

## MANCHESTER TIMES 1860 TO 1880

### 1 January 7 1860

GREAT LOSS OF LIFE ON THE RIVER MERSEY On Saturday, a fearful accident, causing the loss of more than twenty lives, occurred in the river Mersey. It appears that a vessel called the Grand Trianon, commanded by Captain Henry Clarke, left the Birkenhead Dock on Friday morning at high water, and anchored near the middle of the river, off Rock Ferry. She is an emigrant ship, bound for Adelaide. A number of men were on board, consisting of riggers and other artisans, who had been employed in various ways in fitting up the ship and getting her ready for sea. These men, having completed the work on board ship, were desirous of going ashore, and with this object in view, availed themselves of a boat that came alongside. The boat belonged to **Thomas Mackay**, a man well known as a boatman on the river. With regard to the exact number of persons on board, there are various statements but, so far as can at present be ascertained, the number must have been at least twenty six or twenty seven ; some of the survivors estimate it as high as thirty. It was intended that the boat should run into what is termed the Cockle Hole, near the Brunswick Dock, and land her passengers. A strong breeze was blowing at the time from the south west, with rather a heavy sea, the tide being on the ebb. The boat, which was under sail, approached to within a short distance of the Brunswick Pier, when a sea struck her, and she shipped some water. Immediately afterwards, she gave a lurch and filled and, as one of the survivors expressed himself, "she went from under them". All the occupants of the boat were thus thrown into the water and, as may readily be imagined, a fearful scene ensued. Owing to the heavy sea, the unfortunate men could do little towards saving themselves, and the struggles of most of them were of brief duration. The accident having been observed by several persons on the Brunswick Pier, two boats put off immediately to render assistance. One of them was manned by James Godso, Thomas Slack, William Minshull and William Reece, and by dint of great exertion, they reached the scene of the catastrophe. The boat picked up Captain H Clarke, the commander of the ship, Thomas Killing, a labourer, Thomas Mackay, the owner of the boat, and a man unknown, supposed to be a rigger. All of them except the last named were taken to the Southern Hospital, where they received prompt medical assistance. Mackay was so little injured that he left the hospital immediately, and proceeded to his own home in Park Road. The others were, by the usual appliances resorted to on such occasions, soon placed out of danger, and are progressing favourably. Another of the survivors, John O'Hara, a seaman, saved himself by swimming towards the pierhead, where a life buoy was thrown to him, and he was brought ashore at the Cockle Hole slip. The other boat previously alluded to, which put off to render assistance, was manned by William Morton, William Hill, Stephen Benjamin and a seaman. This boat picked up Thomas Grue, who was brought to the George's Pier, and conveyed thence to the receiving house at the Prince's Dock. After being placed in a warm bath, and the other means used for his restoration, he gradually recovered. All the other poor fellows who occupied the boat met a watery grave. Supposing there were 28 in the boat, this would leave 22 unaccounted for. A large portion of them were riggers, and the remainder artisans and labourers who had been employed in various ways on board the ship. It is said that the boat was rather deeply laden, though the accident is not ascribed to this cause.

The names of the whole of the sufferers by this melancholy occurrence are not yet ascertained, but the following are known to be some of them :- William Robbins, Grafton Street ; Robert Jones, Whitley Street ; John Thwaites, Dalton Street ; Alexander Johnson, Kirkdale ; George Wilham, Watkinson Street ; Edward Butler, Grafton Street ; William Brown, Upper Frederick Street ; Daniel Whaling, Mann Street ; James Irving, Rathbone Street ; William Williams, George Sherman and a boy. All these are married men and have families. They were riggers, in the employ of Mr Evans, Upper Frederick Street. Up to a late hour on Friday evening, none of the bodies had been recovered.

The conduct of the boatmen who, on hearing of the occurrence, so promptly proceeded to the scene of the calamity to render all the assistance in their power, is deserving of the highest commendation.

## 2 March 10 1860

SUICIDE BY A BOATMAN On Tuesday, an inquest was held at the Coroner's Court, Ridgefield, before Mr Herford, City Coroner, on the body of **John Jackson**, aged 53, boatman in the employ of Mr Billington. On Monday morning, deceased was perceived by Francis Rolls, cattle dealer, hanging to the mast of a boat lying in the canal near Piccadilly, and on examination, was found to be dead. It appears that the deceased had been in a low state of mind for some time. A verdict of "Suicide whilst in an unsound state of mind" was returned.

## 3 March 31 1860

BREACH OF GAME LAWS **William Shaw**, alias Nicker, was charged at the New Bailey on Thursday with unlawfully shooting a hare. Mr Thomas Farnworth, farmer, Barton, deposed that on Tuesday morning the 20<sup>th</sup> inst, he saw a man shoot a hare. Someone then ran to get it ; but on seeing witness, he went away again, when the man who shot immediately fetched it, and ran in the direction of the canal. Witness was of opinion that the defendant was not the man who shot. The captain of the canal boat on which the defendant was engaged, and a boatman who was also on the boat at the time, were both called, but proved nothing. Farnworth's son was called, and contradicted himself several times. At first, he said he only heard the gun fired ; then that the gun was fired twice, and that he saw the hare shot ; and then that the defendant was not dressed like the man who shot. The hare was found behind the canal bank. The bench considered the case proved, and fined the defendant 20s and costs.

## 4 July 7 1860

SHOCKING RUFFIANISM IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE On Sunday last, a boatman, while maddened with drink, committed a series of atrocities whilst upon the Hereford and Gloucester Canal at Oxenhall, near Newark in Gloucestershire, which it is surprising did not result in the death of several persons. It seems that a boat proprietor named Butler was walking along the canal, when he was met by some children, who ran to him screaming and entreating him to save their mother, who was "being murdered by their father". Butler hastened to the spot, and found a woman, nearly nude, struggling in the canal. He got her out, and then her husband, a boatman named **Holloway**, commenced an attack upon Butler, during which, rushing upon him with an open knife, he inflicted a gash in his throat three inches long, and stabbed him in four other places in the neck and face. Mrs Butler coming up to her husband's aid, Holloway hurled her head foremost into the canal. Another woman who had taken some part in the affair was also thrown in by the infuriated fellow, who again set upon Butler, as he was profusely bleeding from his wounds, yet attempting to draw his wife out of the water, and precipitated him in also. An aged man now came up, but he had no sooner commenced to remonstrate than he too was hurled in by Holloway. In all, no fewer than five persons were together in imminent danger of drowning at the hands of the drink maddened boatman. Happily, however, they were all got out without fatal consequences having ensued. The fellow was sensible enough to get with his boat into an adjoining tunnel, so soon as he knew that the officers of justice had been sent for, and it was Monday before he was arrested. It has been ascertained that he had been drinking freely of some wine that was being conveyed in casks on board another boat then lying in the canal ; and that, dragging his wife from her bed, he had thrown her, undressed, into the canal twice before Butler came up. Butler's wounds, although severe, are not expected to terminate fatally.

## 5 August 11 1860

LAMENTABLE CASE OF SUICIDE On Monday, Mr Herford, the city coroner, held an inquest on the body of Jane Hallard of Stott Street, Hulme, the wife of James Hallard, yardman at Messrs Galloway and Co's. On Monday morning, about half past four o'clock, a boatman named **James Banner** saw the body of the deceased floating in the Rochdale Canal, when he communicated the fact to a policeman, and they took her out of the water. The deceased had a slight cut or scratch upon her throat, and in her pocket, there was found a razor. Her husband stated that about half past

eight on Sunday night, she went to borrow a newspaper for him from a neighbour, and afterwards she said she would go and take a short walk. She was pregnant, and whilst she had been carrying the child, she had occasionally been insane. He found one of his razors missing, which no doubt the deceased had carried away with her. She was a sober woman, and had lived with him on good terms. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

## **6 August 18 1860 South Lancashire Assizes**

**CHARGE OF WIFE MURDER IN LIVERPOOL** Thomas Rawlinson (41), carter, was indicted for the murder of his wife, in Mason Street, Wapping, Liverpool, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June last. The prisoner and his wife lived in a cellar in Mason Street. The deceased was of very intemperate habits, and had on the morning in question been drinking with two other persons, one of whom was a boatman. Before seven o'clock that morning, the deceased had become very drunk, and by about eleven o'clock she was completely helpless. She managed, however, to fasten the door and to crawl into the back cellar, and was there in a beastly state of intoxication when, about half past twelve o'clock, the prisoner came to his dinner. When he arrived, the door was fastened, but in a short time the deceased came and admitted the prisoner, using toward him language of the most irritating and filthy kind. On having no dinner provided for him, he said, "It was very hard that a man should have no dinner provided for him after he had been working hard all day". He then went into a raging passion, and going into the back cellar, he seized a saucepan, and struck the deceased on her temples, by which her skull was fractured in such a way as to cause death. The witnesses for the prosecution who knew the prisoner well spoke of him in the highest terms as to his sobriety, honesty and industry, and stated that his wife was a most dissolute woman, and offered very great provocation. The woman died in a few days after the violence had been used. The jury returned a verdict of "Manslaughter" against the prisoner, but said the crime was committed under circumstances of great aggravation. The sentence was one months imprisonment.

## **7 October 27 1860**

**DEATHS BY DROWNING** About seven o'clock on Thursday morning, the body of a woman unknown, apparently 30 years of age, was found floating in the Rochdale Canal near the Ancoats Bridge. She had contused wounds on the head, but the surgeon, on making a *post mortem* examination, stated to the coroner's jury that although produced during life they were not the cause of death, it having resulted from drowning. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned. Early the same morning, a splash was heard in a lock near the same place. A hat was seen floating upon the surface, and on grapples being obtained, a body was brought up, which was recognised as that of **William Carter**, a boatman from Mirfield, and about 29 years of age ; he was quite dead. An inquest was held on the body, before Mr E Herford, city coroner, and a similar verdict to the above returned.

## **8 February 2 1861**

**MYSTERIOUS FATE OF A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST** Alexis Flint, a Roman Catholic priest of some note, who recently left Paris in consequence of his preaching in rather strong terms about the Emperor, and having been threatened that he would be imprisoned for non payment of mass receipts, which had been owing from him for six years, was found dead in the Mersey yesterday by a boatman named **Peter Henshaw**. The deceased had lately come to Liverpool and had taken his passage in the American ( ? ) steamer, which sailed on the 5<sup>th</sup> ult. On that day, he went out in rather an excited state, and never returned to his lodgings. On his person were found a gold watch, and in a purse 25 ten dollar pieces, 4 twenty ditto, 14 five ditto, 22 one dollar pieces in American gold money, and smaller sums in French and Sardinian coin. The body of the deceased was identified by Mr Vandepitto, of the Eldon Street Roman Catholic Chapel, with whom he had been lodging. The body now lies in the dead house, and an inquest will be held on it today (Saturday) before the Liverpool borough coroner.

## 9 March 30 1861

FATAL AFFRAY IN A PUBLIC HOUSE Early on Tuesday morning, a disturbance took place in the Walton Arms Inn, Altham, near Padiham, which terminated in the death of **John Whittaker**, a boatman of Craven, Yorkshire. It appears that on Monday evening, Whittaker, along with Henry Webster of Padiham and James Hodgson of Hapton, went to the Walton Arms Inn, and remained till about twelve o'clock drinking with his friends. He then asked the landlord, Benjamin Williams, for a bed, but Williams told him he could not have a bed there that night. Whittaker then commenced kicking and striking the landlord in the lobby of the house, and the landlady called on another man, James Redfern, who had just come in with a loaded gun, to assist, and Redfern did so, and Whittaker and his two friends were ejected from the house. Redfern then prepared to go, and for this purpose he shouldered his gun, and was in the lobby when Whittaker and the two other men returned and recommenced the attack on the landlord. The landlord, being exhausted with the previous struggle, was soon overpowered, and one of the men seized the gun from Redfern. Redfern called out, "That gun is loaded, and will shoot every ---- of you", and had just stepped back about three yards, when the gun went off, and the charge lodged in Whittaker's left side. Whittaker fell instantly, and medical aid was called in, but the unfortunate man died about half past four o'clock. The men are in custody.

## 10 April 13 1861

HIGHWAY ROBBERY AND MURDER On Wednesday afternoon, an inquest was held at the Bull's Head, Darkhouse Lane, Coseley, before Mr W H Phillips, deputy coroner for the Wolverhampton district, respecting the death of an aged man named **Walter Piper**, a boatman, who had died near that house the day before from injuries he had received in the same district from highwaymen. The deceased was a single man, and lodged with George Wootten, a shoemaker. He left home on the morning of the 25th of March last, saying he was going with a boat for his master to Birchills near Walsall. His master was Samuel Wilcox of Darkhouse Lane. The deceased was accustomed to go to Bilston market, about one mile away, every Monday evening. On the evening of the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, at about nine o'clock, a witness heard that the deceased had been injured and robbed. He found him in the house of a neighbour, bleeding from a severe wound in the forehead; the skull was driven in. Witness took him home, and sent for a surgeon, but he did not come. The next morning, he sent for another surgeon, who came, and the deceased received surgical aid up to the time of his death. Before he became insensible, he said that he was coming through the Blue Button Leasowe, a field not far away from his lodgings, when two men sprang out of the hedge close by the pathway, one of whom clutched him by the throat, and the other dragged him out of the footpath and under the hedge, where he rifled his pockets of a brass tobacco box, containing 3s 6d, a bag, 1lb of bacon, 1lb of cheese, two loaves of bread and some meat. He was a very quiet man, and witness never knew him to quarrel with anyone. His friends lived at Hagley. After several witnesses had been examined, the inquest was adjourned. The coroner said that no doubt a verdict of "Wilful murder" would eventually be returned against someone.

## 11 April 27 1861

WILFUL MURDER NEAR BILSTON On Tuesday afternoon, an adjourned inquest was held at the Bull's Head, Darkhouse Lane, near Bilston, Staffordshire, on the body of **Walter Piper**, a boatman aged about 60, who was knocked down in a field near that place on the night of the 25<sup>th</sup> of last March, and robbed, and who died of the wound which he then sustained on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April. It will be remembered that the old man was of a quiet disposition and steady habits, and that he was returning to his lodgings at Darkhouse Lane about nine o'clock, carrying a bag with some marketings, when he was pounced upon by two men, one of whom garotted him, the other dealt him a violent blow with a weapon on the forehead, and both rifled his pockets and then decamped with their contents and his bag of provisions. Two men were seen darting out of the field immediately after the offence, and the old man was found lying insensible on the ground and bleeding profusely from the wound on his head. These facts were elicited from the deceased's dying statement, and

from the evidence of the man who found him where his murderers had left him. On Tuesday, Mr H D Booth, surgeon of Bilston, having been examined as to the nature of the old man's wounds, the jury, after learning that there was no more evidence forthcoming, returned a verdict of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown". The Coroner said that he should apply to the Home Secretary to offer a reward, and it was said that a similar course would be taken by the Chief Constable of Staffordshire.

## 12 June 8 1861

**STEALING COTTON BY WHOLESALE** At the New Bailey on Saturday, a very serious charge was investigated, in which a number of boatmen appeared as prisoners. Their names were **William Jones, David Taylor, Joseph Welsby, James Welsby and Thomas Welsby**. They were charged with two robberies. One was for stealing cotton from nine bales which had been sent by Messrs E and G Wood to Messrs Tinker of Bugsworth ; and the second was for stealing cotton from seven bales sent to Messrs Bennett and Co of Chapel-en-le-Frith by Messrs Thompson, McKay and Co. Both cases occurred between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May. Mr Smith (solicitor to the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway) appeared for the prosecution, Mr R B B Cobbett represented the Welsbys, and Mr Ambler appeared for William Jones. A great deal of time was occupied in the examination of witnesses, and much care was taken in tracing the cotton through the various stages of transmission until it was finally delivered by the prisoners. The nine bales had been sent from the New Quay Company's warehouse in Water Street, to the Peak Forest Canal Company's premises, and from thence they were dispatched to their ultimate destination by the boat *Fame*. The seven bales were brought by Messrs Thompson, McKay and Co from Liverpool to Manchester, and sent from their premises by the boat *Sophia* on the Ashton Canal, to Messrs Bennett and Co's mill at Chapel-en-le-Frith. The *Fame* was managed by Taylor, Jones and **Richard Speakman**, the nephew of the captain, and left Manchester on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May. On arriving at their destination at Bugsworth, six of the bales were found to be 53lb short of their proper weight. The seven bales which were sent by the *Sophia* were found to be deficient 40lb. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, a detective who was set to watch at the Ashton lock near Philips Park saw, about three o'clock in the morning, three of the prisoners each take a bag of cotton from the *Fame* ( which was then on its return journey to Manchester) and place them in a stable which the prisoners occupied near to the canal. Upon searching the prisoners' houses and stable the eleven bags were found, containing 180lb of cotton. This was Orleans cotton, and of a similar character to that belonging to Messrs Tinker. It was elicited, in the course of the cross-examination of the witnesses, that the bags had been "sampled" before they were given into the care of the prisoners – that is, they had been cut and a sample taken out, but it was stated that it was not possible for cotton to any large extent to fall out. All the prisoners were committed for trial, bail being allowed in the case of Thomas Welsby, who is only a boy.

## 13 August 10 1861

### Correspondence

#### GALLANT RESCUE FROM THE RIVER IRWELL

*To the Editor of the Weekly Times*

Sir – On Sunday afternoon, at half past two, when the river was very rough, two young men were observed coming down the river in a pair oared boat by **William Partington**, boatman at the Pomona Gardens. He saw that they were in a very dangerous position, and shouted out to caution them, but it was useless, and overboard they both went into the dark surging waters. Partington instantly pushed off to their assistance, and by the most gallant efforts, the brave fellow succeeded in saving them from certain death. He has been at the ferries 18 years, and during that time he has saved 15 lives. Now, I think, Sir, that Partington is really deserving of some public testimonial, and I write to you in the hope that the matter may be taken up by some influential person, in which case I should be very happy to co-operate. I am, sir, yours respectfully,

ROBERT DIBB

#### **14 August 17 1861**

**BURSTING OF THE CANAL NEAR BARNESLEY** At an early hour on Tuesday morning, an alarm was raised that the embankment of the canal at Roystone had given way. At the time of the occurrence a sloop was close to the spot, and was in some danger from the sudden fall of the water. The boatman was the first to discover the flow, which was supposed to be merely a surface leak, and for which purpose the boat was put alongside, so as to stop the gap. On this being done, the water rapidly oozed out, carrying away the side of the embankment the full length of the boat, which fell down a depth of nearly 12 feet, and was floated along the fields, a distance of 400 yards, where it became safely embedded amongst the standing corn, and was afterwards drawn to the canal by horses. Not far from the embankment, there was fortunately a culvert, which took a good deal of the water. Had the accident taken place on the lower embankment, it must have carried away a considerable portion of the line of railway which runs parallel with the canal. As it is, a good deal of damage has been done, whilst the canal has been drained for a distance of nearly eleven miles, in no place being much over 3 foot in depth.

#### **15 September 14 1861**

**FRIGHTFUL ACCIDENT IN A CANAL TUNNEL** For some weeks past, several of the boats on the Grand Junction Canal have been propelled by steam instead of being drawn by horses, and with proper adaption of the tunnels &c, there is no doubt that the difficulties hitherto experienced in navigating canals with steamboats are in a fair way of being overcome. There are several tunnels on the canal, one of them being at Agar Town, and another, that in which occurred the melancholy accident we are about to detail, being close to the Bilsworth station on the London and North Western Railway. The canal tunnels are made of brick and are little, if at all, larger than a sewer. The tunnels are so constructed that horse power is of no use, previous to the introduction of steam, the boats being propelled by a process called "legging". The process is this : A board is placed out on either side of the boat, and on each board lies a man who places his foot against the wall of the tunnel, and thus pushes the boat along. This system still prevails on boats to which the steam engine has not yet been applied, and as the labour of thus "legging" the boat along is both arduous and disagreeable, the steam engine is welcomed as a very agreeable substitute. The engine, however, is not without its disadvantages for, as the tunnels are long and, as we have said, no larger than sewers, the boatmen are half stifled by the volumes of carbon that are emitted from the low funnel ; coal being burnt instead of coke. On Friday night, two steam boats entered the tunnel, and became entangled, but were by some exertion – on whose part cannot now be ascertained – set free. The boat which the steamer was towing was, however, unloosed from it, and was left behind. The smoke from the engine flue became dreadfully dense, and very much effected the "leggers" so much so that they could not work. On board the steamboat, its effect was such that it suffocated two men, one of whom fell into the water, and was not found until some hours afterwards when the canal was dragged. A third man in the company's employ was so overpowered that, on arriving at the mouth of the tunnel, he too fell overboard ; the water, however, restored him to partial consciousness, and he managed to climb on board the boat again and instinctively shut off the steam. The boat could only proceed a short distance, and on arriving at the lock, the awful catastrophe was at once revealed. A young carpenter was lying dead in the hold, one of the boatmen was missing, and the two engine men were lying near the furnace, awfully burned. They were at once removed to the Boat Inn, adjoining the lock, and medical men were at once sent for from Toucester and Blisworth. They attended to the sufferers, who are now progressing favourably, though it will be a long time before they are again fit for work.

#### **16 April 12 1862**

**SERIOUS CHARGES AGAINST AN IRON MERCHANT AND AN IRON MASTER** At the Birmingham Police Court on Saturday, before A Ryland and W James Esqrs, Mr William Izod, George Street, Edgbaston, iron merchant ; Frederick Hill, Stafford Street, clerk ; Jacob Pool, Goldthorn Hill, Wolverhampton, clerk ; and **Thomas Leighton**, West Bromwich, boatman, were

summoned for conspiring together, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February last, to obtain, and for having obtained, 1000 tons of iron, the property of Messrs Edward Bagnall, Thorneycroft and Sam Griffiths. A summons had also been made returnable on that day against Mr Sam Griffiths and a clerk of his named Whitehead, on charges of conspiracy and fraud. The first proceedings in this matter were taken on Monday last, when summonses had been made returnable against Mr Izod and the other persons implicated in that charge, and when Mr Staveley Hill appeared for Messrs Thorneycroft and Co, and Mr Motteram and Mr Keneally appeared for the defendants. It was then arranged that, as there were many witnesses to be examined on each side, and the proceedings would be likely to occupy a whole day, that an adjournment should be taken to Saturday. Later in the day, Mr Keneally applied for the summons against Mr Griffiths and Whitehead. The learned gentleman said that, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December last, Mr Griffiths invited Mr Izod to dine with him at the Queen's Hotel, Birmingham, and on that occasion informed him that he had a large quantity of iron such as he (Mr Izod) used in his business to dispose of. An agreement was then entered into that Mr Izod should be supplied with this iron at the rate of 200 tons per week, and that Mr Izod should at once give Mr Griffiths a cheque for £1000, and two bills, one at two months and one at four months, for £1000 each. As he had not stamps for the bills by him, Mr Griffiths, on the following day, sent his clerk Whitehead to Mr Izod, and the contract was then completed, and Whitehead handed to Mr Izod a memorandum of the terms of the contract. Application had been repeatedly made for the fulfilment of the contract for the weekly delivery of iron, but all in vain, and they were in a position to prove that Mr Griffiths had no iron of the description specified at his works. The summonses were at once granted. On Saturday, another adjournment was granted, the counsel on both sides being stated to be at Gloucester. The case has excited the greatest interest in the iron district, and many ironmasters were present in court on both days.

## **17     April 26 1862**

**EXTRAORDINARY CHARGE AGAINST A STAFFORDSHIRE IRON MERCHANT** At the Birmingham Police Court, the attention of the Stipendiary magistrate, Mr Kynnersley, was occupied during the whole of the day on Tuesday and in the morning of Wednesday in hearing the summonses that had been taken out by Messrs Edward Bagnall, Thorneycroft and Co, against William Izod, Stafford Street, Birmingham, iron merchant ; Frederick Hill ; Jacob Poole, and James Sutton, his clerk ; and **Thomas Leighton**, steerer and haulier, charging them with conspiracy to defraud the complainants of a large quantity of iron. There was also a cross summons against Mr Samuel Griffiths, ironmaster, and William Whitehead, his clerk, charging them with obtaining from Mr Izod, by means of false pretences, a cheque for £1000 and two bills (one at four months and one at six months) for £1000 each. From the evidence, it appeared that Mr Griffiths is a banker at Wolverhampton, the proprietor of several large ironworks in South Staffordshire, and of one in Northamptonshire. In some of these works, Mr Thorneycroft holds an interest, but Mr Griffiths also held three of the furnaces, one of which was at Bilston Brook and another at Windmill End. Mr Griffiths and Mr Izod had had many transactions in the iron trade, and on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December last, a contract was entered into between them by which Mr Griffiths was to supply to Mr Izod 3000 tons of cinder bar iron at £2 5s 6d per ton, and Mr Izod gave Mr Griffiths in advance a cheque for £1000 and two bills, each for £1000. After some few weeks, Mr Griffiths began supplying the iron, and by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January last had sent £450 worth. About this time, there were rumours afloat about Mr Griffiths having made a compromise with his creditors, and Mr Izod began to fear he would never get his contract completed. He determined, however, to have some iron, and attempted to bribe Mr Chapman and Mr Merryman, two of the managers of furnaces, to send him some iron without the knowledge of Mr Griffiths. This failed, and then on Monday the 4<sup>th</sup> of February last, Mr Izod gave the two defendants, Poole and Sutton, each a cheque for £10, and in the evening, they went in a cab to Wolverhampton, calling on the way at the house of Leighton, the other defendant. On their return from Wolverhampton with a man named Silvester, who they had tried to get to send some iron to Mr Izod, saying that it was all right and that they had plenty of money, they went back to Leighton's and stayed with him about an hour. At about four o'clock on the next morning, Leighton

spoke to a boatman named **Dingley** about some boats. At that time, there were three boats at the Staffordshire Works, one of them loaded with nail sheets, consigned to Mr Charles Shaw of Birmingham ; one loaded with rounds and consigned to Messrs Western and Grice ; and one loaded with unfinished bars, consigned to an iron merchant at Rowley. Leighton ordered Dingley, who was his subordinate, to take the boat load of nail sheets consigned to Mr Shaw to Mr Izod instead, and Dingley took the boat to Johnson's Wharf, Birmingham, where it was unloaded by Mr Izod's servants. The defendant Hill received the lading notes, in which the iron was consigned to Mr Shaw, and said it was all right. Mr Staveley Hill contended that Mr Izod obtained the iron, which was not of the same kind as that for which he had a contract, in this manner with the intent to defraud Mr Griffiths, or with the idea that Mr Griffiths would connive at their proceedings, careless if the iron belonged to a creditor, either as to who had it or as to what became of it. On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Motteram that Mr Griffiths had had £1000, besides bills for £2000, for £450 worth of iron, and that, although Mr Izod had had £600 worth of iron besides the £450 worth sent, he had not had as much as he had paid for. There were two other transactions of exactly a similar kind to that detailed in the evidence, but before these were gone into, it was agreed to take an adjournment to Tuesday next.

## **18 July 12 1862**

**THE ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE MURDER** The adjourned examination before the magistrates took place on Thursday in the Ashton Town Hall. There were on the bench Mr A P Wimpenny (chairman), Messrs J Chadwick, N Buckley, G Heginbottom, A Aspland, the Mayor of Ashton &c. There were four prisoners in the dock – Michael Burke, John Ward, Thomas Barlow and John C Johnson.

Mr R B B Cobbett was for the prosecution ; Mr J B Torr appeared for Ward and Barlow ; Mr W P Roberts for Burke and Johnson.

Mr Cobbett said three of the prisoners were charged with the murder of a constable named Jump, and an attack of a felonious character on another officer named Harrop. The prisoner Johnson was charged with harbouring two of them after the offence was committed. It would be impossible to conclude the case against the prisoners that day, because with regard to one, Barlow, who was very recently apprehended, the evidence they had as yet was very insufficient, although they would be able to get much more ; and with regard to the others, the evidence against them was very strong in itself, yet still the constables had reason to know that further evidence would be obtained. He would ask the bench to remand the prisoners after they had heard the evidence which he would lay before them. He would call the whole of the witnesses they had, and go into the whole case so far as they were able consistently with the ends of justice. The facts of the case were then detailed to the bench, reference being constantly made to a model of the place where the affray and murder took place

The evidence taken on the last examination was read over by the clerk to the magistrates.

The plans having been put in and proved,

Joshua Bamford was called. He said he was a watchman in Clifford's brick yard. On the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, he was in the yard watching, in company with James Hall, and about half past one, he saw a number of men walking over the flat bricks. There were six or seven men. He shouted for assistance, and when some men came to him, those who had been destroying the bricks went away, in the direction of the barracks.

Cross-examined by Mr Torr : The men he called to for assistance were men that had come to keep him company ; they had not been set to watch. It was a very dark morning.

Frederick Bamford said : He was a son of the last witness. He was employed as a brick burner. He was there on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, between three and four o'clock. He found about 18000 bricks had been destroyed, the value of which would be £6. He singled out a number of bricks that had footmarks upon them, and delivered them to the police. The bricks produced were those he selected.

Superintendent Chadwick of Stalybridge proved that the bricks produced were those he directed to

be taken up out of the yard. The boots produced made impressions exactly corresponding with those found upon the bricks.

Sergeant Anderson, stationed at Little Bolton, apprehended the prisoner Barlow at his residence in Droylsden on Monday morning last. He took the boots produced by the last witness from the prisoner. On searching the house, he found in the pantry, on the ground floor, the paper of swan shot produced. He made impressions on the bricks produced, and found they corresponded with those found on the bricks taken from the brick croft.

James Hurst, watchman for Mr Whittaker at Hurst, said : About twenty minutes before two o'clock on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> ult, he saw a number of men coming from the direction of the Barracks. There were six or seven men, and they bade him good morning. When he last saw them, they were going towards Hurst church.

Cross-examined by Mr Roberts : There was nothing extraordinary in the appearance of the men.

By Mr Torr : He would not undertake to say no people passed on the road in the course of the night besides the men he saw.

Sergeant G Harrop said he was on duty on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> June last with Jump, who is since dead. About five minutes before two, he was in Smallshaw Fold with Jump. He was passing from Smallshaw Fold in company with Jump through a field road which leads to Broadoak Lane. When they had got about 20 or 30 yards up the road, they saw a number of men coming round the curve of the road. The witness and deceased passed forward, the men coming towards them ; when within 20 or 30 yards, the men left the footpath, and walked in single file on the grass. Four or five of the men who passed had something over that side of the fence nearest to witness. Each man carried a bludgeon concealed under his slop. He believed that he stepped before the last man but one, and said, "My man, what is the meaning of all this? There is something strange in you being here this time in the morning, and all of you having large bludgeons with you". The man put his hand on witness's breast, and tried to pass by on the left. Witness put his hand on the man's breast, and said, "He had no need to be afraid of him (witness) if he had done nothing wrong". The man tried to get away, when witness immediately seized him by the collar. The man called out, "Now, men ; now, men", in a quick tone. Some of the other men, who were in a group, spoke, but the officer could not tell what they said. The man that witness held was still struggling, when he saw the prisoner Burke pull a pistol out of his jacket. In struggling to get away, witness's prisoner fell on to his knees, and while leaning forward, witness's stick was suddenly knocked out of his hand, and immediately a shot struck him over the right eye ; a second shot was immediately fired, and this went over witness's head. Someone struck him on the left hand, and the prisoner he had hold of got away, but before he escaped, witness wrested the bludgeon he produced from his hand. When the prisoner got away, he saw Ward and another man in front of him with bludgeons, and they began striking witness with their bludgeons. The man not in custody, who was with Ward, witness struck with the bludgeon he had in his hand, and he immediately ran away. Then he struck Ward a blow on the front of the head, and he ran away. Another man then commenced throwing stones at witness, and he chased him across the field in the direction of the pit. The man threw himself over the hedge and fell in a ditch on the other side. Witness threw his bludgeon and struck the man on the body, and immediately followed him over the hedge. After having got over the hedge, he heard two shots in the direction of Smallshaw Fold, and then he heard Jump making a moaning noise. He went towards Jump and found him in a crouching position, leaning against the gatepost of Smallshaw Fold yard. A man named Smith then came up, and he and witness carried Jump into Williamson's house. The shot produced was extracted from the back of the deceased, and the paper from one of the wounds in his throat. When deceased was picked up, his staff was fastened on his wrist. On searching the field afterwards, he found two bludgeons and two caps. The black cap was found where the man got over the hedge and fell into the ditch ; the brown one was where the two bludgeons were lying. The man who escaped over the hedge was very like Barlow. The man who escaped from me across the field was not Ward. All the men wore caps, and their boots and five or six inches of their trousers were wet and dirty. The man he had hold of did not fire at witness ; it was some of the other men. Both of witness's arms were bruised severely, his face filled with

powder, the cut over his right eye from the shot bled very much.

Examined by Mr Torr : His duty that night lay in Oldham Road, Little Moss and Hurst. He believed the shots were fired from a revolver. The whole struggle lasted from seven to eight minutes.

Dr S D Lees examined the body of the deceased Jump. He found two gunshot wounds on the upper part of the left breast. At the back, under the left shoulder blade, he extracted a bullet or piece of lead from beneath the skin. He traced the ball which he extracted through the lower and outer opening of the chest, under the second rib, through the upper lobe of the left lung, below the fourth rib behind, to the part of the back where he extracted the ball. He traced the other ball, which was nearer the breast bone, which passed through some of the large blood vessels proceeding to the neck, and traced it to the backbone and spinal canal. He did not succeed in extracting the ball, because he did not think it was necessary, and he would have been obliged to mutilate the body a good deal.

Cross-examined by Mr Torr : There was nothing so eccentric as the course of a bullet through a body.

Re-examined : Harrop was suffering when witness first saw him, on the morning of the murder, from a grazed or scooped wound on the right eyebrow. A few days ago, witness counted ten particles of gunpowder still in his face.

Mr Samuel Williamson, grocer, living at Smallshaw Fold, said on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> June he was aroused from sleep by the sound of a shot. He got up to a window which overlooks the yard, and then he heard two more shots fired. Almost immediately, there was a rush of men from the field into his yard ; they broke down the fence in getting into his yard. There were seven, if not eight. A police officer then came out of the field through the stile by the kitchen, and stood by the other stile which was near the gate. He was without his hat, and staggered as though he was exhausted. Another man then came through the broken fence and stood about the middle of the gate. Jump at that time was leaning with one hand on the stump of the stile. The man near the gate fired two shots in rapid succession, and then Jump fell. Witness then went out and assisted to get Jump in. About two hours after the murder, he found the piece of paper produced on the step of his shop door, about three yards from where Jump was shot. It bore some writing, and the name of Michael Burke.

William Smith, collier residing in Smallshaw Fold, stated that he heard some shots on the morning of the murder. He went out and assisted to remove the deceased into Williamson's house, where he died.

**Nehemiah Ogden**, boatman, living at Smallshaw, stated that he was aroused early in the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> by hearing a gun shot and, on getting up to his window, saw four men opposite his house. They were looking in the direction of Williamson's yard. One man came running to the others, and he called out, "Wild, you must not call out my name any more".

**Mrs Hannah Ogden** corroborated her husband's evidence. She added that the five men were opposite their house when the two last shots were fired ; that would be about 100 yards from where the body of Jump was found.

Mr William Hulme, who lives to the right of Smallshaw Fold, stated that he was aroused in the morning in question by hearing shots fired. He got up to his window and saw two men running past; one man was taller than the other.

Mr Joseph Knott of the "Hero of Alba" beerhouse, produced a small account book. It contained an entry of 5s 4d against Burke, for drink, under the date of February 10<sup>th</sup> 1862. The paper produced (which was the one found on the ground near the body of Jump) was in witness's handwriting ; it was a bill for 5s 4d for drink.

Cross-examined by Mr Torr : He had three or four other customers of the surname of Burke, but the prisoner was the only Michael Burke he knew.

Mr Superintendent Pickering of Rochdale said, on Saturday last, Johnson told him he (Johnson) had something to say about the affair. After being cautioned, he stated that he was in bed on Saturday morning the 28<sup>th</sup> ult and, hearing a knock at his door, he got up. He found Ward standing there ; and having the key of his cellar in his pocket, he took Ward there. They remained in the cellar, and at

eight o'clock Burke came. (At this point the witness was stopped. It was intimated that in the statement which was made, there was something criminating one of the prisoners, which it was not desirable should be given then. The counsel for the prisoners consented to this arrangement, and the witness stepped down.)

Mr Roberts applied that Johnson should be admitted to bail on account of his being ill. (On Sunday last we were informed that he had an attack of *delirium tremens*).

Mr Cobbett opposed the granting of bail, on account of the serious nature of the charge in which he was implicated.

The Bench said they were unanimous in refusing bail to Johnson.

The court then remanded the prisoners until next Monday, when they will be brought up at the New Bailey, Manchester, and without evidence being given, be remanded again to the Monday following at Ashton.

The inquiry before Mr Rutter commenced at two o'clock, and was carried on simultaneously with the examination before the magistrates ; the evidence which was given was exactly similar to that taken by the magistrates ; and a verdict of "Wilful murder" against Burke and Ward was returned unanimously.

**APPREHENSION OF FOUR MEN IN LONDON** We learn from a London paper that four men had been apprehended in the metropolis on suspicion of being concerned in the murder at Ashton. The men were brought up at the Worship Street Police Office, before Mr Leigh. They gave the names of John Muckell, 26 years of age, belonging to Ayrshire, Scotland ; Thomas Carlyle, 25, of Armagh, Ireland ; Stephen McGowan, 22, of Tyrone, Ireland ; and Peter Smith, 19, of Gateshead, Durham. The police constables stated the circumstances under which they were apprehended, and handed in to the magistrate a printed information from Ashton of the murder, as well as a description of the missing men. Mr Leigh having carefully perused this, and a description of the appearance and dress attached to it, said : This in several particulars attaches to the prisoners at the bar. They have in some instances denied each other's statements. One of them has given two names, and there is reason to believe that all have come from the same district. It is my duty to remand them, therefore, that opportunity may be afforded of communicating with the police authorities at Ashton-under-Lyne. The prisoners were then removed, each denying his guilt, and Smith declaring that he did not care a button about it. The men have since been discharged.

**APPREHENSION OF ANOTHER MAN** Another man, of the name of Robert Ryan, brickmaker, Ashton, was apprehended on Thursday evening by Constable Dunn, on suspicion of being connected with this murder.

## **19 July 30 1864**

**COLLISION OFF THE MERSEY** On Saturday night, a collision took place between two steamers, the *Cognac* and the *Golden Pledge*, about half a mile below the Rock Lighthouse at the mouth of the Mersey, by which three men belonging to the latter vessel lost their lives. The *Cognac* is a regular trader between Liverpool and Cadiz, under the command of Captain Williams, and when the accident occurred was inward bound from that place. The *Golden Pledge*, Captain Bartlett, commander, was outward bound for Havana, and heavily laden with a cargo of coals. It appears that the collision was so severe that the *Cognac* cut the other vessel down nearly to the water's edge, and also began to sink immediately. The officers and crew made the most desperate efforts to save themselves, but three of the men belonging to the *Golden Pledge* were unsuccessful. The captain, mate and pilot, on the vessels coming into contact, clung to the *Cognac* and were rescued. A boatman named **Plunkett**, who was towing a boat astern of the *Golden Pledge*, succeeded in saving ten others who were struggling in the water until they could be picked up. The three hands missing, two engineers and one fireman, went down with the vessel. It is thought that the *Cognac* has not sustained any serious damage. The wreck of the *Golden Pledge* lies on the west side of Crosby Channel, and on Sunday, portions of it were observed floating about at the mouth of the river, where the occurrence took place. The *Golden Pledge* belonged to Messrs Klingender and Co, merchants of Liverpool.

## 20 November 26 1864

BOATMEN'S BETHEL The annual meeting of the friends of the above named institution, which for a number of years has been established in this city, took place on Wednesday evening in the schoolroom of the institution, under the presidency of the newly elected Mayor of Salford (Mr Wright Turner). There were also present Mr Alderman Heywood, Mr Alderman Bowker, Mr Saunders (barrister), The Rev G Phillpot (the rector of Gorton), Mr Councillor W Booth, and other gentlemen. There was a very good attendance, there being a fair proportion of boatmen, together with their wives and children, present. Letters of apology were read from the Hon Algernon Egerton MP, and Mr William Morris, who regretted their inability to attend that evening. After tea, the Rev J Shipman read the annual report, which stated that the work of visitation had been continued by the agents of the district, and had been attended with a very great amount of success. The number of visits paid by the missionaries who, it might be said, had on all occasions met with a hearty reception, was 9,370 ; and the number of adult persons met with in these visits was 29,190. These numbers showed an increase of 1400 visits paid and 3,597 boatmen met with. The missionaries engaged in the work conversed with the men on moral, social and religious subjects, which it was evident, from the deep attention the men paid, had effected much good. There had been circulated upwards of 25,000 tracts, books and copies of the Scriptures, that number being more than 5,000 in excess of the number last year. The services at the Bethel had also been attended with success, but in connection with the Sunday School, the committee had to regret a slight decrease in the attendance. It was, however, hoped that the number would be rapidly increased by next year. Several additions had been made in the library, which had been very extensively used, and much interest had been shown on the part of the scholars in the perusal of the works entrusted to them, and in the purchase of periodicals, monthly and otherwise. During the winter months, the Saturday evening entertainments had been crowded on every occasion, and equal success had attended similar entertainments which had been commenced during the present season. During the year, a missionary had been appointed for Birmingham and the canals in the Midlands districts ; this, by removing from the society the South Staffordshire canal districts, gave an opportunity to devote more time and attention to this immediate neighbourhood. The land station at Birmingham is at the Worcester Wharf, and is in a flourishing condition. The Chairman, who was received enthusiastically, said he attended not only to express his own individual sympathy with the society, but also on behalf of the corporation of Salford, to give expression to their feelings of appreciation of the endeavours that had been put forth by the institution. There was no class that was deserving of more sympathy than that to which were borne the benefits which might be achieved by such an institution as this. They were a class of people that had been very much neglected – and their occupation was not likely to lead them to places of worship, or places where they would be likely to obtain intellectual culture (Applause). Mr Stevenson, one of the missionaries, gave an interesting account of his labours amongst the boatmen of the Lancashire district. Mr Alderman Heywood said that the society had been of great service in the past, and there could not be much doubt as to the good that might be done in the future by the institution in the distribution of tracts amongst that class of men towards whom the operations of the society were directed. (Applause) Mr Saunders also addressed the meeting. Referring to a motto on the wall of the room, “Opportunity is the cream of time”, he said an Italian poet had once described opportunity as a damsel poised on a wheel – the wheel rapidly revolving and she going with it. She was beautiful, and her locks were all dishevelled ; they were all in front – there were none behind ; fortunate the persons who grasped opportunity, but those who did so must grasp her by the forelock. He urged the men to make the most of the opportunities afforded them by their institution, and spoke of the value of a religious education and training. Mr Alderman Bowker gave a brief outline of the origin of the Bethel, and said that the boatmen had been very much distressed by the small amount of cotton which had been shipped to Manchester ; but the numbers had but slightly diminished as compared with other districts. Several other addresses were afterwards given, and the meeting terminated shortly before ten o'clock.

## 21 April 15 1865

**DISTRESSING INCIDENT AT GAYTHORN** On Monday, Mr Herford held an inquest on the bodies of **John Pendlebury** of Bedford Leigh, boatman, 39 years of age ; **Catherine**, his wife, 29 years of age ; and **Mary Ann**, aged 15 months, their daughter. Pendlebury was captain of the flat *Walter*, belonging to Mr John Kirk of Black Lane, near Wigan ; and a man named **Dickinson** was mate of the same boat. It seems that, on Saturday evening, Pendlebury went to his cabin late, and in a state of intoxication. He requested his wife, who was asleep with the child in bed, to get up and prepare him his supper. She refused, and a quarrel ensued. Dickinson made his way out of the boat, and whilst at a short distance, he saw the man leave the craft, followed by his wife, with the child in her arms. They disappeared from his view, and he went to sleep in an old boat that was close by. About midnight – soon after the time when deceased left their boat – Thomas Hodgson, whose father is the agent for the Rochdale Canal Company, and who lived at the house attached to the office in Gaythorn, heard screams repeated four or five times. He got up and walked along the canal bank and, after looking carefully about, discovered the body of a child floating in the water, and a few yards from it, a bonnet. Witness said he heard no voice but a woman's. He had known about a score similar accidents, which might have been prevented by a proper fence on the canal side, and lights were also required. He communicated with the police, and the drags were obtained, the result being the finding of the bodies of the deceased boatman and his wife. There was some women's clothing found in the water. It was deposed at the inquest that the deceased man had threatened to kill her, and had frequently chased her out of the cabin. The jury returned a verdict of “Found drowned”.

## 22 June 16 1866

**MURDEROUS ASSAULT AND ROBBERY NEAR BRADFORD** On Monday, at the West Riding Court at Bradford, **Abraham Varley**, master of the boat *Ada*, running on the Liverpool and Leeds Canal, and another young man named **Isaac Furrbeck**, a boatman, were charged with having, at an early hour on Saturday morning, made a murderous attack upon one Jonathan Sugden, a weaver residing at Windhill near Bradford, and also with stealing a Paisley shawl from Mrs Sugden. Between one and two o'clock on Saturday morning, the prosecutor, who was slightly the worse for liquor, was out smoking in front of his own house, when his son, a young man, came up, hotly pursued by the prisoners, in the direction of his father's house. As the prisoners came across a bridge, the prosecutor asked what was the matter, and the prisoners, without giving any reply, immediately knocked the prosecutor down and made a violent attack upon him, kicking him upon the head and face till the blood flowed profusely therefrom. Alarmed by his cries, the prosecutor's wife went to his assistance, and Varley took from her a shawl which was on her head, and took it away with him to his boat. The prisoners returned to the attack, and Furrbeck on the second occasion carried a large iron bar, which was found to be marked with blood, though there was no other evidence of its having been used. The prisoners were committed for trial at the sessions.

## 23 September 29 1866

**FATAL OUTRAGE IN ANCOATS – EXAMINATION OF THE PRISONERS** Yesterday at the City Police Court, four youths named Joseph Rodgers, Henry Holland, Thomas Craven and Thomas Glennan were charged with being concerned in the death of Mr Thomas Lee, stationer, Bradford Road, who was attacked by the prisoners on Wednesday, about half past five o'clock, and kicked to death. The first witness called was **Ellen Jewell**, the wife of a boatman, who was passing down Jersey Street on Wednesday afternoon, and saw several youths standing at the corner of a street, amongst whom were the prisoners. Rodgers came out of the crowd and put his arm round her neck, and then ran away. She pursued him up a narrow street, when he stopped and faced her, threatening to fight. She then asked him to leave her alone. The greater part of the crowd followed her up the street, and when she got back in the main street, one of the crowd pushed her. Her husband remonstrated with her, and they all closed around them like a swarm of bees. One of the crowd jumped on the horse her husband was leading. Her husband tried to break away, when they began

to beat him on the side of the head. One of them seized the bridle, another caught hold of the tail, and a third lifted up the hind leg. At this time, the deceased came up, and asked the boy who was on the horse's back to get off. Rodgers then went up to him and struck him on the side of the face and knocked him down. Holland likewise struck him and knocked him down a second time. When he was down, they began kicking and abusing him. She saw Holland give the last kick. She did not know the other two. While the kicking was going on, her husband went for a policeman, and he was away for about ten minutes. The man on the horse jumped on to the deceased's neck. When the policeman came, they had all gone. The witness was subjected to a lengthened cross-examination by the prisoners as to her identification of them, and she made several discrepancies in her statement. At one time, she stated that Craven was the one she identified, and at another time Rodgers. It was evident, however, that she was very confused. Her husband, **Edward Jewell**, swore to Rodgers and Holland. Holland hit him on the back of the head, and the man on the horse hit him on the jaw. When the deceased came up, he asked what they were doing to his horse. Rodgers then struck him down, and witness also received several blows. Glennan and Holland struck deceased several blows and knocked him down twice. He then went for a policeman. As he was coming back with the officer, they all ran; the policeman took up the chase, and ran Rodgers down to his own house. He afterwards saw Holland standing at the door of a public house with three men. Witness was cross-examined by Holland to show that witness did not identify him at the Police Station, when he admitted that he did not then, but had since in his own mind.

Mary Fowler, a widow living in Wood Street, was passing through Jersey Street, and saw the row. She spoke to seeing blows exchanged at a distance, and on coming nearer, she saw Rodgers strike deceased. The first blow did not knock him down. Holland struck him, and he fell and got up again, when Rodgers and Holland knocked him down again. She then saw the deceased turn round on his chest, and several of them began to kick him. She saw Craven and Glennan in the crowd, but she did not see them strike or kick. She raised the alarm of police, and they ran away. She ran to the man, and he was taken into a neighbour's house, and died in her arms. She identified Holland at once at the station.

Jane Foster, a married woman living in Jersey Street, spoke of the incident of the horse, and said she heard the deceased say, "Don't be foolish, young man, get off". They then knocked his hat over his eyes, and Rodgers came up and struck him in the face. A man very much like Holland ran at him and hit him, and kicked him. There was a crowd round. When it dispersed, she saw the deceased bleeding, and she went to him to pick him up, and Rodgers ran at her and attempted to kick her, and called her a foul name. They all then ran away. She helped to carry him into her house, where he died in the arms of last witness. She could only identify Rodgers.

William Barber proved seeing Craven run away.

Police-constable Simpson, the officer who was called by the boatman, deposed to chasing Rodgers, whom he never lost sight of till he took refuge in his mother's house.

Detective Rowbottom proved the apprehension of Holland, who said that he knew nothing about it. The other prisoners were apprehended by Sergeant Bateman. The wife of the deceased was called to identify the body, and Dr Pearse, the house surgeon of the Infirmary, who made a *post mortem* examination of the body, deposed to the cause of death. He said he found a number of bruises on both sides of the face, especially on the right side. Below the eye, there was a small wound with a contused edge. There was a very severe bruise external to the right temple, and blood was issuing from the right ear. On removing the top of the skull, he found a large quantity of extravasated blood on the brain. The wound on the right temple was sufficient to have caused death. The appearance of the body was healthy. The kick must have been a very severe one, as the tissues were quite unrecognisable.

The prisoners were here made to take off their clogs, which were examined by the witness, who said that the wounds might have been caused by them.

The prisoner Glennan, on being called for his defence, said that he was away at the time. He left Manchester on Monday and went to Leeds, and slept on Monday night at Huddersfield and Tuesday night at Leeds. Left Leeds on the morning the incident occurred about ten, and did not arrive in

Manchester till half past eleven. He told this story in a truthful manner, gave the address of the night refuges he had slept in, and called two witnesses who were his companions on the journey to Leeds. Holland made a similar defence, and said that he had been to Oldham, but not with such an air of truth about it. The prisoners were then committed to the assizes, Mr Fowler remarking that the charge verged very much upon murder. They would, however, be committed for manslaughter. The friends of the prisoners raised a great cry in court on their being committed. The inquest was opened at the City Court, and adjourned to Thursday.

#### **24 October 6 1866**

**THE FATAL OUTRAGE IN ANCOATS** Sergeant Rowbottom of the Manchester detective force, apprehended another man on this charge about one o'clock on Wednesday morning, in Wigan. His name is John Dunne, and he is the person described by the witness last week as having mounted the boatman's horse, knocked deceased's hat off and, according to the evidence of the boatman's wife, jumped upon the deceased. He was brought before the magistrates on Wednesday, and Sergeant Rowbottom stated that, when he charged the prisoner with the offence, he admitted having got upon the horse, and that both the boatman and the deceased asked him to get off, after which the men began to kick deceased, but he (prisoner) did nothing to him. The two witnesses, Mrs Foster and Mrs Fowler, who were examined last week, identified him as the man who mounted the horse. Mrs Foster said she saw him jump off, but could not say whether he jumped on deceased's neck ; if he did so, it was accidental. He was committed to the assizes.

#### **25 November 24 1866**

**THE FLOODS – GREAT LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY**

**MANCHESTER AND SALFORD** On Saturday, the scene of the inundations to Broughton and Salford were visited by crowds so great as to swell the ordinary traffic through Strangeways to something like the dimensions of the Whitsuntide race days. The Bury New Road was on the previous day flooded to a depth of several feet from the north end of the Assize Courts as far as the ascent of Higher Broughton. Very few pedestrians ventured upon wading, and the carts and omnibuses, with full loads of passengers, made slow progress through the flood. The phenomenon of paddling one's own canoe along such a thoroughfare was exhibited with more or less applause or jeering from the inevitable mob, and was hardly surpassed in strangeness by the occasional appearance of a boat in tow of an omnibus. On Saturday at daybreak, the flood had so far receded as to leave quite dry nearly all the thoroughfares, but in the afternoon, a great part of Broughton Lane, Great Clowes Street, and the gardens and fields in that quarter, were still about a foot deep in water. Very early in the forenoon, the Mayor of Salford (Mr Pochin), accompanied by Mr Marshall, acting head constable, visited Broughton, and took measures to protect the deserted houses until the return of their occupants. This was not an unnecessary precaution as, in one instance, a house had been scarcely left by its inmates before two prowlers were seen attempting an entrance by a back window and, on being detected, were summarily punished by being thrown from a ladder into the water below. No case of robbery has, however, been reported to the police. In most instances, people returned to their houses as soon as it was possible to approach them, and found their household goods in a sad plight as, in the haste of departure on Friday, the furniture had not been removed from the lower to the upper rooms. All Lower Broughton and adjacent parts bore evident traces of the flood. Deposits of slimy mud were everywhere visible, and the great numbers of cellars of the district formed reservoirs of water and mud which, owing to the want of cellar drains, had to be baled and pumped out with much labour. To assist in this operation, the mayor ordered out the fire brigade, with their engines, with instructions to attend in the first instance to cellar dwellings, that the inhabitants of these wretched abodes might return to them if they could. In the next place, the efforts of the men were to be given to the clearing of works stopped by the water, that labour might be resumed ; and, these tasks accomplished, they were to give aid wherever required. The work seemed to be pitifully slow and difficult. Some of the sights witnessed were of a most dismal description. The river had apparently first burst its bounds at the end of the Hough

Lane, where it had broken the embankment for some distance, and carried with it large quantities of sand and gravel, which it flung upon the adjacent parts. A little below the broken embankment, mud was deposited to a very considerable depth, and a beautiful garden attached to a dwelling at this point was completely destroyed by the flood, and the materials it brought with it. Just outside the broken embankment, the torrent had hollowed out something resembling a cavern, extending nearly across the road, and in which a lamppost had been swallowed up, the top only remaining visible. The large number of streets between this point and the bridge, bounded on one side by the river and on the other by Lower Broughton Road, appeared to have been the most deeply inundated, the water line on the dwellings varying from four to six feet high ; and here the injury to furniture was very great. In its course along Lower Broughton Road, the flood had risen high on all the houses on either side ; and the force with which it had rushed along was rendered apparent by levelled garden walks, and the destruction of ornamental palisades. The paper works of Messrs Robertson and Stansby, in this street, were flooded to a great depth. It was said the loss to the firm in paper alone would be £1000, and a lurry loaded with five tons of material had been floating about the yard. Following the same line along Sussex Street to the new iron footbridge across the river to Springfield Lane, an equal degree of destruction was observable. A number of houses in course of erection had been partly thrown down by the force of the current, and in some instances those left standing were so injured that it will be necessary to pull them down. Along Great Clowes Street, especially upon the left hand from the bridge, the neatly kept gardens were covered with mud, walls and fences being thrown over, summer houses displaced and upset, and the furniture within the houses more or less damaged. Behind Russell Terrace, perhaps greater ruin had been wrought than anywhere else, the flood having rushed unimpeded over a large space of unoccupied ground until it broke upon the back garden walls, partly carrying them before it, and on receding it left great pools in the low lying gardens. At the end of Duke Street, a lake of great depth had been left, in which it was said a man named Thomas Bowen had been drowned, and for whose body diligent search was made on Saturday without success. In the Salford district – the Adelphi and the locality between Broughton Road and the river – the damage, from the nature of the property, was not so apparent, but the aggregate loss to the poor inhabitants must be something very considerable. The Mayors of Manchester and Salford have sanctioned the placing of subscription boxes in several public places for the collection of pence for the relief of the sufferers. In several public works on the Salford side, great damage has been done, and shopkeepers have also lost considerably by the flooding of their cellars. A grocer in Chapel Street has lost upwards of £150 worth of sugar alone. Fortunately the new river wall erected opposite the Crescent to protect the Willow Bank, and which was only finished very recently, was found on the subsidence of the river to have remained intact, although large quantities of soil had been scooped out from behind. Pool Park, during Saturday, remained navigable throughout the whole extent of the lower part, although in the deeper parts the water had fallen from a height of eleven feet to six feet. On Sunday forenoon, it had fallen considerably lower, and it was found that the highest walk had been covered by at least 5 ft of water. Beyond the Park, in the Wallness, considerable damage has been done, and on towards the Suspension Bridge, the ground remained on Sunday almost entirely under water.

The person named above as having been drowned was not the only one who lost his life. Bowen was a sheriff's officer in the employ of Mr Martin Newton. It is said that he was on his return from serving a writ of distraint when he lost his footing, near Broughton Town Hall, and fell into the deep pool in Duke Street ; his body has not been recovered. Another victim was a man named Samuel Hall, a carter in the employment of Mr Edge, Harris Street, Strangeways. He had been out with his horse and cart about five o'clock on Friday, and was told by his master that it was unsafe to cross the river to the stable, which was on the Salford side near the iron bridge leading from Sherborne Street, Strangeways. He, however, ventured to cross this bridge, over which the water was flowing, and when he got to the opposite side of the river, the current was so strong that the horse, cart and driver were washed away. The horse and cart lodged on a piece of waste land close by, and the body of the man was carried down the stream, and has not been recovered. A third loss of life occurred at Messrs Lockett's engraving works, Strangeways. These premises are situate close to the

river, and have suffered much in the flood. Adjoining the river is a joiner's shop, a building two storeys high. Several workmen had congregated there ; amongst others, an old man named James Radcliffe, who could not be induced to leave. He said that he was safe enough, for the water would never reach him. His son tried to persuade him to leave, but the old man was obstinate. This was about eleven o'clock on Friday evening. Just at that time, the flood freshened, and the water rose rapidly, and the other men left. The water was about up to the crown of the arch of the gateway leading from Lockett Street. About three o'clock in the morning, the outer wall of the joiner's shop, which had been sapped by a branch of the stream, gave way, and the whole building collapsed. The unfortunate man was washed down the stream, and his body was found early in the morning at the Salford new bridge. Several instances of narrow escapes are recorded. One occurred to Sergeant Dewsnap and a police officer named Savage. The sergeant went to the assistance of some persons, when he fell into the water, and was carried into the current. Being a good swimmer, he managed to reach the Salford side, expecting to hear that his fellow officer had been drowned, as he saw his hat floating down the stream. Luckily, however, Savage managed to get on to a raft, and reached the Manchester side in safety. One of the most dangerous localities of the flood was Broughton Lane. In several places, the iron railings were washed across the road, and in one instance they nearly capsized a cab. The water was so deep that the horse had to be taken out of the cab, and the cab had to be left until morning. Mr Superintendent Tozer and the members of the Fire Brigade, and the police generally, rendered very efficient service in rescuing the inhabitants of the flooded houses. On one occasion, Mr Tozer was in considerable danger. He fell into a culvert which was partially open in Broughton Lane, but escaped fortunately with only an unpleasant ducking.

After brilliantly fine and frosty weather all Saturday, people were alarmed again by the heavy fall of rain during the night, and until noon on Sunday. Between twelve and one o'clock on Sunday afternoon, the water again rose with alarming rapidity, and all the low lying portions of the district were once more submerged. A perfect panic appeared to prevail among the inhabitants, many of whom removed from the neighbourhood during the day. Even on Saturday, people on returning home found the condition of their dwellings so alarming that instead of attempting to render them habitable again, they removed their property forthwith. In this wise, perhaps 100 houses were vacated on Saturday alone. The exodus spread consternation among the house agents and owners, who vainly endeavoured to persuade the fugitives that large fires would speedily cure the damp. The second flood was even less expected than the first, and as it occurred during divine service, many families who were in the churches or chapels had to wade knee deep to their houses, In lower Broughton Road and other streets, the houses which had been cleaned up and restored by hard work on Saturday, were found in nearly as bad a plight as before. The experience was enough to quench every hope of house holding in the neighbourhood again, and the hint was very extensively acted upon. Lurries and furniture vans were remarkably in demand for a Sunday afternoon, and labour was hired at extraordinary rates. In many cases where the people were too poor to remove in this fashion, there was the same determination not to sleep another night in Lower Broughton. Men were seen staggering under loads of beds and bedding, husbands carrying their wives, and sons their mothers. The panic lasted till evening, although the flood, which had scarcely risen to one third the height of the previous day, had subsided early in the afternoon. The removal has chiefly been from Drake Street, Union Street, Sussex Street and Willis Street. In Drake Street, the chimney pieces had been washed away, and flags in the kitchen floors were displaced, leaving the houses quite unsafe. The foundations have not only been sapped but washed away. An unfortunate woman living in one of these streets was so frightened that she became insane, and had to be conveyed to the lunatic ward of the Workhouse. In another case, the removal had to be arranged so suddenly that the body of a child which died on Sunday morning had to be packed up with the furniture in one of the vans. The incidents included every variety of the grotesque. Where there was no actual removal, the sudden rise of the flood sent everybody to the upper floors. Man and beast were driven together, and the case of a pig in a bedroom ceased to be suggestive of Irish partiality. The man who escaped the Portland fire with no other salvage than a packet of envelopes was nearly paralleled – not quite – by a lady whose presence of mind was just equal to a flight upstairs with a shovelful of coals – not

a bad thought either, when there was no second chance of visiting the cellar for a day or two. Up to Sunday night, there was neither drinking water nor gas available in many of the houses. The members of the Broughton volunteer fire brigade were rendering conspicuous service by lighting people about with flaming torches. During Sunday, the thousands of sightseers who thronged the Strangeways and Broughton Roads completed the previous day's resemblance to a fair or a race going.

It would be impossible to estimate accurately the damage which has been caused. Messrs Lockett, Strangeways, have suffered very severely, the inconvenience sustained by the washing out of the patterns being very great. The new Salford bridge has received some damage from the continual concussion of the barrels and debris that floated down the river, but its stability has not in any way been impaired. The footway across Waterloo Bridge has been stopped. The Sherborne Street Bridge, which had to be closed on Friday, is reopened and quite uninjured, but was very slippery on Sunday from the lubrication of various oil casks which had been wrecked upon it. Messrs Briggs of the chemical works are very great losers. Most of the casks which were seen floating down the river belonged to this firm. There has been a salvage of about 20 barrels, which were arrested at different portions of the river. Messrs Calden, at the horse repository near Victoria Bridge, were very successful in removing their horses to an upper floor. Several houses in Lower Broughton have been rendered uninhabitable, the partition walls in many cases having fallen. On Sunday, about noon, a large number of oil casks, some empty and others full, went floating down the river.

**DREADFUL CATASTROPHE AT LEEDS** The stream of the Aire was swollen to a considerable extent during the course of Friday and Saturday, owing to the heavy rains which prevailed for some sixteen hours, these downfalls appearing to have been general throughout the whole Craven and Airedale district. At Kirkstall, the river overflowed on to the rails, leaving no distinction between its natural and adopted course than here an overturned porter's box, and there the remains of the wooden passenger station. At Kirkstall forge, the bridge was undermined by the seething waters, the down line of rails having sunk several feet. At the Forge itself, an immense amount of damage was done, as was the case all along the course of the valley. Near Apperley Bridge Station, on the Midland line, was a viaduct of some seven or eight arches spanning the river Aire. The swollen stream brought down a quantity of debris, and this rubbish had ultimately the effect of weakening and bringing down the bridge. A goods engine and several trucks were precipitated into the stream, but the driver and stoker saw the danger ahead, and leaped off before the carriages reached the place where they made their plunge into the waters beneath.

All other matters connected with loss of property by flood, however, pale into insignificance when compared with the loss of life which occurred at Leeds Bridge on Saturday morning. The flood gradually declined after midnight on Friday, and on Saturday, in consequence of many of the mills being stopped by backwater and other causes, a great many factory girls and operatives wandered along the course of the stream to see the wreck that the tumultuous current brought down. The bridge over the Aire, at the foot of Briggate, is composed of three arches, and on Friday night, a large boat laden with coal was rudely torn from her moorings and dashed against the buttresses of the bridge. Here she materially obstructed the current, and turned a body of water through the third arch, nearest Briggate, thus greatly increasing the wash on that side of the stream. Closely abutting upon this arch, and only separated from it by a narrow horseway leading down to the old ford, is Mr Conyer's leather factory. Two terraced roadways are built about this establishment, one on the fore shore, and about two feet above the ordinary level of the river, and the other several feet higher. On this lower platform or landing, some 35 persons were standing on Saturday morning, most of them being mill hands. Suddenly the balcony, which had been persistently washed by the waves since ten o'clock on the preceding day, gave way, and the whole mass of humanity were swept away by the roaring stream. As man and woman, boy and girl, were carried under the archway, their pale upturned faces were seen gaspingly shrieking out for that succour which no human hand was able to extend to them. For the waters, pent up within a very restricted channel, roared and raged furiously against the archway, which was barely able to carry off the great body of the stream. The unfortunates soon disappeared beneath Mr Swabey's wharf, on the lower side of the bridge, and

here it was that bravery and moral courage were first shown by the persons about the spot. Self possession had by this time returned, and great efforts were made to rescue the drowning creatures, who were rapidly being borne away by the cataract of waters. Two boatmen broke open the door of a little office on Mr Swabey's stage, and succeeded in rescuing two men from the watery grave that was imminent. A third man had apparently got stunned against the beams of the landing, for though a gallant fellow of the name of Kirtley fastened a rope round his body, and then jumped into the river to recover the body, he found that his humane labours had been in vain, for life had departed. The corpse turned out to be that of Mr Ellis, a cloth dresser living in Wilson Street, Leeds – a young man about thirty years of age. Two captains of river vessels fortunately happened to be on Warehouse Hill, where the corn factors' offices are situated, when the alarm of the accident was given. One was **Thomas Harrison** of the *Clara*, of Rawcliffe near Goole, and the other **Henry Stones** of the *Vesta*, hailing from Louth in Lincolnshire. As soon as they realised the situation, they jumped aboard a vessel near the quay, and prepared for emergencies. The first sight they observed was that of a number of females clustered together in the despairing death agony, each having her hands rigidly interlaced in the hair or the clothing of her companion. As this floating mass of humanity was being rapidly hurried past the vessel upon which Harrison and Stones had taken up their position, the latter, each armed with a boat hook, succeeded in catching hold of the drowning girls, and dragged them on deck without much difficulty, owing to the vice like and tenacious grasp in which each female held her neighbour. The wharves were crowded with spectators, who had gone down to see the wreck floating down the stream, but whose interest was soon deepened into intensity when they saw the drowning persons struggling with the seething and furious current, their countenances already ghastly with the horror of death and, before any assistance could be attempted, some twenty human creatures were hurried into eternity by the cruel flood. On Sunday morning, the body of a girl of 17 was taken out of the river near Low Fold. A vast amount of live and dead stock carried down the stream, and amongst other articles of property were noticed, on Sunday, a cottage piano, a kitchen dresser, a portion of a bedstead, hay and straw, &c. At Low Fold, about half a mile below Leeds Bridge, a great deal of mischief was done. Here the river runs parallel to the canal, the only intervening space being a green field. On Saturday and Sunday, this neighbourhood presented the appearance of a lake, the accumulated volume of water rushing past Taylor's forge like a cataract. Among the establishments that have sustained damage from the flood are those of Mr Thompson, leather and cloth works, 100 hides having been swept away, as well as a portion of the building ; and Messrs Hives and Atkinson, flax spinners, where the water in the A building almost reached up to the threads in the spinning frames. The night shift man at the latter establishment heard an anxious cry for help from a poor fellow who was floating past on the full flood, but he was unable to render him any assistance, and the unfortunate wretch drifted away to his doom. Considerable damage has been done to the North Eastern Extension Works in School Close, the plant and material having been very considerably disarranged by the furious current. An inquest was held on Monday afternoon at the Leeds Town Hall, before Mr Emsley, coroner, on the body of William Ellis, 30 years of age, and who resided at Beeston Hill, Leeds. The deceased, who was a married man without family, was employed under his father at a cloth dresser's establishment in Wilson Street. Owing to the flooding of the mill in Wilson Street, he and another man named Rayner went to see the course of the raging torrent. They visited several places before they arrived at Leeds Bridge, but when they reached the latter point, they both appear to have availed themselves of the fatal stage attached to Mr Conyers's leather factory. Thirteen mill girls, who had been prevented from working from the same cause – had preceded them, and there were also other persons on the platform, the number altogether being about 30. When the flood carried away the balcony, Lee and the deceased were both whirled under the archway of the bridge, but the latter appears to have struck his head against some timber or stone, and to have been almost immediately killed. He was dead when the two boatmen just below the bridge fished him out of the stream. Lee was more fortunate, for the raging stream carried him under Mr Swabey's pier, and here he managed to buoy himself up until the boatmen above broke a hole in the wooden platform, and thus rescued the half dying and unconscious man. Sergeant Sutherland of the police force, said

he warned the people against going on the landing, but they persisted in spite of his caution. Mr Conyers, the proprietor of the platform in question, stated that it was about six yards long, and it rested for its whole length upon two strong brick walls. There was also about a yard of walling outside the landing, on the side next to the river. The force of the stream had been against it for nearly 24 hours. It was his opinion, however, that the landing was sufficiently strong to resist the flood, and that it had been struck by the swept down stage of the Messrs Hudson. The jury found a verdict of "Accidental death".

PRESTON A flood, the like of which has not been seen for 30 years, prevailed at Preston. On Friday afternoon, the flood all along the valley of the Ribble, from Ribchester past Preston and down as far as Salwick, a distance of about ten miles, continued to increase ; but, as the rain ceased early in the afternoon – it had fallen incessantly since Thursday morning – the overflow did not extend so rapidly as it had previously done. From four o'clock in the afternoon up to half past ten at night, it rose about ten feet, and then began to subside. During Friday evening, the most extraordinary scenes were observable. All the workshops and some of the mills on the western side of the town adjoining the banks of the Ribble had for some hours before that time been inundated and closed and, as the current of water which ran through some of the streets at the rate of ten or twelve miles an hour continued to increase in volume and impetuosity, those parties who had removed their furniture upstairs and had taken up their quarters in the bedrooms, became more apprehensive, and several of them hailed passing boats, sailed to the bottom of Fishergate Hill, and then proceeded into the town to the houses of their friends. The individuals who remained in their deluged houses had, of necessity, to put up with many inconveniences. All the gas meters were stopped up with water, their supplies of coal in the cellars and back yards were cut off, lights had to be supplied to some people through bedroom windows, and others had to get all sorts of rubbish to keep up their fires. One young woman, whilst looking at a gas meter which was out of order, caused an explosion, and got blown out of a room. Her arms and face were badly burned. On Saturday night, the gas could not be lighted in several of the houses on the western side of town. Many persons had to keep pigs in their houses on Friday night, and one man who lives on the Ribble side had to accommodate a horse as well as several pigs in his house. Late on Friday night, fears were entertained as to the safety of the tramway bridge, but it stood firm, although at one time the water was within a foot of running over it. Several sheep – 15 or 20 – which had been driven upon an embankment between the East Lancashire and North Union Railways, were washed away. During the day, many cattle and sheep were drowned and washed away. A dog kennel and a chest of drawers also floated down the river from some place, and large rafts of timber occasionally passed along with the current. Haystacks and trees were nearly out of sight. On Friday evening, a lurry and three horses belonging to Messrs Dobson and Barlow, machinists of Bolton, had, along with the driver and several other persons riding with him, nearly been washed away at Walton. Directly they had passed the bridge there, the water swept lurry, horses and men off the road against a hedge. Hours elapsed before they could be rescued. In the course of the evening, a man named Fox went from one of the Preston livery stables with a horse and drag, to endeavour to rescue the men on the lurry. Fox got pretty near them, but before he could reach the spot, his conveyance and horse were washed right over the road. The horse was drowned. Fox got hold of a fruit tree in a nursery garden, and it was ten minutes to twelve o'clock at night before he was got off it. At one of the cotton mills in Walton, all the operatives were thrown out of work on Friday, and the rapidly rising waters barely gave them time to escape. At Longridge, a neighbouring village, which stands on considerably higher ground northwards – cottages, roads &c were flooded. The highway between Preston and Garstang was almost impassable, even in conveyances in some parts, and land on the banks of the Brock and the Wyre was deluged for miles. A young man named Harrison was drowned whilst bringing a horse and cart from Cottam to Preston on Friday. Between Preston and Kirkham, miles of land were under water, and on some portions of the Preston and Wyre Railway, the trains had to pass through patches of water three feet deep. The footboards of the carriages were out of sight, and it was feared that the engine fires would be extinguished, but this was fortunately avoided. Loads of broken pieces of timber, supposed to be portions of wrecked vessels, were

washed into the estuary of the Ribble at Lytham. At Blackpool, there was not a very rough sea running on Friday, but the overflow of water which came from the drains and rivulets flooded the cellars of many houses extensively. Miles of land in the Fylde were inundated. At noon on Saturday, the Ribble had "dropped" within its banks several feet, and the overflow on all the adjoining land rapidly subsided, and enabled persons to form some idea of the damage which had been done by the flood. Many of the footwalks at the side of the river in Preston and the neighbourhood were greatly damaged ; some were nearly washed away ; the embankment had in several parts been swept away ; and the foundations of one of the adjoining inns were washed bare to the very bottom. A man named Crook, who lives at this inn, has lost nearly 20 pleasure boats. At Walton, the mill of Messrs Calvert Brothers has been damaged to the extent of £4000, and injury has been caused in and about the village which cannot be covered for less than £20,000. On Saturday morning, the dead body of a man named Whittaker was found in one of the rooms of Messrs Calvert's mill. He had been working at the place, and was last seen alive at five o'clock on Friday evening. The room he was found in contained a good deal of water, and it is supposed that on Friday evening he had been climbing up to one of the mill windows, had then fallen back, and had been either drowned or killed by the machinery which he might come in contact with. At Myerscough, the Lancaster and Preston Canal overflowed its banks ; and at Croston, vast tracts of land were inundated by the river Yarrow. The streets of the village were in some places four or five feet deep in water.

Soon after nine o'clock on Sunday morning, the water in the Ribble began to increase again, and as the forenoon advanced, people living on the banks of the river were apprehensive of another flood. At noon, the water had risen about five feet, and at half past two in the afternoon, it had increased two more feet. At this time, the river was overflowing again in several places. The lower part of Penwortham Holme and a portion of the marshes below were flooded ; the water was running nearly level with Preston New Quay, and it was only a few inches from running over upon the highway along Ribble Place and towards Penwortham. The remaining portions of the footpath from Penwortham Bridge to the North Union Railway – about a quarter of a mile long – were covered, and the water washed roughly about the foundations of the Pleasure Boat Inn, which had previously been bared by the flood. The overflow also spread into two or three fields on the south western side of the Ribble, between the railway bridges. Some people who had left their houses on the Ribble side on Sunday morning could not get back to them without boats after dinner. The ground beneath some of the railings adjoining the North Union Railway Bridge has been washed away, and the stones intended to act as supports are hanging to the iron bars let into them. A good deal of water has been drained out of the Avenham valley. Miller Park presented a very muddy desolate appearance. Thousands of persons on Sunday afternoon were standing on the walks above the Ribble, watching the rapidly flowing river and looking at the damage which Friday's flood caused. Several huge logs of wood and portions of trees floated down the river on Sunday. At about three o'clock, the water began to subside again rather suddenly, and it continued to do so until eight o'clock at night, when the tide checked the current a little and heightened the water slightly. The bodies of two men have been washed up at Penwortham Holme. It appears that both of them were Preston men, that their names were Diggles and Ashcroft, and that they were last seen in a boat on Friday, looking out for wreck coming down the Ribble. The inquest on the body of the man Whittaker, whose dead body was found in Messrs Calvert's mill at Walton, has been held. The evidence showed that he was drowned after attempting to rescue several men who had been washed away on a wagon at Walton, and that he was under the influence of drink at the time. At Penwortham, two cottages situated at the side of the highway leading from Preston to Leyland have been washed completely away. The foundations of many of the houses on the western side of Preston have been shaken very considerably.

**BRADFORD** On Friday, there was a very destructive flood at Bradford. The immense weight of rain which fell during the previous night and during the morning filled the brook which runs through the town to overflowing, and the consequence was that many thoroughfares, including Thornton Road, Leeds Road, Bridge Street, Market Street, Canal Road &c, presented the

appearance of rivers, in the streams of water that flowed through them, and the lower rooms of many mills, workshops, warehouses and dyehouses adjoining the banks of the beck were flooded, as were also all the cellars of the warehouses and shops situate near the course of the stream in the centre of the town. For more than a mile, places of business, workshops and cellars were inundated, and much valuable property was injured and destroyed. Some were able to rescue their property. At the early part of the day, the overflowing of the beck seemed aggravated by the circumstance that the flood gates, used for the purpose of impounding water required by the Bradford Canal, could not be opened to any great extent to allow a free course to the stream in the beck. A proposition to blow down the gates with gunpowder, though received with favour at first, was on mature consideration abandoned, from the fear that a sudden opening of the gates would flood the lower rooms of an adjoining manufactory, where valuable materials was stored and could not be removed, and also inundate the Gasworks in the same locality, and probably put the town in darkness for the night. Situated at the junction of several valleys, which have a confluence of streams, the town has been always liable, as its original name (Broadford) would indicate, to floods, and if we venture to make an estimate from the data supplied by previous floods, 10 or 20 years ago, the damage at present cannot be less than £40,000 or £50,000.

**A RAILWAY VIADUCT AND TRAIN SWEEP AWAY** The valleys of the Aire and Wharfe were on Friday covered with broad streams of deep water, thousands of acres of pasture land being entirely covered. Trees were rooted up in every direction, the tops of those which maintained their ground peered through the water to tell of their desolate state. About half past five o'clock, eight or ten lofty arches which form a long viaduct of the Midland Railway at Esholt, were swept away by the flood. The intimation of the accident was a loud crash, which was heard by one of the platelayers on the line. He ran to the Apperley Bridge Station with the alarm. The promptitude of himself and the station master in all probability was the means of saving life. Having put on the distance signal intimating danger, both the station master and some of his assistants, with great intrepidity, ran over the bridge to give warning to an approaching luggage train. As they got over the bridge, the train came through the Thackley tunnel, a short distance from the viaduct, and was signalled. The train, however, did not stop, but went slowly on towards the viaduct. The luggage train no sooner touched the viaduct than the whole mass of masonry fell, and the train fell into the breach a dreadful wreck. The water had sapped the abutment of the bridge nearest the tunnel, and it gave way, followed by the rest of the bridge. The driver and others in charge of the luggage had to get down from the train, and left it to proceed into the open gulph and sink into the water. The Worth Valley, between Keighley and Howarth, presented at every step indications of the disasters caused by the flood of Friday, and the country above and below Keighley was one vast sheet of water, rolling down in a restless torrent, and tearing up almost everything in its way. Mills and dwelling houses had been flooded, and many persons rescued with difficulty from drowning. Both town and country had been very unceremoniously cleared of long accumulations of impurity.

**STOCKPORT** At Stockport, the Mersey is said to have been higher on Friday than at any time since 1799. A number of mills were flooded, and considerable damage was done. Trees, timber, barrels and carcasses of animals came down the river. Houses and fields were inundated. The water rolled by the margin of Vernon Park impetuously, and flooded the lands higher up the river. At the weir, the river was so full that the little cataract which forms a source of attraction to so many entirely disappeared. The lower storey of Mr Hopwood's new mill, in which a quantity of machinery had been placed, was inundated. A shed at the back of Mr Emery's mill was carried away. The extensive works of Mr Geo Gould, dyer, Chestergate, were severely visited, and considerable damage done to the building, portions of the brickwork being washed cleanly away. The well and pump also received injury, and a quantity of liquid used in the process of dyeing was lost, and the well much injured. The water in the works was seven feet deep. The height of the river above the usual level, measured at Wellington Bridge, was about fourteen feet. The embankment near Brinksway Bridge was washed away to a considerable extent. A boy about 15 years of age, son of Mr Nixon, Whitehill Farm, Reddish, ventured on to a field on the edge of the river at his father's farm at noon on Friday, in quest of salvage, but was surrounded by the water and

had to take refuge in a tree. He remained there the whole of the afternoon and night, and the water raged furiously past on all sides. No effort to release him proved successful, and he had to remain in his perilous position until Saturday. Pigs, a cow and calf, and a living dog chained to its kennel, went down the river. The whole country from Heaton Mersey to Northenden was one complete sheet of water, in some places said to be six feet deep. The traffic of the line from Tivet Dale station to Northenden was swamped. The lands of Mr Watkin MP were swamped, the water reaching within 30 or 40 yards of his residence.

**MARPLE AND COMPSTALL** At Marple, New Mills, and further up the course of the Goyt, the embankments suffered, and the plantations along each side were greatly injured. The Marple Bridge forge weir, unable to stand the immense pressure and the constant battering of trees &c hurled against it by the roaring mass, gave way, and was reduced to a complete wreck. The corn mills of Mr Andrew were flooded, and a colliery belonging to the same gentleman was invaded to the extent of about two feet, many of the workmen narrowly escaping with their lives. Beyond the flooding of the lower parts of some of the buildings adjacent to the river (including the Norfolk Arms), there is nothing further serious. Lower down the stream, at Haughton Dale, a good deal of commotion was caused ; for besides deeply flooding the machinery at Mr Walton's wireworks, the cataract washed away an iron footbridge connected with the works, and another wooden footbridge. The iron bridge was carried down as far as Lower Haughton Bridge, where a portion of it was received. As the water increased, tree after tree was torn up and carried along with great velocity. As usual on the occurrence of such disasters, a large number of persons zealously engaged themselves in the foolhardy occupation of gathering salvage, in the shape of wood, skips &c, from the surface of the water as it rushed past. On many occasions the result has proved serious, and it is stated that at Dukinfield a number of men were so engaged, armed with grappling irons and ropes, that for greater safety one of them secured one end of a rope to a large tree growing on the river's bank, and fastened the other end round his body ; and that having been engaged for some time "grappling", by a sudden rise of the water the tree was washed down, and the unfortunate man dragged into and carried away by the roaring, surging element. A messenger on horseback was dispatched to various places down the stream, but failed to gain any tidings of the man who, we are informed, has left a wife and seven children.

**DEWSBURY** A considerable portion of the suburbs, and part of the town of Dewsbury were inundated by the river Calder overflowing its banks. From the woollen mills of Messrs Senior, Porrett and Co, several bales of shoddy were washed away. The people at work in the manufactories were much alarmed, for all egress therefrom was cut off except by vehicles. From eight o'clock to half past, the water rose seven inches, and was higher than at the time of the Holmfirth flood. The carcasses of cattle, pigs and other animals, the trunks of trees, and household furniture were swept down the river. The shops in the centre of the town were flooded with water several feet, and the greatest alarm prevailed. All the mills on the bank of the river and for some distance inland had their engine fires extinguished and their lower rooms inundated. Pieces of machinery (large wooden rollers &c) were observed floating down the valley, along with trees, carcasses of pigs, cows and horses. The water reached a higher point than it did on the occasion of the great flood at Holmfirth.

**GREAT LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY** At a late hour on Friday night, when the current was running strong through the whole district, a cab, driven by a man named George Draycott and belonging to Messrs Ockerby and Sons, was going over the Savile Bridge, and the driver from the box perceived that the road ahead was like a river. In the cab were three persons – Mr Matthew Thackrah, manufacturer, of the firm of Ellis and Thackrah, and two women, all residents at Savile Town. The whole of the occupants of the vehicle were desirous of reaching their homes, and the cabman, nothing daunted by the scene before him, drove on through the water, which was so high that at times it was with difficulty that the animal's head was kept above the surface, and nothing serious happened until the corner of Wharf Street had been reached. At this point, the road had been literally torn up by the rushing water, and by the dropping of the cab into a deep hole, the vehicle was overturned. The driver for a moment or two maintained his seat on the box, but the

struggles of the horse to liberate itself from the shafts compelled him to leave hold, when he was washed away, and found a watery grave. The occupants of the vehicle remained inside, up to the waist in water, and in an ecstasy of fright lest they should be rolled out of the road into deep water below. They were, however, gallantly rescued by Mr Wm Thackrah, after some hours exposure, and when they were nearly insensible. He went into the water up to the armpits, but was saved from being washed away by a strong rope tied to his middle and held by people on the bank. A sad catastrophe happened about a mile from the town and near Clegford Bridge. A cart, containing John Thorpe, the driver ; Mr Thomas Wild of Thornhill ; Mr Whittaker of Northgate, tailor and draper ; and his two sons (Matthew and William), together with a young man, a clerk in the Savile Estate Office, was passing along the road leading from Clegford Bridge to Fall Lane, the water being up to the horse's body at the time, and rapidly rising, when the stream, beating against the wall on the west side, burst it down, and carried the cart and its living freight through the boundary wall of the Dewsbury Mills yard, and hurled the whole into deep water, and some of them to the river below. Mr Whittaker and his sons were drowned, and so was Mr Wild. The driver also met his death. The clerk, whose name was not ascertained, and Mr Stead were more fortunate for, being driven against the roof of one of the stoving houses on the bank of the river at Dewsbury Mills, they made good their footing and escaped. Upon this place, though they made loud appeals for assistance, they had to remain until nearly two o'clock ; but by that time, the waters had so far subsided that by the aid of a boat they were rescued. The body of one of the Whittakers (a boy) was found shortly before ten o'clock in the lake spreading over the large yard attached to Dewsbury Mills. A man named Oldroyd was also drowned ; he was swept away close to the spot where the cabman met his end. A boy named Fligg belonging to Thornhill, who had ventured along the highway, was carried off and drowned in the sight of several people. A woman, also of Thornhill, has been drowned by the flood, and her body has not been recovered. The destruction of property at the mills on the banks of the river is immense ; one firm alone estimate their loss at £1000.

On Monday, Mr Thomas Taylor, the district coroner, held an inquiry at Dewsbury touching the death of three of the victims of the flood which occurred in the vale of the Calder on Friday and Saturday last. The names of the deceased were William Henry Whittaker, tailor ; George Draycott, cab driver ; and Thomas Oldroyd, mill operative. Evidence was given showing how each of deceased met their deaths. Draycott, it seems, was repeatedly warned not to go to the spot from whence he was washed away, but he paid no heed, and was drowned. The man Wild (whose death is already reported) was mainly answerable for the death of five persons, including himself, for it was given in evidence that he was drunk, and urged the driver of the wagon in which they were to go forward, though the road was like a torrent. This he did ; the wagon and its living freight were washed away, and only two out of seven escaped. Oldroyd, it was shown, was engaged in making heroic efforts to rescue first the occupants of a floating cab, and then two men who had been swept off a wagon laden with iron. The horse on which he was riding was swept away, and he rolled off its back to rise no more. The coroner made a few comments on his courageous conduct. Verdicts of "Accidental death" were returned. The bodies of the other victims have not yet been recovered.

**WARRINGTON** One of the highest and most destructive floods within living memory occurred on Saturday morning at Warrington. The Mersey, swollen by the heavy rains of Thursday night and Friday, rose to an enormous height, laid under water a vast extent of country, and destroyed an amount of property, including live stock, the value of which it is impossible to form any estimate. In a very short time, Knutsford Road was under water, the fields on either side were flooded, haystacks were undermined and swept away, and sheep, if not horned cattle and horses, were drowned. In Arpley especially, on the Lancashire side where, as is well known, the land is low lying and at all times liable to floods, were the effects of the disaster apparent. At ten o'clock, the highest point of the flood was reached, and the state of things then in the low lying parts of the town, particularly in Mersey Street and Latchford, was most serious. The river, at Warrington Bridge, was within about two inches of the highest arch, and only a few inches below the stone archway on the edge of the river leading towards Arpley, rushing on at a terrific rate. Arpley, seen from the railway station, was a vast sheet of water, extending as far as the eye could reach ; The

Recreation Ground was covered, and boats were out upon it ; and in several fields, parties were out in boats searching for sheep, a considerable number of which, it is feared, had perished. As to the height of the flood, some idea may be formed from the fact that it extended as far into the town as Fennel Street and Dial Street, up to the Bridewell steps, the water in the kitchen of the Old Cow being a foot or more in depth. No part of the town has suffered so much as Latchford. Along the Wilderspool Road it was impossible for foot passengers to proceed ; between the bridge and the level crossing, people were carried in carts or other conveyances, and the houses on the river side were, of course, all flooded. The water reached almost to the window sills of the cottages at Arpley View, and the inhabitants were imprisoned, finding it necessary to betake themselves to their bedrooms for safety. In the provision shops, we believe considerable damage will have been done. Knutsford Road, however, was in the worst plight. It was impossible for conveyances of any kind to get along. As far as Black Bear Bridge, and extending far on either side, it was one complete waste of water. The flood came up as far as Sparling Street, and entered the courts and yards in the vicinity. In Bakehouse Yard, which is inhabited wholly by poor people, the water was three or four feet deep, and several who lived in cellar dwellings were completely drowned out. In James Street, the water rose as high as the door steps of some of the houses. The water rushed down Princess Street and Fountain Street with great rapidity. Messrs Roberts, Dale and Co on Friday received a telegram from their Manchester establishment, informing them of the state of things there. This put them on the alert, and they had a great quantity of acids removed out of harm's way. But it was impossible wholly to avert the danger. Five pans of magenta liquor, at their Latchford works, were completely lost. Each pan contained five hundred gallons. The whole works were flooded, and the workpeople had to return home. There was nearly a foot of water in the counting house. Messrs Roberts, Dale and Co's Mersey Street works were also stopped. Messrs Edelston and Son's pin mill was stopped, the workmen being unable to get up to it. Some of the stock belonging to cow keepers and others was with difficulty saved. The cattle and horses were loosed from their stalls and conveyed to places of safety. A luggage train coming from Arpley station about ten o'clock came to a stand suddenly in the water, causing a violent shock. The guard was struck by the handle of the break and severely hurt, and a man who was in the van with him was thrown down. In Howley Lane and Dutton Street, the cottages were flooded to such an extent that the furniture in the kitchens was floating about, and the cottagers were obliged to take refuge in the upper storeys of their dwellings until they were rescued.

WIGAN To the north side of Wigan, the river Douglas appeared to reach its highest point about noon on Friday, but to the south east, where it is joined by several large brooks, the flood gradually increased in extent till far on in the evening. Near here, large numbers of dwellings were filled with water, and much of the overflow found its way into the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Here, scores of meadows were placed under water, and the highway from Wigan to Ormskirk and Liverpool was covered at Robin Lane Ends two or three feet deep for a couple of hundred yards. It was market day at Wigan, and those farmers who had come into the town on foot had to avail themselves of the carts which plied for hire at the spot, and ferried passengers over for a few pence each. Beyond this point, the valley widens considerably, and the canal runs for several miles close to the banks of the river. On Friday afternoon, and for some time on Saturday morning, the course of the stream was hardly to be distinguished, and the towing path of the canal was in many parts all that was to be noticed amidst a perfect wilderness of water. At Newburgh, some eight miles from Wigan, the flood gradually rose until the evening, and then caused a serious stoppage of the traffic on the Manchester and Southport Railway. A few hundred yards beyond the Newburgh passenger station, the river runs beneath a small embankment, and for some hours this embankment formed a sort of dam, and created a great lake on the south side of the railway. Just after the five o'clock express from Manchester had passed the spot, there appears to have been a sudden rise of the waters, owing, it is thought, to the lifting of a floodgate on the canal, which was then full to overflowing, and in a very short time a portion of the flood was rushing over the railway, and covering the road to a depth of four or five feet. All further traffic was, of course, stopped for the night, and as there was no subsiding of the waters till after nine o'clock next morning, very considerable inconvenience and

delay were caused. The trains between Southport and Wigan were sent round by Rainford and Burscough junctions – causing the loss of several hours – till noon on Saturday, when one line was opened, but it was dusk before both were in working order. Large quantities of the sand and gravel forming the embankment were washed into the adjacent fields, but none of the rails were lifted from the road. In this neighbourhood, the banks of the river were in many places only faintly perceptible on Saturday afternoon, while beyond, hundreds of fields were hidden by the water. Many of the small farmers had much difficulty in saving their cattle and pigs ; but so far as can be learned, no live stock has been lost.

On Sunday afternoon a lad, ten years of age, named John Sweeney, was kneeling upon a small wooden bridge, just touched by the water, when he overbalanced himself, fell into the current, and was immediately lost to sight.

**BLACKBURN AND DISTRICT** The flood of Friday was thoroughly abated on the evening of that day, but not before it had done a vast amount of damage to householders, shopkeepers and mill owners. In ten mills which were stopped by the river water slowing into the flues and slacking out the fires, more or less damage was done by the water completely saturating and damaging weft and yarn, and a large number of beams in the looms were destroyed or seriously damaged. So far as Blackburn was concerned, no life was lost, though several pigs, ducks and fowls ; but in the neighbouring townships of Ribchester, Osbaldeston and Salesbury, three persons are reported to have been drowned, and large numbers of sheep, oxen and cows were also swept along out of their pasture by the flooding of the Ribble, which backed up to such a height at Ribchester as had never before been known. Near Ribchester, a farmer and his servant man narrowly escaped being drowned by a very hazardous attempt to get six cows out of an inundated field. The cattle were standing upon an elevated part of it, nearly submerged, and were with great difficulty recovered, the men dragging them along with ropes up to the neck in water, but happily out of the current. Some people living on the banks of the Ribble near this place and at Billington secured sheep, pigs, fowls &c by putting them in their bedrooms and hay lofts. Several old buildings were washed down, and many farm implements were carried away with the flood. The loss to several farmers is considerable, and will in some instances seriously inconvenience them, at the least. The damage resulting from the bursting of the embankment of a reservoir at Church has not yet been fully ascertained, but it is likely to fall heavily upon Messrs Barnes.

In Accrington, two or three mills had to cease work on account of their sheds being flooded by the waters of the river Hyndburn. At Church, several houses were flooded, and a lodge connected with the collieries worked by the trustees of the late Joseph Barnes burst its embankment about six o'clock in the morning. The water of the Oswaldtwistle brook was dammed up for the purpose of supplying a water wheel used to pump water out of the Park Pit, and it seemed that the machinery used for lifting the “cloud” in case of flood was out of order, and the water began to overflow its embankment, which was built of rubble. The night watchman, apprehending danger from the water, woke the inmates of two houses near, twelve in number, and they made a hasty retreat to neighbouring houses ; at four o'clock, two hours afterwards, the houses were entirely swept away, and thousands of tons of loose rock adjoining them. A large quantity of water rushed into the coalpit, and it is apprehended that all the lower workings are filled, and that great loss will be sustained through the stoppage of the pit. Two firemen in the pit were got out safely.

**BURNLEY** On Friday morning, between six and seven o'clock, the overflow attained a great height, and intense excitement prevailed in the parts of the town near the banks of the river, where the water had entered the cellars, and in some instances reached the upper apartments. Men, women and children had to be assisted by various means to leave their dwellings, and furniture of every description was removed as rapidly as possible. In Wapping, where there are a large number of beerhouses, general stores and small shops, the water made great havoc, and rafters were hastily put together, and ladders called into request, to secure the escape of the inhabitants from the chamber windows. In Cheapside, cellars, public houses and workshops were also flooded ; and in Lane Bridge the greatest anxiety prevailed among the inhabitants. In this district, a small stream runs beneath a considerable block of houses and workshops, and empties itself into the Calder. In

consequence of the vast volume of water taking this route, and the great pressure given by an abrupt descent, the arching was burst, and the basement storeys were immediately submerged, to the great terror of the inhabitants. In Burnley Wood, vast tracts of land were laid under water, and a considerable portion of Towneley Park was in a similar condition. Several of the mills were also inundated, and incapacitated from working by the water getting to the boiler houses. The stone bridges were in considerable danger, and it was found expedient to remove a portion of the parapet of one in Bridge Street, to allow the overflow to escape by the street. A wooden bridge crossing the Brun, near the old brewery, was completely swept away, as was also Sandholme Bridge. Another bridge at Pheasant Ford was demolished ; and trees of immense size were occasionally swept along. The municipal authorities were busy directing precautionary measures, and the services of the fire brigade were called into requisition to assist those who had delayed leaving their houses or removing their goods.

**ROCHDALE** Nearly all the mills on the banks of the river Roach about Rochdale were flooded. Some of the bottom rooms of the mills were four or five feet in water, and work had to be suspended. A great deal of damage was done to machinery and manufactured goods in the various mills. During the day, the carcasses of sheep, pigs and horses, flannel pieces, planks of timber and barrels were washed down the river.

At Bacup and Bury some damage was also done.

**OLDHAM** In the neighbourhood of Oldham, there has been a considerable amount of flooding, especially in the direction of Shaw, where the low lying lands have been completely submerged and dwelling houses entered by the water. In Hollinwood, owing to the inadequacy of a culvert to take the great quantity of water running towards it, several houses and mills have been entered, the water lodging in the lower rooms. In the valley of Saddleworth, the fields were completely submerged, nothing appearing above water but houses and trees. The river Tame was greatly swollen by the vast quantity of water sent into it by the numerous tributary streams and, overflowing its banks, it inundated the lower rooms of several mills in the neighbourhood of Mossley, doing damage, it is feared, to a considerable amount in some instances. As the water continued to rise until noon, great apprehension was manifested by those living in the lower districts ; but beyond the flooding of the houses, no great damage was sustained. A carter named James Whitworth fell into the water near Scout Hill, and was carried down the stream, whilst attempting to get hold of some pieces of wreck.

**HYDE** From above Broom Stair Bridge to below Glasshouse Fold Bridge was one sheet of water, with here and there a little patch of green, like small islands in a lake. At Broom Stair, the water rose about fourteen feet above its usual level, and was within a few feet of the arch of the bridge. At ten o'clock in the forenoon, the water had risen to within four feet of the mark of the great flood, August 7 1799, and was within ten feet of the warehouse windows and about the same distance from the bridge on its lower side. Betwixt there and Haughton Dale Mills was one lake of water.

**HALIFAX** At Ripponden, near Halifax, a sad fatality occurred. A married woman named Elizabeth Bottomley, and three children named Kershaw, were crossing a small bridge on their way to work, when the bridge was carried away by the flood, and the unfortunate woman and the children perished.

**WAKEFIELD** The Calder rose to a great height, and in many places overflowed, and caused the districts around to present the appearance of a series of reservoirs. Early on Friday, as a keel from Beverley was being lowered down to Mr Fawcett's corn mill for the purpose of being unloaded of a cargo of wheat, the rope broke, and it was drifted down to the weir close by. The captain, whose name is **Armstrong**, and the mate did their utmost to prevent its going over the dam stakes, and two men named Amos Bates (a corn miller) and William Hepworth (a corn porter) went to their assistance. While these two men were proceeding from the shore towards the keel with some tackle in a small boat, they were capsized, and Bates was drifted down the stream ; his companion, however, managed to reach the shore. The mate of the vessel, while endeavouring to reach the shore, was washed away. Neither of the bodies had been recovered when our parcel left ; and the river was rapidly rising, the lower parts of the town being for the most part under water. During the day, another vessel laden with wheat was drifted down to the weir, and it went over the damstakes.

The wires belonging to the United Kingdom Electric Telegraph Company were blown down, and communication was stopped. It is believed that the total loss sustained by parties whose premises have been inundated cannot be much under £100,000. The principal sufferers are the corn factors and millers, great numbers of whom have establishments on each side of the banks of the Calder. Thousands of quarters of grain have been under water, and enormous quantities of flour have been converted into pig food. Many of the worsted and woollen manufacturers, whose mills have been "standing" since Friday have also sustained much damage to their stock of material and valuable machinery.

**DONCASTER** During Friday night last, an immense volume of water came down the river Don, and towards morning the banks were overflowed, and a large tract of country on the north side of Doncaster was flooded. So suddenly did this take place that one farmer in the neighbourhood had 27 sheep drowned in one of his fields, and many other farmers whose land is adjacent to the river either lost cattle or had very narrow escapes from doing so. Between Conisborough and Doncaster, a man went down to the river about four o'clock on Saturday morning, and hooked several carcasses of sheep and beasts as they were being carried down the swollen stream ; he also went into a field near at hand, and drove out forty sheep which, had they remained, must have been drowned in less than an hour afterwards. The Great Northern Railway at Hemsworth, on the line to Leeds, was flooded some 18 inches deep in the morning. As usual, the lower part of Doncaster was inundated, many houses in Marsh Gate having the water in up to the ovens, and families being compelled to migrate into the upper storeys, where they will be in a state of imprisonment for several days. It is no uncommon thing, in these visitations, for the inhabitants of this unfortunate locality to take their pigs upstairs with them ; but, in consequence of the forcible cutting of an embankment by the inhabitants themselves some years ago, the floods have not been so severely felt in Marsh Gate and the lower part of Doncaster as used formerly to be the case.

## **26 December 8 1866**

### **Manchester Assizes**

**THE JERSEY STREET OUTRAGE** Joseph Rodgers (20), Henry Holland (23), John Glenning (20), Thomas Craven (18), John Dorning (18), Joseph Sloane (22) and Richard Macready were charged with the manslaughter of William Lee on the 26<sup>th</sup> September. Mr West and Mr Hopwood prosecuted ; Mr Higgin, in the absence of Mr Cottingham, defended Rodgers and Dorning, Mr Ernest Jones defended Holland, Macready, Sloane and Craven, and Mr Cobbett, Glenning. The case has excited great interest, and the court was crowded with spectators.

Mr West opened the case, remarking that the circumstances connected with the offence with which the prisoners were charged disclosed a state of things discreditable to this city. He then shortly related the facts as they appear in the following evidence. The first witness was

**Ellen Jewell**, wife of Edwin(*sic*) Jewell, a boatman on the Wigan and Manchester Canal. She and her husband were going with a boat horse along Jersey Street about five in the evening, when she recognised Rodgers, who threw his arms around her neck. She went after him to ask what he did it for, when he began to strip as if to fight. She left him and returned to her husband, Rodgers following her. Her husband joined her, and spoke to them, when a mob numbering about 25 came round and began thrashing her husband and pulling him about. One of them got on the boat horse's back. Witness and her husband tried to get away. One of the crowd caught the horse by the head and another by the tail. The deceased came up and asked the one on the horse to get off, but he would not. Lee had his hands in his pocket. Rodgers came and hit him by the side of the head and knocked him down. He got up, and Holland came and knocked him down again. He got up no more after that, but the mob kicked him and knocked him about on the ground. Holland kicked him on the right temple. Witness could not tell which of the rest kicked him. Her husband went to fetch a policeman, and returned with one. The crowd then dispersed, and deceased remained on the ground. She saw one of them jump off the horse upon the deceased's neck.

**Edward Jewell** deposed to seeing a crowd of young men pushing his wife, and all behaving as if they wanted a row. They seized his horse, and one of them, Dorning, got on it. He asked him to get off, and those behind began to thrash him. When he turned to him, then those behind buffeted him.

The deceased came up, and asked Dorning what right he had on the horse's back, and why the people could not allow witness and his wife to go on quietly. One of them knocked deceased's hat off, and Rodgers and Holland knocked him down. He got up, and was knocked down again. Whilst this was going on, witness was struck by Dorning and Macready. He went for a policeman directly after deceased was knocked down a second time. He did not recognise anyone else. When he returned with a policeman, Lee was lying dead on the ground. Witness and the policeman ran after Rodgers, and caught him in his mother's house. Later on, about ten o'clock, he saw Holland and three others at a public house. One of them uttered abusive language, recognising him as having given Rodgers in charge, and they attempted to follow him, but two detectives were with witness and prevented them. Macready took part in beating witness. In cross-examination, witness said that on Wednesday night he was unable to identify Rodgers. He never saw Dorning until now. Witness struck at the man with the halter.

Mary Fowler, a widow living in Bengal Street, was called, and deposed that the row began before she got up to see what was going on. She saw a fight and a mob round a horse, and Dorning on it, who knocked the deceased's hat off. Lee was speaking to the man on the horse's back. Rodgers knocked Lee down. He got up, and was knocked down again by Rodgers and Holland. They all began kicking him while on the ground. She identified Sloane and Macready as kicking at Lee, but she could not say whether they touched him. She saw the others, but could not say whether they took any part in it. She called, "Police", and they ran away. She helped to lift up Lee, and he died in her arms. In cross-examination, she said that all the prisoners were perfect strangers to her.

Jane Foster, a married woman living in Jersey Street, deposed to seeing Dorning on the horse, and Lee remonstrating with him. Dorning knocked his hat off over his eyes, and Rodgers knocked him down. Macready came up and kicked him. Witness saw no one else kick him. She went to help to pick him up. Rodgers ran after her and called her a vile name, and was going to kick her, but was prevented by the cry of "policeman". The policeman and boatman ran after him. She went to Lee, and he was dead. She could identify Rodgers, Dorning, Macready and Sloane, but did not see the latter do anything.

William Barber, a spinner, was about 30 or 40 yards away from the affray. Was there when the policeman came up, and saw Craven running with the rest.

Joseph Simpson, police-constable, deposed that Jewell came to him at 25 minutes past six, and he went to the place, and saw Lee on the ground, and heard that the men who had knocked him down had run away. He went to the corner and saw some men running; he pursued them through several streets, and of one of them he never lost sight till he went into Poland Street, into a house. Witness followed, and found him lying on the stairs, out of breath. Jewell was behind him, and said this man (Rodgers) was one of the worst. Being charged at the station with wilful murder, he said there were 24 of them in the row, and he was not the only one. He was wearing clogs (produced). In cross-examination, witness said he never lost sight of him.

David Ackerley, a spinner, was with the deceased before the row began. He saw Rodgers strike the woman, and deceased told the men not to ill use her. Rodgers then knocked deceased's hat off, deceased followed the hat, Rodgers going after him 20 or 30 yards, and struck him again. Witness saw Holland striking him, and Sloane came up also and struck him; witness then ran to his assistance, and he was knocked down himself by someone not in custody. He saw Dorning get on the horse.

Inspector Bateman of the detective force took Craven into custody at his house in bed, and when charged, he said he was not there. He took his clogs (produced).

Sergeant Rowbottom of the detective force took Holland into custody in Long Street, Ancoats. He then went to Holland's father's in Whittaker Court and took Glenning. Holland said he knew nothing, and Glenning said he was not there at the time. He afterwards took Dorning in Wigan, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October. He said, they were all in the Beehive beerhouse, and went out for the purpose of a fight, when the boatman came up the street with a horse, when he (Dorning) got on the horse for the purpose of attracting the attention of the others who were fighting. The boatman asked him to get off, and the man that was dead attempted to pull him off. He then jumped off the horse and ran

away. Witness afterwards took Macready on the 27<sup>th</sup> November in Manchester. In cross-examination, witness said Holland told him he was in Bolton.

Francis Butler, police-constable, apprehended Sloane, who said he was drunk and asleep in a beerhouse in Jersey Street, half an hour before and also half an hour after, and Mrs McKnight could prove it.

Mr Pearse, senior house surgeon of the Infirmary, made a *post mortem* examination, and found no natural cause of death. He found externally a number of bruises on the face and head, especially the back part of the head. There was a contused wound under the right eye, a severe bruise external to the right temple, and blood issuing from the right ear. There were no other bruises on the body. There was an aggregation of bruises, the most serious being on the right temple. Internally, on removing the scalp, he found numerous extravasations of blood corresponding with the external bruises. There was no fracture of the bones. On removing the top of the skull, he found six or seven ounces of extravasated blood on the brain, and a laceration of the brain substance, exactly corresponding with the bruise on the right temple. The one injury was sufficient to account for death. Some of the external bruises appeared to have been done with the fist, and the others might have been caused by a kick. In cross-examination, witness said that the other bruises, except the one on the temple, were not sufficient to have caused death.

The statements made by the prisoners when before the magistrates were then read. Glenning's statement was that two days before the occurrence, he went to Leeds, slept in the night asylum, and returned the next day, late at night, about 11.30. Holland said that he was at Oldham. Craven said that he was in his house at the time. A friend came and told him that a man was killed. He went out, and ran with the crowd.

His Lordship said that there was no evidence of overt acts as against Craven and Glenning, and directed an acquittal as regarded those two.

Mr Higgin then addressed the jury for Rodgers and Dorning. He agreed with the remarks of Mr West in opening the case, that the occurrence was discreditable to the city of Manchester. There were two questions for the jury. The first was a question of fact as to the identity of the prisoners. The second was one of law, as to what particular acts by any of the prisoners conduced to the death of Lee. With reference to Dorning, it was impossible to deny that he was there, after his statement at Wigan to the police-constable. The principal evidence against him was that of Mrs Jewell, who said that he jumped on deceased from the horse's back. It was shown by the medical evidence that the wound on the temple caused his death ; and that was the result of a kick, which was given on the ground. None of the witnesses said that Dorning took any part after he jumped from the horse, therefore he was not directly concerned in the death of deceased.

His Lordship said he should rule that all who assisted were guilty of manslaughter.

Mr Higgin, with reference to Rodgers, said he should not deny he was there, but that there was no evidence to implicate him directly in this crime, for he was only pointed out as having struck Lee and knocked him down, and not as having kicked him.

Mr Jones then addressed the jury for Macready, Holland and Sloane. With reference to Macready, he said the most formidable evidence was that of Mary Fowler, who said she saw him kick Lee. He asked the jury to bear in mind the remark of Mrs Jewell, that it was very difficult to tell who was there. Another witness, Foster, could only recognise him by his hair, and at first confounded him with Holland, both of them having red hair. As regarded Sloane, Mrs Fowler said he kicked deceased ; but the learned counsel commented on the fact that when she met Mr Scott, she said nothing as to whom she had seen, although she mentioned the occurrence. He should call evidence to prove Sloane was at the Beehive public house at the time. As to Holland, he admitted the case was strong, but his defence was also strong. He should call seven witnesses, three of whom were before the magistrates and four were not. The case of Holland was different than that of Sloane. In the latter, the evidence for the prosecution was weak in the latter part of the story, which he should rebut by similarly strong evidence in favour of the prisoner. He called, for Holland, Michael Curly, a hawker, who remembered that on the 26<sup>th</sup> September, he saw Holland in Oldham at half past three. Witness came to Manchester on the same evening, and heard of the death of Lee, and he recollected

having seen Holland. Mary Ann Kelly saw him coming down Oldham Road that evening at ten minutes past five. They talked together. He went down Ancoats Lane. He said he was going to Bagshaw's beerhouse, and she saw him there at 25 minutes to six. She took him some tobacco. In cross-examination, she said it would take ten minutes to walk to the place where the outrage was committed. She did not hear till next morning of the death of Lee. Alice Taylor, servant at Bagshaw's beerhouse, deposed that Holland was there about half past five. The latest she saw of him was at a quarter past eight. In cross-examination, she said Holland's wife came in that evening. John Lacy deposed that he heard of the death of deceased about eleven o'clock. Saw Holland in Bagshaw's beerhouse at six o'clock, and remained with him till ten. In cross-examination, he said Holland had called in the interval at his father's house. Margaret Holland, sister of the prisoner, said she heard of Mr Lee's death the Friday following. Her brother was in Bagshaw's beerhouse the evening of the 26<sup>th</sup> September. He was at a wake in the neighbourhood at a quarter to 10. In cross-examination, she said she never knew what her brother was taken for. The policeman took Glenning that night at a quarter past one, at her house. John Craven, brother of the prisoner Craven, said he never saw Holland or Glenning in the crowd. In cross-examination, he said he saw Rodgers, Dorning and Macready. On the part of Sloane, Mr Jones called Ellen Ireland, who lives at the Beehive in Jersey Street. She remembered the evening of the death of Mr Lee. She was then standing on the steps of the Beehive. Sloane was asleep in the tap room with several others. He went out about 25 minutes past six. In cross-examination, she said she could only remember Sloane, although about 25 young men came in at the same time. Susannah McKnight, the landlady of the Beehive, said Sloane was in at three o'clock. About 24 came in at that time. They all left, with the exception of Stone, who remained in the house asleep, and he was there during all the time the row was going on. John Connoley gave similar evidence. He left Sloane asleep in the beerhouse at ten minutes to five. He saw Rodgers, Macready, Sloane and Holland there. He went back and found Sloane in the same position as he left him. Mr Jones made a few more remarks, and Mr West replied.

His lordship then summed up. He said there could be no doubt, according to the medical evidence, that the death of the deceased was caused by one of the blows received. As to the law of the matter, all who were parties to the assault were guilty of manslaughter, although only one blow caused death. It was only necessary to prove that they were acting in concert to show them all guilty. The crime was the same, and any question of degree of guilt must be considered on apportioning the punishment. So far, then, as related to the general, all concerned were guilty. It would be necessary for the jury to treat each case individually, and see how far each of the men had a common object. He had directed the acquittal of Craven and Glenning because, although they might be present, there was no proof of any overt acts. As to the alibi, the jury would have to compare the evidence of those who said they were there with the those who said they were not.

The jury retired, and after five minutes consultation, found a verdict of guilty against all the prisoners.

The learned Judge, in sentencing them, said : They had been convicted of the crime of manslaughter, and it was one which differed in degree. It was quite plain that a very large number of rough, bad characters went out for the purpose of committing an assault on the quiet peaceable inhabitants. They succeeded in assaulting Mr and Mrs Jewell, and when the unfortunate man Lee came up to do no more than his duty, they fell upon him, beat him and kicked him, so that he died. The evidence showed that Holland inflicted the severe blow which caused death, and as regarded his case, the question was whether or not it was murder. He thought that if the indictment had been one of murder, probably it would have been reduced to manslaughter. As he had been guilty of the act which occasioned this man's death, the sentence upon him must be that he be kept in penal servitude for 15 years. As regarded Rodgers, he was very active in the violence inflicted, but it was shown that he had not inflicted such severe kicks as Holland. He would be kept in penal servitude for 10 years. Sloane and Macready, although it was shown that they kicked the deceased when on the ground, yet had not been so active, and they would each be sentenced to five years' penal servitude. As regarded Dorning, it had been shown that he was a party to the assault, although there

was no evidence that he had kicked the deceased while on the ground, and the same sentence was passed upon him that would have been passed had the man lived – namely 18 months imprisonment with hard labour.

### **27 December 15 1866**

**DROWNED BY FALLING THROUGH A BRIDGE** An inquest was held on Thursday, before the city coroner, on the body of **John Shoebottom**, a boatman drowned in the Bridgewater Canal. The deceased and a brother boatman, both the worse for drink, were going home after midnight in the direction of a wooden bridge across the canal, in Castle Field. The deceased, in crossing the bridge, suddenly disappeared, having either fallen through a hole or tripped himself up, so as to tumble over the side. On being taken out of the water, though this was but five or six minutes after the accident, he was quite dead. **Mr William Armstrong**, one of the inspectors of the canal, said he did not think the deceased had any business to go over the bridge. He had examined the bridge since the accident, and found it in the unsafe state described. The breakage, however, appeared freshly done, as if one of the boards had just been forced up and removed from its place. The bridge was commonly used by boatmen and people in the potato trade. He (the inspector) did not know who was responsible for keeping it in repair. The jury, in returning a verdict of accidental death, said they considered some blame to attach to those to whom the bridge belonged, as its unsafe state caused the fall which ended in the man being drowned.

[Note name given as Sidebottom in article 35]

### **28 January 12 1867**

**SERIOUS STABBING CASE AT WIGAN** At the County Police Court, Wigan, on Friday, a case was made public in which the knife had been used in a most dastardly manner, and with a result which it is feared will prove fatal. On Thursday afternoon, a party of boatmen and colliers were drinking at a public house in Aspull, about a couple of miles from Wigan, when a quarrel arose, and two men, named James Thompson and **John Deakin**, went out to fight. The fight resulted unfavourably to Thompson, who was seen immediately afterwards to draw his pocket knife and then follow Deakin into the house, and stab him deliberately between the lower ribs on the left side, inflicting a wound several inches in depth. The man fell at once, and Thompson made off, but he was very soon apprehended. The wounded man was taken to his boat on the canal near, in a very dangerous state.

### **29 March 16 1867**

#### **Manchester Spring Assizes**

**THE BRIDGEWATER CANAL NUISANCE** This case had been preferred against the Bridgewater Canal Trustees in December 1865 by certain inhabitants of the district, and had been adjourned from time to time at previous assizes.

Mr Kay, who appeared for the prosecution, said he had to move the postponement of the trial of the indictment which was pending against the defendants until the next assizes. The defendants were the owners of the canal which extended from Manchester to Runcorn, a distance of 28 miles, on a level, there being no lock gates at all, so that when the water was affected prejudicially at Manchester, like effects were felt at the Runcorn end. Some years previous to December 1865, the proprietors of the canal had experienced great difficulty in supplying the canal with a sufficiency of pure water, except at very great expense and outlay, to raise water into the canal at Runcorn ; and they had, under the powers of an Act of Parliament, carried into the canal the waters of two streams which passed through Manchester – the Medlock and the Cornbrook. At that time, prior to the indictment, these two streams were both poured into the Manchester end of the canal, and at present were nothing better than sewers of the worst description. The sewage of the streams was passed into the canal, and in December 1865, the state of the canal was such that the whole of the water for many miles was simply common sewage water, and not only had it been carried into the bed of the canal, but in addition to that, the solid matter had always been carried in, and the consequence was that prior to this indictment the solid matter had formed itself into islands protruding from the

surface of the water. In wet weather, the evil effects were not sensibly perceived, but when the weather was dry, the effluvia was unbearable. The canal passed through a populous district through the suburbs of Manchester, and by the villas of a great number of gentlemen connected with business in town. Things grew so horribly bad in 1865 that the inhabitants must leave their houses along the line of the canal and cease to inhabit that part of the country at all, or else they must strive to put an end to the nuisance which had been created. Shortly before this indictment was preferred, the case of the Bradford Navigation Company had been decided in the Court of Queen's Bench, and the facts of the two cases were exactly analogous. Upon the Bradford case, this one was founded. The defendants said they were justified under the Act of Parliament. The prosecution now said, as at Bradford, that no Act of Parliament could justify the creation of such a nuisance. In the indictment preferred in December 1865, the grand jury returned a true bill, and the prosecution, who had gone to considerable expense, were ready to go on with their indictment at the Christmas assizes ; but, on the application of the defendants, the trial was postponed, in order to give them an opportunity of trying to remedy the evils complained of. The prosecution agreed, and the trial was postponed to the July assizes. At that assizes, the prosecution were again ready for trial, and at that time he was bound to admit the defendants were going to considerable expense in experiments at the Manchester end of the canal. They had employed an able engineer, Mr Cawley, and under his directions, they were carrying on an extensive series of operations. Application was made for the postponement of the trial until these operations could be completed, in order that it might be seen whether they would remove the nuisance. The judge said that, according to the practice of the court, it would be necessary to adjourn the case until the spring assizes. That course had been adopted. Since the works had been brought to a completion, the weather had been rainy, and there had been no hot weather, and thus there had been no opportunity, as yet, of testing whether these works were efficacious. For four or five days during the cold weather, the smell had been again perceived from the water. It had been examined by gentlemen of great experience and long practice and, from their report, as well as from observation, he believed it was doubtful whether the works which had been carried on would remove the mischief ; for they found that there was no provision made for an adequate supply of pure water to the canal, and also there appeared to be no provision for the absolute exclusion of the waters of the Medlock. The prosecution had been put to considerable expense in preparing for trial. If they found that the works had substantially got rid of the nuisance, the gentlemen whom he represented would be only too glad to withdraw from the prosecution without asking anything further from the defendants. He therefore asked his lordship that the case should not be tried this assizes. To try it now would involve considerable expense, and that expense might be rendered unnecessary if it was found that these works were sufficient in hot weather to remedy the evils complained of. He would promise that, whether it were hot or dry weather, if by the time the summer assizes began, the nuisance had not been again perceived, they would undertake to drop all further proceedings in the matter. They did not wish to keep these proceedings hanging over the defendants ; but they begged leave to remind them that, up to the present time, the trial had been postponed, at the request of the defendants themselves, from assize to assize ; and he now, on the part of the prosecution, asked, for the first time, that it might stand over to the summer assizes. If the nuisance still existed at that time, the great expense which had been incurred in the preparation of plans and witnesses would not have been thrown away, but would be useful at the trial.

Mr Quain QC, who appeared for the trustees, opposed this application. He urged that there was no use in trying an indictment that was founded in December 1865. The facts since then had been entirely altered because, as was shown by affidavits on both sides, the trustees had gone to a very great expense – no less than £8,000 – in altering the state of things, and to keep out the water of the Medlock from the canal. By trying an indictment founded in December 1865, they could only try on evidence of a state of things then or previously existing. When this canal was dug by the Duke of Bridgewater, he had the power to take the waters of the Medlock, and at that time it was a pure stream, but since then, flowing through Manchester and coming from Oldham, it had become a foul stream, and having been used before was still used. Supposing a verdict of guilty had been

recorded in 1865, the result would have been that his Lordship would have suspended judgement and given the trustees time, in order to endeavour to abate the nuisance. They had endeavoured to keep out the waters of the Medlock, and works for that purpose had been successful, as would be seen by Mr Crawley's affidavit. The waters of the Cornbrook were not now used. There would be no difficulty, at the next summer assizes, if the works were not successful, in prosecuting a fresh indictment founded on a fresh state of things. They now got water from Rochdale and Worsley. They asked that the indictments might be dropped. It would be met by the assertion of a right which much lead necessarily to extensive litigation.

Mr Kay replied that the real question remained what it was in December 1865, whether the power of their Acts of Parliament justified them in the use of the waters of the Medlock. He had an affidavit of their engineer, which showed that there had been no provision for shutting off the waters of the Medlock. That was the grave ground of complaint in December 1865, and it was the real ground of complaint now. The question would arise now as then, whether then, under the Act of Parliament, they were justified in making use of the waters of the Medlock, and whether that excused them from the nuisance which they created.

His Lordship said that it was clear, from the affidavits, that the trustees of the Bridgewater Canal had, by the very large expenditure of money they had gone to, shown that they were satisfied that there was a cause for complaint, and it was also quite clear that they had earnestly endeavoured to remedy that cause of complaint. It was impossible to doubt, seeing that £8,000 had been spent to separate these foul waters from the canal, that they had intended to remove the cause of complaint, but though this was the case, yet it was possible for them to fail to do so. There had been no opportunity of knowing whether they had done all that was necessary to be done to prevent these nuisances. Under these circumstances, he thought it was reasonable that the trial should be postponed. As to what had been said upon the point that they would be trying an indictment under circumstances quite different from the circumstances under which it was preferred, that objection would be applicable to any time during the past year, for he understood that when these complaints were brought distinctly and formally before the trustees as a matter likely to give rise to litigation, they at once employed an engineer to remove the complaint and prevent the nuisance. The only object of the indictment in such cases as this was that the nuisance should be abated. They had the distinct assurance that if the nuisance was abated, the plaintiffs would not try the case at all. What better could be done? Supposing they pleaded guilty of having caused a nuisance in existence in 1865, they would never be called up for judgement ; and if they were, it would be a nominal penalty that would be inflicted. Under all circumstances, the whole complaint seemed to have been treated in the best possible spirit, and there had better be a postponement.

### **30 March 16 1867 Manchester Spring Assizes**

**WOUNDING James Thompson** was convicted of wounding **John Deakin** at Aspull. The prosecutor and the prisoner are both boatmen and, after they had been drinking in a public house, the prisoner stabbed the prosecutor in the abdomen. The surgeon, Mr J Leyland, described the wound as dangerous, and said that if the prisoner had been a stouter man, the prosecutor would have "kicked the bucket". The witness gave his evidence in a very extraordinary manner, and his lordship said that this was the first time he had heard a medical man use such an expression in court. Gentlemen usually gave their evidence before they dined, but witness appeared to have done so afterwards. The accused was sentenced to fifteen months imprisonment with hard labour.

### **31 March 16 1867**

**FATAL ACCIDENT TO A BOATMAN** An inquest was held on Thursday before Mr Herford on the body of **Isaac Astett**, a boatman late of Cadishead. It appeared from the evidence of a brother boatman that while he and the deceased were engaged in getting their boat through the lock at Mill Bank, near Warrington, the deceased's leg got foul of a coil of rope and was fractured in two places. He was conveyed to the Royal Infirmary, where he sank under his injuries. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

### 32 June 1 1867

**A RACE FOR LIFE** About five o'clock on Thursday evening, a seaman belonging to the brig *Aracaty*, outward bound and anchored in the Mersey, fell overboard. He was rapidly swept away in a northerly direction by the tide, which was ebbing. His critical position was observed by four river boatmen, named **Charles Danalow, David Berry, John Hannan and William Martindale** ; by the river police, who were on duty, from their "look out house" ; and also by the crew of the steam tug *Relief*, Captain Roose, all of whom immediately cast off from the Prince's Landing Stage for the purpose of rescuing the unfortunate man who was struggling for his life. The four boatmen mentioned above took the lead, and maintained it, the steam tug *Relief* and the river police following close in the rear. For about twenty minutes, the scene was a most exciting one. The crews of the respective row boats bent to their oars as if each man's life depended upon the stroke, and the oarsmen seemed to vie with each other in their efforts to get to the drowning man. Ultimately, the crew of the river gig were the first to reach the spot, and rescued the man from his perilous position. The poor fellow's life was saved, but when taken into the boat he was much exhausted, although he afterwards rallied on Captain Roose of the tug *Relief* giving him some stimulants. The boat was towed by the tug to the Prince's Landing Stage, and the rescued man, whose name is James Berry, was handed over to the police on duty, who speedily took him to the receiving house at the Prince's Dock, where his wants were promptly attended to. Those who witnessed the scene were loud in their praise of the boatmen who so promptly exerted themselves to save the life of a fellow creature. To the crew of the river gig belongs the credit of being the first to reach the drowning man ; but this by no means detracts from the praiseworthy conduct of the others. Old boatmen who witnessed the affair declared they had seen many a rowing match, but they had never witnessed such gallant rowing as there was in this race to save life.

### 33 July 20 1867

**SHOOTING ANCOATS ROUGHS** **David Rushby**, a canal boatman, was charged at the New Bailey, on Monday, with shooting at a number of lads upon the canal bank in the neighbourhood of Ancoats, on Sunday, and wounding three of them, named Joseph Nicholson, George Hackney and William Hill. The evidence showed that the prisoner was passing along the canal in a boat in the locality indicated, when he and his master, who was leading the boat horse, were set upon by a large number of the blackguard lads of the neighbourhood, who assailed them with mud and missiles of every description. Nothing they could do availed to rid them of their tormentors and, goaded to extremity, the prisoner went into the cabin, from which he fetched a loaded gun which he fired into the midst of them. The three boys named were very slightly injured by the pellets with which the gun was loaded. The defence was that the prisoner was not aware that the gun was loaded, that he had no intention of injuring the lads, but only desired to frighten them away. His employer, whilst giving him an excellent character, gave an account of the annoyance to which the boatmen are exposed while passing along the canal in this district that would excuse any retaliation but the extreme measure resorted to on this occasion. The policemen who apprehended the prisoner said there was a very bad lot who frequented the canal bank in this district, especially on Sundays, but it was not the special duty of the police to look after them, the canal bank being private property. The bench said they believed that the prisoner had acted as he did only with the intention of frightening the lads, and not believing the gun to be loaded ; and they considered that he had received considerable provocation. He must, however, for the future take care not to take such a dangerous instrument for this purpose. Under the circumstances, they would dismiss the case.

### 34 September 21 1867

**ATTEMPTED MURDER OF A POLICEMAN AT BIRMINGHAM** At the Birmingham Police Court on Saturday, James Fox, 35 years of age, a shearer, was charged with having, in company with four other men not in custody, assaulted policeman Jackson and thrown him into the canal near Fazeley Bridge, Birmingham, on Tuesday night last about a quarter to eleven o'clock. The

policeman gave evidence of the attack made upon him. While on duty by the side of the canal, he was seized by one man, while another struck him on the side with a stick, and three others kicked and boxed him. He was knocked down and kicked when down, and while disabled from offering any resistance, he was lifted up and thrown into the canal. He became insensible in the water but, as he afterwards learned, he was picked up by a boatman, put in a cab, and taken to the hospital, where he recovered. He could not identify the prisoner ; he did not know any of the men who attacked him. A lad named Henry Padmore said he saw the prisoner running away, and having heard that a policeman had been thrown into the canal, he suspected the prisoner and asked him "what was up?" The prisoner said, "I have been throwing a policeman into the canal", and he said, also, "I did it because he arrested a friend of mine". Witness asked him his name, and the prisoner very candidly said it was Fox. Another lad said he heard five men at a street corner agree to attack Jackson. One of the men, speaking of Jackson, who was walking by the side of the canal a short distance off, said, "That is the fellow as took him". The five men then went up to Jackson, witness following stealthily to watch. They seized Jackson, kicked and beat him, and threw him into the canal. The prisoner was one of those men. The two lads who gave the evidence were unknown to each other. The defence was an alibi. The magistrates discharged the prisoner, evidently not thinking the first witness's statement credible, and not placing implicit reliance on that of the other lad.

### **35 December 14 1867**

### **Manchester Winter Assizes**

**SIDEBOTTOM, ADMINISTRATIX v EGERTON AND OTHERS** The plaintiff in this case is the widow of **John Sidebottom**, who was the captain of a boat plying on the Bridgewater Canal ; and the defendants are the trustees of the Duke of Bridgewater's estates. The action was brought to recover damages sustained by the plaintiff through the death of her husband, owing to the alleged negligence of plaintiffs in neglecting to keep a bridge over the canal in proper repair, whereby the deceased fell through into the canal and was drowned. Mr Temple QC, attorney general for the county palatine, with Mr Leresche, appeared for the plaintiff ; and Mr Quain QC with Mr Crompton, for the defendants.

Mr Temple, in opening the case, drew attention to the Acts of Parliament under which the Bridgewater Canal was formed, which gave the trustees power to take land, to enter land, to remove obstructions, and to make towing paths, and to maintain the bridges over the canal in proper condition, and there was also a section whereby all persons should have free liberty to use all these ways for the purposes of merchandise. The deceased was the captain of the *Dew*, belonging to Messrs Brundrett and Whiteway, who also owned another boat called the *Rock*. The deceased's boat was moored at the Harrington wharf, and on the 12th of December, he went into Manchester with a friend, the captain of another boat, which was moored at the Corporation Wharf. They went to the Dog Inn, Deansgate, and had a glass of spirits each. When they left at night to return to their boats, they found the gates at the bottom of Liverpool Road closed. They then turned round Wellington Street into the yard. The deceased, to go towards his boat, had to cross an arm of the canal, and when in the middle of the wooden bridge, he fell through a hole and was drowned.

It was stated by various witnesses that the bridge was in a very insecure state. The plaintiff said her husband was 55 years of age, and earned from £3 to £3 10s a week. They had no family.

Mr Quain submitted that there was no case to go to the jury, for there was no liability on the part of the trustees. The deceased was not using the canal at the time, but had been in the Rochdale Canal, and had moored empty at this place for his own pleasure and, besides, he might have gone a nearer way, and had no business to cross the bridge at all. This portion of the premises was not under the operation of the Bridgewater system. Mr Quain then proceeded to argue on the improbability of men like the deceased falling through an aperture 10 inches wide. It was alleged that he did not fall through the hole at all, but over the side, in a state of intoxication.

Several witnesses deposed to seeing deceased that night in a state of intoxication. It was also endeavoured to be shown that from the place where the deceased was found, it was impossible for him to have fallen where he was alleged to have fallen. The lamps were not lit on the night of the

accident, because no work was going on. Evidence was also called to prove that the hole was not large enough to allow of a man falling through ; and that the strength of the bridge was tested after the accident by four men jumping on it at once, and that it did not give way.

The Judge, in summing up, said it was certain that boatmen would come to town, and that they would go to public houses, and the question was whether, under the circumstances of the case, the defendants were bound to keep this bridge in repair ; and, if so, was it in repair, and did the deceased contribute to the accident himself. He would, if necessary, reserve a point of law raised by Mr Quain – whether the land being purchased from another party made any difference in the liability.

The jury found a verdict for the plaintiff ; damages £400.

[[Note name given as Shoebottom in article 27](#)]

### **36 February 29 1868**

**MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF TWO LOVERS** An inquest was held on Saturday before Mr Herford, city coroner, on the bodies of Thomas Royle, a book keeper, and Elizabeth Gilleard of Ormond Street, found drowned in the Rochdale Canal. Catherine Gilleard identified the body of Elizabeth Gilleard as that of her sister, with whom she lived. She also identified the body of Thomas Royle. Witness said that Royle and her sister were to have been married. They left the house in company on the previous Saturday for a walk. No quarrel had occurred between them. Witness and her mother were surprised that Elizabeth did not return, and they sat up half the night waiting for her. She had never been out late before. On the following Wednesday, witness went to Whitefield, where Royle used to lodge, and there she learned that he had not been heard of since Saturday. Witness and her friends used to pass jocular remarks about the expected marriage and, when nothing was heard of her sister or Royle for some days, she thought they had made a run-away match. Royle often said he intended the marriage to be a very quiet one. Clementina Broster, a neighbour, said she saw Royle on Saturday afternoon, and he said to her that he intended to take an omnibus to Newton Heath, and would thence walk to Oldham, and return to tea that evening. A boatman named **John Cunningham** proved the finding of the bodies, and added that he saw no marks of violence or any appearance of a struggle. **William Diamond**, lock-keeper, said the bodies were found on different sides of the lock ; but this, he said, might be attributed to the flushing of the water. Constable Schofield said he found £2 7s 6d in Royle's pocket, and some letters on matters of business. The watch he carried had stopped at 25 minutes to ten. Another constable said he was present when Elizabeth Gilleard was taken out of the water. There was no appearance that she had been ill treated, and her dress was not the least disordered. Mr C J Cullingworth, physician's assistant at the Royal Infirmary, deposed as to the condition of the bodies after a week's immersion. He detected a slight mark on Royle's eyelid, which might be attributed to the fall. Under the fleshy part of the scalp, there was also a slight lump and an effusion of blood, which might be caused by the head striking against some substance at the bottom of the canal. The medical evidence further showed that a strong smell of alcohol was detected in Royle's stomach, but there was nothing to show he had been an habitual drinker. The witness found nothing of the kind in examining the body of the woman. Nothing appeared in evidence to confirm the report previously current that the deceased were together at a house in Portland Street on Saturday week. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

### **37 August 1 1868**

#### **Manchester Summer Assizes**

**THURSDAY** **David Thomas** (18), **George Thomas** (28) and **Robert Fiston** (22), all canal boatmen, were accused of having, on the 13<sup>th</sup> May, feloniously, unlawfully and maliciously wounded and caused grievous bodily harm to **Francis Twemlow**, a boatman aged about 30, in Dale Street, Manchester, with intent to maim, disfigure and disable him. Mr Taylor prosecuted, and the prisoners were defended by Mr Cottingham.

Prosecutor deposed that the prisoners, after severally challenging him to fight, which he declined to do, made a united and unprovoked assault upon him, threw him down, and kicked him severely on

the head, causing blood to flow profusely and rendering him insensible. He stated that after the first assault, while he was still lying on the ground, George Thomas said, "Let us go back ; he isn't half milled yet", and they returned and renewed the assault. In cross-examination, witness said he did not believe that the prisoners were actuated by any malicious intention against him, but that the affair had arisen out of their having had "a sup of drink". Witness was himself quite sober. Another witness, brother in law of the prosecutor, deposed that, though Twemlow offered the prisoners no provocation, he actually struck the first blow, being compelled to do so in self defence. Dr Trueman, surgeon at the Infirmary, who dressed the prosecutor's wounds, described their nature – one being a wound on the left temple as deep as the bone and an inch and a half long, and said they appeared to have been caused by kicks. A week after the wounds had been dressed, the prosecutor was tolerably well. Witnesses called for the defence stated that the origin of the row was that the youngest prisoner, David Thomas, after some altercation, was twice struck by the prosecutor, and that the other prisoners, who at the time were drinking in an adjoining public house, were afterwards sent for and interfered, along with another man unknown, in order to see fair play. One of the witnesses declared that Twemlow had not been kicked at all in his view, and that the wound he had sustained on his head had been caused by a fall on a stair. The jury found the prisoners guilty of unlawfully wounding and they were each sentenced to one months imprisonment with hard labour.

### **38      October 10 1868**

BOATMEN'S BETHEL, KNOTT MILL    On Tuesday evening, the annual meeting of this useful and unpretending institution was held in the schoolroom off Liverpool Road. There was as usual a crowded attendance. Mr Jacob Bright MP had been announced to preside, and Mr Bazley MP to take a part in the proceedings ; but both gentlemen were absent. Mr Councillor Livesley occupied the chair. The Rev J Shipman gave an account of the operations of the institution during the past year. 36,000 tracts and books of various kinds had been circulated, which was over 14,000 more than last year. They had now, however, an additional agent to assist in their distribution. The ordinary operations of the institution included weekly services and visitation of the sick, and both had been attended by much success. With regard to the educational department, both the school there and the one in Stanley Street had been well attended, better than last year. They were open to the children of boatmen, and the orphans of this class of men. The night schools had not yet been opened for the present season. They also had libraries open, not only to the children but to their parents, who were allowed to take the books away with them on giving the names of their boat and master. Special services had been held for mothers, which seemed to have had a good effect. They had formed a friendly society on something like a temperance basis ; and they had likewise a savings bank, in which the boatmen could deposit their money and withdraw it at pleasure, without trouble. The financial statement showed that up to the end of September, which was about a month earlier than their usual yearly account was made up to, they had received altogether £500 16s, and their expenditure had reached the same amount less £1 18s, which they would have been in pocket had they not just incurred some expense in improving their present premises. A number of gentlemen afterwards addressed the meeting.

### **39      October 30 1869**

BOATMEN'S BETHEL, KNOTT MILL    The annual meeting of this institution was held on Monday evening, there being, as usual, a crowded attendance at tea. At the meeting which was afterwards held, the Mayor presided. The Rev J Shipman, one of the secretaries, made a statement of the operations of the institution during the past year. The usual Sunday and weekday evening services had been more numerously attended than at any time during the past ten years, and in every department of the institution, there was evidence of progress. The two agents of the society at Knott Mill, as well as the one connected with Stanley Street, had devoted much time to visitation, and upwards of 20,000 books, tracts and periodicals had been distributed. Many of these were the gift of friends, and caused a considerable saving to the funds. The Sunday school had never been

better attended, nor was there ever the same amount of order and attention before. There were 23 gratuitous teachers, who devoted themselves with great earnestness to their work. The day school was under the care of Miss Shippides, and it was to be noted that every boatman's child, fatherless child, or child of parents who could not afford to pay, received their education for nothing. The savings bank was found very useful, although the amount of the deposits was not large. They had a band of hope with 112 pledged abstainers, and an average weekly attendance at the meetings of about 200. They had also a section of the Cadets of Temperance, parents, on payment of 1 1/2d a fortnight, receiving £5 on the death of a child. The Sons of Temperance were a friendly society which paid its members during sickness 12s a week for three months, 8s a week for the next 26 weeks, and £12 on the death of a member. They had 35 to 37 members, and £26 in hand. The institution at Stanley Street was in a correspondingly prosperous condition. Mr Shipman remarked that he had noticed a great improvement in the habits of the people, a great advancement in regard to dress, and increased comforts in the cottages of the sailors. With regard to the finances, the income had been £509 14s 2d of which £437 8s 8d were subscriptions, £30 from the day schools and £39 15s 6d in contributions from the Sunday schools. The expenditure had exceeded the income by £16 13s, which they now owed. The Mayor expressed his great interest in the institution, and his appreciation of the useful work it was performing. He remarked that since he had been mayor he had been introduced to several charities of whose existence he previously had no knowledge, and he was quite sure that institution only needed to be better known to be much more widely supported. (Applause) Mr Shipman here read letters of apology from Lord Ellesmere, Mr Jacob Bright MP, and other gentlemen, who were unable to attend. Mr Bright was laid up at home, and was not likely to be out for the next few days. The Mayor being obliged to leave, the chair was taken by Mr T Whitworth MP, who briefly expressed his satisfaction with the institution. Several other gentlemen afterwards addressed the meeting. The proceedings were further enlightened by the singing of a number of children connected with the schools.

#### **40 January 8 1870**

**POACHING** At the County Police Court, Strangeways, on Tuesday, Wright Cross, joiner, Swinton, and Robert Mather, collier, Swinton, were each fined £5, or a months imprisonment in default, for poaching on the farm of Mr Gilbody at Swinton. Cross had been fined £5 for a similar offence at the last petty sessions at Worsley. **Charles Fradley**, canal boatman, was fined £2 and costs for poaching with dogs in Trafford Park, on the information of Robert Spencer, gamewatcher to Sir Humphrey de Trafford.

#### **41 February 19 1870**

**THE LATE MR J N SHIPSIDE** The funeral of Mr Shippide, assistant minister at the Boatmen's Bethel and a prominent advocate of the Band of Hope and temperance movements, took place at Ardwick Cemetery on Saturday, and was attended by a numerous procession, whose members assembled in Blantyre Street, Hulme. It was formed in the following order : Sons of Temperance, Order of Rechabites, Bands of Hope, general temperance friends, executive committee of the Lancashire and Cheshire Band of Hope Union, Staley Street Mission, and Boatmen's Bethel. After these were the hearse, the members of Mr Shippide's family, relatives, ministerial friends and private carriages. The procession numbered nearly 700 persons, and was preceded by an efficient brass band, and comprised all sects and parties, many coming from the surrounding towns to show their respect for Mr Shippide's memory. Crowds of spectators lined all parts of the route. The cortege arrived at the cemetery at 4.30, where a large number of persons were awaiting its arrival. The Revs Mr Shipman, Mr Taylor and Mr Bate officiated at the funeral service. After a few words from the Rev J Shipman at the grave side, and the singing of the hymn "For ever with the Lord &c", the people dispersed.

#### **42 April 16 1870**

**A WOMAN DROWNED IN THE IRWELL** On Tuesday, an inquest was held at the Veteran Inn,

Stanley Street, Salford, before Mr F Price, coroner, on the body of a woman named **Ann Blockley**, wife of **Peter Blockley**, a boatman living at 18 Hardman Street, Deansgate. The husband deposed that the deceased "was in the habit of taking a drop of drink, and had done so for a fortnight". She was very "flighty" on Saturday last, and shortly after rising on Sunday morning was missed from the house, but no particular notice was taken of her absence until evening when, in consequence of her not returning home, inquiries were instituted, and it was ascertained that her body had been found in the forenoon in the river Irwell. **Nathaniel Holt**, a flatman, gave evidence to the effect that whilst conversing with some of his fellow craftsmen near the wharf on Sunday afternoon, he observed a woman struggling in the water near to them. They immediately rescued her, but she shortly afterwards expired. The jury returned a verdict to the effect that deceased had met her death by drowning, but that there was no evidence as to how she got in the water.

#### **43 May 7 1870**

A boatman named **Rae** was recently convicted at the Derbyshire quarter sessions of stealing a partridge. A covey had been shot at by a party of gentlemen, and the prisoner picked up the bird in a field over which one of the party had a right of shooting. The question in dispute was the condition of the partridge when it came into the prisoner's possession, and the jury found that it was in a dying state and could not escape. They therefore convicted Rae of having taken the bird fraudulently, with intent to deprive the owner of it. On Saturday, the Court of Criminal Appeal quashed the conviction. Five judges held that a bird or an animal in a wild state was not regarded as property, and that it was never intended to make those who preyed upon game thieves as well as poachers.

#### **44 May 14 1870**

**ROBBERY FROM A BOATMAN** On Wednesday, at the Salford Borough Police Court, before Sir J I Mantell and Mr T Davies (Mayor), **Thomas Herring** and Sarah Savage were charged with stealing £10 10s from a boatman named **Calyta Milnes**. The prosecutor was drinking with Herring, another waterman, on Tuesday at the Britannia Inn, Regent Road, Salford, and fell asleep there. On being roused up, he called for a quart of beer, but found that all his money was gone, and his companion was also missing. The landlord, on being informed of the man's loss, informed him that the prisoner Herring had changed a sovereign before he left. A search was then made for Herring, who was four hours afterwards found at Knott's vaults, in company with the female prisoner. Milnes asked him for his money, upon which Herring dropped a sovereign, which the woman picked up and gave to the prosecutor, saying, "If it is thine, take it". The male prisoner was remanded for further inquiries, and the woman was discharged.

#### **45 August 27 1870**

**A WOMAN DROWNED AT BARTON** On Saturday afternoon, as a boatman named **James Walker** was passing along the river Irwell near Barton in his boat, he saw the body of a woman floating on the water. He obtained assistance and got the body out. It was taken to the King's Head Inn to await an inquest.

#### **46 October 15 1870**

**FLOOD AT PRESTON** The heavy rains of Saturday caused the river Ribble to overflow its banks in some places in the neighbourhood of Preston, and serious apprehensions of damage from the next tide were entertained. About the time when it flowed, however, 11.20 pm, there was a rather strong wind from the east, which materially reduced the height of the flood. The Miller Park at Avenham was yesterday morning under water in its lowest parts, but this arose from the drains being rendered inoperative by the freshet in the river, which rose considerably above the drainage outlets. **Thomas Hesketh**, boatman, had two or three boats carried away by the flood. All the low lands east and west of Preston were flooded to some extent, but we have not learned that any serious damage was done.

#### **47 December 17 1870**

**A MOTHER CHARGED WITH MANSLAUGHTER** On Monday an inquest was held before Mr Edge, district coroner, at the Commercial Inn, Aspull, on the body of **Mary Gill**, the infant of **Henry Gill**, boatman. It appeared that on Thursday night, the mother, **Eleanor Gill**, and the father returned drunk to their flat at Aspull, and in the morning the brother and sister of the deceased found the child lying dead and cold upon the floor beside the mother. A surgeon stated that the child had died from suffocation and, after the verdict of the jury, the mother was committed to the Manchester Assizes on the charge of manslaughter, upon the coroner's warrant.

#### **48 January 7 1871**

**THE WEATHER AND THE BRIDGEWATER CANAL** The change in the weather on Thursday was a very welcome one to the traders on the Bridgewater Canal. For many days, communication on the canal between Manchester and Liverpool has been stopped owing to the frost, the canal being entirely blocked between Liverpool and Broadheath, Altrincham, although kept open thence to Manchester to some extent by means of the ice boats, which have required as many as eight horses to draw them. Many vessels were with difficulty towed from Manchester to Broadheath, where they were frozen up, and the consequence was that great distress ensued amongst the boatmen and their families, some of whom have been on the verge of starvation. The Guardians of the Altrincham Union, on Wednesday, on the distress being reported to them, ordered a relieving officer to visit the boats and administer relief where necessary. Yesterday, the ice was broken, but the damage to boats from the floating ice and the difficulty in towing deter navigation at present, except in a few cases.

#### **49 March 18 1871**

**THE GUNPOWDER EXPLOSION AT LOW WOOD** On Tuesday afternoon, Mr W Butler, coroner, held an inquest at the Ainsworth Arms, Backbarrow, on view of the body of **Thomas Walker**, one of the men injured by the recent explosion at Low Wood. The deceased at one time, it was thought, would have recovered from his injuries, but on Sunday last a relapse occurred, and he expired. The first witness called was John Atkinson (sub manager at the works) who stated that the deceased was employed at the mill as boatman and labourer, but on the day of the explosion assisted in the corning house, when the accident occurred. All the men employed in the mill were wearing flannel clothes without pockets, and shoes without nails. About half past twelve, witness heard the explosion in the corning house, and went in the direction of the sound. He met deceased coming away from the mill led by another man. On questioning deceased, he learnt that he had been watching for the powder to come through the rollers when the explosion occurred. The other three men in the corning house were all killed. Witness had no notion whatever as to how the explosion occurred. Deceased told him that all was going on right so far as he knew when the accident happened. When deceased found he was injured, he got into the mill race to put out the fire around his neck. Witness wished it to be understood that the work was not perfectly strange to deceased. He had been employed in the corning house at odd times for a week before the accident. The deceased was not forced to work in the corning house against his will. James Collinson, clerk at the works, stated that all the men employed there emptied their pockets on a board before they entered the works that morning. They put on their flannel dresses. Dan Walker met deceased coming from the corning house, who told him he had no idea how the accident happened. Mr Collinson, recalled, said deceased told him he was not forced to work in the corning house. Dr Stunt said that deceased died from nervous exhaustion caused by the sudden shock. A verdict was given "that Thomas Walker died from injuries received at the explosion, but how caused there was no evidence to show". The jury suggested that a petition should be sent to the Home Secretary asking Government to appoint an inspector over powder works generally throughout the kingdom.

**50 June 24 1871**

MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS The following sentences were passed during the day : -  
Six months : **James Hadfield**, 16, boatman, for stealing on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April twelve dog combs and two dog crosses.

**51 July 8 1871**

FATAL ACCIDENTS About half past three o'clock on Sunday afternoon, a child named **George Martin**, whilst in company with his father near the canal at Bradford-cum-Beswick, touched one of the boat horses, which resented the liberty by kicking him in the chest. A doctor was immediately sent for, but the poor child expired in five hours. He was six years old, and resided with his father, a boatman, in Mill Street, Bradford.

**52 July 29 1871**

ALLEGED MANSLAUGHTER IN MANCHESTER At the Waterloo Hotel, Withington, on Tuesday, Mr Frederick Price conducted an inquest touching the death of **Charles Burgess**, boatman, 41 years old, who lived at No 2 Crown Street, Chester Road, Hulme.

The first person who gave evidence was **Ann Burgess**, the wife of the deceased, who said that on Monday evening the 17<sup>th</sup> inst at about ten minutes to six o'clock, her husband, having been in bed since half past ten in the morning, got up and went out. She accompanied him to the gates of the yard belonging to the Trustees of the late Duke of Bridgewater in Chester Road. A man named William Johnson was standing there. She could not tell who spoke first, but her husband and Johnson began swearing at each other. Johnson pushed witness's husband, who then struck him. The quarrel lasted a few minutes longer, and then Johnson's wife came up, shook the deceased, and hit him on the face. **Samuel Johnson** (boatman, Ordsal Lane, Salford) then came across from his brother William's beerhouse, which is on the side of Chester Road opposite to where the quarrel was taking place. He hit the deceased a blow on the right eye and knocked him on his back, causing his head to strike the stones. The deceased became insensible immediately, and remained so until the following morning. At the back of his head there was a small wound, which bled a little. About ten o'clock on Wednesday night, he was removed to the Chorlton Union Workhouse at Withington. He had not given Samuel Johnson any provocation whatever when Johnson knocked him down.

Henry Edwards deposed that he was a butcher, residing at 60 Chester Road, Hulme. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of the present month, he was standing at his own door, and saw the deceased and William Johnson quarrelling. In a minute or two they commenced to fight. They struck one another with their fists ; but, in his opinion, no blows were given that could do any harm. The struggle was more like wrestling than fighting. He went across the road, and when he got to them they had ceased to struggle, and neither seemed any worse for the blows which had been exchanged. He then saw Samuel Johnson come out of his brother William's house, walk straight across the street to the deceased and, without saying a word, raise his right arm and knock the deceased down. He did not appear the worse for drink when he did this. He came out of his brother's house with his shirt sleeves rolled up, and he walked straight back when he had given the blow, which was a very violent one.

Dr William Webster, assistant resident medical officer of the Chorlton Union Workhouse at Withington, said : I saw the deceased immediately on his admission into the house on Wednesday night last. He was in a state of muttering delirium. On his body were two marks of violence – one on his right eye, and the other, which was a cut about an inch and a half long on the back of his head. He died at half past ten o'clock last Friday morning, without having once been sensible during his stay in the Workhouse. On Monday afternoon, I made a *post mortem* examination of the body. The organs in the abdomen and the chest were all healthy. On opening the head, I found a large clot of blood at the anterior part of the right side of the brain. There was also a fracture of the roof of the eye's socket – the frontal bone. The clot of blood was close behind and above the fracture. There was a second fracture in the occipital bone at the back of the head, and a small quantity of blood, corresponding with the fracture, effused between the membranes and the bone.

In my opinion, death was caused by the rupture of the blood vessel behind the frontal bone, and the formation thereby of the clot of blood. The fracture of the blood vessel might have been caused either by a very violent blow on the eye, or by the deceased falling on the back of his head. The fall described by one of the witnesses would, in my opinion, be sufficient to account for all the appearances on the body, except that round the eye.

A verdict of "Manslaughter" against Samuel Johnson was returned by the jury. The man was afterwards committed for trial by the city magistrates.

### **53 August 28 1871**

**SALFORD HUNDRED INTERMEDIATE SESSIONS** The intermediate sessions for the hundred of Salford commenced its sittings on Monday at the Assize Courts, before Mr W H Higgin (QC), chairman, and a bench of magistrates.

The following sentences were passed :-

Four months imprisonment : **Richard Strickland**, boatman, for felony at Droylsden on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August.

### **54 September 2 1871**

**THE LATE GALE AT LIVERPOOL** On Saturday evening, during a stiff breeze and a heavy swell caused by the gale on the previous day, two Mersey boatmen named **Nagle** – father and son – were bringing the captain of the *Mary Durkee* ashore, when the boat was struck by a wave and upset. The occupants could all swim, however, and clung to the keel, where they remained for upwards of two hours, during which time they had drifted nearly out to sea. They were at last observed and rescued by a pilot boat, when it was found that the younger Nagle had been drowned by the waves which constantly dashed over them. An inquest was held on Tuesday, and a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

### **55 September 2 1871**

**KILLED IN A STREET FIGHT** An inquest, which has been adjourned two or three times, was concluded at the Town Hall, Chester, yesterday, relative to the death of Thomas Simpson, who was killed in a street fight, in that city, soon after midnight on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August. The evidence given by the various witnesses who were present was very confused, and in some points contradictory. The most consistent account was that of the deceased's brother, who was in his company, had a quarrel with two men named Davies and Douglas, and fought with Davies in Frodsham Street. Afterwards, Davies and Douglas followed them into Queen Street, and there the quarrel was renewed. Deceased's brother asked a boatman named **Matthew Edwards** to see fair play. Edwards, after watching the fight some little time, took part in it, and knocked down both Davies and Douglas. He also struck deceased on the forehead, which knocked him down. Deceased was insensible and, on hearing that the police were coming, some of his companions carried him off. As he was being taken away, Edwards tried to coax him to speak, and said he had no intention to strike him at all, he thought it was Douglas that he was hitting. Deceased was taken to the Infirmary, and died two days afterwards, never having regained consciousness. A *post mortem* examination revealed a fracture of the skull and congestion of the brain. The jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against Edwards, who has made off.

### **56 October 28 1871**

**POLICE NEWS** **George Lewis**, boatman, Henry Street, Lymm, was, at the County Police Court, Strangeways, before Sir J I Mantell, yesterday, ordered to be imprisoned during the ensuing six months, for violently assaulting Police-constable William Langhorn at Cadishead, Barton-on-Irwell, at a late hour on Thursday night.

### **57 January 6 1872**

**MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS** A general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of

Manchester commenced at the Assize Courts on Wednesday. Mr H W West QC, MP, Recorder, presided.

The following sentences were passed yesterday :-

Twelve months : **Joseph Martin**, 50, for felony, along with three others, on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

Six months : **George Dean**, boatman, for theft, on the 14<sup>th</sup> October.

### **58 March 8 1872**

SALFORD HUNDRED INTERMEDIATE SESSIONS The Salford hundred intermediate sessions commenced on Monday at the Assize Court, Strangeways.

Tuesday : The following sentences were pronounced :-

Acquitted : **John Carroll**, 18, boatman and **James McElroy**, 19, boatman, accused of stealing, at Droylsden, 7s and a pair of boots from the person of Thomas Walker.

### **59 March 9 1872**

MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were opened at the Assize Courts, Strangeways, on Monday, before Mr H Wyndham West, QC, MP, recorder.

The following sentences were passed during the day, Mr Leresche presiding in a second court :-

Three months : **Edward Anson**, 18, boatman, felony.

### **59 May 4 1872**

POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court on Monday, **John Balshaw**, boatman, resident in Liverpool Road, was fined £5 for ill treating a horse on the river bank at Barton-upon-Irwell - Sir J I Mantell, the presiding justice, remarking that he would have imposed a penalty of £20 if he had had the power. A witness stated that on Sunday afternoon he saw the prisoner in charge of two horses near the river Irwell at Barton. One of the beasts slipped down, whereupon Balshaw said, "This is the way I shall serve you, you ----", and pushed the handle of a whip twice up the animal's nose, causing it to bleed, as the witness said, "like a tap".

### **60 June 1 1872**

SALFORD HUNDRED QUARTER SESSIONS The following sentences have also been given :-  
Six months imprisonment : **William Price**, 28, boatman ; **William Stevens**, 34, boatman ; **Peter Walker**, 26, boatman ; and William Simkinson, 40, beerseller, for stealing, at Chadderton on May 2, 220 lb of cotton owned by the Bridgewater Trustees.

### **61 July 13 1872**

MURDER AT LEEDS A boatman named **John Dearden** is in custody at Leeds for having murdered his wife, by shooting her in the head with a six barrelled revolver.

### **62 July 13 1872**

SUSPECTED MURDER AND SUICIDE AT WAKEFIELD On Wednesday morning at an early hour, the inhabitants of Eastmoor, Wakefield, were startled by the discovery that a woman had, to all appearance, been cruelly murdered in her bed, and that by the man who had for some months past cohabited with her, and the excitement was further intensified by the discovery, two or three hours later, that the man himself had put an end to his own existence by hanging. It appears that, acting upon information received, Inspector Wood visited the house of a man named **Isaac Townend**, who lived in Camplins Yard, Eastmoor. The officer found the door fastened, but very soon made an entrance, when the lifeless body of a woman called Ruth Hollins, about 45 years old, was found on the bed. When the above facts were first ascertained by the police, it was not known what had become of the supposed murderer. It was thought he had absconded. About half past ten, however, a man named Joseph Best observed something suspended from a beam in a shed erected in a field near the waterworks, in Ouchthorpe Lane. On approaching it, he found it to be the lifeless

body of Townend, hanging by the neck by a piece of cord. It appears that the murdered woman, who had been drinking for some days past, was last seen alive on Tuesday night about half past six. Townend, who was apparently about the same age as his paramour, was a native of Eastmoor, but for many years lived elsewhere. Formerly, he was employed as a boatman, but for the last twelve months or so he was in the service of Mr John Moxon, cab proprietor &c, Eastmoor, who spoke of him as being a quiet, steady, hard working man. The house the two lived in belonged to Mr Moxon, who was, it is said, the first person to discover the dreadful deed ; for as Townend did not appear at his work at the usual time yesterday morning, he sent messengers to call him. They called and shook the door of the house, but no one answered. Eventually, Mr Moxon went himself ; and, failing to get a reply, he looked through the window of a room, and was horrified to see the woman lying apparently dead on the bed. He at once called Inspector Wood who, as stated above, went and effected an entrance into the room. She was then found to be partially undressed. Dr Wade was shortly afterwards called in, and made a *post mortem* examination of the body in the afternoon. There were discolourations of the skin about the neck, especially at the back, and on the side of the face.

### **63 August 24 1872**

**POLICE NEWS** On Wednesday, at the Salford Police Court, **Charles Martin, William Walker** and **Richard Walker**, boatmen, recently employed by Mr J Davies, Runcorn, were charged with offending against the Masters and Servants Act. About five weeks ago, the prisoners started with their boats to go to Preston Leigh but, on arriving at Salford, were detained in consequence of the canal banks having broken down. During their detention Mr Davies advanced sums of money to them, and when the boats could resume the journey, the defendants refused to continue working unless the prosecutor promised not to ask for repayment of the money advanced. He refused to do this ; and the defendants, without giving him notice of their intention, abandoned their boats, thereby causing damage to them and their cargoes. The defendants were sentenced to pay 20s each or go to prison for 14 days.

### **64 September 21 1872**

**A BOATMAN DROWNED** Shortly before eleven o'clock on the night of the 17<sup>th</sup> inst, a boatman named **Isaac McCormick**, 38 years old, was drowned in a lock of the Rochdale Canal at Failsworth. He was in company with two other boatmen, when they heard a splash in the water, and found that the deceased had disappeared. They searched the water with boat hooks and, at the end of 15 minutes, pulled out the dead body of McCormick.

### **65 October 26 1872**

**GALLANT CONDUCT OF A LIVERPOOL LIFEBOATMAN** One of the most daring acts of bravery which has been recorded since that performed by Joseph Rogers on the occasion of the wreck of the Royal Charter was (says the *Liverpool Albion*) a few days ago witnessed on the coast of North Wales, within a few miles from the spot where that unfortunate vessel was lost. It appears that eight men, comprising boatmen and riggers, were engaged in Liverpool to proceed to Carnarvon for the purpose of bringing the barque *Queen of the Fleet* round to the Mersey. The men were taken down in the steamer *Warrior* (Captain Green) which was to tow the vessel round after she had discharged a cargo of timber from St John, NB. The barque left Carnarvon on the morning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> instant in tow of the *Warrior*; at the time when one of those heavy northerly gales which then visited the coast was raging. The vessel, however, was well sheltered whilst passing through Menai Straits, and on reaching Beaumaris it was resolved to take the Penman Sound, which lies between Puffin Island and the Mainland, and pass to windward of the island. At this point the full fury of the gale was felt, the sound being quite exposed to the northerly winds, and not the slightest shelter was afforded. The sea was running very high, and the vessels had made considerable headway, when the barque, which was pitching and rolling, owing to her being in ballast trim, was struck by a heavy sea, and the tow rope parted. Attempts were immediately made to get out another

hawser, but before that could be accomplished, the sea and wind had driven the *Queen of the Fleet* on to a ledge of rocks lying on the north side of the island. The first blow unshipped the rudder, driving it upwards many feet, and the vessel began to labour very heavily, each sea causing her to roll first on one broadside and then on the other, until it became almost impossible for those on board to prevent themselves from falling into the sea. The crew consisted of Captain Holmes, his son, and the eight men already mentioned ; the captain's wife and daughter being also on board. Signals of distress were made as soon as possible, and were seen from the Penman lifeboat station, some distance from the distressed vessel. At this critical junction, the vessel seeming to open with every blow, and the sea, which was making a clean breach over her, threatening to sweep every soul out of her, one of the crew named **James Moore**, a Liverpool boatman and also one of the crew of the Liverpool tubular lifeboat, gallantly came forward and volunteered to swim to the island with a rope, to effect a means by which the rest could be landed. At least one hundred yards lay between the vessel and where Moore could effect a landing, the sea breaking all along the island most terrifically ; but, nothing daunted, Moore, having divested himself of part of his clothing, and with the deep sea line fastened round his body, heroically plunged into the angry sea. For a time, he was entirely obscured, and when first seen was halfway to the island, struggling forward most bravely at one moment, and the next being carried back almost to the vessel. Still he struggled on to accomplish his praiseworthy aim, and at length he successfully reached the shore, having been dashed against some of the points of the rocks, and sustained severe injuries to several parts of his body. After recovering himself a little, three others of the crew were in turn hauled through the surf by Moore, and an attempt was made to haul a fourth one but, unfortunately, the line got entangled with the rocks, and it was with much difficulty that the poor fellow was hauled back to the vessel in an exhausted state. It was now resolved, as those already landed had been more or less injured by the rocks, not to attempt the same means again, but as the tug steamer lay at the lee side of the island, Captain Green with some of his crew had landed and, with the assistance of the four men already saved, the steamer's punt was carried round the island and, by means of the rope attached to the vessel, the boat was launched through the surf ; and after being hauled backwards and forwards several times, the rest of the crew, with the two females, were safely landed on the island. In landing the remainder of the boat, Captain Green of the *Warrior* performed very meritorious services, remaining in the boat till all were landed. The wind having somewhat changed and moderated, and the tide risen, the vessel beat over the rocks for some hours afterwards, and was boarded by the crew of the lifeboat in a sinking state, but was ultimately got on a sandy beach, when some temporary repairs were effected, and the vessel was got round to Liverpool in a shattered condition. The courage and daring of James Moore cannot be too highly recommended. He has on four occasions rescued lives on the Mersey at the risk of his own, and has also been instrumental in saving lives by means of his boat, in each case having appeared before the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society, and received rewards in recognition of his gallant services.

## **66**      **November 30 1872**

SALFORD HUNDRED INTERMEDIATE SESSIONS    The following sentences were passed on Tuesday :-

Twelve months imprisonment : Daniel O'Neill, 22, carter, **William Whittle**, 20, boatman, and **William Quinn**, 30, boatman, for stealing 30 cwt of pig iron, the property of the Bridgewater Navigation Company.

## **67**      **December 7 1872**

### **Leeds Assizes**

MANSLAUGHTER OF A BOATMAN NEAR WAKEFIELD    **Samuel Mountain**, 29, waterman, was charged with the manslaughter of **Ralph Greenwood** at Walton on the 28<sup>th</sup> August last. Mr Wheelhouse was for the prosecution, and Mr Campbell Foster defended the prisoner. The bill was ignored against prisoner's wife, **Emma Mountain**, who was supposed to have been under the control of her husband. On the day in question, the deceased, who was in command of a boat

belonging to the proprietors of the Oaks Colliery near Barnsley, was near the lodgekeeper's bridge on the Wakefield and Barnsley Canal at Walton, near Wakefield, on his voyage with a cargo of coal from Barnsley to Sowerby Bridge. Prisoner was also captain of a boat belonging to Mr William Fieldhouse, and he and the deceased had a little altercation as to which vessel should first pass the lock. In the course of the quarrel, deceased stepped on board the prisoner's boat, and there struck and assaulted the prisoner's wife, and knocked her down. Greenwood was thereupon savagely struck on the head with a hatchet by the prisoner, who hit him no fewer than six times about the head. Deceased staggered on to the hauling path, and was able to give information of the attack to a policeman. Greenwood was subsequently removed to the Clayton Hospital, where he died as the surgeons were attempting to trepan one severe injury inflicted on his skull. The defence set up by Mr Foster was that the fatal injury might have been caused by Mrs Mountain striking him with the knife with which she was then cutting cabbage, or by Greenwood's falling over the coals, or in the course of the two men struggling together ; or it might have been the result of the blow from the hatchet. Such being the uncertainty of the case, how could the jury clearly attribute the injury to the action of the prisoner? The jury found the prisoner guilty, and he was put back for sentence until this (Tuesday) morning.

### **68     January 10 1874**

**BODY FOUND IN THE IRWELL** On Thursday morning, **Robert Brown**, a boatman living at 2 Back Irwell Street, while on the Irwell near the Racecourse, Cross Lane, Salford, saw the body of a woman floating in the water. The head was embedded in the sand, and this prevented the body drifting. The police were informed of the occurrence, and the body was taken to the Queen's Hotel, Ordsal Lane, where it awaits identification. Deceased was about 40 years of age, and had on a wedding ring. There was only a farthing found upon her.

### **69     February 28 1874**

**LOCAL AND DISTRICT** At the County Police Court, Strangeways, on Wednesday, a boatman named **John Salt** was fined £5 and costs, with the alternative of two months imprisonment, for working a horse in an unfit state. The animal was described as being in a weak and emaciated condition – nothing but skin and bone – and Sir J I Mantell, the stipendiary magistrate, said it was one of the worst cases that had come under his notice.

### **70     March 14 1874**

**FARMYARD ROBBERIES AT OLD TRAFFORD** At the County Police Court, Strangeways, on Monday, **Samuel Meredith**, boatman, Lombard Street, Manchester, was charged with being on the farm of Sir Humphrey de Trafford, Trafford Park, with intent to commit a felony. About half past two o'clock on the morning of Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> ult, Police-constable George Wilson was on duty in plain clothes in the park, when he heard someone in the farmyard endeavouring to silence a dog that was barking. As he entered the yard, prisoner, who was near the duck cote, ran away. The officer followed, and prisoner turned round and struck at him with a wooden railing that he had pulled up. Wilson knocked him down with his staff, and afterwards conveyed him to the police station. There had been eight turkeys and eight ducks stolen earlier in the night from the farm, and in the pockets of the coat that the man was wearing a large quantity of ducks' feathers were found. Superintendent Bent stated that for some months prior to the capture of the prisoner, there had been nightly robberies of poultry from the farm yards in the district. Since his arrest, not a single robbery had occurred. Prisoner, who has been convicted of felony at Runcorn, was sentenced to three months imprisonment as a rogue and a vagabond.

### **71     March 14 1874**

**MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS** The following sentences have been passed at these sessions :-  
**Charles Neale**, 33, boatman, for robbery.

**72 April 11 1874**

**HORSE STEALING** At the County Police Court, Strangeways, on Tuesday, **John Eccles**, boatman, who already stood committed to the sessions for horse stealing, was brought up on a further charge of stealing a horse belonging to **Thomas Matthew Bird**, boat proprietor, Bradford. Prisoner was employed by Mr Bird to take a boat along the canal to Rochdale about a fortnight ago, and instead of returning with the horse, he took the animal to Pendlebury and offered it for sale at the Lord Nelson Inn, Pendlebury. Eventually he sold the horse and collar for a trifling sum. In answer to the charge, he said he found the horse straying on the canal bank, without anyone to take care of it. He was committed to the sessions on this charge also. He is concerned in other robberies.

**73 June 20 1874**

**POLICE NEWS** At the Salford Police Court, before Sir J I Mantell, on Saturday, **George Waterworth**, boatman, was sentenced to three months hard labour for having negligently left his wife and three children chargeable to the Salford Union since the beginning of February last.

**74 August 22 1874**

**SALFORD HUNDRED INTERMEDIATE SESSIONS** Sentences were passed as follows :-  
Six months and three years police supervision : **Edward Hanson**, boatman, for stealing at Droylsden, on the 25<sup>th</sup> July, 40 lb of lead owned by Christopher James Schofield.  
Seven years and seven years police supervision : **William Holt**, 24, boatman, for stealing at Chorlton-cum-Hardy on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July, a mare and a horse belonging to George Clarke.  
Acquitted : **Enoch Williams**, 21, boatman, charged with stealing a wheelbarrow at Worsley.

**75 August 29 1874**

**DEATH FROM SUNSTROKE AT CLIFTON** On Tuesday, Mr F Price, district coroner, held an inquest at the Beehive Inn, Rake Lane, Clifton, on the body of **Ellen Lee**, aged eight years, daughter of **Robert Lee**, employed as a boatman by the Clifton and Kearsley Coal Company, and residing at Ram's Fold in the above township. **Ann Lee** said she was the mother of the deceased girl, who had up to Saturday last from the date of her birth enjoyed good health. On Saturday last, she went into the fields along with five other children about half past one o'clock, and before half past two, she was brought home quite dead. There were no marks of violence upon her. It was a very hot afternoon, and witness was persuaded that the deceased's death was the result of sunstroke. Deceased became black about the head and ears almost as soon as she was dead. Mary Ann Rostron deposed that she saw the deceased playing on some boards or pieces of timber. Witness's attention was arrested by the call of the deceased's elder sister. She saw the deceased fall forward from off the timber on to the grass. The girl's lips immediately went black, and she closed her eyes and died. The day was very hot, and deceased had no hat on, and there was nothing to shade her from the burning sun. Witness believed that the intense heat of the sun at the time was the cause of her death. The Coroner, in summing up the evidence, said it was quite clear that the deceased died from congestion of the brain, which is commonly called sunstroke. The jury returned a verdict accordingly.

**76 September 12 1874**

**SAVAGE WIFE KICKING IN SALFORD** At the Salford Police Court, before Sir J I Mantell, yesterday, **James Ashton**, boatman, 12 Everard Street, Ordsal Lane, was brought up on remand, charged with having brutally assaulted his wife. The prosecutrix stated that last Tuesday night the prisoner reached home rather drunk, and used foul and threatening language to her. Being afraid of him, she left the house until after eleven o'clock, when she returned and found that the prisoner had gone out. He returned shortly afterwards and chased her into the cellar, where he knocked her down and kicked her on the face, head and ribs. He wore heavy hob nailed boots. Mr W E Hodson, district surgeon at the Salford Hospital, said that the prosecutrix was brought to the hospital about

one o'clock on Wednesday morning. She was suffering from a broken rib, two scalp wounds (one an inch long, and penetrating the bone, and the other half an inch long), and bruises on the left cheek, right arm, and right shoulder. Police-constable Christie stated that on Tuesday, at midnight, hearing cries of "murder", he went into the prisoner's lodgings. He found the prosecutrix in the cellar, bleeding profusely from the head. The officer took the woman to the Salford Hospital, and the prisoner to the police station. Sir John Mantell said the prisoner would have to go for trial at the Quarter Sessions ; and he (Sir John) should be astonished beyond measure if the jury acquitted the prisoner. It was the clearest case of brutality that he had ever heard of, and he was sure that such a ruffian as the prisoner deserved five years penal servitude as much as any man that ever got it in this world.

### **77      September 12 1874**

**VIOLENT ASSAULTS IN SALFORD** At the Salford Police Court, before Sir J I Mantel and Mr W W Goulden, on Wednesday, **Henry Baxter**, boatman, 27 Lower Duncan Street, Regent Road, was brought up for assaulting his wife. Police-constable Pritchard said that on Saturday evening, about nine o'clock, he entered the prisoner's house, because he had heard screams of "murder" issue from it. The prisoner was just kicking his wife, who was bleeding profusely from the nose. He (the officer) took the prisoner to the central police station at the Town Hall ; and there, when the prosecutrix was about to append her mark to the entry of the charge, the prisoner said, in a threatening manner, "Touch the pen if you dare, and I'll let you see what I'll do when I come out". The prosecutrix, whom it had been necessary to bring up under a warrant before she would give evidence, stated that on Saturday night the prisoner gave her a black eye and made her mouth bleed. He was sentenced to hard labour in gaol for six months.

### **78      October 10 1874**

**THE GUNPOWDER EXPLOSION** The Regent's Park explosion does not seem less terrible after the lapse of a week. The full effects of it had not become adequately known on the day of its occurrence ; still less had there been time to reflect upon the slender chances by which the actual calamity was divided from something infinitely greater. The insufficiency of the law with respect to the carriage and storage of explosive substances had been vaguely recognised, and a Parliamentary Committee was appointed last session to investigate the subject. Its report was an echo of the complaints which had been current, and yet so great was the apathy prevailing in the matter that it still seemed unlikely there would be any early legislative action. There is now a prospect that "something may be done" on the spur of such a warning as was given last week ; for though it is lamentable to think of the loss of life and property which resulted from this explosion, it is small indeed by comparison with what is continually imperilled, and may be any day sacrificed. Tons of gunpowder are transported daily through more populous parts of the metropolis than that in which the explosion took place, and the restrictions or supervision are a practical nullity. It is provided by the Act of 1860, which regulates the conveyance of gunpowder, that no greater quantity of powder than 500 barrels shall be carried at any one time in any boat &c, except in certain specified cases which are obviously apart from the conveyance through London ; and there are also clauses limiting the quantity carried in the Thames, providing against combustible matter, fire or lights, while the boat is loading or unloading, and providing that the barrels of powder shall be protected by tarpaulin or hides. Smoking on board is prohibited at all times, but in other respects the restrictions do not extend to the time such boats are moving about through the most thickly inhabited places, and gunpowder may, as in the case of the boat which exploded, form part of a miscellaneous cargo. Yesterday week, London was aroused by the explosion on board a boat which was one of a train of six, in tow of a steam tug on the Regent's Canal. The three men on the boat which exploded perished at once. Some of the men in the other boats are in hospital, and it is not yet ascertained what light they may be able to throw upon the cause of the explosion. Possibly they can add nothing to what has been stated at the inquest by the steerer of the steam tug. He states that the boats left the City Wharf of the Grand Junction Canal Company at 8 am and passed along the

Regent's Canal for two hours. When they steamed out of the basin, there was lightning. This may have been the origin of the suggestion made by another boatman, who was asleep when it happened, that it was lightning that did the mischief. The steerer of the steam tug, however, says there was no lightning nor rain after the boats had started. The explosion occurred beneath the North Bridge, a light structure, which was blown into the air. The witness says that after the tug had passed the bridge, he heard a voice from behind call out, "Stop, this boat's afire". He immediately rang the bell to stop. The engine "stopped dead". A momentary stoppage was made, but nothing could be seen. The engine was put in motion again, and about the same time the man noticed a little blue "bursticle" of flame on the boat next but one behind. It rose no higher than the plank on the boat, and it at once disappeared. All was dark again for several seconds. The call of "Stop!" came from the boat where the blue light was afterwards observed, and in less than a minute from the call, the explosion occurred. "It all went up with a blue flare", followed, of course, by no end of smoke. The boat which thus exploded was called the *Tilbury*, and at the inquest the particulars of her cargo were read over by the Grand Junction Company's traffic manager. Besides a large number of casks of gunpowder, making altogether about five tons, there were casks of lead, parcels of stationery, two cases of drugs "not declared, and not charged at a danger rate", a bundle of cloth, a quantity of sugar, some barrels of currants, a cask of borax, one of petroleum and four of benzoline. The discovery of this article among the cargo struck the jury very forcibly, but the inquiry stands adjourned till Monday, after eliciting nothing else beyond the manager's inability to suggest an alteration of the system of traffic. He may have been justified in his remark that it was rather a question for the company's directors than for himself. He is, however, of opinion that a boat cannot be put on specially for five tons of powder. "If it cannot be sent with other things, some other means of conveyance must be found".

Among the several questions arising out of this explosion, the liability of the insurance companies and of the canal companies for damage done is one of the most prominent. The Regent's Canal Company, however, plead that they are not carriers, but simply owners of a highway which they are bound to open freely to all comers in boats, on payment of toll. The most important of all the questions, however, remains that of the way in which this explosion came about, and even if the coroner's inquiry should fail to do more, it will probably convince most people that some better system of regulation is needed for such a traffic as that of gunpowder. The boats employed in carrying gunpowder to and from the Woolwich Arsenal are under stringent rules. They are painted of a colour to warn other vessels of their contents ; they are fitted with lightning conductors ; they are in charge of picked men ; care is taken as to the materials of the boat's construction and the mode of packing, and the possibility of a spark from a passing steamer, a chimney, or elsewhere, is so guarded against by the use of tarpaulin, hides and other coverings, that probably the powder would be absolutely inaccessible to such a danger. Some rigorous system of inspection is required in the case of private depots and private conveyances of gunpowder. At the inquest, several of the boatmen have given evidence, and they seem to be persons who had little knowledge or concern as to the character of their cargo. Their employers had, probably enough, observed the law's requirements in the matter, but the Committee's report, already referred to, had exposed their insufficiency, and the occurrence of this explosion has elicited from many quarters evidence enough of the fact that, in the absence of proper supervision, reasonable precautions are constantly neglected.

## **79      October 10 1874**

**THE GUNPOWDER EXPLOSION IN LONDON – THE INQUEST** The inquest on the bodies of the men killed was opened at twelve o'clock on Saturday, at the Marylebone Workhouse, by Dr Hardwicke.

The Coroner, in opening the proceedings, said that that day they would be of a very formal character, inasmuch as there was a vast deal of evidence to be prepared before the inquiry could be thoroughly entered upon. The jury would, therefore, only view the bodies and take sufficient evidence for the purpose of identification, after which the inquiry would be adjourned.

The jury hereupon went and viewed the bodies, which were in a terrible state of mutilation.

Evidence of identification was then gone into.

**Edward Hall**, living at Branston, Northamptonshire, said : I am a boatman, and knew **William Taylor**. He was a labourer on the boats. I last saw him alive at the Camden Town top lock on Friday morning about half past four. I do not know his age. When I saw him, he was waiting for us to come through the top lock. Our boat was the *Limehouse*. He had on his boat a general cargo. I do not know what it was. He went through the lock before us. The name of his boat was the *Tilbury*. The *Ready* and the *Jane* had gone through before me. I saw nothing after we left the Camden Lock, as I was in my cabin. I had just undressed and gone to bed when the explosion occurred. I cannot say what my impression was at the time. I have no opinion, unless it was the lightning that caused it. I felt the shock. My boat sank ; she was knocked all to pieces. I was knocked out of bed against the fireplace, and I lost my senses. I cannot say how long it was before I "came to" as I was in the water. I saw nothing more of Taylor after we left the Camden top lock. I dare say it was an hour before we found out what the explosion was, because we did not know what boats were on the other side of the bridge. On making inquiry, we found Taylor was missing. I had a general cargo of sugar and other merchandise for Northampton. There was a small bit of fire in my grate. I did not see any sparks coming from the steam tug – not to come the distance where I was. The sparks will not usually fly from the chimney a distance of more than two or three yards. I am sure of that. I do not think that the sparks would be carried further by reason of the breeze as we were passing the bridge, as the air was very still that morning. I cannot say whether there was any fire on board the *Tilbury*.

Evidence was then taken of the identification of the body of **Charles Baxton**.

John Hill deposed as follows : I have known Charles Baxton for the last six or seven years. He was the captain of the *Tilbury*. I last saw him alive on Thursday night, at the City Road Wharf, at about eight o'clock in the evening. I spoke to him. He was loading his boat there, at the Grand Junction Wharf. I did not see the goods that he was taking in. I saw some of them – a few nuts, some sugar bags, casks and all sorts. I did not know what was in them. I do not know whether there was any gunpowder there or not. I could not see.

Hereupon it was decided to adjourn the inquiry till Wednesday.

The inquiry was resumed on that day, at the Marylebone Workhouse, before Dr Hardwicke, deputy coroner.

**Edward Hall** said he had been on board the *Limehouse* for 23 years, and personally superintended the storage of the cargo. He knew every cargo that went on board his own boat. Had occasionally taken gunpowder. Might say that he had taken gunpowder once a year. He had been captain of the *Limehouse* for three months, during which time he had not taken any gunpowder. Took the powder generally in tins. Never recollected taking a ton at a time. It was always put in the bottom of the boat. There was no fall from the wharf to the boat. The casks had to be shifted. Had never noticed afterwards any small particles that had escaped. As captain of the boat, he slept on board his vessel.

The Coroner : Do your men smoke on board?

Witness : Not my men. I do.

The Coroner : Are you allowed to smoke there?

Witness : We are.

By Major Majendie : What orders have you with regard to caution?

Witness : To clothe it with tarpauling, not to clothe up goods. Was in the habit of taking government powder, and had directions given not to have fires on board. With other powder, they had fires. When he had carried powder, he had fires on board. Did not wear a special dress when putting the powder on board. Did not search the men to see whether they had matches. Did not wear any special shoes. Wore their ordinary boots. It was the practice to water the boat before the powder was put on board. The metal of the boat inside was iron. Did have fires on board at the time of loading. Had known instances when Hall's barrels had been bad. The bottoms had dropped out and the powder was spilt. Two bottoms fell out six months ago. The powder was gathered up and put into the barrel again. Did not know if there was any fire on board the *Tilbury*. Immediately

he was saved, he ran back to Camden Town. Did not see any smoke on board the *Tilbury* before the explosion. Saw no light on board the *Tilbury*.

By a Juror : Did not sign any bill of lading of the cargo put on board. Saw a flash of lightning a few minutes – about two minutes and a half – before the explosion. It had been a stormy night.

Hill, a labourer, recalled, said he was in the employ of the Grand Junction Canal at times.

A Juryman : On the last occasion you said it would be worth more than your place to inquire what was in the casks.

Witness : I only meant that it was not my duty to inquire what was in the casks.

By the Coroner : He had loaded gunpowder at the City Wharf ; but received no instructions.

By a Juryman : Was told when loading gunpowder that it was gunpowder, and received instructions not to smoke.

By Major Majendie : Received instructions to take the greatest precautions. Was not allowed to smoke when loading any goods. A tarpauling was put over the powder that was not put over other goods. Had loaded powder often, but never saw a leaky barrel. The instructions were not to put in any goods that were leaky.

**Mr Hugh Hughes** said he had been at Wharf Road as traffic manager of the Grand Canal Company. Tug steamers came to the wharf. Gunpowder came there in vans, was put on board barges, and sent away in considerable quantities. No Government powder came into the City basin, but chiefly blasting powder. He was not personally cognisant of the particular quantities sent away.

The Coroner : What is the largest quantity you have known on board?

Witness : Five tons ; that which was carried by Baxter. The men had not any printed precautions. The men knew the precautions necessary, he believed, had bills of lading sent on Thursday. The cargo of the *Tilbury* was a general cargo of groceries, with five or six tons of powder in casks ; also a package of gunpowder, weighing one quarter and 14 lb. The large bulk was sent by Sligo and Wilks, and consigned to A Greaves, druggist, Chesterfield. The package was to Pearson and Brown, Leicester, from Curtis and Co. [A tin case was handed to the Coroner containing gunpowder, many of which were found on the banks after the explosion.] Was now aware that benzoline was on board.

A Juryman complained that Mr Hughes was desired to read the bill of lading. Yet knowing that benzoline was on board, he had described the cargo as general. This was the very essence of the inquiry, and ought not to have been omitted. (“Hear, hear”, by several jurors).

Thomas Cherry, picker off at the wharf, said he knew the cargo of the *Tilbury* was groceries and timber. Had no written instructions as to loading gunpowder.

Major Majendie : Were there any other barrels?

Witness : Yes, of sugar.

Major Majendie : What else? Did you know there was any petroleum on board?

Witness : Yes, six. They were stowed three abreast at the sides.

By Major Majendie : The only instructions about storing petroleum was that the barrels should be bung up to prevent their leaking. The loading of the *Tilbury* was completed at three o'clock. The barrels were covered up with good tarpaulin. The instructions with regard to powder was to water the ground from the powder house. He did so. The boat was very damp from the rain. Never received any regulations as to matches and books. Smoking was not allowed on the wharf. Sometimes fires were on the boat when powder was being put on board. Was not aware that there was any order against fires being on board a boat when it was being loaded with powder. The *Tilbury* was very low in the water.

By a Juryman : Was responsible for seeing that the barges were properly sent off. He had seen gunpowder and petroleum sent together before. The precaution for preventing fire falling in the powder was the tarpaulin. The light of the gas was sufficient for the purposes of loading. Did not observe any fire on board or light from the cabin.

Mr Hughes, recalled, said the invoice produced was a copy of the bill of lading.

Major Majendie requested him to read out the items of the cargo of the *Tilbury* which was set down, and from which it appeared that amongst other things, there was one package of gunpowder, some

casks of drugs, one case of borax, one cask of petroleum, one case (contents not been stated), the gunpowder alluded to, and two barrels of benzoline. On board the *Jane* (the next boat to the steam tug), two barrels of benzoline and 49 casks of gunpowder. The *Ready* had also gunpowder on board. On board the *Dee*, there was 1 barrel of petroleum, 1 can of naphtha, 10 barrels of paraffin and 1 can of spirit – could not say what. The *Hawkesbury* had on board a barrel of oil, a barrel of benzoline, 4 casks of spirit and 24 casks of gunpowder.

The Coroner asked if it was necessary that gunpowder and petroleum should go with a general cargo.

Witness said it was. The various goods arrived from time to time, and had to go on board to make up the cargoes as they arrived. If this system was prevented, they would have to give up the carriage of explosives.

The Coroner : Have you any responsible officer for seeing the boats go off with gunpowder on board?

The witness said no ; there was only a general overseer.

Mr B Cooper White, on behalf of the Grand Junction Canal Company, said they were simply owners, and not public carriers ; in fact, they did not carry on trade at all. The canal was a public highway, and the canal owners were bound to receive all traffic. All they did was to receive the money at the locks. They were very much in the position of turnpike trustees.

The Coroner : Do I understand that the traffic is carried on in the same manner as hitherto?

Witness : Yes, but we shall avoid putting petroleum, as far as possible, with gunpowder. We have had no gunpowder to carry since the explosion.

The Coroner : Then am I to understand that you are not prepared with sufficient details to say that you will stop such a dangerous system of traffic?

Witness : Not without first consulting my directors.

**William Harding**, captain of the steam tug, said he was lying down when the explosion took place. He was awoke by the shock, and fell against his mate. He had seen smoking in the cabins. The benzoline was put on board the tug while he was away, or he should not have allowed it.

**Francis Clarke**, the company's boatman, gave similar evidence.

Several other witnesses having been examined, the inquiry was adjourned.

## **80      October 4 1874**

**GUNPOWDER AND BENZOLINE** The verdict of the coroner's jury on the great gunpowder explosion is that it was "caused by the ignition of the vapour of benzoline by fire or light in the cabin of the *Tilbury*". The jury add that "in the stowage or transport of the cargo, the Grand Junction Canal Company omitted proper precautions, and were guilty of gross negligence. We further say that the existing statutory laws are entirely inadequate to secure the public safety in these matters". On all the points touched by this verdict, the evidence is very interesting and instructive. The way the explosion happened was shown experimentally. It will be remembered that some of the boatmen on the train of barges had noticed a blue flame a few seconds before the explosion. One of those witnesses was able to perceive that it came from the cabin. It had also been proved at a very early stage of the inquiry that among the cargo of the *Tilbury* were some casks of benzoline in addition to the five tons of powder. The whole was covered over with tarpaulins. This was a sound and proper protection against sparks or damage coming from without, but it had the effect of preventing escape in the case of fire breaking out within. This was an accident that in all probability would not have occurred on this occasion but for the presence of the benzoline, though from the statements made of the want of strict precaution by men who were ignorant of the materials they handled, one cannot say with any confidence that all risk would have been avoided if the benzoline had been absent. This is an especially dangerous product of petroleum, or coal tar oil, giving off an inflammable vapour at the very moderate temperature of 50 degrees Fahrenheit. The vapour would ignite in contact with a light, whether of a fire, a candle or a match, or even with anything red hot, such as a cinder in the cabin fireplace. Dr A S Taylor, FRS, gave evidence on these characteristics of benzoline, and observed that wooden vessels will not secure the vapour.

“Glass alone will keep it in, and then the vessel must have a close stopper. The vapour would come out through a cork”. There can be no doubt, then, of the presence of this vapour beneath the tarpaulin of the *Tilbury* after the casks had been there ten hours. The vapour diffuses itself rapidly through atmospheric air, and when the quantity of air is large the vapour, on coming in contact with fire, bursts into a pale bluish flame. ”All air”, said Dr Taylor, “flows towards the fire, and the draught set up would cause the benzoline vapour to flow in, and come in contact with the fire”.

The theoretical explanation was demonstrated practically by another witness, Major Majendie, RA, who is the Government Inspector under the Gunpowder and Nitroglycerine Acts. He produced an exact model of the *Tilbury*, on the scale of 3/4in to a foot. He poured into the forward end half an ounce of liquid benzoline, taken from Mr Barringer's store at Hackney Wick. He covered the boat with a sheet of tin in the shape of the tarpaulin. After waiting eight minutes for the vapour to be diffused, he introduced a lighted taper into the cabin at the other end of the boat. There was at once a loud report, and the flame spread to the liquid benzoline at the bow. The tin covering was thrown off by the explosion towards the bow, while the cabin was thrown off at the stern. It was objected by the Canal Company's counsel that this was not a fair representation of what would have happened on board the *Tilbury*, because in the model boat there was no cargo to obstruct the passage of the vapour. To this, the easy answer was that a load of goods on board the boat, by taking up space, would really have facilitated the passage of the vapour towards the fire. It was then suggested that the fire in the real cabin was further off the benzoline than the lighted taper in the model, but when it was pointed out that ten hours had been allowed for the vapour to collect in the real cabin, while only eight minutes had been allowed in the model, this objection also was disposed of. Considering the great difference of time, the illustration could not be affected by the admission which the witness made, that a tin covering was more favourable than one of tarpaulin to the collection of the vapour.

Both the theory and the experiment of the scientific witnesses were corroborated by the evidence of the boatmen. One of those who saw the blue flame heard a voice call out, “Stop, this boat's afire”. Another boatman, who saw the flame and heard a report, also heard the steersman of the *Tilbury* call out, “That's nearly blown me out of the hatches already”. He is supposed to have taken it for a flash of lightning. There was time to start the boats again, after the momentary stoppage when the cry was heard on the steamtug. The gunpowder exploded only after a distinct interval from the burst of flame. Dr Taylor, in answer to a questioner, said “a gaseous explosion is usually short and sharp in its report ; whereas gunpowder is a little more slow. It requires some little time for a large mass of gunpowder to go off. The vapour would, however, form a sheet of flame over the whole, and it would not be necessary that the powder should actually be touched by the flame. Gunpowder ignites at 540 degrees. A spark requires 1000 degrees of heat to be luminous. Gunpowder thus ignites at a heat which is not visible”. It only needs to remember one other piece of circumstantial evidence, that the bargemen's cabin had, as usual, a ventilating aperture “looking towards the cargo” to make all that took place as plain as if it had passed before one's eyes. The vapour burst into a blue flame after entering that aperture. The flame disappeared from view as it passed out of the aperture and along the vapour under the tarpaulin. During the few seconds that all was dark again, the flame was on its way to the powder barrels, and then there was heat enough to cause the explosion. All the men on board the *Tilbury* itself were killed, but had their lives been spared, they could probably have added nothing to our information respecting the carelessness of which they were the victims. These unfortunate men do not appear to have contributed in any way to the disaster by their own conduct. The inquiry has confirmed the worst impressions of the magnitude of the daily risks from unprotected conveyance of gunpowder through populous towns. As the coroner remarked in summing up, the jury had before them “the facts of the traffic at present – how fires were alight on the boats, smoking was common, and fiery engines preceded the dangerous convoy”. It was impossible to avoid the conclusion that the law is utterly inadequate to enforce precaution, and that it ought to be amended forthwith.

### 81 October 31 1874

MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS The following sentences were passed on Wednesday :-  
Twelve months hard labour : **Enoch Rawlinson**, 23, boatman, for stealing £7 3s belonging to his master.

**Henry Robinson**, 34, boatman, for theft.

### 82 November 7 1874

ASSAULT WITH AN IRON BAR At the Salford Police Court before Sir J I Mantell, on Saturday, **James Turner**, boatman, was charged with having violently assaulted **Ralph Ashton**, boatman, Clifton, at Agecroft on Thursday afternoon last. The men were each in charge of a boat on the Bridgewater Canal, when they quarrelled concerning the accidental pulling of the prisoner's horse into the canal by the prosecutor's boat, and it is alleged that the prisoner struck Ashton with an iron bar, fracturing one of the bones of the forearm. Mr W Bennet contended that the injury to the prosecutor's arm had not been caused by the prisoner, and called witnesses to prove that his client only used his fists, and that in self defence. The prisoner was sent for trial at the quarter sessions.

### 83 November 14 1874

THE BOATMEN'S BETHEL The annual tea meeting in connection with the Boatmen's Bethel, Knott Mill, was held on Monday at the institution. There was a large attendance. After tea, the chair was taken by the Earl of Ellesmere. There were also on the platform the Rev Earl Mulgrave, Mr C E Cawley MP, Mr Alderman Booth, Mr Councillor Batty, The Rev J S Balmer and Mr J H Raper.

The Rev J Shipman (Superintendent of the Bethel) made a statement with reference to its history and work. He said that there were floating about on the rivers and canals of this country 100,000 men and women who did not come within the influence of the ordinary means used to reach society, in a religious sense. To meet the spiritual wants of this class, in the year 1846 a society was started in London with the object of establishing such institutions as the one within whose walls they were met, and soon after the year 1857 that Bethel was established. Subsequently a branch was formed in Stanley Street and, still later, one at Liverpool, where there were two men at work whom with the three in Manchester, made a total of five engaged in work among the boatmen of this district. With reference to the particular institution, he stated that the regular religious services held there were, as a whole, well attended, and this was especially the case in regard to the past year. The Sunday School, to which was attached an efficient staff of teachers, was in a flourishing condition, and the day school, under the management of Miss Bateman, was progressing satisfactorily. Here the children of boatmen, whenever they came into the city, were supplied with books and everything needful for their education. During the year, 500 deposits had been made in the penny bank by 72 depositors. It was also notable that the men among whom they laboured had presented two petitions to the House of Commons – one in favour of the entire closing of public houses on the Sabbath day, and the other against the lengthening of hours. The amount received in subscriptions and donations was £373 5s 6d ; proceeds from day school pence £7 10s ; Sunday School collection £12 5s ; total income £393 ; leaving a balance of £14 1s 9d against the institution, which was a reduction compared with the debt last year. (Hear).

The Chairman, after expressing the pleasure he felt at being present on that occasion, said he was glad to hear that that station was in a state of prosperity, and he hoped that it might continue to be so. He assured his hearers that, though his connection as an employer of the class among which the work of that institution lay had, by the sale of the Bridgewater Canal, been severed, he had not ceased to take an interest in those who travelled on it, and he trusted he should never cease to do so. (Applause).

Mr C E Cawley MP, Mr E Leader Williams, the Rev Earl Mulgrave and other gentlemen afterwards addressed the meeting.

#### **84 November 28 1874**

**POLICE NEWS** At the Manchester City Police Court, on Monday, **Thomas Ramsbottom**, a boatman, was charged with disorderly behaviour and assaulting Police-constable James Dalton in the execution of his duty. On Saturday night, the prisoner was at a beer house in Scott Street, Hulme, and ordered beer and cigars, for which, when he got them, he refused to pay. The constable was called in to remonstrate with him, but he was met with threats of violence on the part of the prisoner, and on trying to take the latter into custody, was thrown down by him, kicked and bitten in the thumb. Ramsbottom has already been in gaol for a similar offence, and he was now ordered to undergo three months hard labour.

#### **85 December 19 1874**

**WIFE MURDER AT LIVERPOOL** At the Liverpool Assizes on Wednesday, before Mr Justice Mellor, **William Worthington** (33), boatman, was charged with having, at Liverpool, on or about the 29<sup>th</sup> August last, wilfully murdered his wife, **Ann Worthington**. Mr Samuel and Mr Shee prosecuted, and the prisoner was defended by Mr Cottingham.

The prisoner was a flatman, and the deceased and a daughter by a former wife lived with him on board his flat. On the night of the 29<sup>th</sup> August, a Mrs Daley, who lived in Vauxhall Road, heard screams from a yard in which boatmen put up their horses, at the back of her house. On opening the window, she saw the prisoner, whom she knew, kicking his wife several times violently as she lay in a crouching position. Subsequently, a policeman was sent for but, although the deceased's face was covered with blood, he refused to interfere, as it was a "matter between man and wife." The prisoner and the deceased afterwards went on board their flat, and immediately they had got into the cabin, the prisoner began again to kick his wife violently. He gave her one kick in the abdomen with such force that she fell from a form on which she was sitting. The prisoner then went to bed, and the deceased put her head upon the bed and lay on the floor. It was alleged that the next morning about seven o'clock, the prisoner rose and gave the deceased another violent kick on the side, and a blow on the arm with a poker. The unfortunate woman died a few days afterwards at her sister's house in Wigan from the injuries she had received, and it was now stated that the prisoner had not received the slightest provocation for what he had done.

The police officer who declined to take the prisoner in charge was rebuked by his Lordship, and told that in future when he saw signs of recent violence, it was his duty to take the person charged with inflicting that violence into custody, even though that person was the husband of the injured individual.

The medical evidence was to the effect that death resulted from pleuro-pneumonia, aggravated by violence.

Mr Cottingham, for the defence, contended that the crime, if it was murder at all, was only constructive murder ; and the prisoner might have been guilty of a certain amount of violence, without intending to inflict serious injury.

The jury, after an absence from court of 40 minutes, returned with a verdict of "Wilful murder", and strongly recommended the prisoner to mercy.

His Lordship passed sentence of death in the usual form.

#### **86 March 6 1875**

**FATAL RAILWAY ACCIDENT** An inquest was held on Wednesday by the City Coroner with reference to the death of **William Bilsbury**, a boatman aged 24, and lately residing in Ellesmere Street, Leigh. On Saturday morning, the deceased was knocked down and run over by an engine on the London and North Western Railway at West Leigh. When picked up, it was found that he had had both of his legs broken. He was conveyed to the Manchester Infirmary, and died there on Monday. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

#### **87 March 13 1875**

**POLICE NEWS** **Edward Spencer**, a boatman in the employment of Mr Bates of Runcorn, was

brought up at the County Police Court on Monday, before Sir J I Mantell, charged with having assaulted his wife, **Mary Spencer**. It appeared from the evidence of the prosecution that on Friday afternoon, the prisoner was engaged in carrying coal from Worsley to Runcorn on the Bridgewater Canal. As the boat was passing through Patricroft, prisoner told the prosecutrix to stop at Monton Bridge to get some corn for the horse. He stayed behind to assist his brother, who was close to, to get a horse out of the canal ; and the prosecutrix thinking it would be better to go on to Worsley, neglected to stop at Monton Bridge. A short time after she reached Worsley, the prisoner came up. He took a stone and threw it at her. It struck her in the temple with such violence as to knock her into the canal. She was dragged out of the water by two men. Her husband was half drunk at the time, and he had been drinking for three or four days. The prisoner earned from £3 to £3 15s a week. The prosecutrix stated that if her husband were sent to prison, she would have to work the boat herself, and she would be content if his Worship would bind him over to keep the peace. His Worship said he would like to see the prisoner go to penal servitude, but if he sent him to prison, he would be leaving his wife and family in poverty, because it seemed that, wretch though he (the prisoner) was, he really did find them a living. He would be bound over in two sureties of £25 each, and his own recognisance of £50, to keep the peace for six months.

### **88 March 20 1875**

**KICKING CASE** At the Manchester City Police Court on Saturday, before Mr Headlam, **Robert Morton**, a boatman, was charged with having committed a violent assault on **Peter Moston**, another boatman. The prisoner was taken into custody by police-constable T Lambert. The prosecutor said that on the 10<sup>th</sup> inst, he was standing on the wharf at Castlefield waiting for his boat, which was coming along the canal, when the prisoner came up in a state of intoxication and, without any provocation, struck the witness a blow on the head, knocking him down. He then kicked him on various parts of the body, and caused severe injury to his left arm, after which he threatened that if the witness would "fetch his mates" he would serve them in the same way. The prisoner was sent to gaol for two months, with hard labour.

### **89 May 29 1875**

**CORONERS' INQUESTS** An inquest was held upon the body of **Thomas Henry Morris**, aged 19, a boatman, lately employed by Mr W Aldred, Manchester. On Tuesday night, between seven and eight o'clock, the deceased had raised the "paddles" of a lock of the canal near Oxford Street, and had got upon the top of the lock gate to walk across, when his foot slipped and he fell to the bottom of the lock, striking his head upon the stone foundation. When got out, about fifteen minutes afterwards, he was quite dead. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

### **90 July 17 1875**

**MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS** The business of these sessions closed on Saturday. Three months imprisonment : **John Proudclough**, 50, boatman, for theft.

### **91 August 21 1875**

**POLICE NEWS** At the Salford Police Court, before Sir J I Mantell, on Wednesday, **John Beattie**, boatman, Joule Street, Ordsal Lane, was sentenced to four months imprisonment for having assaulted his wife in their own house on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> inst, and Police-constable Eyre, when the officer apprehended him on Monday evening. **James Roughley**, boatman, Union Court, Union Street, was sentenced to two months imprisonment with hard labour for having on Tuesday evening violently assaulted his wife and Police-constable Hough in Hampson Street.

### **92 August 21 1875**

In the course of a quarrel on Tuesday night, between two boatmen at Peterborough, one named **Thompson** stabbed the other, named **Read**, twice in the chest. Thompson was remanded on the charge on Wednesday. Read is not expected to recover.

**93 December 4 1875**

POLICE NEWS At the Salford Police Court, before Sir J I Mantell, a boatman named **James Ruffley** was brought up for assaulting another boatman named **James Martin**. The boats to which the two men belonged met in the Bury and Bolton Canal at a place within the borough of Salford on the 13<sup>th</sup> October ; and a quarrel took place between the complainant and defendant as to which boat should give way while the other passed. A scuffle ensued, in the course of which Ruffley knocked Martin into the water ; but the latter was got out again without serious injury. The defendant was fined £5 and costs, with the alternative of a month's imprisonment.

**94 December 18 1875**

THE CHARGE OF MURDERING A GIRL IN A CANAL BOAT On Saturday, the Staffordshire boatman, **Frederick Musson**, aged 23, and his putative wife, **Annie Maria Hillman**, aged 21, whose trial at the winter assizes at Stafford on the charge of murdering Elizabeth Lowke had occupied nearly two days, were found guilty of manslaughter and were sentenced by Baron Amphlett each to twenty years penal servitude. The deceased was seven years of age, and had been handed over to the accused by her widowed father, to act as their nurse and general drudge. After about four months ill feeding and exposure and beating, the child was found dead in the boat, her body being a mass of bruises and sores. The immediate cause of death was injury to the head, the result, it is believed, of blows from a whipstock, with which she had been often beaten.

**95 March 11 1876**

MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were opened on Monday at the City Police Courts, Minshull Street, before Mr H W West QC, Recorder. The following sentences were passed during the day by the Recorder and Mr J H P Leresche, who presides in the second court :-

Two months imprisonment : **Samuel Smith**, 18, boatman, for theft.

The following sentences were passed on Wednesday :-

Three months imprisonment : **Thomas Day**, 24, boatman, for theft.

**96 April 1 1876**

LOCAL AND DISTRICT At the Salford Police Court, before Mr W W Goulden and Mr J F Mart, on Tuesday, a young man named **Robert Lawless**, who follows the occupation of a canal boatman, was charged with having stabbed **Elizabeth Doyle**, with whom he has been cohabiting in a house in Wood Street, Deansgate. For some time, however, the prosecutrix has been staying with her sister in Morris Street, Gore Street, Salford, and on Monday night the prisoner called to request that she would go away with him. She refused, upon which he pulled out of his pocket a clasp knife, and stabbed her in her upper lip, which was nearly penetrated by the blow. He was committed for trial at the quarter sessions.

**97 April 15 1876**

SALFORD QUARTER SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the hundred of Salford commenced on Monday morning at the Assize Courts, Strangeways. The following sentences were passed on Wednesday :-

Nine months imprisonment : **Robert Lawless**, 21, boatman, for maliciously wounding Elizabeth Doyle at Salford.

**98 April 29 1876**

MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were opened on Monday at the police courts, Minshull Street, before Mr H W West QC, Recorder. The following sentences were passed during the day :-

Three months : **Thomas Buckley**, 26, boatman, and Jas Taylor, carter, for theft.

**99 May 13 1876**

A boatman named **William Green**, living in Ann Street, Bridgewater Street, on Thursday was engaged in repainting his flat, which was in the Bridgewater Canal, when he fell into the water, striking his head against the boat in his fall. He was at once taken out of the canal and removed to the Royal Infirmary, where efforts were made to restore him to consciousness, but without success. The City Coroner held an inquest on the body yesterday, and a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**100 May 27 1876**

**SALFORD SESSIONS** The business of these sessions commenced at the Assize Courts, Strangeways, on Monday. The following sentences have been passed :-

Eighteen months imprisonment and four years police supervision : **Edward Hanson**, boatman, for stealing at Droylsden on the 13<sup>th</sup> May, a shirt, the property of Robert W Hulme.

**101 July 15 1876**

**MANCHESTER SUMMER ASSIZES**

**CHARGE OF CHILD MURDER AT BARTON-UPON-IRWELL** Sarah Ann Jackson was charged with having, at Barton-upon-Irwell on the 27<sup>th</sup> March, wilfully murdered her newly born female child. Mr Addison appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Fleming for the defence.

The case for the prosecution was as follows. The prisoner worked in a mill at Patricroft, and lodged with a boatman and his wife, named **Collins**. Prior to the 27<sup>th</sup> March, Mrs Collins had noticed that prisoner was in the family way and had asked her about it, prisoner, however, constantly denying it. On the 27<sup>th</sup> March, she came back from the mill at about half past five, and complained of feeling poorly. She appears to have gone out again in a short time to an old water closet, and was there confined of a female child. She then returned to the house and, after remaining there an hour or two, went again to the water closet, took the child away, and put it in the canal, which is a short distance from the place where she was confined. The counsel for the prosecution stated that possibly the death of the child might have resulted from its being neglected immediately after birth, when the mother, probably in order to avoid suspicion, returned to the house for some time. In that case, she would be guilty of manslaughter or, at least, if it could not be proved that the child had had an independent existence, of concealment of birth. The medical evidence showed that the child had died very shortly after its birth. There were no marks of external violence on the child. The child had probably breathed whilst being born, but it was possible that it might have died before it was completely born. Probably, however, it had died from cold and exposure shortly after birth, His Lordship said that there was no evidence to find the prisoner guilty of murder or manslaughter, because it had not been proved that the child had had an independent existence.

The jury found the prisoner guilty of concealment of birth, and sentence was deferred.

**102 July 29 1876**

**SERIOUS ASSAULT CASES** At the Manchester County Police Court on Tuesday, **Henry Bradshaw**, a boatman in the employ of the Tyldesley Coal Company, was charged with assaulting John Walker Preston of the firm of Messrs Preston and Co, silk merchants, Manchester. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of the present month, Mr Preston and his two sons were walking along the towing-path of the Bridgewater Canal, near his premises. A horse, which was drawing two boats, was driven in front of them, and they were nearly thrown into the canal. The complainant spoke to the boy who was in charge of the animal, and touched it with the object of getting it out of the way. Upon seeing this, the defendant, who was steering the boat, jumped on the towing-path and struck him a violent blow in the face, knocking him down. His Worship imposed a fine of 20s and costs, with the alternative of 14 days imprisonment.

### **103 September 16 1876**

**POLICE NEWS** At the Salford Police Court on Monday, a young man named Robert Hogg, a labourer belonging to the Adelphi, was brought up for an assault upon **John Cookson**, boatman, Spaw Street, New Bailey Street. The prosecutor was sitting at his door on Saturday night, when the prisoner and two companions came up. The prisoner exclaimed, "Hello! I've had it in for you for twelve months", and knocked the prosecutor down. After which he and his companions kicked Cookson as he lay upon the ground. He was sentenced to two months hard labour in gaol.

### **104 October 21 1876**

**CRUELTY OF A MOTHER** At the meeting of the Warrington Board of Guardians, on Wednesday, the Chairman (Mr Pickthall) stated that an infant aged ten months had been taken into the house in a most emaciated condition. It appears that the mother, **Margaret Birkenhead**, residing at Sankey Bridge, was a very drunken character, and had neglected this and her other children. Her husband, a canal boatman, being a good deal from home, she was constantly out drinking. The child was just alive, but that was all. The grandmother of the infant produced it before the Guardians, and it was a mere skeleton. She said that her son's wife constantly left the children whilst she went out drinking, and on this last occasion, had left the infant from Wednesday to Friday night without the least food or any attention, and had she (the grandmother) not found it in bed, then it must soon have died. It was so weak it could only take a little milk now and then, and had to be fed with a spoon. The medical officer said it was a case of sheer starvation, as the child was otherwise healthy. The Chairman said it was the most shocking case he had ever seen, and it was unanimously decided to prosecute the mother for her inhuman conduct.

### **105 December 16 1876**

**MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS** The following sentences were passed during the day by the Recorder, and Mr J H P Leresche, who presides in the Second Court :-  
**James Whalley**, 22, boatman, for theft.

### **106 January 6 1877**

**POLICE NEWS** At the Salford Police Court, before Mr E Walmsley and other magistrates, **Henry Barker**, boatman, Nangreave Street, was fined £1 and costs at the instance of Inspectors Williamson and Chambers for having on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> ult cruelly treated a horse by neglecting to supply it with sufficient food.

### **107 January 13 1877**

**SALFORD QUARTER SESSIONS** The following sentences were passed during the day :-  
Acquitted : **James McRoy**, boatman, with stealing at Stretford, on the 28<sup>th</sup> September, three coats and other articles of wearing apparel from Thomas Edwards.

### **108 February 17 1877**

**MURDERS** At the Salford Police Court on Thursday, a married woman named Mary Ann Woods, aged 32, Flax Street, Adelphi, was brought before Sir J Iles Mantell for attempting to drown her infant child, four months old. **Peter Walker**, a boatman in the employ of the Bridgewater Navigation Company living at Lymm, Cheshire, said that about two o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, he was on board a boat on the river Irwell, near Prince's Bridge, Salford, when his attention was called to the prisoner, who was standing in the river, holding a child in her hands under the water. Witness could reach her from the towing path, and he took the child, which was nearly dead, from her, giving it to his wife who was on the boat. The child was insensible, but after it had been undressed and rubbed, and brandy and water administered, it recovered consciousness. He also pulled the prisoner out of the water. Detective Sergeant Quick stated that he received the prisoner into custody at the chief police station on Wednesday afternoon, and charged her with having attempted to murder her child, and to commit suicide. The magistrate remarked that he saw

no reason whatever for supposing that the woman wanted to commit suicide. She appeared to have gone into the water solely to drown her child. She would have to go for trial at the assizes.

**109 February 24 1877**

SALFORD HUNDRED SESSIONS On Tuesday, sentences were passed as follows :-  
Twelve months imprisonment : **Edward Mevins**, 19, boatman, theft at Salford.

**110 March 3 1877**

MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS These sessions resumed the trial of prisoners on Saturday morning, the Recorder (Mr H W West) presiding. The following sentences have been passed :-

Eight months imprisonment : Henry Beedon, 19, groom, stealing a sack of corn, the property of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company ; **George Ashley**, 30, boatman, stealing five pieces of calico, the property of the same company.

**111 March 17 1877**

SINGULAR CASE OF ASSAULT At the Salford Police Court on Monday, **Frank Rothwell**, a boatman upon the Bury and Bolton Canal, was brought before Sir J I Mantell, on a charge of having assaulted his wife and caused her to swallow a pin. Between two and three o'clock the same morning, he and his wife, while on board their boat near Oldfield Road, quarrelled in the cabin concerning a kitten which he had given away against the wishes of the prosecutrix. The latter was dressing herself, and was sitting up in bed holding a pin between her teeth, when her husband struck her upon the mouth, causing her to swallow the pin. According to the statements of the prisoner and his daughter, who was present during the quarrel, the prisoner only hit his wife with his stocking ; but police-sergeant Harrison, who subsequently met the whole family going with Mrs Rothwell to the Salford Hospital, stated that the woman had told him that her husband struck her with his hand. Mr William Walter, house surgeon at the Salford Royal Hospital, informed the magistrate that he saw the prosecutrix at the institution between three and four o'clock that morning, and he was of opinion that there was great danger that the pin which she had swallowed might cause death by sticking into her internally. The prisoner was remanded for a week, but was admitted to bail, himself in £100, and two other persons in £50 each.

**112 April 21 1877**

SUSPECTED MURDER OF A CANAL BOATMAN The Coroner for South Cheshire on Wednesday investigated a case in which foul play is suggested, at Waverton, near Chester. A boatman named **Morris** was walking alongside of his boat between Beeston and Chester early on Monday morning, when he saw another boatman named **Charles Moston** of Wolverhampton, lying on the bank with his head and shoulders dreadfully bruised and battered, and apparently dying. He shook him and shouted to him, and Moston opened his eyes and groaned. He was then carried on board Morris's boat, and was having his lips moistened with brandy when he expired. Dr Watson was called, and he gave it as his opinion that deceased's neck had been dislocated or fractured. Moston was engaged on board the *Usk* (**Captain Probert**) which left Beeston for Chester the previous night. When the boat was moving off, Morris, who found him as described, saw Moston jump on board quite sober. The Coroner said the case was very suspicious, and ordered the arrest of Captain Probert, and adjourned the inquest in order to allow a *post mortem* examination.

**113 May 5 1877**

THE MURDER OF A BOATMAN At Broxton on Thursday, the prisoners **John Probert**, a boatman in the employment of the Shropshire Union Company, and **Jane Probert**, his wife, already committed on the coroner's warrant for the murder of **Charles Moston**, another boatman of Wolverhampton, at Waverton on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, were brought before the magistrates on the same charge. The deceased man was found on the canal bank with two of the principal vertebrae of the

spine fractured, and died in a few minutes. The medical evidence showed that extreme violence must have been used. The facts are pretty well known. Among some 16 witnesses examined, only two or three were able to append their signature to the depositions, and the evidence disclosed some of the most shocking features of canal boat life. In some instances, several adults of both sexes were living in a small cabin, and in one boat were a man, his wife and five children. One witness had never heard of the Bible. The prisoners made the same statement as before the coroner, and were committed to take their trial after a hearing of eight hours.

#### **114 June 9 1877**

**THE DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD** At Lichfield, on Monday, the Venerable Archdeacon commenced his first visitation. He mentioned that the bishop of the diocese had taken upon himself the entire responsibility of the new mission to canal boatmen, and had engaged a chaplain and ordered a church boat, in which his lordship himself would make the first missionary journey. He also intimated that the scheme for the division of the archdeaconry of Staffordshire had been approved, and that eight of the twenty rural deaneries would be placed under the care of Sir Lovelace Stamer, as Archdeacon of North Staffordshire.

#### **115 June 30 1877**

**RESCUE FROM DROWNING** A boy, seven years old, named William Henry Everton, son of David Everton, Derwent Street, Ordsal Lane, while playing on the bank of the Irwell near Woden Street on the afternoon of the 26<sup>th</sup> inst, fell into the river. The lad was carried some distance by the current, and eventually sank, but **Mark Addy**, a boatman living in the vicinity, plunged into the stream and rescued the boy. Addy has now rescued 31 persons from drowning.

#### **116 July 21 1877**

**POLICE NEWS** Yesterday, at the Manchester City Police Court, before Mr J Galloway and Mr Jardine, a canal boatman named **Samuel Bailey** was committed to the sessions for burglary. The prisoner was found by police-constable Bowerman early yesterday morning on the premises of the prosecutor, who keeps the Commercial Inn, Egerton Street, Hulme. The officer called the assistance of another constable named James, and the prisoner in trying to escape fell into the arms of the officer James.

#### **117 August 25 1877**

**FOUND DROWNED** An inquest was held on Monday before Mr E Herford, city coroner, relative to the death of **Joseph Smith** of 2 Collier's Row, Gaythorn, a boatman aged 32 years. The deceased was found drowned in the canal, near the Ancoats Lane lock, on Friday morning, having fallen from his boat on the previous night. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

#### **118 September 15 1877**

**A BOATMAN DROWNED** An inquest was held on Monday before Mr E Herford, Manchester, city coroner, touching the death of **Richard Jacksworth**, boatman, aged 25, of no settled place of residence. The deceased had been in the employment of the Shropshire Union Canal Company on a boat named *The Wren*, and on Friday night he was on the Bridgewater Canal near Castlefields, Manchester. He was seen to take a "shaft" to push the boat from one side of the canal to the other, and shortly afterwards was missed from the boat. He was subsequently found in the water, quite dead. The "shaft" was still sticking in the woodwork at the side of the canal, and it is supposed that it had pulled the deceased from the boat into the water. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

#### **119 November 3 1877**

**CHESTER AND NORTH WALES ASSIZES** **John Hughes**, 28, flatman, was indicted for the manslaughter of Nicholas Martin Stevens, a Cornish sailor, at Runcorn on the 20<sup>th</sup> October.

Stevens, the deceased, was a mate on the schooner *Annie*, and the prisoner an ordinary hand on board the *Dee*, both of which were lying at Runcorn. Stevens had been in town, and was returning home about half past ten o'clock at night, a little in drink, when a row between the prisoner and his wife, in which the former was kicking and beating the latter in the most brutal manner, induced the deceased and a mate to interfere, when the prisoner pitched into them, and knocked them both over the side of the boat *Dee* into the water, and deceased was drowned. It was contended by the counsel for the defence that the death of Stevens resulted from accident. A fight took place on a pitch dark night on board a little boat, and it was not an extraordinary, though regrettable, circumstance that one should fall over the side and be drowned. The jury returned a verdict of "Guilty" and the prisoner was sentenced to three months imprisonment with hard labour.

#### **120 November 17 1877**

A boatman named **James Harper** fell into No 3 lock at Marple on Thursday, and was drowned. The deceased belonged to Ashton, and was about 30 years of age.

#### **121 December 8 1877**

**POLICE NEWS** At the Manchester City Police Court on Wednesday, before Mr T Dale, **John Hadfield, alias Robert Fitton**, a boatman of Newton Heath, was charged with breaking into and entering the warehouse of the London and North Western Railway Company, Ducie Street, London Road, and with stealing therefrom twelve sacks of corn, value £10, the property of the company, between the night of the 7<sup>th</sup> and the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> of July last. On the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup>, he was seen by a watchman named Wild, in the employ of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company, sweeping up corn on the aqueduct bridge on the canal, not far from the warehouse, and suspecting that something was wrong, Wild obtained assistance, and found the prisoner and two other men, one of whom has since been committed to prison for nine months for another offence at Liverpool, loitering about the place. They also found that the warehouse had been entered, and the corn stolen. It was suggested on behalf of the prosecution that the prisoner had loaded the corn on to his boat and made off with it. The prisoner, for whom Mr F H Marshall appeared, had absconded at the time, and nothing had been heard of him until the beginning of the present week, when he was apprehended at Droylsden by police-constable Seabury of the county constabulary. He was committed to the sessions for trial.

#### **122 January 19 1878**

**MR MARK ADDY** A public meeting was held on Saturday evening in the Salford Town Hall for the purpose of presenting a purse of 200 guineas and an illuminated address to **Mr Mark Addy**, the well known Salford boatman, in recognition of his services in rescuing persons from drowning. The Mayor (Mr Alderman Walmsley) presided. The borough members, Mr W T Charley and Mr O O Walker were present. Mr Charley, MP, in making the presentation, said that Mr Addy had saved 37 persons from drowning, and his mission had been a nobler one than that of our soldiers and sailors, just in proportion as it was nobler to save life than to destroy it. Mr James Smith presented an address from the Salford Hundred Humane Society, whose bronze, silver and gold medals have already been awarded to Mr Addy.

#### **123 February 23 1878**

**CITY SESSIONS** The general quarter sessions for the city of Manchester commenced on Wednesday at the Sessions Courts, Minshull Street. The following sentences were passed during the day :-

Twelve months imprisonment : **Walter Barker**, 20, boatman, stealing a pair of boots and other articles, the property of John H Heywood, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

#### **124 February 23 1878**

**POLICE NEWS** At the Manchester County Police Court on Saturday, before Mr J W Maclure and

Mr C L Clare, **Benjamin Wood**, canal boatman, was charged with having unlawfully wounded his wife. Evidence was given that on Wednesday evening, as the prosecutrix lay ill on the deck of her husband's boat at Miles Platting, the prisoner, who was under the influence of drink, seized her by the ears and dashed her head violently against the timber, causing a wound an inch long, and penetrating to the bone. She became insensible, and on recovering consciousness and attempting to leave the boat, the prisoner kicked her. The prisoner was committed for trial at the quarter sessions.

**125 March 2 1878**

MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were continued on Saturday, at the Sessions Courts, Minshull Street. The following sentences were passed :-

In the case of Eliza Ann Hughes, 19, factory operative ; **John Hoare**, 18, boatman ; and Patrick Conway, 16, labourer, indicted for wounding Thomas Bowden on the 20<sup>th</sup> January, the prosecutor was not able to appear, and the prisoners will take their trial at the assizes.

**126 March 2 1878**

SALFORD HUNDRED SESSIONS The business of the intermediate sessions of the peace for the hundred of Salford was commenced on Monday at the Assize Courts, Manchester, Mr W Higgin, QC, presiding. The following sentences were passed during the day by the Chairman and Mr A Aspland, who presided in the second court :-

Fifteen months imprisonment : **Benjamin Wood**, 46, boatman, unlawfully wounding **Elizabeth Wood**, at Newton on the 13<sup>th</sup> January.

**127 March 30 1878**

POLICE NEWS At the County Police Court on Tuesday, before Sir John Iles Mantell and Mr C L Clare, **Roger Miller**, Miles Platting and **John Turkey**, no settled residence, both boatmen, were charged with being upon the premises of Lawrence Lee, butcher, Philips Park Road, Bradford, for a felonious purpose. The prisoners were seen to jump over the yard wall of Mr Lee's premises on the night of the 18<sup>th</sup> inst, and were chased and captured. A grid over the cellar window was afterwards found to be broken, and it appeared that the prisoners were attempting to break into the premises, but had been disturbed. They were committed for trial at the sessions.

**128 April 20 1878**

SALFORD HUNDRED QUARTER SESSIONS The following sentences were passed during the day :-

Three months : **Roger Miller**, boatman, for having at Bradford on the 18<sup>th</sup> ult been found in a shop with **John Turkey**, with intent to commit a felony.

**129 June 25 1878**

MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS The quarter sessions for the city of Manchester were opened on Wednesday at the Sessions Courts, Minshull Street. The following sentences have been passed :- Eighteen months imprisonment and seven years police supervision : **Geo Ashley**, 29, boatman, for stealing a tame fowl.

**130 July 27 1878**

DROWNING IN THE ROCHDALE CANAL On Saturday afternoon, Mr Coroner Molesworth held an inquest at the Cotton Tree Inn, Boarshaw, Middleton, on the body of a boy named **Patrick Clifford**, 14 years of age, a boatman's assistant, who was drowned the previous afternoon in the Manchester and Rochdale Canal at Boarshaw. The boy lived at Sowerby Bridge, near Halifax, but ran away from home last New Year's Day, and was taken in by a man named **Peter Youlding**, of Hulme, Manchester, who has charge of a boat running between Manchester and Sowerby Bridge. At the time of the accident, deceased was engaged about the locks, when he fell in and was

drowned, twenty minutes elapsing before his body was recovered. A witness named **William Cox**, of Manchester, deposed to pulling deceased out. In reply to the Coroner, he said he never saw a canal, with the exception of the Manchester and Rochdale Canal, but what had railings round the locks, so as to prevent accidents. This was, in his opinion, the most dangerous canal in the kingdom in winter time. When it was frosty, they had to crawl on their hands and knees across the locks for fear of slipping in. Several of the jurymen remarked that this was a shameful state of affairs, and a disgrace to the canal company. The Coroner remarked that some time ago, he had a similar case as this, and the jury passed a recommendation that the locks be railed off. He brought the matter before the canal company at the last annual meeting but one, and he was given to understand that it should be done. It was undoubtedly the most dangerous and unprotected canal in the kingdom. It was only a matter of about £1 for every lock. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death", and passed a recommendation to the Canal Company to have the locks fenced off. The Coroner said he would forward the recommendation at once, and would also send a very strong letter to the company, as he was very much annoyed that no notice had been taken of the former recommendation.

### **131 August 3 1878**

POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court, on Wednesday, before Sir J I Mantell, **William McEvoy**, canal boatman, was fined £2 10s and costs for causing a horse, of which he was the owner, to be worked while in an unfit state at Worsley.

### **132 August 21 1878**

POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court on Wednesday, before Mr J Aitken, **James Pittifer**, canal boatman of Runcorn, was fined £3 and costs for working a horse whilst in an unfit condition at Worsley on the 20<sup>th</sup> inst.

### **133 September 7 1878**

POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court on Thursday, before Mr H Pearson and Mr S Watts, **George Clay**, master boatman of Runcorn, was fined £2 and costs for working a horse in an unfit condition at Worsley on Wednesday.

### **134 October 26 1878**

MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were opened on Monday in the Sessions Court, Minshull Street. The following sentences were passed during the day :-

Nine months imprisonment : **James McKoy**, 24, boatman, stealing a horse and set of harness, the property of Joseph Davies.

### **135 November 23 1878**

POLICE NEWS At the Manchester City Police Court on Thursday, a boatman named **Alexander Simms** was charged before Mr F J Headlam with having assaulted Acting Sergeant Joshua Sykes. About ten o'clock on Wednesday night, the prisoner, who had previously been cautioned by Sykes for his conduct towards some passers by, attacked the officer in Quay Street, striking him several times on the head with a piece of iron. A struggle ensued between them, and three or four other boatmen came to the assistance of Simms, but Sykes kept hold of him until the arrival of police-constable Hake, when the prisoner was taken to the station. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour.

### **136 December 14 1878**

REDUCTION OF WAGES The boatmen in the employment of the Peak Forest Canal Company and its various branches have received an intimation that at an early date their earnings will be reduced at the rate of 5s per boat weekly. The lime boats have also been notified of a reduction of

3s per boat. In the quarries, both at Bugsworth and Doveholes, the pavier getters have received notice of a reduction of 2d per ton in their next payment, about Christmas. Already the labourers and other employees have been reduced at the rate of 1s per week.

### **137 December 14 1878**

**MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS** The general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were commenced on Wednesday at the Sessions Courts, Minshull Street. The trial of prisoners was soon after proceeded with, and the following sentences were passed :-

One months imprisonment : **James Gough**, 28, boatman and **William Smith**, 39, labourer, stealing two ropes, the property of Sarah Pendlebury.

### **138 December 21 1878**

**RAILWAY COLLISION AT TYLDESLEY** On Monday morning, a collision, resulting in injury to many passengers, took place between a passenger train and an engine, about half a mile on the Manchester side of Tyldesley Station, on the London and North Western Railway. The collision occurred at Green's coal siding, belonging to the Tyldesley Coal Company. The passenger train leaves Liverpool at 7.45 am, and proceeds to Manchester via St Helens and Brynne, stopping at all stations. When it left Tyldesley at about ten o'clock – ten minutes late – it consisted of eight carriages, which were all filled with passengers. As it approached the colliery siding, the pointsman, ignoring the fact of its having been signalled to him, turned an engine through the points for the purpose of crossing the up on to the down line, and at this moment the engine of the passenger train came up at a moderate speed and dashed into the engine. There was a heavy fog prevailing at the time. The drivers and stokers escaped injury by jumping from their engines a second or two before the collision happened. The front part of the passenger train engine was staved in, while the luggage engine tender was much damaged. One or two of the carriages left the rails, and great confusion and excitement reigned among the passengers. Mr Gould of Bolton, the district inspector of the line, was on the scene of the accident a few minutes afterwards, and under his directions the train, with the exception of one carriage which was so damaged as to be unfit to travel, was taken back to Tyldesley station, where Dr Duncan, Dr Hoyle and Dr Trail were summoned to attend the injured passengers, several of whom were unconscious. A few fainted away on removal from the train. The collision arose through the error of a pointsman named McNulty, who stated that he believed the train signalled to him was a luggage train which would approach on a loop line. The line is worked on the absolute block system, and it is curious to note that when the driver of the passenger train passed the signal it was all right, or “off” as it is called, but before he was able to turn the engine across the main line this signal had to be put at danger, though the passenger train had then passed the point. A number of the injured passengers did not report themselves to the railway officials. A few of those attended by the medical gentlemen were able to walk home, but the majority of them were either sent in cabs or by subsequent passenger trains. The up line was blocked for four hours.

The following were among the injured :-

**Joseph Taylor**, boatman, 8 Canal Street, Leigh ; head cut.

### **139 December 28 1878**

**THE PREVAILING DISTRESS – CHESHIRE** One of the largest firms of shoe manufacturers in Nantwich has reduced by 1d per pair the price paid on boots. The staple trade of Nantwich, shoemaking, is in a shocking condition. The 5,000 artisans employed in the London and North Western engine works at Crewe have an enforced holiday inflicted on them of ten days in consequence of the slackness in trade. The men are already on short time. The Shropshire Union Company's Canal is frozen up for miles in its course through Cheshire, and the boatmen with their wives and families are in a destitute condition. About fifty boatmen with their wives and families are ice bound and starving at Nantwich, and the same state of things is general in Chester and

Ellesmere Port. Mr and Mrs Tollemache and others have taken steps to alleviate the distress at Nantwich.

#### **140 February 15 1879**

MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were commenced on Wednesday at the Sessions Courts, Minshull Street. The following sentences were passed :-

Twelve months imprisonment : **Thomas James Jones**, 22, boatman, stealing a rug, the property of William Carver and others.

#### **141 May 31 1879**

A boatman named **Richard Speakman** was charged at the City Police Court on Wednesday with having committed a violent assault on **Thomas Kearney**, another boatman. It appeared that the men quarrelled and fought while on the towing-path of the Ashton Canal, the prisoner knocking Kearney into the water, where he remained several minutes before being rescued. He was taken to the Ardwick and Ancoats Dispensary, and it was found that the impure condition of the water had so injured his lungs that his life was in danger. The prisoner was remanded. Kearney died on Wednesday night.

#### **142 June 14 1879**

THE CASE OF SUPPOSED POISONING BY CANAL WATER The inquest on the body of **Thomas Carney**, 35, boatman of 1 Back Lord Street, Bradford Street, Ancoats, was resumed on Wednesday at the court of the Manchester City Coroner, Mr E Herford. On the 28<sup>th</sup> ult, the deceased and another boatman, **Richard Speakman** of 5 Aqueduct Street, quarrelled on the banks of the Ashton Canal, near Mill Street, Ancoats, and Carney either slipped or was knocked into the water. He was taken out in an unconscious condition, and was conveyed to the Ardwick and Ancoats Dispensary, where he died on the following morning, having never recovered consciousness. Dr Martin, who made a *post mortem* examination, said he found extensive inflammation of both lungs. The immediate cause of death was the formation of clots in the arteries leading from the heart to the lungs, blocking them up. The rapid manner in which the inflammation was set up, and the extent to which it prevailed, at first induced the witness to believe that there must have been present in the air cells of the lungs some noxious agent which acted upon the lung tissue but, having since examined the water of the canal where the deceased was got out, and found it much purer than he expected, he was of opinion that the inflammation of the lungs was set up not by the foulness of the water but by the water getting into the air cells. Speakman was examined, and denied having either knocked or pushed the deceased into the canal. The deceased struck him first in the quarrel, and in the struggle which followed, they got close to the water, and the deceased accidentally fell in. The witness did all he could to rescue him, and helped to take him to the hospital. The jury found a verdict of "Accidental death".

#### **143 June 28 1879**

MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were opened at the City Police Court, Minshull Street, on Monday. The following sentences were passed :-

Seven years penal servitude : **Samuel Smith**, 21, boatman, for stealing articles of wearing apparel from a canal boat, the property of **John Hughes** (nine previous convictions).

Six months imprisonment : **John Madden**, 22, boatman, stealing five tons of pig iron, the property of William T Dunn.

#### **144 October 4 1879**

DANGEROUS CANAL LOCKS On Tuesday afternoon, Mr J Molesworth, county coroner, held an inquest at Bearshaw, Middleton, on the body of **Patrick Brimmick**, 25 years of age, a boatman

late of Littleborough. It appears that the previous afternoon, the deceased was walking across a lock on the Manchester and Rochdale Canal at Boarshaw, for the purpose of opening the far paddle, when he slipped and fell in the water. He was got out in about five minutes, but he was then dead. The Coroner : It was not long since a man was drowned under similar circumstances at this lock, and at the inquest then held, the jury passed a recommendation to the proprietors of the canal to have the locks made more safe by placing handrails on each side. No notice was taken of that recommendation, and now another death had occurred. He believed the locks on the Manchester and Rochdale Canal were the most unprotected in the kingdom, and he thought that if the proprietors would take no notice of remonstrances, the legislature should take cognisance of it, because it was really a disgraceful state of things. The jury, in returning a verdict of "Accidental death", decided to forward a strong recommendation to the directors of the company to have the locks protected. James Bamford, who had been warned as a juror, but failed to attend, was fined 20s and costs.

#### **145    November 15 1879**

**SEVERE GALE AND SHIPPING DISASTERS**    On Tuesday night, a gale of unusual violence from the NNW sprang up at Liverpool, and continued throughout the whole of Wednesday with very little abatement. As is always the case, the shipping in the river was seriously inconvenienced, and several casualties took place, the worst up to a late hour being the total wreck of the schooner *Ann Shepherd*. The vessel was engaged conveying granite sets from Aberdeen to the dock extension at the northern part of the Mersey, and about eight am on Wednesday, she was driven violently against the river wall close to the Clarence dock, and continued to bump against the granite work for a couple of hundred yards, when she was literally smashed to pieces, sinking near the Waterloo dock. Just after she struck, her masts fell broken against the wall and the crew, who were in the greatest peril, climbed up the rigging and got on shore. The *Ann Shepherd* was owned in Fleetwood by Mr Edmund Porter. A collision took place later in the day between the large steamer *Brazilian* and the American vessel *Governor Tilley*. The latter vessel sustained damage, but the injury to the *Brazilian*, if any, was slight. The flat *Celestial* of Runcorn was also driven ashore early in the morning on the Dovespit Bank, outside the river, and remained aground up to a late hour. The fine iron ship *Corby*, which left the Mersey on the previous day, was obliged to return to the river on Wednesday owing to stress of weather, and while swinging to the tide in the course of the morning, she dragged her anchor, and for some time was in danger of colliding with the North Landing Stage. Another large vessel also dragged from her moorings, but was fortunately brought to in time to avert a collision. Rumours were afloat that a large steamer had been driven ashore off the Mersey, and that another vessel had sunk off the King's Dock, but up to a late hour no confirmation of the reports had been received.

About noon, a further catastrophe took place, by which one man lost his life. A river gig, in charge of four boatmen, went out to attend upon the inward bound steamer *Farnwood*. They made fast to the steamer opposite Seacombe Ferry, and immediately afterwards their boat was struck by a wave and capsized, all the men being thrown struggling in the water. Three of the men were picked up by two steamtugs, but the fourth, **Ellis Evans**, residing at 18 Sherbourne Street, was lost.

Another collision of a serious nature occurred later in the day between the two large sailing ships *Glencorse* and the *Soflid*. Both were in the river outward bound, the former having put back through stress of weather, when the *Soflid* broke her sheer, dragged, and fouled the other vessel, which was also at anchor, carrying away her jibboom. The *Soflid* was extensively damaged in the bulwarks, stanchions and deck house on the port side ; but before any further injury could be done, she was towed clear by a steam tug. Much difficulty was experienced in the navigation of the river, and up to a late hour, the wind had not abated in force, but showed indications of increased violence.

#### **146    December 13 1879**

**MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS**    The business of the general quarter sessions of the peace

for this city was resumed yesterday. Appended are the sentences passed :-

Four months imprisonment : **John Underhill**, 22, boatman, for stealing a rope belonging to John Woodhead.

**147 February 7 1880**

**FOUND DROWNED** On Wednesday morning, before Mr Smelt, deputy coroner for Manchester, an inquest was held upon the body of a man unknown, apparently about 30 years of age. The same morning, a boatman named **Venables** found the body of the deceased in the Hulme Locks, Egerton Street. There were several bruises upon the body which appeared to have been caused after death, and the opinion was that it had been in the water some five or six days. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

**148 June 12 1880**

**MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS** The business of the general quarter sessions of the peace for this city was commenced at the Sessions Court, Minshull Street, on Thursday morning. The following sentences were passed :-

Twelve months imprisonment and seven years police supervision : **Matthew Holland**, 21, boatman, breaking and entering the warehouse of Richard Hardwick and others on the 15<sup>th</sup> inst and stealing eleven skirts ; also stealing a suit of clothes &c on the 11<sup>th</sup> inst, the property of Thomas Heathcote.

**149 June 26 1880**

**FATAL STRUGGLE** A shocking tragedy is reported from Bootle, near Liverpool. A flatman and his wife were quarrelling on board their boat when, in the course of the struggle, the man kicked the woman into the water and she was drowned. The man absconded and has not been seen since, nor has the body of the woman yet been recovered. The deceased leaves a family of five children.

**150 July 31 1880**

**CASE OF DROWNING** An inquest was held at Church, near Accrington, on Tuesday, respecting the death of Thomas Burton, aged eight years, who was drowned in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Church on Sunday evening. It appeared that the deceased and a number of others were playing on what is known as a turnbridge which crosses the canal. A pleasure boat came up, and the bridge had to be turned in order to let it pass. The deceased, after the boat had passed, endeavoured to jump on to the bridge, whilst it was in motion, from the embankment, but he missed getting a foothold and fell into the water. He was not extricated before 20 minutes had elapsed, when he was found to be dead. The Coroner (Mr Robinson) said it was to be regretted that no one should have attended either from the canal company or from the company who had charge of the bridge. It appeared to him that it was a piece of gross negligence on the part of someone. The bridges, which were very numerous on the canal would, no doubt, be a very nice, but at the same time a dangerous, plaything for boys, for they could be constantly turning and twisting those bridges on the canal. A juryman suggested that all the boatmen should carry a key to lock and unlock all reversible bridges when requisite. Another juryman said there was a notice posted near the bridge threatening prosecution to trespassers. The Coroner said these notices were like those on the railway and, as a rule, were only meant for show. Companies did not enforce their notices until it became a general rule to disregard them. That was the worst of it. If they would put notices up and abide by them, there would be some sense in them. The jury ultimately returned a verdict that the deceased was "Accidentally drowned".

**151 August 21 1880**

**RIOTOUS PROCEEDINGS AT OLD TRAFFORD** At the Manchester County Police Court on Monday, before Sir John Iles Mantell, ten youths from 15 to 18 years of age, named John Mooney, Thomas Lowther, Edward Higgins, Joseph Clarkson, John Delaney, John Morgan, John Burns,

Allen Leitch, Joseph Hogan and John Jackson, and all employed in factories in Salford except Lowther, who is a compositor, were charged with having assaulted a number of policemen in the vicinity of Old Trafford. The facts of the case having been stated by Superintendent Bent, the Stipendiary asked what the charge was against the prisoners. Superintendent Bent : With being concerned in a riot. The Stipendiary said in that case he would have no summary jurisdiction. Superintendent Bent said he should prefer that the prisoners should be dealt with summarily, and it was decided to proceed on a charge of assaulting the police. Henry Spencer, a game watcher for Sir Humphrey de Trafford, stated that he was on duty on Sunday afternoon. On arriving at the Water Meetings about five o'clock, he saw a number of boys, some of whom were not dressed, running over the land. Others were pulling railings and stakes up, and throwing them into the canal. There would be between 300 and 400 engaged in this mischief. Several lads were in the fields cutting corn. He was about to take two of them into custody, when he was set upon by a lot of them, who pelted him with stones. He identified Lowther, Burns, Mooney, Leitch and Hogan as being concerned in the assault, but there were at least a hundred boys throwing stones. Several men employed by Mr Joseph Kelsall of the Water Meetings Farm were also attacked when they came to his assistance, and if the police had not arrived as soon as they did, he firmly believed either himself or some of his assistants would have been killed. He never saw "such a scene in his life". Martin Barlow, a watcher employed by Mr Kelsall, corroborated the evidence of the previous witness. He identified Mooney, Lowther and Hogan. Lowther had a "pikel" in his hand, with which he was trying to strike different people. The "pikels" were stolen from Mr Kelsall's shed, and used when the stones were exhausted. Police-constables Tracey, Chipchase and Carr, a boatman named **James Goodier**, and a farm labourer named John Donoghue, in the employment of Mr Bancroft, proved all the boys excepting Lowther threw stones at the police when they came upon the scene. Sir John Iles Mantell, addressing the prisoners, said they were there on a very serious charge. They had been concerned in a matter in connection with which, if it was pushed to the extreme, they could be indicted at the assizes on a charge of rioting. He sentenced them all to three months imprisonment with hard labour, with the exception of Lowther, who would have two months imprisonment.

### **152    September 18 1880**

**ATTEMPTING TO DROWN A GIRL**    On Monday at the Huddersfield Police Court, a boatman named **George Hellowell**, South Street, was charged with having attempted to drown a girl named Ellen Harney, of Leeds Road, mill hand. On Friday night about 11 o'clock, Harney and a married woman named Sarah Hirst, who does not live with her husband, met Hellowell in Castlegate, and he said he would have treated them to some beer only it was after 11 o'clock. He asked them (as he knew Hirst) to go with him to a boat lying in the basin at Aspley, where they could have plenty to eat and drink, and they went in that direction. On reaching the basin, Hellowell told Harney to go back, and as she said she would not go, but intended to go where her friend (who lodged in the same house with her) went, the prisoner pushed her into the canal. When she came to the surface, she tried to scream, but had her mouth full of water, and she went underneath again. When she came up, her friend called to her, and told the prisoner that if he did not help to get her out, she would cry out "Murder" and swear her life against his. When the girl came up a second time, he put his hand on her head and pushed her back into the water, but ultimately he caught hold of her while Hirst dragged her to the side, and then he made off. Police-constable Casson apprehended the prisoner the next morning in a boat at Turnbridge, and in reply to the charge the prisoner said, "I did not push her into the water. I was not within 20 yards of her when she fell in". The Bench committed the prisoner for trial at the assizes.