or be imprisoned for one month.

### **186 September 8 1855**

**INQUEST** On Tuesday, an inquest was held by Mr Herford, city coroner, on the body of a boatman, name unknown, a native of Wrexham, aged about 45, who was found drowned in the Rochdale Canal near Knott Mill on Tuesday morning.







**192 March 1 1856**

**FATAL ACCIDENT** On Tuesday afternoon, a fatal accident occurred in the Welcome Inn, Fleet Street, to **Mrs Haddock**, 50 years of age, the wife of a boatman at Northwich. It appeared that the deceased came on a visit to Manchester about a week ago, and put up at the Welcome Inn. She was somewhat intemperate in her habits, and had been drinking a good deal for some days. On Tuesday morning, she went out and had some spirits elsewhere, although when she returned, about one o'clock, it could not be said that she was altogether tipsy. She went upstairs shortly afterwards for a pair of clogs, and unfortunately fell from the top to the very bottom. She never spoke, but died almost immediately. An inquest was held on the body the same afternoon by Mr Herford, city coroner, and the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**193 March 8 1856**

**Bury**

**BURGLARY** On Friday se'nnight, at the petty sessions, **Robert Hamer**, boatman, was charged with breaking into the house of James Hamer, handloom weaver, Cookey Moor, Ainsworth, during Sunday night the 17<sup>th</sup> February. Entrance to the premises had been effected by taking out a back window, and the footmarks corresponded with the shoes worn by the prisoner. He was committed for trial at the next assizes.

**194 March 8 1856**

**Stockport**

**BREACH OF CANAL BYE LAWS** At the county petty sessions on Thursday, a canal boatman named **John Bradbury** was charged with navigating a boat upon the Peak Forest Canal at Marple, after six o'clock in the evening on the 16<sup>th</sup> ult, contrary to the bye laws of the company, whereby the navigation of the canal was obstructed for upwards of three hours. The offence being proved, Mr Johnson, who attended for the company, said, if he would make an apology and promise not to offend again, the penalty would not be enforced. As the defendant, however, refused to make the required apology, he was ordered to pay the full penalty of £3 and costs ; and in default, ordered to be committed for three months.

**195 June 28 1856**

**The Police Courts**

**DARING BURGLARY** James Henderson, Robert Beaver and Ann Welsh, a woman whose face presented a shocking appearance, from the ill usage of the first named prisoner, James Henderson, with whom she had cohabited, were severally charged with being concerned in a burglary on Thursday night last at the Caledonian Arms, Bridgewater Street. Miss Jasper, the daughter of the proprietor, proved that, upon going to bed, about one o'clock on Thursday night, everything was quite safe, but about half past five o'clock on the morning of Friday, it was discovered that the house had been broken open, and £8 4s in silver and copper stolen from the bar. Some silver spoons and other articles were also missing. The two male prisoners were at the house on the previous night, and were observed by **Mrs Hall**, the wife of a boatman, in the neighbourhood early on the Friday morning. The next morning, one of them looked in at the house, and ordered a glass of ale, for which he tendered a florin in exchange, which was identified as part of the stolen money. They were thereupon given into custody, and a five shilling piece and two florins (which coins were amongst the missing money) was found upon them. They severally denied their guilt, and the woman stated that she left the prisoner on Thursday morning, in consequence of his ill treatment of her, and had not seen him since. They were all remanded until Tuesday next.

**196 August 9 1856**

**The Police Courts**

**ASSAULT BY TURN-OUT BOATMEN** **James Malin**, a boatman, was charged at the New Bailey with assaulting two men, on different boats, and preventing them prosecuting their voyage from Manchester to Liverpool. A witness stated that the hands of the boats belonging to the Merchants' Company and to Mr William Jackson, numbering thirty two, have turned out for wages, but that the captains remained in charge. The men seemed determined neither to go in the boats themselves, nor to allow other men. At four o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, two men in court, complainants, set off

with two boats, and witness also accompanied one of them. When opposite Stretford, a number of the turn-outs came running across the field. The prisoner threw stones at the man steering the first boat, until he was obliged to stop it. Witness had his head nearly struck, the stone cutting his hat. The second boat had to be run ashore, and five or six of the turn-outs attacked the man upon it, and kicked him. At this stage, the case had to be stopped, as it requires two magistrates to adjudicate in an assault, and only one was present.

**197 August 16 1856**

**The Police Courts**

**ASSAULT AND RIOT BY TURN-OUTS** At the New Bailey, **James Malin** and **Timothy Rotherham**, two boatmen, were charged with being concerned in a riot at Stretford on Tuesday, and with assaulting Thomas Picton. It appears that the prisoners were in the employment of Messrs Jackson and Son, carriers, but turned out with a number of others on a question of wages. Other men were brought in to fill their places ; and on Tuesday, as two boats, manned by strangers, and among them Picton, who is a lurryman to Messrs Jackson and Son, were passing Stretford on the canal, a body of from 20 to 30 men, and among them the prisoners, came across the fields to the bank and commenced throwing stones at the men in the boat. Picton was the only one who was seriously abused, as the rest made their escape from their assailants, and Malin was seen to take a prominent part, both in the general riot and in the particular assault on Picton. He was committed to the sessions, but his companion, against whom no evidence of actual participation in the riot was adduced, was discharged.

**198 August 23 1856**

**ALARMING ACCIDENT** An accident of a very alarming character, but happily unattended with fatal consequences, occurred in Peter Street, almost opposite the Theatre Royal. Last night about ten o'clock, a "Hansom" belonging to Mr John Greenwood was standing in Peter Street, when the horse attached to it took fright and dashed off, without fare or driver, at a furious pace down the street towards Deansgate. About the foot of Mount Street, the vehicle was brought in contact with a cab belonging to Mr J Thornton, in which a gentleman was riding, and smashed off two of its wheels, but without injuring its inmates. The horse, with its fury accelerated by this obstruction, kept on its course, and dashed across Deansgate, luckily without trampling anyone under its feet, and into Quay Street, where the Hansom was brought in contact with a lurry and smashed to pieces. The excited animal, relieved of the vehicle it had dragged so furiously and so far, but considerably exhausted, ran on to the foot of Quay Street, where it was brought to a stand by some boatmen. It is very remarkable that at night, such a crowded thoroughfare should have been traversed in such a manner without damage to life or limb. The horse itself was not much injured.

**199 September 8 1856**

**Stalybridge**

**WILFUL WASTE OF CANAL WATER** At the petty sessions on Monday, **John Barker**, a boatman, was fined 40s and costs for wilfully wasting the water of the Huddersfield Canal ; in default of payment, to be imprisoned for one month. The water had been wasted, as is too commonly done, by the boatmen going through the locks and allowing the water to run away. The magistrates had no power to mitigate the penalty, but they recommended the company to take the case into consideration.

**200 November 8 1856**

**BOATMEN SUSPECTED OF ROBBERY** At the City Police Court, **William Slater**, the captain of one of the boats of the Bridgewater Trust, was placed in the dock, with two assistants, charged with having abstracted three gallons of ale from a cask which had been brought in the boat, from Preston Brook to Manchester, for Messrs Salt and Co. Some ale was found in the cabin, but as it could not be identified, that part of the charge was abandoned, and Mr Thomasson, agent of the Trust, preferred another under the general Canal Act, accusing the prisoner of being in possession of bungs, gimblets, and a tube (of gutta percha), which could be used as a syphon. These articles were

illegal, and had been found in the cabin. Slater was fined £5 and costs ; the other men were discharged.

**201 December 20 1856**

**Bury**

FATAL ACCIDENT On Wednesday evening, about six o'clock, a boatman named **John Woodhead**, having drawn off the lock at Ringley Bridge, in the township of Pilkington, was proceeding towards his horse on the towing-path, when he accidentally fell into the canal and was drowned. The body was recovered in about a quarter of an hour. Neither his friends nor former place of residence are known.

**202 January 24 1857**

ROBBING RAILWAY COMPANIES Two boatmen, named **James Johnson** and **David Shuttleworth**, were charged with stealing, on the 21<sup>st</sup> inst, seven railway chairs and 160lb of pig iron, the property of the East Lancashire and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Companies. A plate layer named Isaac Greenhalgh proved that the iron was safe on the railway at Pendleton on Tuesday, and was gone on the following day. The prisoners were employed on a boat on Windsor Bridge, and at an early hour on Wednesday morning, they were observed to leave the boat and to proceed towards the railway. Both returned in a few minutes, carrying something which they "buried" under some ashes. In a quarter of an hour, they came with two barrows, and brought a quantity of iron from under the ashes. This they wheeled off in the barrows towards Windsor Bridge, and returned with one barrow empty, and the other containing the chairs. These were placed in the cabin of the boat. Inspector Tattersall proved that he found the chairs in the cabin covered with (????), and a marine store dealer's wife named Cavanagh, from Tontine Street, proved that the prisoners sold her some pig iron, and tried to sell the chairs. They were committed for trial at the sessions.

**203 June 27 1857**

**Oldham**

BURGLARY At the petty sessions on Saturday, **John Spencer**, a boatman employed on the Manchester and Rochdale Canal, was charged with burglariously breaking into the house of David Hindley, barber, at Hollinwood, with intent to commit felony, on the previous Wednesday night. He was committed for trial at the assizes.

**204 July 18 1857**

A FATAL FIGHT On Saturday afternoon, **Henry Ashton**, a youth 19 years of age, employed as a boatman on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, was killed by **Henry Webster**, another boatman, at Shevington near Chorley. It appears that for some time past a grievance had existed between the men, who were cousins, and on Saturday afternoon, they met at Shevington, and agreed to settle the difference by a stand up fight. In the third round, Webster struck Aston a blow in the region of the heart. Ashton fell from the effect of the blow, but rose again, and died immediately.

**205 September 26 1857**

**Stalybridge**

COMMITTAL OF BOATMEN FOR ROBBERY On Wednesday, at the Borough Court held at the Magistrates' Clerk's Office, **Thomas Hogden**, captain, **Thomas Heath**, mate, and **Thomas Hallburt**, boatman, were severally committed to Knutsford for trial, for robbing a chest of drawers which had been deposited on their boat by Mr Trelfall for conveyance to Manchester.

**206 October 31 1857**

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY ON THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY An important case has been tried at the quarter sessions at Stafford, which has occupied nearly three days in its investigation. The trial commenced on Friday morning, and the court sat on Saturday night until five minutes to twelve o'clock, when it was adjourned until Monday, three learned counsel having to address the jury on behalf of the prisoners. The property stolen was 500lb of cotton lace thread,

valued at between £200 and £300. The names of the prisoners are :- William Lane, a beerhouse keeper of Crewe, formerly an engine driver in the employ of the North Staffordshire Railway Company ; Thomas Bentley, a fireman in the company's service ; Samuel Parker, alias John Lee, greengrocer of Macclesfield ; Samuel Bloore, writing clerk, Macclesfield ; and **John Bentley**, a boatman. The prisoners were charged with stealing the cotton lace thread ; and a second count charged them with receiving it, knowing it to have been stolen. Forty five witnesses were examined for the prosecution, and the facts detailed were as follows :- On the 4<sup>th</sup> of August last, a quantity of cotton lace thread, enclosed in five boxes, was consigned by Mr George Swindells and Messrs Oliver and Son, at Bollington, to the care of the North Staffordshire Company, for conveyance to Bristol via Birmingham. The boxes were placed in a luggage van (No 3,041), the door of which fastened with a spring, and which could not be reopened except with a key normally kept in the goods office. The train, of which this van formed part, left the station at Macclesfield at fifty minutes after seven the same evening, and arrived at Stoke-upon-Trent at half past nine, where it was run into the goods station and subsequently broken up and reformed, the carriages for Birmingham via Norton Bridge being formed into a separate train. Of this reformed train, a man named Bell was the driver, and the prisoner, Thomas Bentley, the fireman ; and at the suggestion of the latter, a conditional permission was given by the foreman to take the train on to the main line ready to start for Norton Bridge. Stoke wakes and races were on, and several excursion trains crowded the rails. The luggage train did not leave until half past two o'clock in the morning. On its arrival at Bristol, the van was examined, and the boxes were missing. To connect the prisoners with the robbery, two boatmen, **James Holland** and a man named **Gould**, who have been in custody as accomplices, and who have turned approvers, together with several disinterested persons, were examined.

Counsel having addressed the jury for the prisoners, the summing up occupied the chairman nearly two hours, after which the jury acquitted John Bentley and Thomas Bentley, but returned a verdict of guilty against the other three. Parker and Bloore were sentenced to four years penal servitude each, and Lane to two years imprisonment with hard labour.

### **207    October 31 1857**

**SINGULAR FATAL ACCIDENT**    On Saturday afternoon, a boatman named **John Sanderson**, about 50 years of age, came up to the vegetable stall of a woman named Ann Hayes, at Barnsley. He commenced a conversation with her, and afterwards became very abusive, using very indecent language. Feeling insulted, she took up a turnip from the stall and threw it at him. Being apparently the worse for liquor, the blow was sufficient to completely overbalance him, when he fell, the back part of his head coming first to the ground. He was taken up insensible, and removed to the Cross Keys Inn, where medical aid was procured ; but after lingering for a couple of hours, he died, never having spoken after the occurrence. Mrs Hayes was at once apprehended.

### **208    November 14 1857**

**A FARMER DROWNED**    On Thursday last, Mr Rutter held an inquest on the body of a farmer named John Hampson, who was drowned in the canal near West Leigh on Sunday last. Deceased was tipsy at the time, and rolled off the deck of a boat into the canal. He was got out by the boatmen in whose company he was, but life appears to have then been almost extinct. The jury returned a verdict to the effect, "That the deceased had come to his death by drowning, but by what means he came into the water did not by the evidence appear."

### **209    December 5 1857**

**ATTEMPTING TO STAB A POLICEMAN**    On Wednesday at the Barnsley Court House, a boatman named **Thomas Smith** was brought before the sitting magistrates on a charge of violently assaulting and attempting to stab Police-sergeant Sykes. It appeared that on Tuesday evening, Sykes had gone in pursuit of the prisoner, who was suspected of having committed a robbery. On finding him on the Doncaster Road, the prisoner threatened that, if the officer attempted to take him

into custody, he would stab him. The officer then seized the prisoner, who made a desperate resistance, and conducted himself most violently. A struggle ensued, in which the prisoner bit and kicked the officer, and then pulled out of his pocket a clasp-knife, which he brandished, and with which he attempted to stab him, and which he would have used but for the arrival of some other parties, who interfered. The Bench convicted the prisoner in the penalty of £5 and costs, in default he would stand committed to Wakefield House of Correction for two months, with hard labour.

**210 August 14 1858**

**South Lancashire Assizes**

HOUSEBREAKING IN MANCHESTER **John Shaw**, 31, boatman, was charged with entering the house of Margaret Horton, Manchester, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June last, and stealing several articles, the property of Mrs Horton. He pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to six months hard labour.

**211 August 21 1858**

FATAL ACCIDENT On Saturday last, a shocking accident occurred to a boatman named **Herbert Holt**, at the Chesterfield and Stockwith Canal, near Wheeldon Mill. It appears that the deceased and another man were loading some ironstone, and the deceased was intending to shoot a cartload of ironstone into a boat, and put a stone under the wheels of the cart to stop it from running into the canal. The stone gave the cart a sudden jerk, and the horse wheeled round and knocked the deceased into the boat, the cart falling on him, breaking his back and seriously injuring his body, in consequence of which he died before he could be got from under the cart.

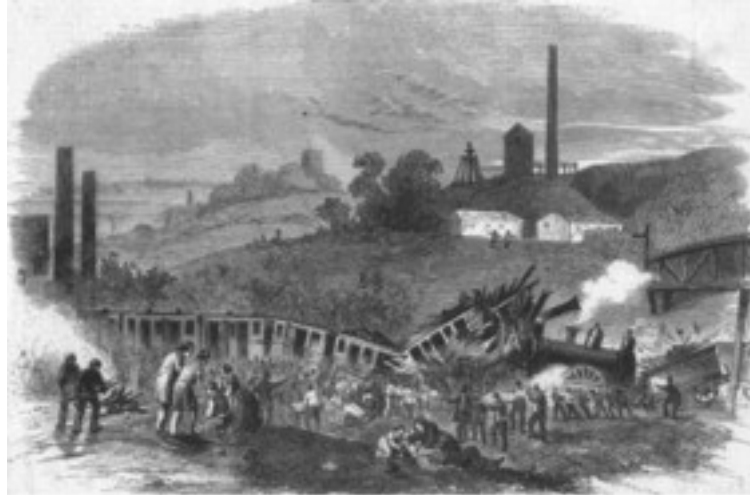
INQUEST An inquest was held at Chesterfield on Monday on the body of **Herbert Holt**, boatman, who was killed by a cartload of ironstone falling on him, whilst in a boat, on Saturday last. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**212 August 29 1858**

RAILWAY COLLISION AND TERRIBLE LOSS OF LIFE, NEAR DUDLEY The most terrible accident that has ever occurred on a railway in the Midland district took place on Monday night, on the Oxfordshire and Worcester Railway, between Round Oak and Brettel Lane Stations, a few miles beyond Dudley ; by it, 11 persons were instantaneously killed, and another died a few hours afterwards ; several more were so severely injured that their recovery is despaired of ; others are maimed for life ; and a great number were more or less injured. It appears that on Monday a special train was announced from Wolverhampton to Worcester at 9.15, calling at all stations, for the express purpose of conveying the teachers and children of the various schools to Worcester. The fare from Wolverhampton and Stourbridge, and all intermediate stations, to Worcester and back, was 1s for adults and 6d for children ; from Hagley, Churchill, Kidderminster and Worcester, it was 8d for adults and 4d for children ; and from Droitwich and Fearnhall Heath, 6d for adults and 3d for children. This extraordinary through rate of charges naturally attracted a large number of passengers, and by the time the train arrived at its destination, it had been augmented to 45 carriages, computed to contain nearly 2,000 passengers. The return train was announced to leave Worcester at 6.15 pm. Those having charge of the arrangements determined to divide the train, and instead of having one monster train propelled by two engines, to have two trains, each drawn by one engine. Accordingly, about twenty five minutes past six, the first train left Worcester station. It consisted of twenty nine carriages, closely packed with passengers, and was followed in a quarter of an hour by the second train, consisting of sixteen carriages. Each train called at all stations, and all went well with the first until its arrival at Round Oak, which took place about 8.05, where, either just before the train arrived at the station, which is situated on a steep incline, or when it was put in motion to leave the station, 12 or 13 of the last carriages became detached from the former part of this train, by the breakings of the couplings of two of the carriages, and rolled back down the incline towards Brettel Lane with ever increasing velocity. The guard, who occupied the van at the extremity of the train, applied his brake with all the force of which it was capable, but its power was insufficient to check the retrograde movement of the carriages, which soon attained a very high rate of speed. On arrival at Bug Hole, a little more than half way to Brettel Lane, they dashed into the



second excursion train, which as before stated, was dispatched from Worcester only fifteen minutes after the first, and being a lighter train, naturally gained upon it during the journey. The driver of the second train perceived the carriages running back upon his train down the incline, and had nearly succeeded in bringing his train to a stand at the time of the collision, thus considerably mitigating the severity of the crash ; but as it was, the consequences were fearful. The guard's van and the carriage next to it were split into matchwood, and the second carriage escaped little better. The guard jumped out just before the collision occurred and escaped without injury, but the effect on the passengers, crowded in the two shattered carriages, was dreadful. The scene that ensued it is impossible to describe, fragments of the crushed and broken carriages, mutilated human forms, some still in death, some writhing in their last agonies, others fearfully but not fatally hurt, shrieking in terror, were commingled in a general melee, hardly distinguishable amid the darkness and the dust occasioned by the collision.



The terrified passengers who escaped without serious injury ran hither and thither in bewilderment, and for a time none knew what to do. A few of the more self-possessed, however, speedily bestirred themselves to render all possible assistance to the unfortunate sufferers, and remove them from the wreck that bestrewed the line ; and messengers were dispatched for medical and other aid. It was soon apparent that the loss of life was lamentably great. Eleven lifeless forms were discovered amongst the rubbish, in addition to many frightfully mangled and disfigured, and as speedily as possible, the latter were conveyed on stretchers, furnished by the shivered coaches, to the various hotels in the neighbourhood, and the next duty to attend to was the removal of the dead in like manner. Many of those only slightly wounded proceeded onwards by the train, and it is probable that a complete list of the casualties resulting from this sad affair will never be obtained. The removal of the wounded was effected under the superintendence of Mr Wall, assistant to Mr Norris, the company's surgeon at Brierley Hill, who was first upon the ground, but other medical men soon arrived, and took charge of cases at the inns to which the sufferers were conveyed. Amongst them were Dr Walker, Brierley Hill, and his assistant ; Mr W E Johnson, surgeon of Dudley, and Mr Herton, his assistant ; Mr Osborne and Mr Harding of Stourbridge ; Mr Tomlinson from Mr Frere's ; Mr Evans, from Mr Giles's of Stourbridge, &c. Information of the occurrence was instantly telegraphed to Worcester, and about 9.30, Mr Sherriff, the general manager, with Mr Adcock, and Mr Carden and Mr Everett, surgeons to the company, arrived by special trains from Worcester. The two former gentlemen immediately directed their attention to the clearing of the line and preparing it for the resumption of traffic ; and the two latter visited the wounded located in the neighbourhood. There is a feature in this case which is not presented by railway accidents generally. The train to which the accident happened being a special one to a particular district, all the persons injured and, it is feared, all those killed also, resided within a limited area within which all the distressing consequences of the calamity are concentrated, instead of being distributed over the whole country, as is the case of an ordinary train carrying passengers to and from various parts. The bodies of some of the dead are fearfully mangled ; and their identification, except by their dress, will in some cases be difficult. The features of one poor woman, whose body lies, with four

others, at the Swan Inn, Moor Lane, are wholly indistinguishable, her head being crushed into a fearful mass. The legs of a man lying at the same place are fearfully crushed, and his head and face shockingly contused. This gentleman has been expensively dressed, and even in death has the air of a person who has been accustomed to move in a superior society. Most of the others appear to have belonged to the working classes. We may mention that the particular spot at which the collision occurred is a short distance beyond the junction of the Kingswinford branch of railway, in course of formation with the main line, and that the line was cleared for traffic by twelve o'clock ; but little damage being done to the permanent way. From the list appended, it will be perceived that all the casualties were sustained by persons resident at Prince's End, Coseley, Tipton, Dudley, and the vicinity of these places and, with one exception, all are adult persons. Elizabeth Hyde, a girl 10 or 12 years of age, slightly injured ; Charles Turner of Bloomfield, Tipton, suffering from injury to the chest, and scalp wound, many cuts about the head, fractured ribs on the left side, and perforation and protrusion of the left lung, recovery doubtful ; Thomas Brett of Daisy Bank, fractured shoulder, and injuries to the head and thigh, a serious but not fatal case ; Edward Jones, of Dudley Port, slight injury to left leg. These were all accommodated at the Crown. Sarah Fisher of Coseley, slight injury to chest, was staying at the Royal Exchange ; F Stokes, slight injury to leg ; William Skelding, Prince's End, injury to tongue and nose ; Eliza Jones, Prince's End, a girl, suffering from general concussion, a slight scalp wound, and contusion of knee ; Thomas Jones, father of the last named, slightly injured ; and Mary Jones, mother of Eliza and wife of Thomas Jones, sustained a fracture of the collar bone, and injuries of a very serious nature to the chest and abdomen. All of these were accommodated at the Whimsey, at Brettel Lane, where three dead lay. Lydia Cox Bloomfield, very extensive scalp wound ; Samuel Clarke, concussion of the brain and extensive injury to the knee joint, very serious case ; and Henry James Coseley, slightly injured in the back. These lay at the Cock Inn, Moor Lane, where were also three dead – two men and a woman. Joseph Webb, compound fracture of the left leg and right toe, not expected to recover ; William Kendrick, Prince's End, fracture of right thigh and left leg, and injuries to the head, dangerous case, but hope of recovery ; William Harley, tailor, Dudley, general concussion, not dangerous ; Richard Welsh, scalp wound and internal injuries of a very serious character, no hope of recovery. These were lying at the Swan Inn, Moor Lane, where there were five dead – three men and two women. Sarah Ann Whitehouse, of Prince's End, injury to the arm and leg, not of a serious character, accommodated at a house next door to the Swan Inn ; Headon Smith, Coseley, comminuting fracture of the arm, and injury to the back ; Sarah Bevan, of Coseley Street, Bilston, toe cut off, and otherwise injured ; Mrs Wycherley, sister of Miss Bevan, injury to left leg ; and Benjamin Sheldon, injury to ankles, necessitating amputation of both legs, dangerous case. These lay at Moor Lane House, kept by Mr James Nadon. In addition to the above, there were a great number of persons injured, who were conveyed to a distance by their friends, and others proceeded to Dudley by rail, and were forwarded to their homes. Mr Johnson, who arrived at Dudley station, appeared so much injured that his recovery was considered doubtful. Mr Mooney put on special trains for the accommodation of persons residing on the lines of the South Stafford and Stour Valley Railways, who were detained by the accident until too late for the ordinary trains.

The following particulars were supplied on Tuesday night by a correspondent :-

#### THE DEAD

At the Swan Inn : Edward Matthews, who had lived near the Ivy House at Coseley. Joseph Baker, Prince's End, puddler. The third dead body is not identified. Mrs Skeldon (whose brother and son are also dead) ; the head of this poor woman was frightfully crushed, and her legs were much cut ; she was also far advanced in pregnancy. She comes from Prince's End. Mrs Hildrick, with her head in a yet more mutilated state than that of Mrs Skeldon.

Moor Lane Hall beerhouse : The man Skeldon, from Prince's End, died at about eight o'clock on Tuesday morning, after his legs had been amputated – the amputation being considered by the surgeons on the spot the only means of giving the man a chance of life.

The Cock Inn : Mrs Harley, Stafford Street, Dudley, dreadfully crushed. The youth Skeldon, before referred to, his skull was forced in from the direction of the forehead.

The third man (dead), who lies by the side of these, is not yet identified.

At the house, there also lies Samuel Clarke, 18 Capon Fields, who has been so much injured that little hopes are entertained of his recovery. The Rev E C Parry, who had taken two hundred children in the train, visited him yesterday, and gave most appropriate advice to the young man, who during the previous day had carried a school banner from the works of Messrs Bagnall, ironmasters, to which works Mr Parry, who was most useful on the previous night, is attached as a works' chaplain.

Whimsey Inn : **Henry Marshall**, boatman, from Worcester, leaving wife and family. Injuries to body and legs.

Francis Mills, mill furnace man, married and a family. A cut across the head, as if from an axe.

The Crown : Richard Moore of Prince's End, aged about 30, whose heart and lungs were torn out by a splinter of one of the carriages. Decomposition in regard to this body had far advanced yesterday afternoon.

### **213 September 11 1858**

THE RECENT ACCIDENT ON THE OXFORD, WORCESTER AND WOLVERHAMPTON RAILWAY - THE ADJOURNED INQUEST On Thursday week, an inquest opened before G H Hinchcliffe Esq at the Royal Hotel, on the body of Mrs Rogers, who died on Tuesday night at Prince's End, in consequence of injuries received in this lamentable collision. Mr King alluded, and preferred a request on behalf of the company, that if it were possible the formality of a second enquiry might be dispensed with, as great inconvenience resulted from the withdrawal of so many of the company's servants from their ordinary duties as were required to attend the inquest at Brierley Hill. The coroner fully concurred in the desirability of avoiding a second enquiry of the duration of the one now in progress before Mr Phillips, and it was arranged that the inquest on Mrs Rogers should be adjourned until after the termination of the enquiry before Mr Phillips ; and that the depositions taken in that enquiry should be read over to the jury in this case, instead of all the witnesses attending personally and being re-examined. Formal evidence of the identity of the body having been adduced, the inquisition was adjourned until the first Tuesday in October. All the wounded in the neighbourhood, with one exception, are progressing favourably, and fatal consequences are not immediately apprehended in any of the cases. The sufferers who remain in the vicinity of the scene of the accident are also going on well. It is confidently expected that the whole will recover. The thirty eight patients under the care of Mr Underhill of Tipton are also going on satisfactorily. It is understood that compensation has already been paid by the company in the majority of the cases of the loss of property or personal injury.

The inquest on the bodies of thirteen of the fourteen persons killed by the collision was resumed on Tuesday, at the Bell Hotel, Brierley Hill, by Mr T M Phillips, coroner.

John Cording, the under guard of the train that separated, deposed that he lived in Worcester. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of last month, when he accompanied an excursion train from Wolverhampton to Worcester, Frederick Cook was the head guard. Heard no complaints of defective machinery or engine on that morning. Twenty nine carriages in our part of the train arrived at Worcester. We put on some extra carriages at Dudley. There were two guard's vans. I rode in the front van. At Tipton, before we put on more carriages at Dudley, four or five persons were in my van. I had them in my van because there was no room for them in the train. I am not aware that anything broke before we arrived at Brettel Lane. Some more carriages were put on at Stourbridge. About seven carriages were put on at Dudley. After repairing the broken shackle at Brettel Lane, we started, having before taken in more passengers. When Cook gave me the signal at Brettel Lane that all was ready for starting, I gave it to the engine driver, Jonas Lockwood. Another engine having been put on at Dudley, there was another driver also. His name was Thomas Benson. The shackle broke just as we were starting from Brettel Lane, about fifteen carriages from the front. One bow of the shackle was broken, and the other bow was pulled off one of the pins upon which it worked. Cook was at the point of breakage when I got down, and he replaced the broken shackle with a strong goods chain. Another breakage took place at Hagley, just after we left the station. In that case also, the shackle was

broken. We repaired that breakage by hooking on the spare shackle that was suspended near to the broken one, The assistant superintendent, Mr Charles Harris, was in the train from Dudley to Worcester. I don't know whether Mr Harris or the head guard made a report of the accident at Worcester. Before we left Worcester at night, the chains were all repaired, but one. I saw them. They were repaired by a blacksmith ; but I don't know what chains were used in coming back from Worcester. We left Worcester at 6.30. In the first portion of the train from Worcester, there were 29 or 30 carriages. I and Cook had the charge of the first portion. There was one engine at starting, but we put on a second engine at Stourbridge, to take us up the incline from that place to Dudley. Robert McGee was the driver of the engine that was put on at Stourbridge. Nothing occurred until we got to Round Oak Station. Just before we got to that station, I looked out, and saw that the train was all right. Just as the signal was given to go on again from Round Oak, the engine driver, Burke, told me that the train had divided. The breakage did not, to my knowledge, occur till the brakes were put on at the station. After Burke had told me that the train had broken and gone adrift, I looked out and saw that the lights behind had gone. I then went back to where the breakage had taken place. The number of the carriage from which the shackle broke was 114, through Bristol and Liverpool. The side chains of that carriage were not broken, but the side chains of the carriage to which it was connected were broken. I went back with some carriages and, under the direction of Mr Ivetts, brought on some of the wounded in a train of twelve carriages. The break I had coming back, Cook had in the morning. It was in good working order. I saw Cook at the place of the collision. He did not complain about any portion of the couplings, and seemed quite sober. I do not think that the guard could have stopped it on that night, because being foggy, the rails were greasy. By the Foreman : There is a rule against passengers riding in the guard's van, but we don't like to leave passengers behind. It is not usual to allow passengers to ride in those compartments of second class carriages where there are breaks.

By Mr King : The number of one of the carriages where the breakage took place was 114, but I don't know the number of the other. The shackle of number 114 was broken, but the side chains of that carriage were not broken. Of the other carriage, one of the side chains was broken ; the screw pin of the other side chain on that carriage was stripped through the nut. I saw 114 and the other carriage coupled together at the scene of the accident. After they had been coupled, I proceeded with them and others to Wolverhampton, and pointed them out to Drinkwater, the inspector of carriages there. On the day after the accident, I took No 114 to Grandmore, the inspector of carriages, and also to Brown, the platform inspector.

**Joseph Williams**, boatman of King Street, Worcester, was coming back from Worcester in the train that broke. I left Dudley in the morning. In coming back from Worcester, there were more persons in the guard's van than myself, the guard Cook, and Marshall, the deceased. There were about six. The guard said, "Jump out, lads, there will be an accident". He had been trying to stop the train with his brake ; but we did not know that we were going back till he told us. When he told us to jump, I don't know what afterwards took place. I was so frightened, I got up to the other end of the van. I don't know whether Cook jumped out. Before then, I don't know whether he used the brake. When he was using the brake, I did not perceive any alteration in the speed of the carriage. I was quite sober. I was hurt in the forehead. As far as I can recollect, I was thrown out. When I came to my senses, I was by the side of the broken carriages on the line. I have received £5 from the company as compensation for the injuries I have received.

Frederick Cook of Worcester, the guard before referred to, after being cautioned by the coroner, said that he accompanied the excursion train from Wolverhampton to Worcester on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August. Cording was my under guard, and Jonah Lockwood was the engine driver. There were twenty four carriages and two brake vans. We had eight more carriages at Dudley, and also additional passengers, with another engine. Nothing occurred till we got to Brettle Lane. There, a shackle and the two side chains broke at about fourteen carriages from the last van. I fetched four big links from the behind van, put a scrag into the wheel of one of the carriages, and made the carriages tight. The porter at the station assisted me to do the work. I don't know if Mr Hart, the station master, was there. We attached five more carriages at Stourbridge. We were just starting out of the station, as at

Brettel Lane, when a shackle and two side chains broke at about twelve carriages from the behind van. I there hooked on the second shackle at that point, and we went on again. At Droitwich, I found another shackle had broken, and the train was held together by the two side chains. I took in some passengers at Prince's End, expecting there would be room at Dudley.

The Coroner : But you were acting contrary to the company's rules in doing so, were you not?

Witness : Yes, but rather than leave them behind, I took them in.

Examination continued : I did not complain about the couplings at either of the stations. I did not at Worcester, for Mr Harris was with us. In coming back, the first train was composed of 27 carriages and two brake vans, and one engine, till we came to Stourbridge, when a second was put on, to help us up the bank.

The Coroner : Is that usual?

Witness : I have been piloted up before. There were several persons in my van coming from Worcester. All went till we got to Round Oak. I told only two persons to get into the van at Worcester.

The Coroner : At Brettel Lane, what took place?

Witness : I put on my brake to stop at the station. After, as I thought we had stopped, I pulled off the brake, just as the carriages were coming back with the rebound, and then the train began to run back. Upon this, I put on my brake again, and it seemed to draw them up a bit, but they seemed to get ahead of me afterwards. The brake was a good one, but the weight was too heavy for it. I was afraid of the train coming after us, for I knew that we generally started ten minutes after each other. I saw it coming upon us, and I shouted several times to the passengers to jump out, and told the persons in the van to jump out. I also held out my red lamp, and sounded my whistle as loudly as I could. I don't think anyone jumped out besides myself. I jumped out about ten yards from the collision. I got out and met the fireman coming from Round Oak, who told me that the line was blocked at Round Oak ; and in the opposite direction, Pigott, the guard, told me it was all right. At Brettel Lane, I told them to come back and help the poor people, for we had a dreadful collision. I have tried the experiments on the line since the accident.

The Coroner : With the same brake?

Witness : No ; no ; that brake was smashed to pieces. There were 18 carriages in the part that broke away. Sometimes we take 35 carriages down that incline, upon which, when the rails are wet, we find a difficulty to stop.

Coroner : How do you account for your brake not acting on this night against only eighteen carriages?

Witness : My brake acted very well with that heavy living freight in the carriages. We had a second brake in the eighteen carriages that ran down. It was a second class carriage. If a person had been in that carriage to apply that brake, the train would have been stopped.

Coroner : Then why did you not have someone in that carriage to work the brake?

Witness : Mr Harris had the starting of the trains from Worcester.

Coroner : Why did you not ask for someone?

Witness : If I had, I should not have had anyone. The brake compartment was full of children. It is usual for those compartments to be used in excursion trains. The rules of the brakes in second class carriages do not apply to excursion trains.

The Coroner : But how is that? Are not the lives of Her Majesty's subjects who travel in excursion trains as valuable as the lives of those who travel in ordinary trains?

Witness : In excursion trains, I have often had the second class breaks full.

By Mr Ebsworth : The passengers in the second class break might have played tricks with the break. So far as I am concerned, I left those breaks to chance.

By another solicitor : If there had been a person in charge of the second class brake we could have signalled to each other, and the lives that have been lost might have been saved. If there had been a means of communication existing between the driver and the guard, I don't think that I could have stopped the train, communication of the severance having been conveyed to me directly the severance took place.



Mr Craig, of the Manchester and Lincolnshire Railway, and Mr McConnell wished to be examined. The Coroner regretted that he had not known earlier in the day that those gentlemen were there. If he had, their evidence could have been taken before, as they had come so great a distance. It being now six o'clock, the jury determined to adjourn without taking any more evidence until next Tuesday, to meet at eleven o'clock instead of one.

[Note : the words break and brake are used interchangeably here]

#### **214 October 2 1858**

**SUSPECTED MURDER AT BLACKBURN** On Wednesday morning about half past seven o'clock, the body of a boatman named **William Walmesley** was found in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and in consequence of information given to the police, another boatman named **James Tasker** was taken into custody on suspicion of having thrown the deceased into the water on Tuesday night. It appears that deceased was on board Tasker's boat on Tuesday night, and he and Tasker were quarrelling. The language, which was overheard, was very violent and threatening ; and about ten minutes to twelve, a splash was heard in the water, and then all was quiet. Tasker was brought before the magistrates on Wednesday morning, and formally remanded till yesterday. Tasker's wife was on board the boat at the time of the quarrelling, and after the splash was heard, was seen to look over the side into the water, and then go back to the cabin. She was taken into custody on Wednesday afternoon. The inquest was held on Thursday afternoon at the Rock Inn, Eanam, Blackburn, before H W Hargreaves, deputy coroner, on the body. James Tasker and his wife were present, in charge of the police. Mr J Pickup, solicitor, appeared to watch the case on behalf of Walmesley. The principal witness examined was a boatman named **Carr**, who said that on Tuesday night, he heard Tasker and Walmesley quarrelling as he was preparing to go to bed in the cabin of his own boat, which was moored a little distance from Tasker's. The deceased was in Tasker's boat, and after a good deal of loud talking, he (Carr) heard a splash, and a voice cried, "Lie there, b---r thee, lie there". The witness said he heard no struggling after the splash, and he was certain the words he had heard were used by Tasker. The witness went to bed, and inquiring for Walmesley on the following morning, heard that he was missing. With the assistance of several persons, the canal was dragged, and the body of the deceased was found near Tasker's boat. The jury, after consulting for ten minutes, returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

#### **215 October 16 1858**

**MANSLAUGHTER AT HINDLEY** The neighbourhood of Hindley has been in great consternation, in consequence of a most violent assault having been committed by **Henry Abrahams**, a boatman, on Joseph Leather, son of George Leather, farmer of Low Green, Hindley, on the 30<sup>th</sup> ult, which ended in Leather's death on Saturday last. Abrahams was brought before the county magistrates at Wigan last Friday, and remanded. The heavy bludgeon with which he inflicted the blow was produced, it was seventeen inches long, and loaded with more than a pound of lead. Yesterday the inquiry was held before C Driffield Esq, coroner, at the Bird i' th' Hand, Hindley. George Leather stated that his son Joseph was 26 years of age. On Thursday the 30<sup>th</sup> ult, the prisoner and his wife came to fetch a horse, and two young men were with them. Prisoner went with a pikel to force the stable door, and his son Joseph came from the house, and went for a policeman. When he returned, he endeavoured to keep Abrahams from the stable door, pushing him away, and telling him he had no business there. Abrahams then seized him by the hair of the head, and dragged him about. Witness said to his son, "Joseph, save thyself". The wife of the prisoner then pulled a cudgel out (the one produced) and struck Joseph with it. She then handed the weapon to her husband who, holding deceased by the hair with the left hand, struck him on the left side of the head with the cudgel, which he held in his right hand. The blood ran from Joseph's head immediately after the blow was struck. Witness believes the prisoner hit the deceased with the cudgel three times. Deceased threw Abrahams down, but never struck him. Policeman Jones came up, when the two were on the ground, and took the weapon from the prisoner. Deceased seemed much hurt, and Jones took him into the house, after which he plastered the wound. The wound

became worse, and on Sunday, Joseph “took to his bed.” Mr Martin, surgeon, attended him until he died on Saturday night. The witness added that he had exchanged a horse with Abrahams on the previous day, the latter giving 5s to boot, and he wanted the exchanged horse back again, which caused the dispute. Mr Martin, surgeon, said the wound on the head was nearly an inch long, and the head much swollen. Erysipelas set in on the Sunday, and spread to the face. From the symptoms exhibited throughout, he concluded that deceased died from erysipelas produced by the wound, which also softened the brain. The jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against Abrahams and his wife.

## **216 June 25 1859**

**THE VIOLATION AND MURDER IN SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE – PRINCES END, SATURDAY** The adjourned inquest on the body of the woman found murdered in the canal, near the Moat Colliery, at this place, was resumed here today at the Bull's Head Inn. It was supposed that the woman's name was Hughes, and that she was the wife of a boatman, but this supposition turns out to be erroneous, and the body still requires to be identified. The evidence taken on the former occasion was read over, and the following new evidence adduced :-

Joseph Williams, a police officer, said : I was on duty near the Moat Colliery on Sunday night, the 27<sup>th</sup> ult. I saw the prisoners Catstan and Acton, and Richard Price (a witness), but I did not see a woman. I did not see any marks indicating that a struggle had taken place. I apprehended the prisoner Allen ; he said he knew all about it, and he would tell. I was present when the other prisoners were apprehended. They were charged with violently assaulting a woman unknown. I received information from the witness Harper that something was going on ; and that induced me to go to the Moat Colliery.

John Walker Stringler deposed : I was in Higg's Inn, near Tipton Street, on the Sunday afternoon in question. The deceased was there when I arrived. She had on a reddish jacket and a bonnet. I did not notice any other parts of her dress. She remained there till shutting up time (three o'clock) and had two glasses of ale. I saw her again in Hurst Lane about a quarter of an hour after. There was no one with her then. I asked her where she was going. She asked me to go a walk with her. I did so, and remained with her till five o'clock. She then went to the Fiddle public house, and we had some ale. I remained there about one hour and a quarter. I met with her again up in the Foxyards. We then went to the Shrubbery Tavern. We had three pints of ale there. She was not drunk, but she was a little under the influence of drink. Whilst there, the prisoner Walker's wife came in, and struck deceased with a stick on the head. We went into the tavern about nine o'clock, and left about eleven. She followed “Jerry Jones” and me out of the tavern into the shrubbery. I left her in the shrubbery and went home, about ten minutes past eleven. I did not see her alive again. When I left her, I met the prisoner Allen, E Acton and Watkins, and several others whom I did not know, going towards her.

Robert Bales, a puddler of Princes End, deposed : I saw a woman in the Moat Colliery at about half past eleven on the Saturday night in question. I had been at Wood's public house with James Price and Thomas Bardon. My attention was drawn to the woman by seeing the prisoners Watkins and Allen, and several others, following her. They were walking towards the Ironbridge. Allen and Watkins had got hold of the woman by each arm. They were helping her along. She did not appear able to walk by herself. I did not hear any of them speak to the woman. The prisoners Edward Ashton, Calstan and Fereday were with them before they went over the ironbridge, but only the two I have mentioned went over the bridge with her. As I was coming back again home, I heard the woman shriek. I ran in the direction of the shriek. [The witness then detailed what he saw in the field, the particulars of which are unfit for publication].

Thomas Felton, puddler, deposed that on Tuesday evening last, he was with a young man named Robert Davies, who was intoxicated. Davies then said that “he was a murderer” and that he “deserved the gallows”. He said that he had helped to throw the body into the canal. He (witness) assisted to bring him home, and he twice tried to throw himself into the canal. The next day, he asked him (witness) if the police knew anything about what he had stated.

Davies was brought in, but he said he knew nothing about the affair.

At this stage of the proceedings, the Coroner said that, as the affair had assumed so black an aspect, he thought that a further adjournment should take place and, in the meantime, he would communicate with the Secretary of State for the purpose of obtaining an order to procure the attendance of the prisoners at the next inquest, from Stafford Gaol, where the six prisoners were committed by the magistrates.

## **217 November 5 1859**

**ANOTHER VIOLENT GALE** Throughout the whole of Wednesday and the previous night, another violent gale, equal in duration and occasionally in fury to that of last week, appears to have swept over the country. At Portsmouth, it is described as far exceeding in strength and intensity the gale of last week. At Plymouth, on Wednesday, the steam ships of war had their engines at work, to ease the strain on their cable. At Eastbourne in Sussex, the gale, which was from WSW, is said to have been terrific, causing serious damage in the town. The accounts add that fortunately there was little or no sea, the wind blowing off the land.

On Wednesday, the French and German mails did not reach this country in consequence of the gale. The *Alliance*, which usually makes the voyage from Havre in nine or ten hours, has arrived at Southampton, after having been 32 hours in a terrific gale, which she first encountered three hours after leaving Havre.

A melancholy occurrence took place on Tuesday in the river which, so far as can be ascertained, resulted in the loss of six or seven lives. It appears that about six o'clock, the screw steamer *Hungarian* (one of the Montreal Ocean Steamship Company's vessels) was lying in the river between Seacombe and Egremont. She was to sail on Wednesday for Portland. Alongside the steamer lay a flat, from which coals were being delivered, a number of labouring men, probably 12 or 14, being employed in the operation. There was a heavy sea running, and in consequence of the flat making a lurch, the rope which attached her to the steamer gave way. The flat's mast then caught some part of the ship's rigging, upon which the former heeled over, the water rushed into the hold, and she capsized. The men on board struggled manfully to save themselves, but the tide running strong at the time, they were quickly carried down the river by the stream. Several of them clung to the hatches of the flat, which were floating about, and by this means were enable to support themselves, until assistance reached them. A boatman, **Joseph White**, behaved nobly on the occasion. He went promptly to the assistance of the sufferers, and rescued six of them, who had by great exertion temporarily sustained themselves by holding on to the hatches. Boats were put off from the steamer, but whether they picked up anyone has not been ascertained. It is feared that such is not the case and that, except the survivors previously named, all the other poor fellows have met a watery grave. One of the men was saved by hanging on to the foot of his companion while supporting himself with a hatch which had floated from the flat. The flat became a complete wreck, and floated down the river. The *Liverpool Mercury* of Thursday says : "From further inquiries in reference to this unfortunate occurrence, we are glad to find that the result is not so serious as at first supposed. It is said that there were nine men on board the flat when she capsized. This would leave three unaccounted for, all of whom were drowned".