

**MANCHESTER COURIER AND LANCASHIRE GENERAL ADVERTISER**  
**1825 to 1855**

**1 15 October 1825**

As **George Nixon**, a boatman in the employ of Mr George Shaw, ironfounder of Wheelock near Sandbach, was passing a boat through Preston Tunnel, he fell from the plank and was drowned. We regret to say that he has left an afflicted widow and an infant to lament their loss.

**2 18 February 1826**

On Wednesday, an inquest was held at Knott Mill on the body of a boy named **John Penny**. The deceased had been in the employment of a boatman at Northwich ; about ten days ago, he came home to the house of his parents at Knott Mill in a most wretched condition, his body being covered with marks of violence, as if he had been beaten and kicked in a cruel manner. He stated that the marks had been inflicted by his master ; he lingered till Monday evening last, when he expired. Mr Mann, the surgeon, however, stated to the jury that the boy's death had been occasioned by typhus fever and not by external violence, and the jury found a verdict accordingly. The body was almost reduced to a skeleton.

**3 3 March 1827 New Bailey**

TUESDAY **William Jones**, a boatman, was charged with stealing four sovereigns, a Bank of England note for £1, and 19s in silver, the property of W H Williams. It appeared that **Hugh Edmondson**, the captain of the boat in which the prisoner was employed, had received from Mr Williams the money in question, and that during the night, the prisoner went to the boat and robbed him of it. The prisoner denied having any concern in the robbery, but circumstances of a suspicious nature having transpired, he was taken into custody. After hearing the particulars of the case, the sitting magistrate committed him for trial.

**4 29 December 1827 New Bailey**

ROBBERY AT THE EARL OF STAMFORD'S Three men named Thomas Worrall, **John Holt** and **John Chorlton** were charged with stealing a silver inkstand from the seat of the Earl of Stamford at Dunham. The article, upon which was engraven the name and the crest of his lordship, it appeared, was missing on Saturday morning last, and in the course of the day, the prisoner Thomas Worrall, a very decent looking man, was taken into custody by Mr Lavender, in consequence of being found offering for sale the top part of a silver inkstand, on which were some characters that led to a knowledge of the party to whom it belonged. In consequence, however, of the man's giving a fair account of the way in which he became possessed of the article, he was admitted as evidence against the other two men, Holt and Chorlton, the latter of whom, it appeared, had given him the piece of silver to dispose of for him. Holt, who is a boatman, said in his defence that a boy named Thomas Bateman brought the piece of silver to him, on Friday morning, as he (Holt) lay on the locker in the cabin of his boat ; that, by Bateman's desire, he and Chorlton (another boatman) accompanied him to Manchester, but that he knew nothing further of the matter. Worrall and Chorlton were discharged, and Holt was remanded.

**5 31 May 1828**

CORONER'S INQUESTS On Tuesday morning, an inquest was held at the Junction Inn in this town, on the body of **Mary Clegg**, who it was reported had died as a result of ill treatment by her husband, who is a boatman. Mr Ollier, the surgeon, had opened and inspected the body, and on the examination of him and other witnesses, the jury found a verdict "That the said deceased died on the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> instant, at Manchester aforesaid, in a boat called the *Neptune*, and of which her husband **James Clegg** was the master ; but whether the said deceased died by a blow or blows, a fall or falls, or by being jammed between two vessels, it was not possible to ascertain by any evidence before the said jurors".

## 6 6 September 1828

CORONER'S INQUESTS On Thursday an inquest was held at the Town Hall Tavern upon **James Henry**, a boatman in the employ of the Old Quay Company who was killed on Wednesday last at Barton upon Irwell, by a blow on the head from one of the horses that was drawing the boat, while the deceased was in the act of adjusting the tow rope. Verdict, "Accidentally killed".

## 7 24 January 1829 Salford Epiphany Sessions

Thomas Branaghan, Michael Devan, **William Shaw** and Joseph Grassy were indicted for stealing eight pieces of cambric handkerchiefs from the waggon of Messrs Francis Phillips and Sons at Heaton Norris on the 26<sup>th</sup> November. The prisoners were found by Normansell, one of the Salford officers, in the Hope and Anchor public house, in the old churchyard, with a bag in their possession containing the stolen property, which was afterwards found to have been taken from the waggon of Messrs Phillips and Sons while it stood for a few minutes at the door of the Chapel House at Heaton Norris. Shaw, who is a boatman, pleaded guilty to the charge.

Mr Darbyshire stated that robberies of this description were of late become uncommonly frequent, the police having sometimes as many informations as nine or ten a week. The Chairman in passing sentence observed, that the court were determined to punish any cases of this nature that might come before them with the severest punishment of the law. Shaw was then sentenced to seven years transportation. The other prisoners were acquitted.

## 8 21 March 1829 New Bailey

Brownhill and his wife, two notorious receivers of stolen goods, who were brought up on Friday for having in their possession some tea which had been stolen from Messrs Hargreaves, the carriers, were again placed at the bar, along with James and Betty Ferneyhough and **John Chorlton**, a boatman, who had been subsequently apprehended. A police officer from Altrincham, the place where the last mentioned prisoners live, stated that he searched Ferneyhough's house, and found the tea at the back part of it ; he also found a quantity of hats, wine and lead, all of which were concealed. All the prisoners were remanded until Wednesday, when the case was remitted to a Cheshire magistrate, the prisoners being resident in that county.

## 9 11 July 1829

ROBBERY AT MESSRS PICKFORD'S On Wednesday and Thursday, two men named **Birch** and **Mattocks** were examined at the New Bailey on the charge of having robbed their employers, Messrs Pickford and Co. It appeared that on Tuesday last, the prisoner Mattocks went to the house of John Morton, a farmer at Cheetham, and wished him to purchase a quantity of fur which he had with him. Morton refused to buy it, and stated his belief that it had been stolen. He, however, agreed to see Mattocks again on the subject at the Whister's Arms in Strangeways at a stated hour. In the meantime, he communicated the circumstance to Bailey, the constable, who went to the Whitster's Arms and took Mattocks into custody, with the fur in his possession. Mattocks stated that he had received the fur from a boatman named Birch, who had formerly been in the employ of Messrs Pickford and Co, but had left them four or five years ago. In consequence of this statement, Bailey went to Messrs Pickford and Co's warehouse, where he learned that Birch was still in their employment, as a night watchman, and that Mattocks was foreman of the "saddlers" as they are called, in their dock yard. Birch was then sent for, and at first denied all knowledge of the business, but afterwards admitted having given Mattocks the apron, or "brat", in which the fur was wrapped. Three keys were found upon Mattocks, one of which exactly fitted the door of the dock yard, as well as two other doors on the premises. On examining some bundles of fur which had been received from London about fourteen months ago and still remained in the warehouse, it was found that upwards of 60lb weight of fur was gone. Some of it is worth 6s per lb. The prisoners were both committed to the sessions. We understand that Messrs Pickford and Co have at different times missed cash parcels and other articles, although there is no proof they were abstracted by the prisoners.

### 10 25 July 1829

**THEFT BY A DUMB BOY** A stout lad named **William Rayner**, who is deaf and dumb and about 18 years of age, was examined before Mr Foster at the New Bailey on Wednesday and Thursday, on the charge of having stolen a watch from a boatman in Rochdale. It appears that the prisoner is employed by the boatmen on the Rochdale canal to assist them occasionally in navigating their flats. The owner of the watch was sitting drunk and asleep in a public house at Rochdale, and on coming to his senses, he found that his watch was gone. Next day, Rayner sold it to a person in Manchester for a sovereign. Of course, the prisoner could not be expected to give any account of the transaction *viva voce* ; but a boatman was found who was in the habit of conversing with him by signs, and who undertook to interpret between the magistrate and the prisoner. The interpreter's vocabulary seemed to be rather an imperfect one. He said at one time that the prisoner acknowledged that he was guilty, and at another that he denied taking the watch. After a great deal of examining and cross-examining, it was found impossible to ascertain whether or not the proceedings were rendered intelligible to the prisoner. At length, in reply to the question whether he would behave himself honestly in future if he were let off this time, the prisoner gave a significant shake of the head, which the interpreter translated into a promise that he would never steal a watch again. Upon this hint, Mr Foster ordered him to be released, and cautioned his mother, who was present, to take better care of him in future. The mother said she would do the best she could, but he was almost beyond her control, as she could not afford to keep him idle at home, and was obliged to send him among the boatmen to earn his living by his skill in "navigation".

### 11 28 November 1829

**AFFRAY WITH THE MILITARY** On Thursday night, a serious disturbance took place at the Angel Inn in Deansgate, between a party of the 87<sup>th</sup> Foot and a number of boatmen. A good deal of ill blood appears lately to have arisen between the boatmen and the soldiers of the 87<sup>th</sup>, and a few evenings ago, an affray took place between them, in which the soldiers were worsted. On Thursday evening, about a dozen of the soldiers, armed with shillelahs (the regiment is an Irish one), repaired to the Angel tap, in which a number of navigators were drinking. They soon picked a quarrel with the boatmen, upon whom they then fell, and belaboured them so heartily with their weapons, that at the end of the affray one of them was found to be so severely beaten about the head and body that his life is in danger. He was immediately taken to the Infirmary. The police, on hearing of the disturbance, proceeded to the spot, but a sergeant and piquet of the regiment also coming up about the same time, **they** took possession of the offenders and marched them off to the barracks. Mr Lavender has since requested the interference of Colonel Shaw, to order the men to be placed under arrest, until it shall be seen whether the wounded boatman survive the ill treatment he has received.

### 12 27 February 1830

**FATAL ACCIDENT** On Wednesday last, about 11 o'clock, a boatman in the employ of Mr M Heath, carrier, fell from his boat into the canal near Castle Field and close to the mouth of a culvert, the valve of which being at the time open, he was instantly swept into it by the force of the current. His hat, and a boat hook which he had in his hand when he fell, were observed sailing down the Medlock, into which the culvert leads, a few minutes afterwards, but the body of the unfortunate man was not found until yesterday afternoon, when it was discovered at the mouth of the culvert. The deceased belonged to Stourport, and had only come to Manchester for the first time on the day he thus met with his death. His name is **Thomas Pearson**, and we understand he has left a wife and five children to lament his loss. An inquest will be held on the body this day.

### 13 17 April 1830

#### Lancaster Insolvent Debtors' Court

**DAVID BAILEY**, late of Hope Street, Salford, boatman and carter, was opposed by Mr Thomas Williams, but discharged.

## 14 1 May 1830

DREADFUL ACCIDENT – TWELVE LIVES LOST On Saturday morning at 8 o'clock, an appalling accident took place on the river, by which no less than twelve persons were suddenly plunged into eternity. The following are the particulars of this melancholy occurrence. A number of the stone masons and labourers employed in erecting the piers of the railway bridge on the Manchester side of the river, lodge in Salford, and a ferry boat is kept at the works for the purpose of conveying them across at meal times. When the men left off work at 8 o'clock in the morning for breakfast, about eighteen of them rushed, as usual, into the boat ; and, notwithstanding the strong remonstrances of a man of the name of **Wilson**, who acts as ferry man, and who told them she was overloaded, they pushed her off towards the middle of the stream. The boat is a rather flat bottomed one, about nineteen feet in length and six in breadth, and is capable of carrying about 12 or 14 persons without danger. When the boat was pushed off, the stern was within about an inch of the water, and unfortunately the heavy rain of the previous night had swelled the river about three feet above its usual height ; and from the strength of the current, as well as from the high wind which prevailed, the surface of the water was a good deal agitated, particularly in that part of the river where the progress of the stream is interrupted by the coffer dam and other works connected with the bridge. From the number of men on board of the boat, it was impossible for them to sit down, and indeed there was scarcely standing room for so many. The ferry man, therefore, who sat about the centre, was almost completely prevented by the numbers about him either from seeing correctly the direction he was taking, or from having a proper management of his oars. His general practice is to cross immediately below the coffer dam ; but on pushing the boat off on this occasion, she was carried between two of the piles which have been driven in to strengthen that fabric, and unfortunately struck against the pile on the lower side. The shock, though not great, was sufficient to cause the men who were standing to swerve a little from their upright position, and the balance of the boat being thus partially destroyed, she immediately filled with water, and went down. One of the men clung to the pile which had been the secondary cause of the accident, and another clung to him. Two others succeeded in swimming ashore to the Manchester side, and a fifth directed his course to the Salford bank. He was carried down however a considerable way by the force of the current, and was picked up when completely exhausted opposite the New Quay, which is about a hundred yards below the place where the accident happened. The ferry man, Wilson, on perceiving the boat going down, leaped into the water and swam ashore to the Manchester bank. He then pushed into the water two beams of timber, which were lying about, thinking they might be the means of saving some of those who were struggling in the centre of the stream. Having done this, he next pushed off a flat bottomed boat, used for the conveyance of stone, and succeeded in saving the lives of the two men who were clinging to the pile. Six out of the whole number were thus saved ; and all the rest, consisting of eleven men and a boy, were unfortunately drowned. About one half of them clung to each other and went down together, immediately below the spot where the boat struck ; the remainder were carried away and overwhelmed by the current.

Immediately on the accident taking place, the other workmen employed on the works rushed to the spot, and rendered all the assistance in their power. Unfortunately, however, the greater part of those who lodge in Manchester had left the works immediately on the ringing of the 8 o'clock bell, and thus got to a considerable distance from the yard before the accident occurred. A raft was also pushed off from the New Quay, to intercept such as might be carried down ; but unfortunately these exertions were not attended with greater success than we have mentioned.

In the course of half an hour after the accident, several of the bodies were picked up and carried into Mr Brown's dye house, where every means were used for their resuscitation by Mr Jordan, Mr Ollier, and a number of other medical gentlemen, who hastened to the spot. In no instance, however, did they succeed in restoring animation. The first body was found exactly half an hour after the accident happened, and the eleventh after the lapse of an hour and a half. The greatest praise is due to Mr Brown and his workmen, as well as to the persons employed at the Old Quay, for the activity and humanity they displayed. Mr Rothwell and Mr Harrison, who live in the neighbourhood, were also quickly on the spot, and rendered every assistance in their power.

Wilson, the boatman, has received much praise for the coolness and promptitude with which he acted under the awful circumstances in which he was placed. We understand he still suffers considerably from the effects of the cold and the alarm and agitation which he sustained.

As soon as it was discovered that the vital spark had irrecoverably fled, the bodies of the sufferers were carried to the Quay Tavern in Liverpool Road, where an inquest was held upon them on Sunday evening, and a verdict returned to the effect that the deceased were accidentally drowned. Five of the bodies were afterwards removed by their friends, and the remaining six were interred in one grave, on Tuesday afternoon, in the new Burying Ground in Rusholme Road, the agents of the company undertaking to defray the expenses of the funeral. From the preceding account, it will be perfectly obvious that, throughout this lamentable affair, not the slightest blame could attach to any person, except to the unfortunate men themselves ; everything practicable having been done by the agents of the company to prevent accidents.

We have been requested by some of the parties interested to notice the very handsome conduct on this melancholy occasion of Lieutenant Colonel Blair, the commanding officer of the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment, now in the barracks in Regent Road. Immediately on hearing of the accident, the colonel sent down the surgeon of the regiment to render to the sufferers any assistance in his power. He also sent a guard of soldiers to keep order at the place, and in every respect behaved in the kindest and most considerate manner.

On Sunday afternoon, a collection, amounting to £25, was made in behalf of the widows and families of the sufferers in the Scottish chapel in Lloyd Street. As the expenses of the funeral have been defrayed by the Company's servants, the whole of this collection will be available for the relief of the widows and children, or other destitute relatives who depended for their subsistence wholly, or in part, upon the deceased.

The following is a list of the names of the unhappy sufferers, with some account of the circumstances of each :-

James Bern, aged 36, a stonemason, has left a wife and five children in destitute circumstances, at Brechin in Forfarshire, Scotland ; the youngest child is only a fortnight old.

Donald McDonald, stonemason, aged 43, a native of Forres, Morayshire, Scotland, has left a son and a daughter, who are grown up ; the son was in the boat, but was saved by the boatman, William Wilson.

John Wilson, stonemason, aged 22, single, son of Mr John Wilson, one of the inspectors of bridges for this county. At the conclusion of the inquest on Sunday, his body was taken to Bolton and interred by his friends.

Alexander Findlay, stonemason, aged 24, single, from Fort Augustus, Invernesshire. His brother was in the boat, and was saved by the boatman, along with young McDonald.

Jeremiah Henderson, stonemason, aged 26, single, a native of Heighington in the county of Durham. He had been employed for three years on the line, and came, only a fortnight ago, from the works at the Liverpool end.

Peter Dymont, labourer, aged 32, a native of America. Has left a wife (an Irishwoman) and two young children in a destitute condition.

William Ord, stonemason, aged 34, from near Barnard Castle, county of Durham ; has left a wife, but no children.

John Winstanley sen, labourer, aged 64, a native of Ashton-in-the-Willows ; has left a wife and family, who are all grown up. He formerly carried the mail between Warrington and Wigan, for fifteen years, and usually went by the name of "the old post". He was engaged in the Irish rebellion in 1798 as a private in the old Lancashire militia.

John Winstanley jun, labourer, aged 20, youngest son of the above ; single.

Ralph Cordwell, labourer, aged 35, a native of Berry Lane in this county ; has left a wife and one daughter, about 15 years of age.

James Dowley, aged 21, single, belonged to Ordsall Lane, Salford. He was a painter by trade, but worked as a labourer at the railway bridge.

James Findlay, aged 13, stonemason. He lately came with his father from Glasgow. His father and

two uncles are in the employment of the railway company as overseers or foremen. They are not at all related, however, to Alexander Findley, who was drowned as above mentioned. The body of the unfortunate lad has not yet been found, although persons have been employed during the whole week in dragging the river. A reward of two guineas has been offered by his surviving friends for the recovery of the body.

Those of the above bodies taken away by their friends are Wilson, Dowley, Cordwell and the two Winstanleys. The remaining six were buried as we have already stated, in one grave in Rusholme Road burying ground on Tuesday afternoon. They were borne by their fellow workmen from the Quay Tavern to the place of internment. After the usual funeral service had been read over the grave, an address appropriate to the occasion was delivered by the Rev W McKerrow, one of the ministers of the Scottish Chapel in Lloyd Street. Among the persons employed on the railway, and who were present at the funeral, were a great number of Scotsmen, who have found employment on the works of the railway, on account of their skill in masonry and engineering. We understand that it is intended that a marble slab shall be placed over the grave, on which a suitable inscription is to be engraved, commemorative of this melancholy event.

On Thursday, several of the directors of the railway came over from Liverpool for the purpose of ascertaining the cause and particulars of the late accident, and the circumstances of the families left by deceased. Having satisfied themselves in these points, they returned to Liverpool yesterday morning.

#### **15 8 May 1830**

The graves of two children in the burial ground of Stockport parish church were last week despoiled of their contents by resurrectionists. Several instances of body snatching have also recently occurred at Maltby in Yorkshire, and at Penrith, and other places in Cumberland and Westmoreland. A man named Hall was convicted last week at Pontefract sessions for violating a grave at Bradfield and sentenced to six months imprisonment.

#### **16 21 August 1830**

**DEATH FROM FIGHTING** On Tuesday the 10<sup>th</sup> instant, a fight took place in the Two Cocks public house, between John Davies of Thompson Street, Salford, and a boatman, who is only known at present by the name of Oxford Jack. Davies received so much injury that he had to be carried home, and he died on Tuesday evening last. An inquest took place on Thursday last before Mr Milne, when Mr Boutflower, surgeon, who had opened the body, gave it as his opinion that the man had not died in consequence of any violence that had been done to him. The jury found a verdict in accordance with that opinion. We have not heard to what cause Mr Boutflower attributed the man's death.

#### **17 4 September 1830**

#### **Lancaster Autumn Assizes**

**RUNNING DOWN A FLAT – ASHBRIDGE AND OTHERS v WILLIAMS** This was an action brought by the plaintiffs, twelve in number, who are owners of a vessel called the *Termagant* of Liverpool, to recover damages from the defendant, who is a trustee of the City of Dublin Steam Navigation Company, in consequence of one of their steam packets having run down the vessel, while in the river Mersey, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April last.

Mr Pollock (with whom was Mr Patteson) briefly stated the plaintiff's case.

The ownership of the vessel having been proved, and also that the defendant was a trustee of the steam company, the following witness was called.

**Bernard Mullen** said he was a boatman on the Mersey on the day in question, and was alongside the brig *Termagant*, which was a little to the northward of the entrance of the Brunswick dock basin, and about going into it. The steamer *Nottingham* was coming out of the dock at a rapid rate and with full power. She ran against the brig, struck her midships, almost split her in two, and she immediately went down. He was of opinion that if the steamer had not come out with full power, or had reversed her paddles, the accident would have been avoided. The crew could not have got the

brig out of the way, and were in no fault whatever.

A number of witnesses gave similar testimony.

The witnesses were cross-examined at great length by Messrs Brougham and Alderson, and one of them, a ship chandler, excited much merriment in giving his evidence.

Mr Brougham asked him if he had not a great respect for the plaintiffs? He replied that he had respect for the whole community, and particularly Mr Brougham.

Mr Brougham : Aye, aye, but more particularly that small portion of it which you deal with. I suppose you expect to deal more largely with the plaintiffs if all goes on well? - Yes.

Mr Brougham : Did you see the flat *Diligence* in the river? - Indeed I saw no *diligent* flat at all. [Roars of laughter].

Mr Brougham then addressed the jury at considerable length, saying that he should show that the accident might have been avoided if the captain of the brig had been disposed to get out of the way, as he had ample opportunity.

A number of witnesses were then called to prove the statement of the learned counsel, and also that the vessel was not going at more than 2 1/2 miles an hour, her full power being 9.

Mr Pollock replied.

The learned Judge, in summing up, observed that the question for the jury was whether the defendant had been negligent and, through that negligence, had run against the vessel; if they were of opinion that he had, their verdict must be for the plaintiffs, if not, for the defendant. His lordship was about to read over the evidence, when the jury interrupted him and returned a verdict for the plaintiffs. The amount of damage was referred.

## **18 2 October 1830**

### **New Bailey**

The boatman who was in custody, charged with attempting to drown Ford, the Salford watchman by throwing him into the Bolton Canal, was again brought up along with two other men named John Carrington and James Fielding, who had been apprehended by Diggles on account of their being known companions of the other man, whose name is **Bailey**, but as Ford was quite unable to identify any of them, they were reluctantly discharged by the magistrate.

## **19 18 February 1832**

### **New Bailey**

**Sarah Morton and Mary Ann Smith**, two married women, stood charged with having possession of a quantity of wearing apparel, which had either been lost or stolen from the cart of a person who was conveying them to a washerwoman at Altrincham from the house of a gentleman at Manchester.

The circumstances which led to the discovery of this property were rather curious. A few days ago, the prisoner Morton came to Booth, the Chorlton Row Officer, and gave information of her house having been robbed. He on that occasion, amongst other questions, asked her what her husband was, and she replied that he was a boatman on the canal to London. Booth casually observed, without any particular allusion to her husband, that he was afraid there were some boatmen who were regularly in the habit of conveying stolen goods away with them to London. A day or two afterwards, she came again to Booth, and said that in consequence of his observation, she had been very uneasy in her mind, as she had some things which were not her own, and she wished the right owner had them. She then told him a circumstantial tale of the husband of the other prisoner, who worked in the same boat as her own husband, having one night last month (which afterwards appeared to be the night on which the clothing in question was lost or stolen from the cart) found a basket of dirty clothes near Stretford. The boat being then on its way to London, the clothes were taken there and brought back when, hearing nothing of such articles being lost, they (Smith and Morton) divided them between them. In consequence of this communication, Booth went to the house of the prisoner Smith in Eltoft Street, and found the remainder of the articles, as Morton had stated. It not being known at that time who had lost the clothes, the parties were not taken into custody, but when that circumstance was afterwards ascertained, the women (their husbands being away with their boat) were apprehended. Both the prisoners now stated that the statement made by

Morton was the truth, and called witnesses, who proved that before Booth knew anything of the matter, the same story had been told to them. There being a probability that the basket had dropped from the cart and been found in the manner described, the magistrates dismissed the charge, and the prisoners were set at liberty.

**20 4 August 1832**

**New Bailey**

**John Jones, Joseph Salt and Thomas Platt** were charged with committing a robbery in Parliament Street on Saturday afternoon under the following circumstances. A labouring man named John Hale said that he went into a beer shop, kept by a man named Duck, in Parliament Street about 5 o'clock on Saturday afternoon. He had not been there many minutes when a boatman, whom he did not know, asked him to dance, and upon his refusing to do so, assaulted him in the most violent manner. Duck then prevailed upon him to leave the house, and he had not gone many yards from the door when he was knocked down by a number of men, who robbed him of fifteen shillings and some copper. This was done in the open street, but the only one of the gang who could be identified was Jones, who was seen with his hand in Hale's pocket. He was accordingly committed for trial, and the two other prisoners were discharged.

**21 18 January 1834**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** On Tuesday night about 12 o'clock, a boatman named **John Forshaw** went on board a boat belonging to his brother in the basin of the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal at Knott Mill for the purpose of sleeping there. It was not his habit to do so, but on this occasion he had offered his services to remain on board all night in the absence of his brother, as a protection to some valuable property that was on board. As he did not make his appearance in the morning, a search was instituted, and after some time he was found standing upright in the canal, between the boat in which he had slept and another very near to it, the crown of his head being just level with the water. He was quite dead when found. The night had been very dark, and it is supposed that in attempting to pass from one boat to the other, his foot had slipped and he had fallen into the water. An inquest was held on the body on Wednesday, and a verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

**22 5 July 1834**

**DROWNING** Between 9 and 10 o'clock on Saturday evening, **John Hewitt**, a boatman, was employed in turning the winch by which the paddles of the locks at Knott Mill are raised, when the winch handle slipped off and he was precipitated into the water. It was some time before he rose to the surface, but at length another boatman caught hold of him by the leg and dragged him out. He was quite dead when taken out of the water. The inquest was held by Mr Rutter and a verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was recorded.

**23 26 July 1834**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** On Monday last, an inquest was held before Mr W S Rutter on the body of Joseph Allen, a dyer, who was drowned on Sunday night in the Bolton Canal. The principal witness examined was **George Jordan**, a boatman, who stated that on Sunday night he was drinking with the deceased at a beershop in Pendleton. They left that place together to go to Jordan's boat, which was lying in the bottom lock of the canal, next to the river Irwell. On arriving there, Jordan jumped into the boat, which lay about three yards below the level of the canal bank, the water being out of the lock, and he told the deceased to stand still until he could fill the lock and so raise the boat to a level with the side. The night was very dark, and instead of attending to Jordan's directions, the deceased walked forward into the water. On hearing him fall, Jordan put his hand out and caught hold of the deceased, who made a spring to get into the boat, but instead of doing so, he dragged Jordan into the water. They struggled together for some time, and at length Jordan succeeded in dragging the deceased to the side of the lock, where there was a crevice in the wall by which he could hold himself from sinking. Jordan having thus, as he thought, secured the deceased, attempted to climb up the lock gates, but fell several times before he could accomplish his

object ; in the meantime, the deceased became exhausted, and crying out, "I'm going, I'm going, Lord have mercy on me!" fell backwards into the water and sank, never to rise again. Jordan seeing the fate of his companion, and being unable to render him further assistance, ran in search of the watchman, and after about an hour's exertions, the body of the deceased was taken out of the water and conveyed to a neighbouring public house. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death". Both the deceased and his companion were intoxicated when the fatal event happened, and to this circumstance, Allen's death may be attributed.

## 24 9 August 1834

### Chester Summer Assizes

THE TRIAL OF THE MURDERERS OF MR ASHTON NEAR HYDE James Garside and **Joseph Moseley** were placed at the bar at eleven o'clock this morning, charged with the wilful murder of Mr Thomas Ashton on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1831, by shooting him on the evening of that day with a pistol, while passing from the Apethorn Mill to his father's house, Pole Bank. William Moseley, a third party in the horrid transaction, was admitted evidence for the crown. Both prisoners pleaded not guilty. The following were sworn on the jury :-

Robert Naylor, Runcorn, tea dealer  
Samuel Anderton, Gawsworth, farmer  
William Bottoms, Bramall, innkeeper  
Charles Gerrard, Great Budworth, farmer  
W B Gibson, Runcorn, joiner  
John Gosling, Macclesfield, builder  
Matthew Goodwin, Buglawton, farmer  
Thomas Norbury, Bowden, farmer  
Thomas Pownall, Bollington, innkeeper  
John Powell, Butley, farmer  
Thomas Smith, Bramall, innkeeper  
J Warrington, Gawsworth, farmer

After the jury had been charged, the judge ordered all the witnesses out of court, except the professional gentlemen and magistrates.

Mr Attorney General stated the case, with whom was Dr J B Brown and J H Lloyd Esq. Mr Dunn for prisoner Garside. Joseph Moseley undefended.

The Attorney General wished the jury to forget what they might have heard or read out of court, and confine themselves to what they would hear this day in court. In 1831, great excitement existed in the neighbourhood of Ashton-under-Lyne and 52 mills were out of employment. The prosecutor, Mr S Ashton, was the proprietor of two mills, one at Woodly and the other at Apethorn. The unfortunate young man, Thomas Ashton, had the care of the Woodly mill, but his brother had the care of the Apethorn mill and, in consequence of his brother being engaged on the night of the murder, the deceased attended the mill at Apethorn in his place ; their practice of returning to the mill after tea was well known. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1831, the deceased was to superintend for his brother, and left the house in the evening by the private path from the house towards the mill, and was seen passing through the gate by a person named Wood, whom he heard call, and directly after he met three men who were strangers to him, and shortly after he heard the shot. These three men were met shortly before by a boy and a girl, both of whom saw something bright in the hands of one of them ; the man who had it had a shooting jacket on, and that man stepped aside and looked under his hat. No other persons were met on the road and, therefore, the shot must have been fired by one of those three. Now the question will be to find out who these three men were and, in order to do that, he was driven to call one of those three, and that person is an accomplice called William Moseley. The Attorney General then stated the law as to confirming an accomplice. As regarded Garside, there would be no difficulty, and as regarded the accomplice, there would be abundant corroboration.

Hannah Oldham, sworn, examined by Dr Brown : I was in the service of Mr S Ashton in January 1831 ; his house is called Pole Bank, in Werneth ; at that time, he had two sons, Thomas and James ;

they superintended the mills. James usually attended the Apethorn mill. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January, Thomas attended that mill, and left the house about seven o'clock at night, which was the usual time that James used to go to Apethorn. Saw him brought back, in half an hour after, dead.

William Taylor, examined by Mr Lloyd : Is a joiner, living at Werneth ; remembers the night when Mr Ashton was shot ; was in Mr Ashton's service at that time.

Plan delivered to the jury.

Taylor continued : Knows the prisoner well ; there is a road called Apethorn Road which leads to Gerrard's ; there is a clap gate leading out of the lane towards Mr Ashton's house, leading out of the footpath into the lane ; was going down that lane on that night, about seven o'clock, six or seven minutes after. George Wagstaffe was with me ; we were going up Apethorn Lane from the mill ; we saw a man lying one half upon the road and the other upon the ditch ; this was 31 yards from the clap gate nearer the mill ; it was light enough to see an object four or five yards off. Went up to the man and looked at him. We then went up to the farm house next to the place, procured a light, and went to the place and found the man ; we thought he was drunk ; he was lying on the left side with his right hand in his top coat pocket, in this manner (describing it). He was on his back, covered with blood, so that we could not see his countenance till after we had fetched a surgeon, and then I recognised his features. I knew him before. That person was Mr Thomas Ashton. He was afterwards taken home in an armed chair. Apethorn Lane is a common thoroughfare, leading to Houghton Green and other parts ; it is a foot road only. Examined the place afterwards, and observed two seats at the back of a strong thorn, in the fence, as if two persons had been sitting, or one twice. It was at the back side of the fence, and opposite to where the body was found. It was on the field side of the fence. The footpath leads to Mr Ashton's house. It was about seven yards distance. A person sitting there could see a person coming down the footpath perfectly well. I saw the marks of a well nailed shoe or shoes. There were more marks than one. I observed two.

By the Judge : The footmarks were near the place where the person sat.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : I was examined shortly after. Cannot recollect when the first examination took place. I was at the inquest, which was a day or two after. There were many persons present when I was examined. I have given the same evidence since before the magistrates. William Moseley was present at the time. We went on the opposite side to that which Mr Ashton was going. We went from the mill towards the clap gate. The distance from the gate is about 300 yards.

George Wagstaffe was put in the box, but not examined by the counsel for the prosecution.

Examined by Mr Dunn : I was at the inquest, but not called upon. I was not examined.

By the Attorney General : I remember the night Mr Ashton was shot ; was going from the mill with the last witness. Went down Apethorn Lane, and passed Swindell's farm ; found Mr Thomas Ashton dead on the road. Met no one on the road in the space. Found the body about a quarter past seven ; the body was quite warm ; his right hand in his top coat pocket (as by the last witness). Did not find any pistol or firearms about him. Saw a place where two persons had been sitting. It was just across the road from which we found the body.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : Gave the same evidence before the magistrates at Stockport. Was examined on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, and then again on the Tuesday following. Gave the same account both times. Taylor and I walked abreast. That lane is used by the persons coming from the mill. Other persons came about four or five minutes after we found him.

Mr Tinker, surgeon : I was called in on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January to examine the body of the deceased, at eight o'clock in the evening. Mr Ashton was quite dead then. The cause of his death was a gun shot wound, which had entered at the breast bone, passed through his heart and lungs, and passed out at the shoulder blade. They appeared to have been slugs. There was one wound at the front and two at the back.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : I was examined before the magistrates in the presence of William Moseley. The depositions were read over in his presence. Not accustomed to gun shot wounds. Never saw a gunshot wound before.

By the prisoner, Joseph Moseley : Has not said before the magistrates that it was done with a ball.

The guns have not been examined in the neighbourhood.

**William Moseley** sworn, examined by Mr Lloyd : Is the brother of Joseph Moseley, and is a labourer, and lived lately in Romiley. Romiley is about a mile and a half from Mr Ashton's on the Stockport side ; it is about four miles from Marple ; has been a boatman ; has known Garside a few years. Garside lived at Marple when I was an apprentice there. Met Joseph Moseley and James Garside at the Stag's Head at Marple Bridge ; it was on Wednesday ; remembers the day in which young Mr Ashton was shot ; it was on the Wednesday before ; stayed a short time there, and had something to drink.

By the Judge : That would be the 29<sup>th</sup> of December. Whilst we were drinking, both of them asked me if I had anything to do ; Garside asked me first ; I said I was out of employ, and was going to Macclesfield seeking work the day after. Garside said I had better stop a few days, as they could find me better employment ; they could find me a better job than anything I could find. It was agreed that I was to meet them the Sunday following at Marple Bridge, towards twelve o'clock ; we then parted ; I did not see either of them again till the Sunday. I went to Marple Bridge on the Sunday between twelve and one o'clock, found both of them, then remained on the bridge about half an hour ; did not go into any house ; both told me they were going to meet two men on Compsall Brow ; both told me that ; they said I must go with them, and we went ; whilst we were standing at the bridge we saw Robert Middleton, and Jones, a shoemaker ; Robert Middleton is a glazier ; I don't know what has become of Jones ; all three of us went to Compsall Brow ; it is at Werneth Lane ; we called on our way at a public house at the top of the brow, just under Mr Wright's tower ; we met two men there, and one was called either Schofield or Stansfield ; I knew them by sight before, but did not know their names before ; I thought one was a joiner ; my brother told me to stand a little on one side ; the two men talked a little time with my brother and Garside ; I could not perfectly hear what was said, but I heard something said about the union ; they remained talking about half an hour, and then they went away ; I then joined my brother and Garside, and asked them what they were going to do, and they (both) said they had agreed with these men to shoot one of the Mr Ashton's ; and I asked what it was for, and they said on account of the union turn out ; they told me they were to have £10 for the job. They said I must meet them on Werneth Low, at Mr Wright's tower, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January, about four or five o'clock ; that was the next day ; I refused at first, and told them I would rather not have anything to do with anything of that sort, but by persuasion I gave consent ; they said that if I did not light of them there, I was to go to the gravel pit at Lousy Thorn ; we then parted ; I was living then in Romiley, and they were living in Marple ; Wright's tower is between Romiley and Marple ; I set out the next day about four o'clock from Romiley ; on my way, I met one George Parkinson ; he is a Romiley man ; he walked with me as far as his own house, which is on Cross Moor ; I afterwards went on to the tower ; Garside and Moseley were not there ; I got there about five o'clock, not quite five ; I then went on towards the gravel pit, and there I met them standing at the gravel pit ; the first thing they did was to show me the pieces which were loaded ; they were pistols ; one was a large one, like a horse pistol, and the other a small one ; Garside had the larger one ; one was a bright one ; Joseph had the bright barrelled one, which was the smaller one ; Garside had brown cloth trousers, a waistcoat of the same colour, a coat like the one he has on now, and a hat on ; it was a common coat. Joseph was dressed in a pair of jean trousers, a dark coloured singlet, and a light shooting coat ; it was a longish coat, a shooting coat ; he had a hat on. I was dressed on woollen cord knee breeches, a yellow striped waistcoat, and a brown cloth jacket which came down to my knees ; I had a hairy cap on. When they showed me the pieces, they told me the way we were to go ; we were to go round by the turnpike ; I told them we had better go on the left side ; we went round by the turnpike, and towards the factory, Mr Ashton's factory ; we all went that way and met several persons on our road. From Lousy Thorn we went by the foot road to the turnpike road ; then a short distance on the turnpike road, until we got into the lane leading to Apethorn Mill. When we were at Lousy Thorn I saw the farmer there ; he was in the field, about the breadth of the field off ; his name is Samuel Taylor. When we got to the lane, we changed our shoes ; Garside and I changed ; I had before a pair of shoes well nailed ; Garside put one on ; the other I kept on ; I took his hat and gave him my cap ;

there was not any other exchange ; we then went forward along the lane ; we met a man when we had got down the lane 20 or 30 yards ; we met a little girl after that, about the same distance ; she met us ; I was a few yards behind ; my brother and Garside walked together before me ; after that we met a boy with a lanthorn ; this was a short space after we met the little girl ; he met us ; we met a man after that just opposite the clap gate leading up to Mr Ashton's house ; my brother went across the road to look at him ; he bended down to look at him in the face ; I was well opposite the clap gate ; that man passed, and then Garside asked Joseph if he knew him, and Joe said, "No" ; after that they went into the field on the left hand side, and I went into the one on the right hand side; they then came back and went into the field through the clap gate ; I was on the higher ground, and could see where they were ; they lay waiting for this man to come ; they lay in the ditch, both of them ; they were sat on the ditch back, with their heads down ; both were sat down, one a little behind the other ; they sat a few yards below the footpath ; in a short time, there came a man on the same side as they were, he was on the footpath, coming towards the clap gate ; he came through the clap gate ; Garside met him, and he gave way to Garside ; he met him in the field before he got to the clap gate ; he pointed the piece towards him, and he gave way and changed the side ; he fired ; when he fired the piece, he was in the field, on the footpath leading to Mr Ashton's house ; it was in the private road where the shot was fired ; it was about 20 yards from the clap gate ; it was Mr Ashton who gave way when he came out of the ditch ; Garside met him when he came back ; he had got through the clap gate when the shot was fired ; he was going towards the mill when he was shot ; he was about 20 yards from the clap gate when the shot was fired ; I had never been in that lane before ; the person who was shot fell across the road, with his head towards the right hand side ; the man whom we met could not have gone out of hearing when the shot was fired ; I then set off to the place where we had agreed to meet, which was at the canal bridge near to the mill ; I went across the field ; I do not know which way they went ; I did not stop to see them start ; I went to a bridge a little further on ; we were to meet at the first bridge, but I went on to the second ; I then went back to the first bridge, where I found my brother and Garside ; Garside had the piece in his hand ; I asked him if he had shot him, and he said, "Yes, dead enough, he never stirred after". We stood upon the bridge talking a little time, and there was a man coming along the towing-path, we stooped down below the battlement that he might not see us ; we then went off to go, and I went with them as far as Hatherlow ; as we were going, they said I was to meet them at the Bull's Head ; I asked them which they had shot, and they said it did not mean which one it was, if it was one of them – meaning one of the Ashtons ; it was agreed I was to meet them at dinner time the next day ; we parted at Hatherlow ; I slept that night in a boat of **Joseph Bennett's** at Hatherlow ; Joseph and Garside went towards Marple ; I did not go the next day ; I saw them on the Wednesday following ; it was about dinner time ; on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, I met them in the road leading to Marple bridge ; it was near to the 7<sup>th</sup> lock on the canal ; it was agreed to meet there if I did not go to the Bull's Head ; it was to receive part of the money ; I found them there with one of the men whom I had not before seen on the brow, it was the man whom I called either Stansfield or Schofield ; he pulled out ten sovereigns and said he had settled with them, and he would settle with me ; I received two of them ; he wanted me to take the other, but I would not, I said I would be content with that, and they might take the other ; he pulled out a book, which we were to sign ; the other two had signed, and I put my mark ; we all then went down upon our knees and made a profession to God, declaring that we would never tell ; we prayed God to strike us dead if we told ; we did this one after another ; we each held a knife in our turns over the other ; Schofield took a part in it, he stood the same as the others ; Garside and the man who paid my money made that proposal ; the man that paid the money made it first.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : My brother is older than me ; I told this after I was taken ; it was not immediately after ; I told it after I came here ; it was the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> of April I was apprehended, and I believe it was on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May that I told it ; when I said it was two days after it, I meant two days after I came here ; I did not tell anyone in Stockport of it ; it was to prevent me from being hung that I told it ; I have been in Knutsford for a month for stealing a spade from my master ; I never was in prison before except at Knutsford ; never heard that the grand jury cut a bill against me ;

does not know a man of the name of Patrick McMann ; there were two or three sent to gaol at the time I went ; do not know any man of the name of McMann ; kept this secret until May 1834. I had thought of telling it before ; I thought so when I was at Stockport ; I was out of work in January 1831 ; they lived at Marple, which is on the way to Macclesfield from Romiley ; I went there that night ; I mean the day that the money was paid ; Taylor, who kept the Stag's Head, is dead ; I do not know the waiter at that house ; I did not see anyone examined to prove that I was at the Stag's Head on the Wednesday ; I believe there was a man, but I do not know that he proved it, or can prove it ; I asked them what sort of a job they had to do, and they said it was a bit of a job of their own they had to do ; I did not look for any work in the meantime ; I asked them again, but they would not tell me ; they said they would tell me on the Sunday. Robert Middleton saw us on the bridge ; I told that Robert Middleton saw us before ; Middleton swore it ; I did not hear him examined before the magistrates ; I do not know that he spoke to us on that day ; there was Jones, the shoe maker, there. Mr Shaw keeps the public house at Compstall Brow ; he was not examined before the magistrates, nor anyone from his house. Both told me they had agreed with the two men to shoot one of Mr Ashtons ; they told me they were to have £10, and I was to have a share of it ; I agreed to go with them ; I had no ill will towards him ; I would not take £1000 to be one of another job like it ; I would not swear against another falsely for £1000 ; I would not take a false oath for the third of £10; I do not know whether or not I would shoot a man if I were not to be hung and let off for doing it ; I refused at first ; I overtook Geo Parkinson on the road coming from Hatherlow ; I did not hear Geo Parkinson examined before the magistrates ; he walked with me three quarters of a mile ; they showed me the pistols at the gravel pit ; I do not know that my brother had a pistol of his own ; I never asked where they had the pistols from ; it was not quite dark when they showed me the pistols; they showed them from under their coats ; I heard it said before the magistrates that a person had been seen with something bright ; I had heard how the men were dressed before I made my confession ; I heard someone say before the magistrates that one had a round shooting jacket on; I knew where the factory was before this happened ; I did not know his house ; I knew whereabouts it was ; I never was on that road before, not nearer than the canal. It was dark when we were at Lousy Thorn ; it might be about six o'clock then ; I could not see across a field at that time. It was not dark when we were at Taylor's farm at the first. I heard Taylor say, when before the magistrates, that he had seen three men near to his house ; I heard some of the evidence before the magistrates, and I might hear that a person had met three men down the lane, and about the little girl meeting three men there ; we met the boy with the lanthorn, but I do not remember hearing anything of that before the magistrates ; there was a man said before the magistrates that he had been met by us, and one of us looked at him ; there is a field on one side of the road, but I think not on the other ; there is a bit of a nursery on one ; I stood close by the hedge ; I was not in the same field as the prisoners were ; they were in the ditch, I was in the field on the other side where the prisoners were ; saw a person coming down, saw him go through the clap gate ; it might be about twenty yards from the gate where the man was shot ; I was within ten yards of him when he was shot ; I was on the other side of the road ; I am certain that he was coming towards us when he was shot ; I am quite sure that he was coming towards us when he was shot ; I am quite sure that Garside fired the shot. I know I am swearing to save myself ; I do not know that I should be hung if I did not swear that it was Garside fired the shot ; the hedge we stood upon after the job is not more than a quarter of a mile from the factory ; we stood there about twenty minutes ; I heard Garside say that he had shot the man, and he told me so at the bridge. I did not know any of the Ashtons ; I asked what master it was, and they said it did not matter which of them, so as it was one ; the man offered me three sovereigns, and I only took two.

Re-examined by the Attorney General : Never had been in Apethorn Road before, and it was then dark ; I was a boatman, and in the habit of passing the factory by the canal, and under the bridges, which I knew well ; I had no watch with me, and I only guess at the time I was at Compstall Bridge, and I guess at the time I was on the bridge.

By the Judge : Knows a man of the name of James Butterworth ; I saw him at his own door on that night ; his house is about three quarters of a mile from Wright's Tower, and before we got there ;

they sat on the left side of the lane going to the factory, and I was on the right side, and the lane was between us. When I was before the magistrates, I stated that they went over on the left side, then came back again into the lane, and backed themselves up against the bank under which I stood ; they did that besides cowering down ; they did both ; that was in the same road where Mr Ashton was shot.

Robert Middleton said : I am a glazier, residing at Marple Bridge ; I know both the prisoners at the bar and William Moseley ; I remember well the day on which Mr Ashton was shot. On the day before he was shot, I saw William and Joseph Moseley and James Garside together on Marple Bridge about four o'clock in the afternoon ; I spoke to Garside ; I knew a man by the name of Jones, but he is dead.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : I gave evidence before the magistrates on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May ; I recollect them standing there very well ; I stood there with three other persons ; I do not think that Jones knew the Moseleys, nor do I know that the others knew them ; I am quite certain of the day and the men ; I have seen the two prisoners together often, but never saw the three together before in all my life ; I am certain it was about that time, on account of the chapel loosing ; never saw William Moseley on the bridge before.

Re-examined by the Attorney General : I heard about ten o'clock the next morning of Mr Ashton being shot ; a deal of inquiry was made about that time ; it was on the Sunday I saw them there.

Cross-examined by Joseph Moseley : I saw all of you there that day ; I am sure I saw you and spoke to you.

William Moseley recalled : After leaving the two men on the Sunday, at Compstall Brow, the prisoners went towards Marple and I went to Romiley.

Mary Darbyshire said : I live at Marple, and remember the day Mr Ashton was shot. I had been at Compstall Bridge on that day. I know Joseph Moseley and saw him about four o'clock on that day at Rosy Toll bar ; I was going towards Marple and he towards Compstall Bridge. I had known him well, and was sure it was him. I know Garside. No one was with Moseley then. I saw Garside in the course of the week that Mr Ashton was shot, but I do not know the day of the week. I had some conversation with him. I told him that I had met Joseph Moseley on that day, at the Rosy Toll bar. I do not remember that he said anything to that. We had no conversation about the murder. The prisoners are acquainted, and I have seen them together.

By the Judge : Does not remember having any conversation with Garside about six weeks after at Mrs Talbot's house. Recollects seeing him at that house.

By Joseph Moseley : I never saw any harm to you in all my life. There are a many roads leading from Rosy Brow besides that which leads to Mr Ashton's.

Samuel Taylor said : I am a farmer, living in Werneth near Stockport. Our farm adjoins Lousy Thorn, and both farms go by that name. Remembers the day on which young Mr Ashton was shot. There is a gravel pit near the farm. I saw three men near there between 4 and 5 o'clock on that evening ; two were standing in the road which leads from Stockport to Mottram. I went up to the gate, and two men were standing about fifty yards from the gravel pit, and a third was coming towards them from the left, which was coming from Compstall Bridge Road. I did not see all the three together afterwards. I was standing at the gate where the road leads from Mr Ashton's ; my place is about 5 or 700 yards from Wright's Tower. Our house is about 5 or 600 yards from the gravel pit, or perhaps a little more. I was coming the Grave Road which leads from Compstall Bridge. I did not stop to see whether they joined or had any conversation. I was looking to the west when I saw the two. The one man was about 80, 90 or 100 yards from the other two. I was examined before the magistrates, and I believe I gave the same account there. I did not take much notice of the size and appearance of the men, they did not appear to be taller than the prisoners.

Martha Percival said : I work at one of Mr Ashton's mills ; remembers the night his son was shot ; was coming up the Apethorn Lane from the mill on that night, and met three men facing Lee's factory, which is opposite the lane ; I had passed the gate leading to Mr Ashton's house and do not know what time it was ; it was dark ; they made a noise with their mouths ; all of them did so ; one of them next to me had something in his hand like a gun ; I was not sure it was a gun, it shined like

a brass shoe horn ; they pushed me between them, and I was frightened.

By Mr Dunn : I was examined at the inquest, and also before the magistrates at Stockport, and in the presence of William Moseley. I stated the same then as now.

By the Judge : Cannot say what size the men were, nor how dressed.

Joseph Collier said : I remember the night Mr Ashton was shot ; went along to Apethorn Mill about seven o'clock on that night ; knows the clap gate leading to Mr Ashton's house. I met three men on that night ; they were near to the clap gate ; it was nearer the mill than to Gee Cross ; it was about the gate, and between the gate and the mill. I had a lanthorn, one had something which shined in his right hand. I saw the spot where Mr Ashton was shot on the next day. I heard the report of firearms in about ten minutes after I had passed those three men, but it appeared to be down the lane, in the direction to the clap gate. I did not observe the size of the men. I was going to fetch my mother home.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : It was near to the gate but on the other side of the road. I gave the same statement in the presence of William Moseley, before the magistrates. It was very dark, and on that account I had the lanthorn.

Thomas Wood said : I was in the employ of Mr Ashton as a blacksmith at the time his son was shot ; I left the mill about seven o'clock that night and came up the Apethorn Lane. I met three men between Swindell's farm and the lane leading up to Mr Ashton's house. I passed them when I went towards Gee Cross. I passed the clap gate, and I saw someone coming down the road, through the gate, with a top coat on, and in about a minute afterwards I heard the report of firearms ; I did not turn back. One was dressed in a sort of shooting jacket and his hands held down close to his sides. It came down to his thighs. One looked at me and had a hat on. I did not take particular notice of the others. I did not meet any other persons but those before I heard the shot. I did not notice how the man in the top coat had his hands.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : Gave the same statement before the magistrates in William's hearing.

John Lowe, sworn : Was wheeling some coals up Apethorn Lane about seven o'clock on the night Mr Ashton was shot, and heard the report of firearms, shortly after that two men came past me ; they were running and came close past me ; they ran towards Apethorn Mill from the direction of the clap gate ; they were about the same size of the prisoners, they had fustian jackets and cotton cord trousers ; they had on the same sort of jackets as shooters use. They passed me in less than two minutes after I had heard the shot. I did not see anybody else between there and the clap gate ; went up to the place where Mr Ashton was lying. He was dead, but there were folks there when I got up.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : Was not examined before the inquest, but was examined before the magistrates, and told the same story. The two men were running in the direction of the canal.

Robert Ollerenshaw said : I am a stone mason living at Marple. I don't remember the day of the month that young Mr Ashton was shot ; I heard tell of it, and on the following day I saw Joseph Moseley and James Garside ; it was the day after the murder ; they were together, and I met them between the Navigation Inn and the Bull's Head in Marple. James Garside spoke to me and said, "Uncle, I will give you either ale or gin if you will turn back". I turned back, and all of us went to the Bull's Head and had something to drink. I asked Garside if he had been at home, and he did not say whether he had or not ; it was in the morning part, I gave him something to eat.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : Had not seen them together before that morning. I did not go any farther than the Bull's Head with them ; Garside fixed upon the Bull's Head ; there was some talk in the house about the murder, and I am sure it was the day after. I told the same thing before the magistrate.

John Staveley Barrett sworn : I am deputy constable of Stockport. I apprehended the prisoner, Joseph Moseley, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April last, and told him he was charged with being concerned in the murder of Mr Ashton, and he stated that he knew nothing about it, for he was from home at the time; he said he was on a journey between Liverpool and Chester at the time, and did not hear anything of it until he returned home at the latter end of the week. Mr Ashton was shot on the Monday.

Cross-examined by Joseph Moseley : I told you about four o'clock in the morning. I told you in the course of a few minutes. I have called several times to see your brother since he was committed.

Re-examined : Never gave him any money except 2s, which I gave him since he made his confession ; he complained that he wanted some tobacco and had no money. I often give the prisoners money who behave well in my custody. I think it was the day I delivered him into the Castle. I think I did not give him money more than once. I think I did give him a shilling on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May. I am sure that I never gave him more than 3s. No one was present when I gave him the money. I did not tell him in the condemned cells that I would keep him there until he said something. I never held out any inducement towards him to say anything. I delivered the message to Mr Dunstan that he was to keep the prisoners separate, and that it was by the directions of the committing magistrate. It was in a few minutes after I had apprehended him ; it was after we had left his house ; it was in the gig that I told him what he was apprehended for, and then he stated that he was on his journey from Liverpool to Chester. Earlam, my assistant, was there, and might have heard it.

Henry Earlam sworn : I belong to the Stockport police. I was not present when he took Joseph Moseley, but at the back of the house, and went round as soon as he was seized. I heard Barrett tell Joseph Moseley that Garside had been telling of several depredations which they had committed. I did not hear him tell Barrett that he was between Liverpool and Chester.

Samuel Chorlton said : I am the attorney for the prosecution. Was present at about the 20<sup>th</sup> of April last, at Stockport, when the prisoner, Joseph Moseley, was brought before Capt Clarke for the purpose of being remanded. Garside was not then brought from Derby. Capt Clarke told him he should be under the necessity of remanding him. Joseph Moseley said it was hard to be detained, for he was innocent, and that he was on a journey from Liverpool to Chester at the time.

By Joseph Moseley : You said that you had been to the Registry Office at Chester. I do not remember you saying that you had seen in the papers about the murder.

Captain Clarke R N : When Joseph Moseley was remanded by me, he said that he was not in the country at the time, for he was down at Liverpool and Chester when the murder was committed.

Robert Ollerenshaw recalled : Mr Ashton's murder was mentioned at the Bull's Head the morning after it was done ; it was mentioned at Joseph Moseley's hearing. The boatmen who were in the house mentioned Mr Ashton's name.

----- Maxwell, examined by Joseph Moseley : William Moseley was put in the condemned cell to keep the prisoners separate. Barrett saw him there ; I was present, but did not pay any attention to the conversation. He was kept there for a day or two, as there was no other safe place at liberty at that time. I ordered Barrett to come away and let him alone. This was before the 27<sup>th</sup> of May, and before William Moseley had made the confession. The prisoners are in the habit of throwing notes from one yard to another, and he was put there for safety.

By Mr Dunn : The only reason he was put there was to keep him separate from his brother and Garside ; and we had no other safe place. There are three yards for prisoners before trial ; but there were only two yards at that time, the gaol being very full, and the convicts were there.

William Geoffrey Lockett : I am a magistrate for the county of Derby, and one of the visiting justices for the county gaol there ; I was sent for to the gaol ; I attended the prisoner in the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> of April last and saw Garside ; young Ashton was with me there ; Garside did not say much then ; I made my own memoranda of what passed at that time ; there was no inducement whatever for him to say anything to me ; Dr Forester is a magistrate ; I believe he is not here.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : It was at the request of Mr Ashton that I went to the gaol. A letter had been sent by Dr Forester by a wrong direction given by Garside. I sent a copy of a statement made by Garside to the Police Office, Stockport ; and before I had any answer, young Mr Ashton came over. As soon as Mr Ashton and I entered, the gaoler told him that there was a magistrate then present ; I did not caution him before I took down any statement ; I had no intention of taking any expressions which would be made use of against him. Afterwards, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, I took from him two important depositions, and before doing so I cautioned him ; I did not swear him to them. There was something said about the *Gazette*. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, I went to the prison, and Garside was brought

into the justices room. He wished to know if Joseph Moseley was in custody ; and he asked me if he was to be admitted a witness for the Crown. I told him that I did not know that Moseley was in custody, but thought it very probable that he was ; and as to him being made a witness, I could give him no assurance of that, as it lay entirely with the Crown ; and then I told him that what he had said or might say would affect him materially, and that he must consider it well before he said anything – as to his expecting to be a witness, he must not rely upon that, but dispel it from his mind entirely. And I also told him that my own feeling was that he would not be made a witness. He was then under a sentence for another offence. I told him that I could not believe what he had stated to Dr Forester, and that I was confident he knew much more of the matter than he had stated. After a short time, he said he did know more of it than what he had said, and he would then tell all he knew about it. He was beginning to state it, and then he stopped, and said he would look at the *Hue and Cry* first. I directed the turnkey to fetch the *Hue and Cry* of June 1831, which was delivered to the prisoner Garside. I asked him if he could read, and he said he could ; he held it in his hand, as if he was reading, and held it long enough to have read it. I asked him if he had read it, and he said, “Yes”. I doubted him, and then read him the advertisement myself. [Mr Lockett here read the advertisement from the *Gazette*]. There is a reward mentioned at the bottom of it ; but I think I did not see it then, and I think I did not read it to Garside. However, he then asked me if he could be made a witness with a pardon. I said, “Do you mean for the offence for which you are now in custody?” and he said he did. I did not answer his question, although I had an opinion upon it. He then said he would tell all about it ; but he was so agitated that I told him he was not then in a fit state to say anything, and I would come again at eight o'clock ; this was about four o'clock. I told him that he had not told all he knew ; and that my impression was that he was the person who had fired the shot. I went again at eight o'clock, and the governor was then returned. Garside was fetched, and he appeared much more agitated then before. It was a very cold night and he shivered very much. I ordered him to come to the fire, and I directed the governor to give him a glass of sherry, which he did, and he then soon recovered. I then took his statement. There was nothing said about getting part of the reward, in addition to the pardon. If he did it under an impression of getting pardoned, it was quite against what I said to him, nor did he do it on the faith of the proclamation. My impression was that he wanted to see the proclamation for quite another purpose ; it was, as I thought, to see whether the man who actually fired could be pardoned. There were several circumstances which led me to that conclusion. He had said several times that he was afraid of Joe saying that he (Garside) had shot the pistol. He seemed to have a better knowledge of the pistol than the opportunity (as he said) he had of seeing it would afford him. His stopping so suddenly to look at the advertisement, and several other circumstances, led me to believe that he knew a deal more than he had said. On the 29<sup>th</sup>, I told him that the Moseleys were apprehended, and he must go to Stockport as a witness.

William Weston, jun, said : I am a clerk to Dr Forester of Derby, one of the magistrates for that county. I attended at the gaol with Dr Forester on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April last, and took down a statement from Garside ; and no inducement was held out to him ; there was nothing said to him about being a witness. I read it over to him, and he said, “Stop, I have an alteration to make there”, and I accordingly made an alteration, which was done several times at his request. After it was taken, he said he had a deal more to say, and if we would give him pen, ink and paper, he would commit it to paper ; and they were given him accordingly.

Cross-examined by Mr Dunn : Dr Forester was with him again in my presence once after. It was not told him that what he said would be used against him ; but no inducement was held out to him. There was nothing said about the reward ; there was no intimation given to him that he would be made a witness. He said something about getting a pardon for the offence of which he was then convicted, and I told him that I could not give him any information on the subject ; this was before he gave his statement ; the pardon was qualified to the offence of which he was convicted.

John Sims : Is the governor of Derby Gaol. Garside sent me a note on Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> April last, and told me that he wanted to communicate to me a murder which took place about two or three years ago, and I asked him whether it was the said Mr Ashton, but he would not say anything more unless

before a visiting magistrate. I then went to Mr Lockett, but he being from home, I went to Dr Forester, and he and his clerk came up to the gaol soon after. Dr Forester never saw him but in my presence. Garside asked him if he could be pardoned, and the Doctor told him he could not do anything to get him a pardon. He directed me to take him off the mills to keep him from other prisoners, and prevent them from ill treating him. Neither Doctor Forester nor the prisoner ever mentioned a free pardon. The Hue and Cry was read to him. Dr Forester told him that if he was the man who shot, no pardon could be gotten for him. He then refused to say anything more until he got before the magistrates at Stockport.

Mr Dunn objected to the admissibility of the statement, on the ground that the proclamation was sufficient to induce the prisoner, Garside, to confess. He quoted *Rex v Hall* 2 Leech p559 in support of his argument, but the objection was overruled.

William Moseley recalled : I have been in the gaol since I gave my confession. I have not been told what I am again fetched for, Barrett has not said anything to me since. I had 10 or 11s when I was taken, which Barrett gave me back ; he has not given me any money but my own ; he has seen me in the gaol several times ; I came out of the cells when he saw me ; he gave me money at different times ; I had 11s in the whole, and at different times ; he did not tell me that I must be kept in the cells unless I told ; he gave me the first money when I first came ; he gave me 2s or 3s at the first. I asked him for it ; I had 3s from him ; he came to me at the races and gave me 3s more ; he gave me another 3s after, and since then 2s ; he never gave me 1s at a time.

Cross-examined by Joseph Moseley : I was put in the condemned cell by the turnkey. Barrett did not tell me that I must be kept there unless I made a confession. He gave me no money but what was my own.

Mr Lockett recalled and stated that between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 29<sup>th</sup> whilst in London, Captain Clarke wrote to me to apply to the Secretary of State, for an order to move Garside from Derby to Stockport, and on my return on the 29<sup>th</sup>, I told Garside that he would be removed accordingly. He then wished to know what he had said and written, and I told him that I would put it together in a detailed form and would see him again in the morning, which I did, and then read the same very slowly to him. He suggested several alterations which I made, and then told him I would get it copied again and see him in the evening ; I have both copies here ; I saw him again, and read it over to him, and asked him if it was all true, and he said it was ; I then said to him, "Do you make this statement voluntarily and uninfluenced", and he said, "Yes I do". I then handed it to him to sign, and he said, "No ; I'll not sign it until I see the justices at Stockport".

Samuel Chorlton recalled : Was present at Chester Castle on the 18<sup>th</sup> July, and read over to all three the statement made by William Moseley, and when it was over, Joseph Moseley said very vehemently and turning to Garside, "Thou seest what thou hast done for us both ; now we will have it all out". Captain Clarke seeing him much agitated, cautioned him against saying anything that would criminate himself ; the governor went out for paper, and in the interval his emotion appeared to have subsided ; Joseph then said, "I thank you for cautioning me ; I will say no more" ; on leaving the room, Garside said to William Moseley, "Be sure and say nowt, and they can do us no harm".

William Moseley's statement, as read in the gaol, was here again read.

Cross-examined by Joseph Moseley : That is the answer you gave which I have stated ; it was in consequence of the information given by Garside that the Moseleys were apprehended.

The statement made by Garside to Mr Lockett was read here ; which in substance contained a detailed account as given by the accomplice William Moseley, except he endeavoured to fix the firing upon Joseph Moseley, and making himself to have done just what William Moseley stated he did.

James Ashton, sworn : Is brother to the unfortunate young man who was shot ; in January 1831, I had the superintendence of the Apethorn Mill, and my brother that of Woodley. I was in the habit of going from the house to the mill down the private road about the hour of seven in the evening. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1831, having to go out to a friend's, I arranged with my brother to attend to the Apethorn Mill for me ; at this time, there was a considerable excitement amongst the workpeople in

Ashton and Stayley Bridge ; I had discharged one man a few days before for belonging to the union. At a quarter past seven o'clock, the case for the prosecution was gone through, and upon the prisoners being called upon for their defence, James Garside said that his confession made at Derby was under a promise of being pardoned, and also of his getting part of the reward, and that Mr Sims, the gaoler there, had told him that the proclamation would be enough for him ; and he told him this almost daily for a fortnight.

Here Mr Sims was called, and stated that it was all false what Garside was saying.

Joseph Moseley said that what both his brother and Garside had said was false. He handed a written defence to the like effect, and urging that it was not likely that he should shoot a man that he never saw or knew, or had any ill will towards him.

At the suggestion of Joseph Moseley, Enoch Bradley, a convicted felon who had served his time, and was now waiting to take his trial for another offence, said : On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June, William Moseley told me that Mr Dunstan had told him that his brother was writing home, and wished to know if I had anything to send. I asked him if he had made any statement, and he said no ; that when Barrett came over the first time, he had him put in the condemned cells, and said he would keep him there unless he made a statement, but he did not make any statement, and he kept him there until eight o'clock, and then he put him in the hospital ; he also said that Barrett had told him if he would confess, he should have anything he wanted, but that he had not given him anything ; that on the Saturday following, Barrett had put him in the cell again, and told him if he would not tell, he would keep him there until the assizes ; and he said, "How could I make a statement when I knew nothing about it?" and that Barrett said he could help him out with one ; that Barrett had said he could tell him where they were drinking at, and as it was so long a time since, folks would think he was telling true ; he also told me he could have money from Barrett for asking for, and that he had in the whole 17s ; that his money was getting done, and unless he came soon, he should write to him for some ; I asked him if he knew nothing how he could get the money ; did he ask him for money, and he said no ; Barrett was in the habit of coming over to ask him some questions, and he got the money when he came over.

John Dunstan sworn : Is the governor of the castle. William Moseley was put in the condemned cell by my direction, and whilst the alterations were going on ; Barrett had nothing to do with his confinement.

About twenty minutes past eight, his Lordship began to sum up the evidence to the jury, which occupied his Lordship two hours and a half. The Jury retired a few minutes, and returned a verdict of Guilty against each ; and in answer to a question from his Lordship, stated that they found that Garside fired the pistol. His Lordship passed sentence, and ordered them to be executed on Friday next, their bodies to be buried in the precincts of the prison.

Upon the verdict being returned, both prisoners fainted away, and after the Judge had passed sentence, Garside was removed in a state of insensibility. The trial concluded at eleven o'clock exactly.

**THE MURDERERS OF MR ASHTON** Although the two men convicted of the murder of the late Mr Thomas Ashton were sentenced to be executed on Friday morning, the execution had not taken place at twelve o'clock yesterday, when our latest accounts left Chester, nor had any preparations been made for the execution. It appears that there is a question at issue between the sheriffs of the city of Chester and the high sheriff of the county as to whose duty it is to see execution done upon the bodies of criminals ; and it is therefore quite uncertain when the execution may take place. It has been the custom for several centuries past for the sheriffs of the city to perform the unpleasant task of executing all criminals convicted at the assizes, the origin of which custom cannot be clearly ascertained. Since the abolition of the palatine jurisdiction, however, the city sheriffs conceive that the onus has been removed from them to the sheriff of the county, and as they are supported in this opinion by the law officers of the crown, they have positively refused to perform the duty. On the other hand, the high sheriff disclaims the office, and is determined to do so until compelled to undertake it by due course of law. Thus the matter rests at present ; and we understand that the

criminals have been respited by Mr Baron Park until some arrangement is made on the subject by the higher powers.

**25 27 September 1834**

**SHEEP STEALING** About eight o'clock yesterday evening week, some boys, who were rat hunting on the banks of the river at Eccles, heard the noise of something falling in the water near them, which they discovered to be part of the carcass of a sheep, which appeared to have been recently killed, and from which the skin had not been separated. They immediately gave an alarm at a neighbouring house, and concealed under a hedge in the field from which the part of the carcass appeared to have been thrown, they found the remainder of it. A watch was set over it, and about 12 o'clock the same night, a boatman named **Thomas Bracegirdle** was caught in the act of carrying it away. He was brought up at the New Bailey on Saturday and committed for trial at the sessions. The sheep belonged to Mr Bumby, butcher of this town, who has lost upwards of twenty from the same field within the last two years.

**26 22 November 1834 Bolton**

**PETTY SESSIONS – THURSDAY** **Thomas Tabernacle** was committed to Kirkdale, charged with having stolen three pieces of cotton print of a fancy pattern, from a boat, the property of Mr John Hargreaves senior of Hart Common. The prisoner is a boatman in the employ of Mr Hargreaves. He offered the pieces in pledge to a pawnbroker, who refused to advance anything on them, because he believed them to be stolen. The prisoner then went to a beer shop kept by Rebecca Charleston, to whom he sold them.

Rebecca Charleston was also brought up, charged with receiving the goods knowing them to be stolen, and was required to find substantial sureties to answer the charge at the ensuing quarter sessions.

**27 6 December 1834 Lancaster Insolvent Debtors' Court**

The following were ordered to be discharged forthwith :- **John Ogden**, Warrington, boatman.

**28 20 December 1834**

**ROBBERY ON THE CANAL** **Robert Bennett**, captain of a boat belonging to the Bolton and Bury carriers, was brought up at the New Bailey under a warrant, charging him with having left his boat on the canal at Pendleton on Monday afternoon, in consequence of which the boat had been robbed of a chest of tea, five loaves of sugar and a cask of spirits. **John Alcroft**, a boatman employed on board, was also placed at the bar, on suspicion of being concerned in the robbery ; and against him there were these very strong circumstances, that when he was taken into custody, he was in the company of a number of thieves, and before anything was said to him he declared that he knew nothing whatever about the robbery. As it was expected that some information would be obtained against the prisoners, they were both remanded. The two prisoners were again brought up on Friday, but as no further evidence had been obtained against them, they were discharged.

**29 25 April 1835**

**MAN DROWNED** On Tuesday morning about two o'clock, Mr Thomas of Deansgate was called out of bed and informed that a man was in the canal near the mouth of the tunnel at Gaythorne. He immediately went out with a grapple and proceeded to drag the canal, and in a few minutes he drew out the body of a boatman named **George Schofield**, after it had floated some six yards into the tunnel. An inquest was held on the body, before Mr Rutter, when it was stated by a waiter at the Boat House in Deansgate that the deceased left that house about 12 o'clock in a state of intoxication, accompanied by another man, who promised to see him safe on board his boat, which lay above the locks in Gaythorne. No evidence whatever was offered to show how the deceased fell into the water, and the man who accompanied him from the Boat House was not known. Under these circumstances, the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

### 30 19 September 1835

**DISCOVERY OF THE BODY OF THE LATE MR HENRY BAILEY** The body of the late Henry Bailey, deputy constable of Cheetham, who was drowned in the river Irwell on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March in attempting to preserve the life of a boy who had fallen into the water, was found on Saturday morning last on a sandbank at Sticking's Island, about a mile and a half below Barton Bridge. Having been in the water upwards of six months, it was, of course, so far decomposed that none of the features could be recognised, but several articles of clothing remained so far entire that they were satisfactorily identified by his surviving friends. It will be remembered that at the time the unfortunate man met his death, the river was very much swollen, and as there have been no such floods in the river since, it appears probable that he must have been carried to this distance from Manchester at once, and have since been embedded in the sand, from which the late heavy rains have dislodged the body. It was expected that the body would have been stopped in its course down the river either by the weir at Throstle Nest, or at Mode Wheel, and at these two points, consequently, the strictest search has from time to time been made by the friends of the deceased, and by those persons who have pursued the search in anticipation of gaining the reward which was offered by the authorities of the township of Cheetham. The circumstances under which the body was found were detailed to the coroner's jury which was summoned for the occasion, and of the evidence then given the following is an abstract.

**Thomas Royle** stated that he was a boatman and lived at Sticking's Island. On Saturday morning, between six and seven o'clock, his two daughters went out to gather mushrooms. They returned in about five minutes, and in consequence of the information they gave him, he went to the river side where he found a dead body lying on a bank, the feet just touching the water. The deceased had on a pair of newly soled shoes, a pair of stockings, part of a pair of dark trousers, a black waistcoat, part of a linen shirt, a flannel waistcoat, a black stock and a belt around the body. The head was bald, with the exception of one lock of black hair on the right side, and the skin of the face was of a sodden brown colour. He suspected that the body was that of Mr Bailey, and he immediately sent off to Manchester to give information to the overseers of Cheetham.

Thomas Robinson, the assistant overseer of Cheetham, deposed that in consequence of the information he received from Royle, he and Gorst, the deputy constable, went to Sticking's Island, where they found the body on the bank, about fifty yards from Royle's house. From its general appearance, he knew it to be the body of the late Henry Bailey. He knew the belt which was round the body, as Bailey had shown it to him frequently, and advised him to wear one. He also knew the shoes on the feet ; they had been repaired by a shoemaker named John Moore, not long before the deceased was drowned, but to be more certain, he brought one of the shoes with him to Manchester and showed it to Moore, who identified it, and said that he took it home on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March and Mr Bailey was drowned on the 11<sup>th</sup>. He was quite confident that it was the body of Henry Bailey, who was formerly deputy constable of Cheetham.

William Grimshaw, a milkman residing in Oldfield Lane, detailed to the jury the circumstances attending the death of the deceased, as they have already been fully laid before the public. It appears that before Bailey had been carried many yards by the current, a drag was thrown into the water to him, but the cord attached to the drag was about four inches too short to reach him. When he had floated near to the junction of the Irk with the Irwell, the boy whom he had hitherto kept hold of was washed away from him, and carried by the current towards the Salford side of the river, while Bailey was caught in the eddy and driven towards the river wall at Hunt's Bank. He was afterwards seen with his head above the water for some distance, but was at length overwhelmed by the torrent.

The jury returned a verdict "that the deceased was drowned in attempting to save the life of a boy who had accidentally fallen into the river".

Under the direction of the overseers of Cheetham, the body of the deceased was brought from the place where it was found, in a shell, and placed in an outhouse near the Ducie Arms. The funeral took place on Sunday, when the body of the deceased was interred in the Parochial Burial Ground near Scotland Bridge. It was followed to the grave by the children of the Church Sunday School, in

which he was for many years a scholar and teacher, and by a vast concourse of spectators, many of whom appeared to be much affected by the scene.

### **31 28 November 1835**

**ROBBERY ON THE PEAK FOREST CANAL** On Saturday last, Irving and McMullin, two of the police officers, were employed to search a boat belonging to Messrs Hibberson and Co, carriers, which was lying at the Piccadilly Wharf, in consequence of a quantity of spirits having been stolen on their transit from this town to Chapel-en-le-Frith, whence they were to be carried to Sheffield by land. No spirits were found in the boat, but a bag containing about 100lbs of malt was found in the cabin, and as the officers thought that the account given of it by the two men on board (**Philip Gavins** and **Thomas Rigby**) was unsatisfactory, they took them into custody. It was subsequently ascertained that a cargo of 108 sacks of malt had been brought by the prisoners from Chapel-en-le-Frith, having been sent to that place by Mr Baker of Chesterfield, and on examining the sacks, it was found that several of them had been cut open, and small quantities of malt taken from each. The whole quantity missed from the sacks was about equal to that found in the cabin of the boat, and on comparing the two, they were found to be of the same quality. The prisoners were brought up at the New Bailey on Wednesday last, when they said in their defence that the malt found in the cabin was some which had fallen from a sack which was torn on the railway at Bugsworth, and they had put it in the cabin to dry. This statement was distinctly shown to be false by the man who had the care of the malt while on the railway, and he proved that not more than a quart of malt was lost when the sack was torn. It was also proved that when the sacks were delivered to the prisoners, none of them were cut as they were when received at Messrs Hibberson's warehouse. The prisoners were committed for trial. An attempt was made to establish a charge against another boatman, named **Ormerod Oddie**, for stealing the spirits of which the officers were in search when they found the malt, but the evidence was not sufficient, and Oddie was discharged.

### **32 9 January 1836**

**MAN DROWNED** About half past eight on Monday morning, **George Rowbotham**, a boatman in the employ of Mr Brundrith of Runcorn, was passing in his boat along the Rochdale Canal near Union Street, when the hauling line of the boat, as he was tightening it, drew out of the water the body of a man which it had caught by the arm. The steersman immediately drew the body into the boat, and it was conveyed to a neighbouring public house, so completely covered with mud that none of the features were visible. An inquest was held before Mr Rutter on the same day, but no evidence could be found to identify the deceased, nor any account given of the means whereby he came into the water ; a verdict to that effect was consequently returned by the jury. The deceased was a stout, well made man, about 5ft 8in high. On searching his pockets, Green, the coroner's officer, found two tobacco boxes, in one of which was a pawn ticket for a handkerchief, pledged in the name of Edward Marris, at Mr Cliffe's in Angel Street. He also found 2s 9 1/2d, a handkerchief and a short pipe. The deceased's dress consisted of a short fustian jacket, a waistcoat with sleeves, a black neckerchief, a striped cotton shirt, fustian trowsers, woollen stockings and thick laced shoes.

### **33 16 January 1836**

**CHARGE OF STEALING FROM A BOAT** On Thursday last, **Alice Harding**, the wife of a boatman in the employ of Mr Hargreaves, carrier to Preston, was brought up at the New Bailey, charged on suspicion that a quantity of tea, which was found loose in a drawer in her house, was stolen. In consequence of some silk having been stolen from a boat of which Harding was the captain, a search warrant was placed in the hands of Sawley, the beadle, and he proceeded to search the house during Harding's absence with his boat. The silk was not found, but about two pounds weight of tea were discovered in a drawer, and suspecting from the unusual manner in which it was kept that it was not honestly obtained, Sawley took the prisoner into custody. Her defence was that she had bought the tea from a Scotchman, and as her husband had nothing to do with the management of the house, he knew nothing about it. Mr Hargreaves said he was not aware of any

tea being stolen from his boat lately, but various kinds of property had been stolen at various times. The prisoner was remanded to await the return of her husband, and when she was again brought up on Friday, it was stated that her husband's boat had returned but he had not returned with it. No evidence was forthcoming to incriminate the prisoner as to the tea, and she was accordingly discharged.

#### **34 25 March 1837**

**THEFT FROM A BOAT ON THE CANAL** On Saturday morning about 7 o'clock, as Charles Jackson, a police watchman, and another person holding a similar situation, were returning homewards from their rounds, they met a man named **Joseph Darlington** in Ducie Street carrying a bundle which, in answer to their inquiries, he stated contained dirty clothes, entrusted to him by the captain of a boat to which he belonged, to take to Knott Mill to be washed. On examining the bundle, they found it to be composed of eleven pounds of Broosa raw silk, of a very rare and fine quality, wrapped in two handkerchiefs. They therefore took him into custody, and afterwards ascertained that the silk had been stolen. He was examined at the New Bailey on Tuesday, when it appeared that six bales and twelve cases of silk, part of it being of the above description and the remainder of an inferior quality, had been shipped by Mr W B Prescott of Liverpool, on board one of Messrs Kenworthy's boats, of which **John Beckett** was the master, and in which the prisoner had been employed about ten days. The boat arrived on Saturday morning in Manchester, and as the prisoner had been told by Beckett at Liverpool that he would be at liberty as soon as they got here, after the cargo had been uncovered he went away whilst Beckett and the other men fell asleep in the cabin. The silk was consigned to Messrs Eustatius Ralli and partner of Manchester, and on delivery at the warehouse, four of the cases and one of the bales were found to be each one pound deficient in weight. The quality of the silk was precisely the same as that discovered in Darlington's possession. The prisoner was remanded until Wednesday, when he was committed for trial.

#### **35 25 March 1837**

**THEFT IN A WAREHOUSE** On Tuesday evening, a boatman named **Henry Green**, employed by Mr Matthew Heath, wharfinger and carrier of this town, whilst assisting to carry a quantity of goods from the warehouse to the boat to which he belonged, was observed by the bookkeeper to extract from a bale of carpet worsted, consigned from a house in Yorkshire to another in Kidderminster, one of the hanks, which he left on the floor of the warehouse. A second person working on the premises afterwards saw him take the hank out of the warehouse, concealed under his frock, and it was at last found concealed under his bed in the cabin. He was given into custody, and on being brought up at the New Bailey on Wednesday, was committed for trial at the sessions.

#### **36 15 April 1837**

**CHARGE OF POISONING** On Monday, a woman named **Ann Gomersal** was brought up at the New Bailey, having been apprehended under suspicion of having poisoned her husband. It appeared that a short time ago, she was residing in Store Street, Ardwick, when her husband died rather suddenly. An inquest was held on the body, and a verdict of "Died by the visitation of God" returned; but on consideration, the suspicion of some neighbours were aroused, and they had the prisoner taken into custody. A woman said that nine days before the husband's death, Mrs Gomersal came into her house and swore she would be the death of her husband before many days were over. She was quite sober then, and had been quarrelling with her husband. Another woman said that the prisoner had said, "My husband's ill, and he'll never get better". This was on Tuesday morning, and the husband died on Thursday morning early. A man said that a week before the death of the husband, the prisoner came to his house, and asked his wife and daughter to have some broth. They took some, but shortly afterwards they began to vomit, and the same symptom accompanied the death of the husband. It appeared that two surgeons, Messrs Walker and Boyers, had examined the body, and Mr Walker had given evidence on the inquest. The prisoner then left the neighbourhood and went to reside with a boatman, with whom she has cohabited since the husband's death. She

was ordered to find bail in two sureties of £10 each, to appear when called upon ; and the magistrate, J F Foster Esq, ordered that the attendance of the surgeon who gave evidence at the inquest should be procured.

### 37 1 July 1837

DETECTION OF A THIEF On Saturday evening, a principal in the firm of Messrs Thompson and Co, carriers, observed a tarpauling belonging to them in a shed on the canal wharf at Piccadilly, and knowing that it must have been placed there with an intention to remove it from the premises on the first convenient opportunity, he sent to the police office for advice and assistance to enable him to bring the thief to punishment. Baxendale and Patterson, two of the officers, accordingly went to the wharf about ten o'clock, and watched until eleven, when they saw a boatman cross another boat, to which his own was moored, land on the wharf adjoining, belonging to Messrs Falkner and Co, carriers, in his way to the shed above mentioned, and return with the tarpauling. They took him into custody with some difficulty, and he was brought up at the New Bailey on Wednesday and committed for trial. His name is **James Smith**.

### 38 22 July 1837

ROBBERY IN A BOAT At the New Bailey on Wednesday, a boatman named **Samuel Ogden** was charged with having been concerned, with three other men, in stealing a box containing £40, the property of Messrs Buckley, Kershaw and Co, from a boat on the Huddersfield Canal. An application was made by an officer for liberty to move the prisoner to Huddersfield, where his three companions are in custody, and was granted.

### 39 14 April 1838

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MANCHESTER COURIER

Sir – Permit me, through your columns, to call the attention of the authorities of the town, and the public in general, to the danger attending the passing over the swing bridge in Union Street, Ancoats, belonging to the Rochdale Canal Company.

I need not, I am sure, do more than relate the particulars of an accident which happened to me on Friday evening last, of a kind so serious that it must have been attended with consequences of the most frightful, had it not been for the active kindness of many persons passing at the time, to show the necessity for some alteration in its management. On approaching the bridge as I returned home from Broughton in a gig, about half after seven in the evening, accompanied by my wife and child, about three years old, I found that a horse led by a boatman was just crossing ; supposing that a boat was about to pass, I drew up, intending to stay until I could proceed with safety. The man leading the horse immediately called out, two or three times, “Drive on, drive on”. Believing that the boat must have passed, it being dark at the time, I did so. My horse had no sooner placed its fore legs on the bridge, than it was turned off a yard or perhaps more, the horse falling between the road and the bridge. Myself, wife and child were all thrown out. My wife, with the child in her arms, fell between the road and bridge, and both must inevitably have lost their lives had she not kept a hold on the bridge with one hand, supporting (how, it is impossible to say) the child by the other. All this time her feet were in the water. We were extricated from our perilous position by a number of people returning home from the mills which had, fortunately, just closed. My wife is confined to bed from the effects of the accident, The horse, gig and harness have been much injured ; and altogether I have suffered damage to the amount of £20 or more. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN BENNETT, Surgeon  
42 Mill Street, Ancoats

April 5 1838

*[Several accidents of a very serious nature have lately occurred at the place referred to ; and we print the above letter because we think the matter one in which the public safety is deeply interested. We are given to understand that the management of the drawbridge is confided by the canal proprietors to an aged female (between fifty and sixty), and that in consequence of the boatmen not being properly looked after, the bridge is frequently left in a dangerous state. If the*

*evil be not immediately obviated, we should advise the inhabitants of the district to institute legal proceedings against the proprietors. Of course, the loss which Mr Bennett has sustained will be made good by the company. - Ed. Courier]*

**40 19 May 1838**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MANCHESTER COURIER

Sir – A few weeks ago I addressed, through your columns, a letter to the public, stating the particulars of an accident which occurred to me at the Union Street swing bridge belonging to the Rochdale canal company. I think, in justice to the company, I ought publicly to acknowledge the receipt of £10 from them towards the loss then sustained. I may state that the accident was caused by the gross negligence of a boatman employed by Mr Hoyle of Rochdale, and I consequently applied to him for remuneration ; I have not, however, been able to obtain any. I am, sir, your very obedient servant.

JNO BENNETT, Surgeon, 42 Mill Street, Ancoats.

May 17 1838

**41 26 May 1838**

APPREHENSION OF THE “PURRING” FIGHTERS In our paper of the 21<sup>st</sup> ult, we noticed a savage “purring” fight by two brutal fellows in a field near Brandlesome Hall which, we believe, is in the township of Elton, near Bury. It will be recollected that for £25 a side, these fellows, who were nearly in a state of nudity, kicked each other with shoes heavily toed with iron and studded with jagged nails, so as to tear skin and flesh away at every kick. On Monday last, Cross and Daggatt, of the Manchester police, ascertained that one of the fellows, **William Thornhill**, who is a boatman of Gorton, and the successful combatant, was at the Robin Hood public house, Gorton Road. They accordingly proceeded thither, and found Thornhill, who swore they should not take him prisoner ; that he would die before he would be taken &c. However they seized him, and after a severe struggle – for he is a powerful athletic fellow – they succeeded in mastering him, and conveying him to the lock up. He was brought up yesterday at the New Bailey, and remanded, with an understanding that he was to be delivered up into the custody of Mr Amos Hughes, the deputy constable of Pilkington. Yesterday Hughes came over, and having learned from the Manchester police that James Rayner, the vanquished pugilist, was likely to be at a certain public house in Stockport in the evening, where some of his comrades, in order to comfort him for his defeat, were to assemble for the purpose of “giving him a benefit” - in other words, clubbing their shillings or pence together and making him a present of the sum raised. Hughes at once proceeded to Stockport and, with the assistance of one of the police officers of that town, succeeded in apprehending him, although he had been preceded by a comrade of Rayner's, known by the name of “Dicky Misfortune” who, having heard that Thornhill was in custody, went to warn Rayner of his danger. Hughes returned last night with his prisoner, whom he lodged in the lock up at the police office ; and this morning he will convey both pugilists to Bury, for examination there before the magistrates. Rayner appears to have recovered in a great measure the effects of the dreadful kicking he received, though he is rather deaf from a kick on one ear, and complains of being obliged to keep from “drink” as it inflames his legs. He denies having been kicked in the groin at all, and says that it was all “fair kicking about the shins and knees”. We can only repeat our earnest hope that the authorities of the township in which the brutal contest took place will, in the event of the prisoners' committal for trial, take such steps as will conduce to the ends of justice, and operate as a warning to the disorderly practices and abettors of such disgraceful contests.

**42 6 October 1838**

PROPERTY FOUND, SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN STOLEN Seven prisoners named Rose Goddier, Mary Parkinson, ----- **Wedge, George Montgomery, Joseph Russell**, Nathan Wakefield and **James Kent** were brought up at the New Bailey on Tuesday last, charged by police officers Phenix, Norbury, Binnell, Dale and Williamson, under the following circumstances. Phenix and the

other officers stated that in consequence of information they went to a beershop at Droylsden on Monday, kept by Rose Goodier, (who was the wife of a man lately transported for receiving stolen property) for the purpose of searching it. On their appearance the other female prisoner, who is the daughter of Goodier, ran from the house and was followed by Norbury, and found secreted in the home of a farmer. In her pocket were found the keys to some drawers in her mother's house, in which, on their being unlocked, was found some wearing apparel and some silver plate, consisting of spoons with different initials upon them, and a valuable silver mounted teapot. In the cellar of the house was also found a 20 gallon barrel containing a considerable quantity of port wine. On being questioned, the prisoners could give no satisfactory account of the manner in which they became possessed of the goods, but said the wine had been left there that morning by a boatman. The house was on the bank of the canal, and a private door communicated with it. In consequence of this statement, the two women were then taken to the Manchester police office, and Dale and Binnell went to Pickford and Co's warehouse to enquire about what boatmen had come up the canal that morning, and found that Captain Wedge had brought one up at an early hour. Wedge was sent for, and with his two men, the prisoners Montgomery and Russell, came into the office and were examined in the presence of Messrs Pickford and Co's clerk, but said he had not any port wine in his boat. The officers then went onto his boat, where they found that before leaving the cabin, Wedge had broken a bottle containing some sort of liquid which appeared to have been port wine. In the cupboard, they found three pounds of tea, a large bottle of gin, a small tin pump, such as might be used for extracting liquor of any kind from a barrel through a small gimblet hole, two gimblets of different sizes, and a "jemmy" or small crowbar. They then went, in consequence of other grounds of suspicion, to search another boat which the captain had left the prisoner Kent in charge of ; where they also found several pounds of tea and a large bottle of rum. This bottle was afterwards broken by the other prisoner, who happened to come in while they were searching and was abusive. They had consequently apprehended him along with the others. None of the property had yet been owned, and the officers wished the prisoners to be remanded that they might have an opportunity of making inquiries. Mr Maude, after efficiently investigating the case, consented to remand all the prisoners except Kent and Wakefield till Tuesday. The two prisoners excepted were of course discharged. The prisoners were again placed at the bar on Thursday, when a clerk from Messrs Pickford and Co's stated that the gin produced was of the same quality as some in a cask which had been brought up in Wedge's boat, and that the cask in question, on examination, was found to be seven quarts short. It had apparently been watered also, as it appeared muddy, as would be the case under such circumstances, and some port wine had also been sent. The prisoners were again remanded until Saturday in order that the persons who had sent the gin and wine might be written to , to furnish evidence as to the quantity and quality of what was forwarded by them.

#### **43      27 October 1838**

**FATAL ACCIDENT** On Saturday morning last, about 11 o'clock, **Robert Jackson**, aged 54, a stone boatman, and his two sons, were removing a large stone to the crane, at the canal wharf. He had two wheels and a pole, and he desired his sons several times to let go the pole ; at last they did so, and it unfortunately sprung and struck him over the head, and fractured his skull so severely that he died on Tuesday morning. An inquest was held on the body the same afternoon, and a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned. He has left a wife and four children, but three of them are at work.

#### **44      17 November 1838                      Warrington**

**COMMITMENT OF A NOTORIOUS GANG OF ROBBERS** Owing to the exertions of Mr Jones, the deputy constable, and Percy, one of his assistants, a gang of young thieves have been apprehended and committed for trial on five charges of burglary and robbery. Their names are Paul Rowlinson, William Howard, John Morris, William Young and Samuel Warburton. In the course of their examinations, which took place on Monday and Wednesday last, they displayed the greatest effrontery, promising (with a laugh) one of the witnesses a monkey on returning from abroad, and

impudently avowing to the magistrates a wish to take a sail across the ocean. Although none of them exceeded eighteen years of age, they had frequently been in the custody of the police, and some of them tried for felony. The first charge was preferred against Paul Rowlinson, William Howard and John Morris, for stealing five waistcoats and a piece of cotton from the shop of Mr Hankinson, a tailor, in Erlam Street. On the evening of Monday week, the gang met at the Rose beer shop in Butter Market Street, and from thence they proceeded to Mr Hankinson's shop, and finding the door open, the prisoner Rowlinson went in and stole the goods in question from the counter. They then went in Mather's beer shop at Pinner's Brow, where they sold one of the waistcoats for eighteen pence, two for two shillings and the last for three pence to parties in the house or living in the immediate neighbourhood. The next robbery was committed by Morris and another man not in custody, and the prisoner Young, committed as a receiver of the stolen property (a quantity of butter taken from the shop of Mrs Jefferson of Fennel Street, and sold at Mrs Hewitt's in Mill Street.) A third robbery was committed on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October at Mr Langshaw's, the White Hart in the Corn Market. A pair of metal sugar tongs, which cost fourteen pence, were stolen from Mr Longshaw's bar, and shortly afterwards purchased from the prisoner Young by Mrs Mather, the beershop keeper, for half a crown. The next charge was for a burglary committed at the shop of Mr Bramhall, pawnbrokers, at three o'clock in the morning after the waistcoats were stolen from Mr Hankinson's shop. The parties accused were the prisoners Morris, Howard, Rowlinson and Warburton. The shop of Mr Bramhall was broken open by some parties, who effected an entrance by breaking the glass of one of the windows, fifteen or sixteen pairs of trousers, and from thirty shillings to two pounds in copper were taken by the burglars; one of whom, it is inferred, must have cut his fingers, as marks of blood were found on the window frame. The prisoner Howard had a wound on his hand when taken into custody. Morris confessed to Mr Jones to having sold seven pairs of trousers to an Irishman at St Helens for twelve shillings ; and a boy named David Sefton proved having been sent by Warburton to pledge a pair of trousers for 4s at the shop of Mr Mather, a pawnbroker in Warrington. Monks exchanged some clothes with Rowlinson for a pair of the stolen trousers and a waistcoat ; and the whole of the party were proved, by **John Yates**, a flatman living at Sankey, to have gone from Newton Locks along the Sankey Canal in his barge, to a place near Green Bank. They sold him two pairs of the trousers for three shillings. Patrick Hardy, the Irishman to whom the seven pairs of trousers were sold for twelve shillings, was committed to take his trial on the charge of receiving stolen goods, knowing them to have been stolen. The prisoner John Morris was also committed for stealing a purse and a bag, and 20s in silver, belonging to Mrs Crosby of the Bear's Paw ; and William Young, for passing a bad half crown at the shop of Mr Ashton, hairdresser, on the 27<sup>th</sup> October.

**45      1 December 1838    Newton**

CAUTION TO FLATMEN    **Richard Roden**, master of the flat Howe, was on Thursday ordered to pay the sum of £2 18s 6d, the amount of the damage done by his flat to the Mill Bridge at Great Sankey. **John Williams**, another flatman, was fined 5 shillings for having, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, drawn the paddles of Bradley Lock near Newton, thereby causing a wilful waste of water.

**46      22 December 1838**

IMPORTANT DECISION    At Daresbury petty sessions on Tuesday, Mr Mitchell, the agent for the Bridgewater Trust at Preston Brook appeared before Sir Richard Brooke, Bart, and Captain Jackson, to answer the complaint of Mr Bowker, the inspector of weights and measures for Cheshire. Mr Bowker stated that he went to the canal warehouses at Preston Brook on the 14<sup>th</sup> instant, and there found in use between four and five hundred 60lb weights, contrary to the act of parliament now in force for regulating weights and measures. Mr Mitchell, in defence, contended that under the canal act, 1<sup>st</sup> Wm. IV cap 4, the Bridgewater Trust did not come within the operation of the act under which the present information was laid, as the canal act specially provided that "six score pounds weight avoirdupois of all goods, articles and things conveyed on the said navigation should be deemed and taken as and for one hundred weight, and twenty of such hundred weight should be

deemed a ton, within the intent and meaning of the act.” He further stated that three years ago, the weights now complained of had been taken to Runcorn, and the sum of £34 paid for stamping them. Mr Wagstaff, the clerk to the magistrates', said that this must have taken place during the period that intervened between the passing of two acts of parliament. Sir Richard Brooke asked whether the Trust had not procured any new weights since the new act was passed. Defendant answered in the negative. The trustees had continued to take their toll by the same weights, as they had done prior to the passing of the last act. Captain Jackson said that the new act specially provided that tolls should be taken by the imperial standard only. Mr Bowker, the inspector, said he had tried a number of the weights, and found them correct. The bench considered that the trustees were not authorised to use any single weight above 56lbs, as it was greater than allowed by the imperial standard, therefore they must convict. The lowest penalty only would be inflicted, on the understanding that the weights were not to be again used. The defendant was convicted in the penalty of ten shillings, and eight shillings and sixpence costs. The defendant said he could not take upon himself to pay away the trustees' money without their consent, and he had reluctantly to submit that he was not the proper person to be summoned to answer the charge. Captain Jackson said that as the defendant had appeared, the objection he had just taken could be of no consequence. An appeal was open to him, if the trustees thought it worth their while to appeal within the next fourteen days. The defendant intimated his intention to appeal. By this decision of the magistrates, the weights are seized, but the inspector declared that it was not his intention to seize them.

#### **47 22 December 1838**

**FIRE** On Tuesday evening, a fire broke out in the farm buildings attached to the Stanley Arms public house, Anderton, near Northwick, and before it was extinguished, a large quantity of hay and corn, and the barn in which it was deposited, were completely destroyed. **Moses Chatterley**, a boatman in the employ of Messrs Ackers and Co, has been apprehended on suspicion of setting fire to the premises, but there being no evidence against him, he has been liberated. An insurance on the property was effected by Mr Speakman, the owner, only two days before the fire took place.

#### **48 9 February 1839**

**SINKING OF A BOAT – TWO LIVES LOST** On Monday night, the 28<sup>th</sup> ult, a boat belonging to Mr Shepherd of Rochdale, loaded with lime, and containing the boatman **Adam Armstrong**, his wife and two daughters, was proceeding to that town along the canal, when an accident occurred which put a period to the lives of two of the party. An empty coal boat was coupled with the one loaded with lime, and when they entered the lock at Failsworth, the lower gate was closed, and the boys in the coal boat drew the clews to let the water in, for the purpose of rising the boat in the lock. Armstrong was on board outside the cabin at the time, his wife and daughter Betsy were in bed in the cabin, another daughter being engaged in cooking his supper. When the water had risen about a yard, the boats ran back against the lower gates, and the loaded boat suddenly fell sideways and went down, but the empty boat remained as she was. The moment the boat went down, Armstrong jumped into the cabin under water to extricate its inmates, and he remained there until all the three were got out, and with assistance they were taken to the lock house ; but only the one who was cooking survived, her mother and sister being quite dead. A surgeon was sent for, but all was of no use, and the poor man is left to deplore the loss of a wife and child. An inquest was held before Mr Rutter on Wednesday week, and a verdict of “Accidental death” returned.

#### **49 23 February 1839**

**A POACHING BOATMAN** On Monday, **Joseph West**, a flatman in the employ of Mr Tonge of Manchester, was convicted in the penalty of £2 for shooting a hare in Dunham Park, whilst passing along the Duke of Bridgewater's canal in his boat.

#### **50 30 March 1839**

**MANSLAUGHTER IN GREAT ANCOATS** On Monday night about eleven o'clock, a man named

James France came to his death by blows received in a fight, which took place between six or eight men, partially intoxicated, in the house of Mr J Heatly jun of Great Ancoats Street, known as the White House Vaults. The deceased, who was unmarried, was about 26 years of age ; and, as will be seen by the subjoined evidence, was not the originator of the quarrel. He seems to have died almost instantly from the injuries he had received, as two surgeons were in attendance very soon after the affray, and he was then quite lifeless. Four men named John Gee, ---- Berry, John Grimes and ---- Vickers, were taken into custody as having been concerned in the fight.

On Wednesday afternoon, Mr Rutter held an inquest at the house which had been the scene of this outrage, when the following evidence was received :-

Mr Henry Ollier, surgeon, deposed : Yesterday, I examined the head and body, along with Sickell, the officer, at this house. The knuckles of the right hand had been recently bruised ; blood was flowing from the nostrils and mouth ; there was an extravasation of blood on the breast bone, and the lungs were somewhat gorged with blood. The inner coat of the stomach was in an unhealthy condition, and there was food therein, apparent potatoes and other substances. There were bruised wounds on the right cheek, the left upper eyelid, the left side of the nose and on the front part of the chin. There was extravasation of blood under the scalp, in several parts of the back of the head. There was great fullness of the vessels of the brain, and extravasation of blood on the course of its membranes. Judging from the appearances, as well as from the swollen, horrid state of the face, I am clearly of opinion that the deceased died through violence. I give this opinion without knowing anything of the case, I merely judge from what I saw. Either the injuries on the breast or on the head were sufficient to cause death, but more especially those on the head. Without knowing anything at all of the case, I should say the injuries had been caused by pressure ; they seemed as though the man had been pressed or stamped upon.

Eliza Heatly, wife of Mr Heatly, keeper of the White House vaults, deposed :- On Monday evening, a little before eleven o'clock, deceased and another man, whose name I do not know, came into our vaults. I knew deceased ; he had been a customer ever since we opened. Another man, a hawker of trotters, afterwards came in. He was at first standing near some boatmen, and then came towards the counter, and deceased proposed to toss him for a trotter. Deceased took sixpence out of his pocket, and commenced tossing ; his companion took a trotter out of the basket ; the trotter man collared deceased's companion ; they had a struggle, and both fell. I next saw **Charles Thornley**, a boatman, striking deceased. He was striking him right and left. How they came to be fighting, I don't know. I did not see deceased strike at all. He fell after the second blow, I saw nothing after. They all commenced fighting again. Thornley and the other boatmen were sitting at the window, with a glass of rum and water each, when deceased and his companion came in. The trotter man was talking to them ; went to them to hawk his trotters. After France was knocked down, I was so agitated that I cannot tell what happened after. The general fight did not last above three or four minutes. The boatmen made their escape immediately. They had both been engaged in the affray. Seven or eight were engaged. Deceased's companion took a part against the boatmen. Two men named John Grimes and John Berry, who are in custody, took France's side. I did not see the trotter man take a part in it. We are very much annoyed by these trotter people. It is not the first quarrel this man has caused in the vault. It commenced by France's companion taking a trotter out of the basket. [The four prisoners were here brought into the room.] This is the man (pointing to Vickers) who kicked deceased three or four times when he was down. These two (Grimes and Berry) seemed to take deceased's part. Grimes was the man who came in with him. Vickers came in after the deceased was knocked down, and before Thornley and the other man had left, just before the policemen. I could not see where he kicked him. I sent a woman privately for the watchman. John Cockayne came almost immediately after. Deceased was then lying on the form against the counter, and he asked what we were doing with that man tipsy. I did not see what sort of shoes Vickers had on, but he wears clogs. [Mr Ollier here, at the instance of the coroner, caused Vickers to exhibit the clogs he had on. They were very heavy ones, and full of large iron nails ; but there were no peculiar marks observable upon them.] Did not see anyone do anything at him but Thornley and Vickers. Vickers was at the bottom of the vaults when the watchman came in. He

was not then taken into custody, but was put out by our manservant. Neither deceased nor his companion had anything to drink.

Joshua Gordon, waiter in the vaults, deposed : I was in the vaults when the disturbance commenced. It began with the trotter man and Grimes. Deceased and trotter man were tossing for a trotter ; and this young man (Grimes), in the meantime, put his hand in the basket and took out a trotter, and put it in one of his jacket pockets. The trotter man perceived it, turned round, and challenged him with it, and dashed his hand into the other's jacket pocket. They both fell with struggling. When they got up, the trotter man had the trotter in his left hand, and held it up. They had some words and then made it up to go out and fight. They got to the middle door of the vault, when Thornley and the other boatmen got up, and swore it was a "d-----d shame, and a b----y shame", and used such words as those. France told Thornley that he had nothing to do with it ; when Thornley hit him with his left hand in the face. [In answer to a juror, the witness said Thornley and the other boatmen ----- both off]. France reeled up the vault with the first blow, but did not fall. He was coming up again, but before he had time to lift his hand, Thornley hit him a second blow on the face with his right hand, which knocked him down. I stepped in to prevent the second blow, but he pushed me to one side, and someone pulled me from behind. Deceased was quite sober. Thornley had had some liquor, but not so much as to make him drunk. When deceased fell, some of his companions attacked Thornley ; and they were fighting so among one another that I cannot tell how they went on. I did not see France get up after he fell. After a while, as I was going out for the watchman, I saw Vickers kicking at France ; I saw him give him two or three severe kicks. France was still on the floor. He kicked him on the side and body. I laid hold of Vickers and put him out ; he turned back, and swore he would "baste" me. I told him if he did, I would make a warning to him ; he came in a second, and a third time. I put him out both times, and he did not come back again. After I had got him out, I saw the boatman who was with Thornley with his knees on deceased's thighs, and hitting him with his grippen fist in the breast and face. I knocked him to one side, and asked him if he was going to murder the man ; he got up and went out, and I saw no more of him. Someone assisted me to lift France on to the seat, and about that time, Mr Cockayne came in. I saw three men altogether attack him. I only saw Thornley hit him twice. I did not see the other man's knees in any other position than on his thighs. There were people about when Vickers kicked him, but I could not see who they were. I did not see when Thornley left the premises. Deceased was quite sober, but Vickers was rather drunk. Thornley and the other boatman had both had liquor.

John Boden of 119 Canal Street deposed : I was coming from the club on Monday night, and called at the vaults to have a glass. I and Berry went in together. We went out for a few minutes, and when we returned, the fight was going on. All was quiet when we went out. I know Thornley ; he was kneeling on his breast ; the other boatman, whom I only know by sight, was upon his legs. Vickers came up and kicked him at the same time as the other two were upon him ; he kicked him on the side of the breast. Thornley was thumping him with his fist. Berry was fighting with Henry Gee, one of the men in custody, but neither of them did anything at France. I saw no one do anything at him apart from the two boatmen and Vickers. I was perfectly sober at the time.

John Cockayne, police watchman, deposed : I was called in at eleven o'clock exactly. I found two of the prisoners, Berry and Gee, on the floor fighting. Deceased was on a form in the corner, just behind where they were fighting. I asked if he was drunk, and was told by the waiter he had been kicked. He pointed out Gee as one who had struck him, and I took him into custody. I also took Berry as another who was fighting ; and the landlady pointed out Grimes as another. I took them all to the lock up. I then sent for Mr Howard, surgeon, to the deceased, and I said I thought that he was dead ; I also sent for Mr (.....) who said he was dead. I saw no signs of life ; I held up his head and some blood ran out of his mouth. I did not see Vickers that night, but he was taken into custody at three o'clock that morning. When told that France was dead and charged with kicking him, he replied, "I did kick him, I own", and said that they were to have fought for £5. I could not see that he had had liquor, nor Berry, nor Grimes either. Vickers did not assign as a reason for kicking him that they were to have fought for £5.

The Coroner said, at this stage of the proceedings he thought the jury might venture to draw the

conclusion that there was nothing in this evidence to place any of the persons in custody, except Vickers. The other three, Gee, Berry and Grimes, were therefore entitled to their liberty.

The jury having signified their assent, they were released ; and the Coroner, addressing Grimes, said that he firmly believed that if he had not interfered with the trotter man, this unfortunate occurrence, which had cost his friend his life, might not have happened. It was very great folly, at any time, to play tricks of that kind, and often led to fatal consequences. He trusted that this would be a warning to him and the others not again to mix in such scenes of uproar. Mr. Rutter then asked each of them if they had any statements to make which would throw light on the matter, as they were now perfectly at liberty to do so ; but none of them would speak to any further particulars, and all said they had not seen the deceased struck at all. They were then discharged.

The Coroner, in addressing the jury, said they would find, upon the evidence, that there was a clear case of manslaughter against three persons – Vickers, Thornley and the other boatman ; for that it was manslaughter they could have no doubt at all.

The Foreman of the Jury : There is only one circumstance tends to give it a different character, Vickers saying that he was to have fought the deceased for £5.

The Coroner did not think that fact of much weight as it appeared he did not assign that as a reason for kicking him. It seemed to have risen entirely and sudden from the circumstances of Grimes's interference with the trotter man.

The jury then agreed to a verdict of “Manslaughter” against Vickers and the two boatmen.

The Coroner told Vickers that as he would have to take his trial at the present assizes, which commenced at Liverpool the following day, he would probably be removed down to Liverpool next morning ; so that if he wished to consult his friends, an opportunity was afforded him that night.

The court then broke up. During the proceedings, so great was the interest excited that the vaults, at which the inquest was held, were filled with people, and a great crowd was gathered around the place, anxious to know the result.

## **51 18 May 1839**

**ROBBERY IN A BROTHEL** Two man named **John Cholmley** and William Preston, the one a boatman, the other a carter, were charged at the New Bailey yesterday with stealing half a sovereign and four half crowns, the property of a lad named Henry Smith. The robbery had taken place on Thursday night, when the parties were all at the house of a woman named Faulkner, who keeps a brothel in Back Lad Lane. The prosecutor stated that the money had been taken out of his trowsers pocket, which he placed beneath his pillow, and that he saw the prisoner Cholmley near his bed. On the prisoners being searched, a half sovereign and two half crowns were found in the pocket of Preston, who professed himself unable to tell how they got there. They were both committed for trial at the sessions.

## **52 20 July 1839**

### **Runcorn**

**ROBBING A COASTING VESSEL** On Monday, **Thomas Gandy**, captain of the *Susan*, a vessel trading between this town and Liverpool, and **George Betley**, one of the crew, were brought before Thomas Lyon Esq and Holbrook Gaskell Esq, charged with stealing a quantity of porter, the property of Mr Joseph Coyne, a merchant of Runcorn. Mr Coyne stated that he was the owner of the vessel in question. She arrived at Runcorn on the evening of Wednesday with a cargo of porter, of which he received a shipment note. The porter was in half barrels, the average weight of which is about 1 cwt 3 qrs 14 lbs. Witness found the men on board the vessel tipsy, and on causing the porter to be weighed, he found four of the half barrels to be deficient in weight ; and on examining the casks, discovered that they had been pegged on the opposite side to the bung. John Mouldsdale, a warehouseman, weighed the casks and spoke to the exact deficiency. The four casks pegged were the topmost in the cargo. **William Blackburne**, a flatman, who rode on board the flat from Liverpool to Runcorn, deposed to having seen Betley lift off the hatch and go down into the hold with a black water jug. After he had been down some time, he handed it up, and it was placed upon the deck. Witness then went down into the cabin, fell asleep, and did not awake again until

disturbed by the constable. After the prisoner, Betley, was in prison, he said there was not more than two quarts taken out of each half barrel. The jug now produced is similar to the one witness saw Betley take down the hold. Mr Joseph Hartley, one of the constables of Runcorn, deposed to finding the prisoners intoxicated. He found William Blackburne on board in one of the berths, fast asleep, and the prisoner, Gandy, on hearing Mr Harding say he would have the vessel searched, upset a jug of porter and drenched William Blackburne and completely saturated the berth. Mr Harding confirmed this testimony, and produced the jug spoken to by Blackburne. It had the remains of porter in it. Upon Gandy, he found a vent peg, and in the cabin cupboard a jug of porter. On being called upon for their defence, Betley said that he found the porter *frizzing*, and took about two quarts out of each barrel to give them vent. They were fully committed to Knutsford for trial.

**53 27 July 1839**

**FATAL ASSAULT** On Monday, a boatman named **James Whitworth**, while in the act of drawing the lock flue near Trubsmithy, fell into the lock, and was dead before any assistance could be offered. He bore a good character, and resided near Littleborough.

**54 5 October 1839**

**BOAT CASES** **George Normington, Miles Slater and James Horsfield**, three captains of boats on the Rochdale Canal, were each fined in the penalty of 25s and costs, for obstructing the boats in the canal near Manchester.

**55 2 November 1839**

**Petty Sessions**

**James Mills**, a boatman, was charged with stealing four red cabbages. Mr Ogden of the George and Dragon public house, Trubsmithy, found the prisoner with the cabbages in his yard on Sunday. It was asked whether the prisoner was an old offender or not, when he called out, "I never was here before un ; if I get through this time, oll never come here no more. I have a wife and three children, and can only get 16s per week ; let me off this time, un I will never come again". He was ordered to pay 5s and expenses.

**56 11 January 1840**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** On Tuesday last, an inquest was held by W S Rutter Esq, coroner, on view of the body of Mr William Edwards, turner and earthenware dealer, in Downing Street, who had been found in the Duke's Canal on Monday morning. **James Oldfield**, a boatman in the service of the Trustees of the Duke of Bridgewater, stated that between half past eleven and twelve o'clock on Monday morning, he discovered the deceased apparently standing with his head just above water, between the Oxford Road and Tib Locks. He immediately got the body out, which appeared to have been in the water many days. John Barber of Clare Street, Chorlton, stated that the deceased, who was 35 years of age and had left a widow and five children, was at work till 7 o'clock at night on the 20<sup>th</sup> of December, and was missing after that night. He learnt that he was drinking at a beer shop in Medlock Street ; and he would have to come by the canal side on his way home. He usually went along the canal side to his work. He was never to be seen after that night. Verdict, "Found drowned".

**57 29 February 1840**

**Rochdale**

**PETTY SESSIONS** A person was brought up by the Canal Company for overloading his boat. According to the evidence given, he had four and a half tons over burden, for which the magistrates fined the boatman 40s per ton and expenses for the overweight.

**58 7 March 1840**

The following paragraph has been sent to us for publication. Under this head, in our last week's paper, we gave a short account of the canal company having had a boatman before the magistrates on the preceding Monday for overloading his vessel. We have been requested to correct this

account in one particular – the kind of charge ; it was, as we are informed, not for overloading his vessel but for having a greater weight of cargo on board than he had accounted for, by upwards of four tons, thereby defrauding the company out of the dues for that weight. He was convicted in the penalty, after the rate of 40s per ton on four tons, of £8 and costs.

## 59 28 March 1840

**CHARGE OF MURDER AGAINST A BOATMAN** About nine o'clock on Sunday morning, it was discovered that a man named **William Cheetham**, a boatman in the employ of Mr William Shepherd of Rochdale, had been to all appearance barbarously murdered in the cabin of his boat, which plies on the Rochdale canal, and then lay in a cut of the canal at a place called Brown's Fields, near to Port Street. The deceased was found lying partly on the bed and partly on the floor of the cabin of his boat ; there were several wounds on his head and face, which it was suspected had been inflicted by a large wooden mallet that was found stained with blood on the floor of the cabin. A bloody piece of brick was also found on the side of the canal near the boat, and large clots of blood were observed on the floor of the cabin.

The first information of the circumstance was given by **John Clayton**, the captain of the boat, and **James Hanson**, another boatman belonging to the same vessel. The body, when found, was still warm, and after it had been removed to the Infirmary, both the men were taken into custody but afterwards set at liberty. Hanson, however, was again apprehended ; it appearing that he had slept in the boat all night, and other facts having come to the knowledge of the police which tended strongly to criminate him. He was brought up at the Borough Court on Monday before Mr Maude, when, after a short statement of the facts by Superintendent Sawley, he was remanded till the next day.

An inquest was held on the body in the library of the Infirmary at three o'clock on Monday afternoon, when the following evidence was taken before Mr Chapman, the corporation coroner :-  
John Clayton of 15 Richard Street, Rochdale, boatman, deposed : Having been at an early hour in Tib Street, Manchester, on Saturday last, with one James Hanson of Oldham Road, Rochdale, boatman, for refreshment, I and Hanson left there about half past one in the afternoon, and went to a public house called the Crown and Anchor in Port Street, Manchester, where we had a quart of fourpenny beer each ; we left about half past two o'clock, and went to our boat (he being a fellow boatman) which was plying upon the Rochdale Canal, in Brown's Fields, Manchester. The boat is the property of my employer, William Shepherd of Rochdale, innkeeper. The men of Mr Bridge, slate dealer, being loading the same with slates, we went to an adjoining public house called the Brown's Fields Tavern in Brewer Street, kept by Thomas Wormald, where we met the deceased, who was drinking there. He also was my fellow boatman. We remained there until a quarter before eight ; when, as I did not expect the boat to leave until next morning, I went away to the Leeds Railway Station in Manchester, and went by the train to Mill's Hill, having left Hanson at the public house, both of us being drunk. The deceased, who had left about half past six, had had beer, but was not so drunk as either of us. I returned about nine o'clock the next morning (Sunday) and met Hanson standing at the Brown's Fields Tavern door. On asking me where I had been, which I told him, he said that the deceased was dead in the cabin. On my saying, "He is not, is he?" he put it off with a smile, and added, "No ; but he has such a face as thou never seed". I asked him to go with me to see him. We then went together to the cabin, and on my opening the door, I saw the deceased kneeling on the floor, his head and the upper part of his body being upon the bed, and the knees under. I called him by his name, and then shook him ; but he did not answer. I lifted up his head by the hair, and perceived he was dead, his lips being blue, and he was frothing at the mouth ; he was warm ; he was without hat, but was dressed in other respects, and his hat was lying on the floor broken in pieces. I could not say how it may have been damaged ; the deceased had two black eyes. His upper lips were much swollen ; the end of his chin was scratched ; and one cheek, I think the left one, was much scarred, as if he had been drawn along the ground, and his nose was bloody. I did not look at him so as to speak further as to the injuries, but blood was upon several parts of the floor, and one of the marks was about the size of half a crown, and appeared as if occasioned by

repeated dropping. It was not dry, but stiff. I did not notice his clothes. We then went together for a policeman and on finding one on the Ancoats Street bridge adjoining, and he having asked to his assistance another policeman, we (being four of us) returned to the boat and took him out of the cabin. Seeing that he was dead, one of the policemen, with the assistance of some other persons who had come up, took him to this place while I and Hanson went with the other to the station house in New Islington. There was a broken slate in the cabin, which I had not seen before that morning. I did not notice Hanson's clothes or appearance, and I did not suspect him. I did not see any marks of feet or of scuffling on the bank, or on the deck or other parts of the boat ; but as the body was conveying away from the boat, one of the policemen picked up a brick on the side of the canal, near the boat, which was bloody. After being examined and our descriptions taken down, we were dismissed from the station house, and on our returning to the canal yard, Hanson was again taken up by another policeman. Nothing was said by Hanson either going or returning.

**James Bold** of Hatherow near Stockport said : I am a boatman in the employ of Messrs Thomas Boothman and Co of Brown's Fields, Manchester, lime dealers. About a quarter before eight on Saturday night last, as I was drawing up one of the paddles of the Brown's Field lock on the Rochdale Canal in order for my boat to pass through, I observed a man jump from a wall of Mr Bridge's yard adjoining upon one of the balance poles of the lock ; he cried out, after he had jumped from the pole, and was turning the corner of the boat next to the canal, "D—m your eyes, I'll cut your bloody head off". He stooped, as if to pick up some stones or brickbats, and then ran to the stern end of Mr Shepherd's boat, then in the canal. I then perceived a man, having his head out of the cabin ; and the first man began to throw the slates or bricks at him, and others which had been lying on the ground round about him. After he had done this for about two minutes, he then jumped upon the stern end of the boat, and turning towards me said, "D—n his eyes, Jem, what must I do with him? I'll kill him". The other man was calling out, "Watchman". I answered, "Leave him alone ; I think thou has done enough at him". Just before this, he had been leaning over the man, and had given him a kick ; he was taking a slate from a stack, and saying he would cut his head off ; but I entreated him to stop, as he had done enough. The kick seemed to be a heavy one, and I think must have caused the death of the man ; I did not hear him cry again, and all became still afterwards; but I observed the first mentioned man, immediately after the kick, jump into the hatchway, and throw the stones or brickbats out of the boat upon the bank, which I thought curious. I then left my boat and returned to an empty one up at the Ancoats end of the canal, and on my way I called at the boat house, and told the woman of the circumstances, and that I thought the man was badly hurt. About an hour before, I had seen the deceased approach the same boat and go into the hatchway, and he seemed to be fresh ; but at that time I could not distinguish the man so as to know him. It was sufficiently light for me to see them. (The prisoner being required to stand up, the witness said) I think that man is a bit bigger than the man who threw the stones ; besides, he had a pair of white trousers on.

The prisoner said he had a pair of white trousers ; they were produced by Green, the officer, when the witness said, "They were such trousers as those, but I think lighter ; the voice was slighter, and I think more like a woman's voice".

Clayton being further examined, said ; The prisoner told me on Sunday morning that the boat had been robbed of some horse corn, and a sack, and some bread, and that two other boats had been robbed beside ; he said the deceased had said so, and had told him that four men and a woman had done it. He said nothing to me about being beaten, but he said the deceased had told him that the four men and the woman (.....) him a good hiding.

(.....) Rose, private watchman to Mr Binns, cotton manufacturer, Brown's Field, deposed : On Saturday night, about five or six minutes past seven o'clock, I was on duty near the canal ; while sitting in the boiler house, I heard the cry of "murder" two or three times. I went into the engine house, and opened the window, opposite to which were some boats in the arm of the canal, near Mr Bridge's yard. I saw a man come out of one of the boats into the slate yard ; the head of another man appeared above the deck of the boat ; and I heard the man who came out of the boat say, with an oath, if he could find a stone he would cut his head off ; he also said, "I'll make thee remember

for attempting to throttle me". He then threw two or three stones at him, and went and picked up some more, and threw them at him. After that, he went down to the bottom of the yard and fetched some more, and then came back to the boat, threatening to murder him ; he then threw the stones. He fetched another stone or two from the bottom of the yard, and swore that he neither cared for him (deceased) nor the boat – he could get another tomorrow. He then got other stones, and jumped upon the boat and threw them into the cabin, as I thought, at the man. I did not see the man's head then. He afterwards came into the yard again, picked something up, and returned to the boat, and went into the cabin. While he was out of the boat, I saw the other man's head, but it disappeared when he returned to the boat, and I never saw it after. He seemed to go half in. There was no noise ; and I went away, and heard nothing more. Someone who stood against the lock gates was shouting, but the man who was throwing the stones took no notice of him ; I thought he shouted, "George". I saw no one else in the boat or about the yard. It was between light and dark ; it was just dusk. His clothes were lighter than the prisoner's ; he wore either a dark cap or a very low hat. (The prisoner was made to put his hat on, which was a very low one). The trousers produced are about the colour of those worn by the man I saw throwing the stones. He had no coat on, but a lightish waistcoat. I was about fourteen yards from them ; it was too dark to distinguish a man properly ; he looked all of a brown colour. I never interfered with them, for I thought as boatmen are often fighting, if I did, they would throw stones through the factory windows. I thought the man in the boat was very ill used, but I never interfered nor told anyone until Sunday night, when I heard that a man was dead, and I told what I had seen. I saw the witness Bold coming up with a lime boat; I saw the boat just coming out of the lock ; he had nothing to do with it. I did not see Clayton at all. I would be a few minutes more than half past seven when the witness Bold passed in his boat. They had been agait a good bit before he came up. I thought the man who threw the stones was sober, but I could see that the other man was three parts drunk. I was on watch all the night, but I heard nothing after. All was quite silent after the man got into the boat. I never saw him go out again. I saw no one on the premises afterwards.

By a Juror : The man who threw the stones seemed to be a lesser man than the prisoner ; his voice seemed to me a laddish, shrill voice. He swore very much, his voice was not like the prisoner's, as he speaks now. I went off duty about ten minutes or a quarter before six next morning.

**James Howarth** of Boorshaw Clough near Middleton deposed : I am a boatman in the service of **John Cheetham** of Middleton. Our boat was in the Rochdale Canal near Brown's Fields on Saturday night. I was on board all night, as was my fellow boatman, **Samuel Cheetham** of Middleton. About seven o'clock we left the boat and went ashore to supper up our horse. We returned about nine o'clock and found that our boat had been shifted to the next lock ; two locks had been broken, and a pair of trousers and some lines had been taken out of the cabin. We then took her through the lock and tied her alongside Shepherd's boat. About ten minutes past nine, the prisoner shouted out to me, and asked me for some matches ; we had none on board, so I went with him to the boat house and returned with a lighted rope. I assisted him to make a fire in the cabin. I observed William Cheetham, the deceased, sitting on the bed ; there are two beds in the cabin. The wrists of his shirt sleeves were very bloody, and one side of his face, I cannot say which ; deceased said it had been done in the cabin, but the prisoner said it had been done somewhere out, in the street ; deceased said there had been men on board the boat who had done it, but the prisoner said it had been done in the street ; I don't know whether the deceased said "man" or "men" had done it ; I am sure he spoke to me ; I did not speak to him, but he said it had been done either in the cabin or on board. I then asked Hanson to lend me a rope, I did not get it, but went to my own boat and went to bed. I got up next morning about six o'clock and went into their boat, and asked again for the rope. Hanson was in bed ; he shouted at Bill (meaning the deceased) and asked if it was not time for them to start ; the deceased lay with his back up against the other bed, and his feet off ; he did not answer ; prisoner then kicked at his shoes, and shook him by the arm and called, "Bill" ; deceased did not answer ; prisoner then pulled him off the bed on to the cabin floor ; deceased was quite dressed, but had not his hat on ; I did not see his hat, and did not take notice whether he had it on or not ; he did not seem to move when pulled on the floor ; I thought it was owing to his having

been drunk the night before. I got the rope which I went for, and then returned to my own boat. I did not notice him any further, nor go into the boat afterwards. The prisoner did not seem to be at all concerned about it ; I saw nothing different in his appearance or his dress. Deceased was in the same bed in the morning as the night before, and as near the same place as might be. I had no suspicion he was dead ; he snored a bit, as I thought, in the morning, and I said to the prisoner, "What, is he asleep yet?" The night before, when the prisoner said it had been done in the street, and the deceased said it had been done aboard, they did not "threap" but seemed to be in good humour with each other, as far as I could see ; deceased did not say he suspected anyone ; he did not say, "It's that man" ; he said that there had been men on board, and done that, he did not say what. It was dark in the cabin until we got a light ; I did not ask him if he was very ill hurt ; I thought he had hit his nose, and wiped it on his sleeve ; I did not ask a single question about it.

The prisoner being asked if he had any question to put, said he had not, but stated that after the witness left their boat on Sunday morning, the deceased got up, and then said he would lie down again for half an hour, while he (the prisoner) went to see for the captain, who had not been on board all night.

Superintendent Sawley of the Manchester police, proved having taken the prisoner into custody, when he said he did not return to the boat until eleven o'clock, and when he got into the boat, Bill (the deceased) told him that he had been attacked by four men and a woman, who had beaten him, and taken his bit of brass (money) ; that he then went to bed, and slept till six in the morning, when Howarth, the boatman, came to borrow a rope, and he then called the deceased, the rope being under him, and the deceased got up and spoke to Howarth, and witness gave Howarth the rope, with which he went away. Witness had examined his clothes, and on his trousers found several spots of blood, and on the knee there was a large blotch of blood. He also searched the cabin, and found under the step a wooden mallet with several spots of blood upon it. The clothes on the left hand side of the bed had also blood upon them. There was a number of slates on the bank, and one of them was sprinkled with blood.

At the suggestion of the coroner, the inquiry was then adjourned.

Mr Rutter also held an inquest on the body at the same place, at five o'clock on Monday when, in addition to the above, the following witnesses were examined :-

Robert Astley of Bank Street, Manchester, deposed : About nine o'clock on Sunday morning, I called at the Brown's Field Tavern near Port Street, and while standing there, Hanson and the captain of the boat came into the house, and Hanson said, "Oh dear, what must I do? The boat has been robbed and the man has been murdered". They said they wanted a policeman, and I said I would go with them ; I went with them to Ancoats Street bridge, where we met with Butcher, one of the police inspectors. Hanson said he had left the man in the boat at six o'clock that morning, and had spoken to him ; he said he had asked him what there had been amiss, whether there had been a fight, and that the deceased had told him that four men and a woman had followed him to the boat ; and that he had had the woman in the boat all night, but that he did not know her. Butcher and us all went together to the yard where the boat lay ; it is an inclosed yard, and the gate being locked, we had to climb a wall five feet in height to get in. On going into the boat, we found the deceased lying on his back on the bed, with his clothes on, except his jacket. He was dead ; his head was much disfigured with wounds ; the body was immediately conveyed to the Infirmary. Opposite to the cabin, about a yard and a half from the boat, a half brick was found, marked with blood ; the officer took it into his care.

John Butcher, inspector of police, deposed : I went to the boat with the last witness. I first asked Hanson if he knew what had occurred ; he told me that he had gone to the boat between seven and eight o'clock on Saturday night, for a feed of corn, that he got it and then went to the stable to his horse ; that after that he returned to the boat, and then saw the deceased, who told him that he had been followed on board by four or five men and a woman, who had beat him and pummelled his head. Hanson said he asked the deceased if he knew anything of them, but the deceased said he did not ; he said they followed him into the boat, and served him in that way, and robbed him. Hanson said that, after that, he went to the public house and got forward in liquor, and remained there till

between ten and eleven o'clock ; he there told the waiter that Bill had got a good beating. He further said that he went to bed, and lay until six in the morning, then awoke the deceased, who said he was still sleepy and said (.....) an hour longer and that he (.....) man left the boat, that he returned again and found the deceased almost dead ; that he then went to find the captain, met with him, and took him to the boat ; after which they came to me. On going into the boat, I saw the deceased lying on his back on the bed, and I ordered that he should be conveyed to the Infirmary. The body was then quite warm, but dead. The piece of brick now produced is that which was found in the yard. (The brick was produced and examined ; it was marked with blood on one edge, and on two of the sides.) There were three distinct marks, apparently newly made, on the door of the cabin, as if by stones or bricks.

Mr William Smith, house surgeon to the Infirmary, deposed : Yesterday morning, the deceased was brought to the Infirmary, being then dead. This morning, I have made an inspection of the head and body. There were two or three slight lacerations on the scalp, and effused blood under the scalp. There was a fracture of the skull, extending from the top of the head to behind the left ear. Inside the skull, a very large quantity of blood was effused, which pressed to a considerable extent on the brain, and caused the death of the deceased. There was nothing in the chest or abdomen to account for his death. There were appearances in the stomach as if the deceased had been drinking. A fall or a blow might have produced the injuries to the skull ; but if they had been caused by a blow, it was not one of the fist. The injuries might have arisen from more blows than one. The deceased could not have retained his senses long after receiving those injuries. There was no other external injury except a slight bruise on the face.

There being no further evidence ready to be produced, and none of the witnesses being able to identify Hanson as the man who was throwing the stones into the cabin on Saturday night, Mr Rutter adjourned the inquiry until Monday next. Mr Chapman sat again on Friday ; the result is stated in our fifth page.

**CHARGE OF MURDER AGAINST A BOATMAN – ADJOURNED INQUEST** Yesterday morning, the adjourned inquest in this case was held at the Infirmary, when several other witnesses were examined. Thomas Hammersley deposed to having been at the Brown's Field Tavern at the time the deceased was there with the prisoner and Clayton, the captain of the boat ; and also that the prisoner and deceased were quarrelling, all of them being very drunk, and that the prisoner used abusive language to the deceased and threatened to kill him. Thomas Sidebottom, who worked at Mr Bridge's slate yard, deposed to having seen the prisoner leave the yard about half past six o'clock the same evening with a sack on his back. One or two other witnesses were examined, but nothing material was elicited, and the inquest was again adjourned to Monday next.

## **60 4 April 1840**

**ADJOURNED INQUEST ON THE MAN WHO WAS MURDERED IN THE CANAL BOAT** The inquiry into the circumstances attendant on the death of **William Cheetham**, the particulars of which appeared in our last, was resumed by W S Rutter Esq, the coroner, on Monday afternoon last, when the following additional evidence was taken :-

William Patten deposed : I am a carter in the employ of Mr Bridge, silk merchant. Last Saturday night but one, the gates of the wharf were locked about seven o'clock ; a man was in at that time, but I did not know him ; he asked when we were going to lock up ; I told him we were just about locking up ; he said he had to go down to the boat ; he did so ; only one boat was lying there ; we locked the gate, and I saw no more of him afterwards ; I went straight home. I don't know the deceased nor the prisoner Hanson. It is not customary to allow persons to go within the gates, except they be going to a boat ; in that case, we don't ask their names. This man was dressed in light clothes and wore a little hat. It was within five minutes of seven o'clock, either before or after, when we locked up. I understood another man had been seen to go on board ten minutes before, but I did not see him. The man whom I saw was of middle stature. I have heard the voice of the man who is in custody, and I think it is similar. He had had a little liquor, but not much. I told him we

were going to lock up, so that if he wanted anything out, he must get it. He said he was going down to a boat that he had lying there. The boat that was there was Mr Shepherd's of Rochdale. I don't know the captain by name. He did not seem angry, but spoke like a person who had had some drink. After we locked up, no one could get in without climbing over the wall. The man was dressed like a boatman, with light clothes and a little hat ; his trousers were a shade lighter than his other clothes. It was getting dusk at the time. There was no other boat than Shepherd's there that night ; and I saw no other person with light clothes but the man who came in. I may have seen the prisoner before, but not to my knowledge.

Thomas Hammersley of Norman's Buildings, Store Street, labourer, deposed : I knew the prisoner by the name of Giles, but never knew his right name till lately. On the night of Saturday the 21<sup>st</sup>, I saw him and the deceased at the Brown's Fields Tavern between six and seven o'clock ; I don't know how it originated, but the prisoner was calling deceased names and swearing at him ; we were all sitting in one room. I told him it was a bad thing to call anyone such names ; Cheetham said something to him, whereupon he went near him, called him a low name, and threatened to kill him. Clayton, the captain, who was there, then pushed him aside, and said, "Nay, thou will not". Hanson had on a light pair of trousers with a rule pocket on one side, a green waistcoat with sleeves, and a very low hat. I heard nothing more. I was sober enough to attend to what passed. I had been assisting to unload their boat that morning, and went there for my wages.

Thomas Sidebotham of Long Street, Manchester, deposed : I am in the employ of Mr Bridge. I saw the prisoner Hanson at Mr Bridge's slate wharf on last Saturday but one ; he was backwards and forwards all the afternoon ; I last saw him about seven o'clock. About half past six, I saw him going apparently from the boat towards Brown's Fields with a bag, which appeared to contain something bulky ; it might be corn or grain. He returned about seven o'clock, just as they were closing the gates. I heard him ask the men who were shutting the gates if they were going to lock up ; one made answer, and said he should lock up in a minute ; he also asked the prisoner whether he was going into his boat or he was going out, and he said he did not know ; he stopped considering about a minute and then went down towards the boat. I was at the gate at the time ; I did not see him get on board ; I went away ; he was locked within the yard. I believe the deceased was in the boat at the time. I did not see him go in, but a man told me he had seen him go in very ill drunk. I had seen him go out of the yard a short time before Hanson did ; he was not at all disfigured, but very drunk. About seven o'clock next morning, I saw Hanson getting over the wall to get to the boat, as though he had been at the horse, but I did not speak to him. He had a can in his hand. He had then light coloured trousers, a green waistcoat with sleeves, and a low crowned hat on. I work at the yard regular, and was there all day on Saturday, till the gates were closed. I saw nothing of any woman there, nor have I heard of any being there. No one but these two men were going backwards and forwards to the boat. I was the first man in the yard on Sunday morning, and stepped down to the boat before the prisoner came ; the boat was then loose ; I looked down but saw nothing. I saw the bed rolled up, on which the deceased was afterwards found.

Superintendent Sawley deposed : I apprehended the prisoner on Sunday morning about eleven o'clock ; he had been in custody before, but had been discharged. I thought he had been in custody, and from the information I received I thought it such a suspicious case against him that I took him again. I asked him his name, and cautioned him as to what he said ; he said, "I know nothing at all about it ; I went to the boat last night about eleven o'clock, and saw Bill (meaning the deceased) who said that four men and a woman had followed him into the boat, and beaten him very badly". I asked him why he had not told someone and got some assistance to him ; he said he did not think he was much worse, but he had just named it to the other ; I asked him if anyone else knew anything about it ; and he said a man named Jem who, I have since learnt, was **James Howarth** of Middleton, had come to their boat about six o'clock that morning to borrow a line, as theirs had been stolen, and that he had then spoken to the deceased. He also said that all the corn and all the lines had been stolen both from their boat and Howarth's. I then searched the boat, and under the bottom step which leads into the cabin I found a wooden mallet, one corner and edge of which was wet with blood at the time. It was impossible for the blood to have got onto the mallet as it lay ; it

must have been placed there afterwards by some person. On the floor, by the side of the bed, was a large clot of blood, apparently caused by dropping, larger than half a crown. There were two beds in the cabin, one on the right, the other on the left ; all the clothes were on the left hand bed, there being nothing but the bed on the other, and they were spotted with blood in several places. I took the prisoner to the Town Hall, and on examining him there, found a large spot of blood on one knee of his trousers, and two or three small spots in other parts of the thigh ; the spot on the knee looked as if attempts had been made to rub it out. It is only fair to state that the small spots might have been occasioned by his assisting to remove the deceased out of the cabin. I asked him how he accounted for the blood on his knee, and he said he did not know how it was, except it was from having his finger crushed two or three days before. I looked at his fingers, but saw nothing the matter with them. He wore light fustian trousers, a waistcoat with sleeves, and a very low crowned hat (with a short flipe) which fit close to his head. The prisoner told me that the deceased had spoke to Howarth on Sunday morning, when he went for the line, but Howarth told me that he had not spoken to him.

**John Clayton**, the captain of the boat in which the deceased was found, was recalled and examined by the coroner as to what passed at the Brown's Field Tavern. He said : I was at the Brown's Field Tavern from between two and three o'clock till a quarter before eight ; the prisoner and the deceased and I were all there together ; deceased left a long time before me ; I cannot tell how long Hanson stopped after, but he left before me. They had had a word or two before they went, but what they were I cannot speak to. I cannot recollect what the prisoner said, but I remember I struck him for abusing the deceased. I had had too much liquor to be able to say what passed exactly. To the best of my knowledge, I did not tell Hanson I was going to Mills Hill that night ; if I had not gone, I should have slept on board all night. I know the mallet that was found : Cheetham had pickled it up in the cut about nine or ten days before ; we used it to break coals, and it ought to have been there. I don't know of Hanson having crushed his finger two or three days before this happened ; I never heard of it. I did not notice the blood on his trousers before. Had he crushed his finger very much, I think I should have heard of it.

Peter Hamilton of Brewer Street, near the Brown's Field Tavern, deposed : On the morning of Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup>, between seven and eight, the prisoner came to my house, and said it was a shocking thing that had occurred about Cheetham being nearly killed last night, in the boat ; I asked him how it had occurred ; he said, "I went aboard about half past ten last night, and when I got aboard I found William Cheetham sadly abused, and all the lines taken off the vessel, and even my sack of corn gone". I said, "Why did you not give alarm to Mr Wormald of the Brown's Fields Tavern, or me?" He said he thought the man was sadly beaten. He said his eyes were quite black ; he had just come from aboard ; he added, "I asked him to get up and wash him, and he said he would". In less than half an hour after that, I saw the prisoner going quickly round the corner, and I then heard that the deceased was dead on board. When he came into our house to tell me, he stood with his back to the fire, and shivered ; he had no handkerchief on. He had on a waistcoat with sleeves, light trousers, and a very low crowned hat.

**Samuel Cheetham**, captain of the boat which lay alongside W Shepherd's on Saturday night, was next examined, and stated that when his mate (James Howarth) went on board the deceased's boat for a rope on Sunday morning, thinking that he stayed long, he also went on board, and saw the deceased laid partly on the floor ; he seemed to take his breath in an unusual sort of way, and when they returned to his own vessel, he (witness) remarked to the mate (Howarth) that he thought it strange for him to be in that state after being in bed all night.

Howarth was also recalled and closely questioned, but nothing further could be elicited from him. Thomas Pritchard, a labourer in the employ of Mr Bridge, deposed : I saw deceased going through the yard towards the boat about half past six on Saturday night ; the other man had come out about ten minutes before, with a sack upon his back ; he went from the yard into the street, but I did not notice which way he went ; I saw nothing of either of them after that ; I left the yard about seven o'clock, just before they closed the gates. Had the deceased come from the boat again, I must have seen him. The sack was nearly full of something, I cannot tell what. It would be about as big as

half a load of potatoes.

Mr Sawley was here called in, and stated that he saw no prospect of being able to obtain any further evidence. He had exerted himself to the utmost, but could not hear of anything further likely to throw light on this transaction. There had been a rumour that the prisoner had said to some man, on Sunday morning, that he had "done Bill's job for him at last". He had made enquiry into this, and had ascertained that the man to whom the prisoner was represented as having said so, was not in Manchester at the time ; therefore, it was probable that there was no truth in it.

The Coroner remarked that the case was certainly brought a little nearer home now ; there was a much greater suspicion against Hanson. He thought it better, in order to refresh the recollection of the jury, to read over the whole of the evidence. Having done so, he said he would leave it to the jury to say whether they were prepared to come to a decision on the case then, or would like two or three days more, to see whether anything else would transpire. It appeared to him that the case was one of very strong suspicion against this man. It was entirely one of circumstances, the strongest of which was, that he was seen to go through the yard about seven o'clock, and at five minutes past seven, the watchman heard screams and saw two men, one in the cabin of the boat, the other on the deck, throwing stones at him.

A Juror observed that there was another very strong circumstance ; it appeared that the prisoner had himself robbed the vessel, by taking away the sack of corn, and then stated that it had been robbed by someone else.

The Coroner said it was probable that the cause of the attack was to be traced to what had taken place when they were at the Brown's Field Tavern, when it appeared Clayton, the captain, had struck at Hanson for having abused the deceased. The case altogether was one of circumstances, and it appeared to him that it was a very strong one. Supposing they were of opinion that Hanson was the person who had committed the injuries upon this man, they would have to consider whether the case was one of murder or of manslaughter. He thought there was no doubt that some altercation had taken place in the cabin between the parties, and that a good deal of ill feeling was created ; but there was a determination of purpose on the part of the prisoner, as was evinced by his frequently coming out of the cabin, and this continued a length of time, if the statements of the witnesses were correct, upwards of half an hour – at all events he was seen, five or six times, to pick up various missiles in the yard and use them, and after he had disposed of one lot, to take up another. It was to be taken into consideration that they were in an excited state of drunkenness and passion ; but when they found a man continuing to inflict injuries of that description, he thought that, in point of law, it amounted to murder – at all events, it was as bad a case of manslaughter as he had ever heard. He was not prepared to say that, upon his trial, the prisoner would be found guilty of the higher crime, but the jury would not be wrong in finding a verdict of wilful murder.

The jury agreed to a verdict of "Wilful murder" against the prisoner, who was afterwards committed for trial at the assizes.

#### **61 4 April 1840**

**MAN DROWNED** On Thursday morning, **William Evans**, a boatman, 23 years of age from Runcorn, fell into one of the locks of the canal, Rochdale, and before he could be got out, he was drowned.

#### **62 18 April 1840**

**A RAILWAY TRESPASSER** **Thomas Clare**, a flatman and publican residing at Northwich, was, at the petty sessions held on Monday, convicted in a penalty of 20s and costs for trespassing on the Grand Junction Railway at Winwick on the 5<sup>th</sup> instant. The defendant was told to walk off the line by the policeman on duty, but refused to do so, alleging that he was a proprietor, and had a right to walk wherever he pleased.

#### **63 16 May 1840**

**MURDER AT BIRMINGHAM** On Thursday morning week, great excitement was occasioned in

the neighbourhood of Lancaster Street and Newton Row, in this place, by the discovery of the body of a female in the canal, close to Walmer Lane Bridge, which was recognised to be that of a young woman of the name of Harriet Wright, who had for some short time previously resided in that vicinity. It was currently reported that the deceased had been drowned by a person of the name of Josiah Lilley, with whom she had been living, and he was afterwards apprehended, and kept in the custody of the police, as soon as information had been conveyed to the proper authorities.

On Friday afternoon at three o'clock, an inquest was held upon the body at the Turk's Head in Mount Street, before J B Davies Esq MD and a respectable jury, Mr Charles Cook being the foreman ; and such was the interest excited that the room was crowded during the investigation, and a large concourse of persons had assembled in the street to await the results of the inquiry. The jury having proceeded with the coroner to view the body, which was placed in Cleveland Street, and which presented no views of external violence, they returned to the inquest room, when the prisoner was brought forward in the custody of the police. He is not more than seventeen years of age, and has been working as an apprentice to a plane maker, having several times been committed to the House of Correction at Warwick for neglect of service.

The usual forms having been gone through, a boatman of the name of **Thomas Willis** was first sworn and examined. He stated that about four o'clock on Wednesday morning as he was walking along the footpath of the Fazeley Canal, he perceived a man's hat lying under Walmer Lane bridge, and at the same time he noticed the bonnet of a female floating on the water. In consequence of his suspicions, he procured a boat hook, and with the assistance of his brother, after a short time, he discovered the body of the deceased which he landed on the bank, and it was then conveyed to a public house in the neighbourhood. On searching the deceased, several letters were found, one of which had been written by the accused on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April from the prison at Warwick, requesting a supply of money and other articles from his mother previously to his liberation. The prisoner put several questions to this witness, but they were unimportant.

William Bruff, a sergeant of police, to whom information of the circumstance had been conveyed, stated that he apprehended the prisoner at his father's house ; he was in bed at the time, and when informed the charge against him was that of drowning a young woman, he exclaimed, "Good God! Is she dead? If I am hung for her, I shall die innocent". He at once owned the hat which was found on the footpath of the canal, observing, "It is mine, it was taken off me last night for a trap". The prisoner, in the presence of the father of the deceased, denied having caused her death.

Dennis Corkery, one of the police, deposed to seeing the deceased and the prisoner together on Wednesday evening between four and five o'clock, at the end of John Street ; the deceased asked for her bonnet and shawl, and said she would then have done with him, as she was sorry she had not appeared against him at the public office ; Lilley had been apprehended on a charge preferred by the father of stealing the bonnet and shawl, but released.

Superintendent Crohen, in his examination, said the prisoner had been taken to see the body, but added nothing further of importance.

Inspector Edmonds said he asked the prisoner, when in his custody, at what hour he last saw the deceased, and he replied, "I saw her about eleven o'clock in Brewery Street ; she said she would drown herself, and asked me to give her my handkerchief ; I refused. She then took my hat from my head and turned down by a heap of stones on the canal side ; that was the last time I saw her.

Ann Mitchell was next examined, and said she knew the deceased and the prisoner ; on Wednesday night she saw them walking together, about half past nine o'clock, and that about ten minutes past eleven she saw a man running down Cleveland Street, in a direction from an entry leading from the canal ; he had no hat on his head, and she thought from the dress the prisoner was the person.

Frankish, a sergeant in the police force, said he was talking to the deceased in Aston Street about six o'clock on Wednesday evening, when the prisoner came up and charged her with being intoxicated. She denied it, and after some quarrelling, witness left them together.

Twilley, also a sergeant in the police force, produced two letters written by the prisoner since his apprehension, one of which was directed at his mother, and the other related to his course of life.

Sarah Whitheridge, who was acquainted with the prisoner and the deceased, stated that on Monday

evening, they were quarrelling in her house, and the prisoner made use of threats towards her, as the deceased refused to continue the acquaintance.

John Taylor, a watchman in the employ of Mr Clive, said about eleven o'clock he heard a noise as if proceeding from the canal, but on opening the door of his premises, he saw no person, and then returned to his duty.

After some further unimportant evidence, Mr Charles Gem, surgeon to the police force, stated that he had examined the body of the deceased, and found no marks of external injury except two slight bruises on the arm and wrist, which he thought had been occasioned by a grasp or pressure. The general appearance of the body was healthy.

Sarah Fleming deposed that the deceased had refused to appear against the prisoner for stealing her bonnet and shawl, and was much depressed in spirits when told she would be compelled to do so.

The sister of the prisoner was then examined, and stated that the deceased had been in distressed circumstances for some time, and frequently in very low spirits.

The father of the deceased, William Wright, said his daughter was at times distressed, owing to the conduct of Lilley, and he had threatened to turn her out of his house if she did not discontinue the acquaintance.

Eliza Neal, the sister of the unfortunate young woman, stated that she had heard the deceased say she would destroy herself, and the prisoner had frequently held out threats to her if she married anyone else.

This being the whole of the evidence, and the prisoner declining to make any statement, the coroner summed up the testimony, and at about twelve o'clock, the jury returned the following verdict :- "We are agreed that the deceased came by her death by drowning, and record a verdict of Wilful Murder against the prisoner".

Lilley, on hearing the verdict, appeared much dejected, and the usual forms having been gone through, he was delivered into the custody of Mr G Redfern, and conveyed to the police office in Moor Street, previously to his removal to the gaol at Warwick.

#### **64 7 November 1840**

**BOAT ROBBERY** On Tuesday night, a boatman named **George Shaw** was observed by the private watchman of Thomson, McKay and Co, Rochdale Canal Wharf, Piccadilly, to be pushing a boat from under an archway at his employers' wharf, and suspecting something had been stolen, he gave information to Mr John Brace, the manager of Thomson, McKay and Co's business, who on examination, found that a bale of ropes had been stolen. Soon after, Shaw, who had formerly been in the employ of Thomson, McKay and Co, was found at another wharf ; and on board his boat was found the missing bale of ropes. He was given in charge to a police officer, and on Wednesday was brought up at the Borough Court. Mr Law, attorney, appeared for the prosecution, and the facts having been stated, Shaw was committed for trial at the sessions.

#### **65 7 November 1840 Petty Sessions**

**Jonathan Rhodes**, a boatman, was brought up by the Overseers of Spotland for neglect of family, he having four children chargeable upon that township. The overseer claimed £5 due to the township. The man and his friends offered 7s per week, which was refused. Rhodes, not being able to pay the amount, was committed to Ripon for three months.

#### **66 24 November 1840**

**ANOTHER ACCIDENT IN THE BRIDGEWATER CANAL BASIN – A BOY DROWNED** Last week, we had to communicate the painful intelligence of a flatman being drowned in the canal basin, and now we have to record a similar distressing occurrence in the same place. On Thursday morning the 12<sup>th</sup> inst, a boy, belonging to a coal boat, was left alone on board, and by some incautious step he fell overboard and was drowned. On Saturday last, Faithful Thomas Esq, the coroner, held the inquest at Mr Mountfield's, the Bridgewater Arms. Several persons were called upon as witnesses, among whom was **John Ankers**, the master of the boat, who spoke to leaving

his brother, **Richard Ankers**, a boy about ten years old, in charge of the boat alone, and that during his absence he had fallen into the basin and was drowned. The verdict of the jury was "Accidentally drowned". The boat belongs to Mr Royle of Timperley, and we cannot help thinking it was culpable remissness to have so young a child in charge of a boat who, far more reasonably, *ought to have had someone in charge of him* ; but indeed the poor little fellow was one of those pitiable children who are of illegitimate parentage, and he had really no one to feel common affection for him. This is another instance of the moral degradation of this class of people and we, again and again, urge the bounden duty of using every effort to raise the moral character of bargemen and boatmen.

**67 12 December 1840**

AN OLD SERVANT On Tuesday, **John Yates**, the captain of one of the Warrington and Runcorn packet boats, terminated his mortal career in the 74<sup>th</sup> year of his age. He had been a faithful and diligent servant to the Old Quay Company for no less a period than sixty four years. Few men in his situation were more respected, and he died deeply regretted by a number of relations and friends.

**68 16 January 1841**

MAN DROWNED IN RESCUING HIS SON Yesterday afternoon week, John Halstead, a boy about 15 years of age, while on a boat which was near one of the locks of the canal at Ashton-under-Lyne, owing to the slippery state of the boat, fell into the canal. His father, who was on the canal bank at the time, immediately threw off his frock, jumped into the water, and endeavoured to get to his son ; but, being unable to swim, got out of his depth. He sunk, and rose again two or three times, and then he disappeared altogether. In the meantime, the boy clung to the boat, and **Thomas Hill**, a boatman, jumped down from the lock, got hold of him, and pulled him out. Immediate search was then made for the body of the father, but half an hour elapsed before it was discovered, when, we hardly need add, life was quite extinct. An inquest was held on the body of the unfortunate man, whose name is Henry Halstead, on Monday before Mr Chapman, when the above circumstances were stated, and the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**69 6 November 1841**

ACCIDENTAL CASE OF DROWNING On Monday night last, two boats on the Rochdale Canal at Whitegate End near Oldham, ran against each other, when a boatman of the name of **John Lumb**, from Brighouse, Yorkshire, who was in a state of extreme intoxication, accidentally fell from one of the boats owing to the collision and, dropping into the canal, was instantly drowned.

**70 31 December 1841**

MANSLAUGHTER BY A BOATMAN About twelve o'clock on Sunday night last, a quarrel occurred on board a boat called the *Emma*, lying in the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal near to Knott Mill, between **John Chadwick**, a boatman belonging to the boat, and a man named **William Graves**, commonly known by the cognomen of "Manchester Bill". It appeared that the latter did not belong to the boat, but had gone on board, as Chadwick supposed, for the purpose of stealing. Chadwick threatened to knock him overboard if he did not quit the boat, and on his refusing did so. The man was drowned, and the circumstances under which this act was performed were such as clearly to constitute a case of manslaughter. Chadwick was brought up at the Borough Court on Monday, but was remanded till after the inquest, when he was committed for trial. The inquest was held on Monday, before W S Rutter Esq, the coroner, at the Boat House public house in Deansgate, to which place the body of the unfortunate man was conveyed when taken out of the water.

**Joseph Farrington** of Bradshaw Street, Hulme, deposed : I am a watchman in the service of the trustees of the late Duke of Bridgewater, at their wharf at Knott Mill in Manchester. About half past twelve this morning, I was on duty on the quay, and I heard two men quarrelling on board a vessel

belonging to the Merchants' Company ; and I looked and saw the prisoner John Chadwick, who was on board, and I heard him say, "If you come here, I'll knock you overboard". Immediately afterwards I saw the prisoner strike another man, who was then close to him, and the man fell overboard into the canal. The man in the water then called out, "Dick, Dick", and the prisoner said, "I'll not pull him out, by Gad". I was on the opposite side of the canal at the time ; and presently I saw the captain come on deck in his shirt, and he ran to the bow of the vessel with a shaft, and asked where the man was, the prisoner replied, "He is gone down there ; he is lost". Another man came up to where I was ; I sent him for a police officer ; and I waited to see that the prisoner did not get away. A police officer came, and I then went with him on board the vessel, and the prisoner was secured in the cabin. I went with him to the police office, and I there related what I had heard and seen ; and what he said was taken down. I am sure the prisoner is the man who struck the man who went overboard. I did not see the man found, and I did not know who he was. He was on board at the time that the prisoner said, "If you come here, I'll knock you overboard", and was standing near to the prisoner. They had been quarrelling a few minutes before that, but I did not caught what it was that they said. I saw that the prisoner had had liquor. There was only one blow struck before the man went overboard, and he fell betwixt two vessels. It was a frosty night. I am sure the prisoner struck him.

Richard Cooper, police officer, deposed : About half past twelve last night, I received information that a man was knocked overboard into the canal, and I went down and found Joseph Farrington, the last witness, watching a boat, called I believe, the *Emma*. I went on board and saw the prisoner in the cabin, putting on his shoes. He came out and I got hold of him, and told him he was my prisoner. He said he believed he was. I told him he was charged with knocking a man overboard, and he was drowned. He replied, "He came on board our vessel and was overhauling our ropes, and I told him, if he did not go away, that I would knock him overboard, and I did so". I then conveyed him to the police office.

John Taylor of Manor Street, Manchester, deposed : I am a private watchman on the quay at Castle Field, and was on duty last night. I heard a noise and I then went upon the (.....) and I saw Joseph Farrington, from whom I learnt that there was a man drowned, and he pointed out a boat to me. Upon that I went to the police office and met with Richard Cooper, the officer, who went to the boat with me ; and I saw the prisoner secured by the officer. After that, I and others proceeded to search for the body from that boat, and then we got a small boat. In an hour or so from the time I first heard of the circumstance, we found the body of the deceased, and it was conveyed to the boathouse, where it now lies. He was about ten yards from the place pointed out to me as the place where he fell in. The water there is not deep, and the deceased could have waded it.

**James Ditchfield** of London Bridge deposed : I belong to a boat called the *Albert*, which was lying alongside the *Emma* last night. About twelve o'clock last night, I was on deck and saw the deceased on board a vessel called the *Duke* ; but the captain told him to go away, observing that he was after something he should not be. Upon that he came on board our vessel ; and he wanted to go on board the *Emma*, where the prisoner was, to sleep. The prisoner told him he should not come there, saying that he thought he was coming to rob him when he had got asleep. The deceased then began to curse him, and said he would come on board. The prisoner said that he should not, and that if he did, he would knock him into the cut. The deceased did step from our boat to the *Emma*. I was at that time in bed in my cabin ; I had gone down directly after deceased had come on board my boat. I did not hear the deceased fall into the water, but I heard him call out, "Dick, Dick". He meant the prisoner, who goes by that name. I had seen the deceased and the prisoner at the Boat House at ten o'clock last night, and they were then both very forward in liquor. The deceased was so drunk that two men carried him on board the *Duke*, as I have been told.

The Coroner deeming it necessary to take the evidence of the captain of the boat to which the prisoner belonged, who was not then in attendance, the inquest was adjourned until Tuesday evening, when he made the following deposition :-

**James Lamb** of Runcorn deposed : I am captain of the boat *Emma*, which is the property of the Merchants' Company, the same boat as the prisoner belongs to. About twelve o'clock on Sunday

night, I heard the prisoner and the deceased falling out. I was in bed in the cabin at the time. I did not know who the deceased was then. I looked up and told them I would not allow them to kick up any rows there ; they were then at the other end of the vessel. I told them they must go on shore, if they could not agree. The prisoner made answer, and said, "I'm in my own place, am not I?" I said whether he was or not, I would not have him falling out there. He made me no answer, but went down into his own berth, where he sleeps, and shut himself up, by putting the hatch on. I put on my hatch, and went to bed again. About a quarter of an hour after, I heard the man who has been drowned call out, "Dick, Dick, pull me out". Dick is a by name we have for the prisoner. I jumped up out of the cabin, went on deck, and got a boat hook out of the vessel's bottom, which I gave to the prisoner to get the man out with. I called out, "Where is he? Where is he?" Prisoner said, "He's there. He's drowning, he's drowning!" I gave prisoner hold of the boat hook, but he said it would not reach him. I told him to try, and I would loose the vessel off, and pull her ahead, nearer to the deceased. We did so ; the prisoner put out the boat hook ; I asked him if he had got him, and he said, "No, he has sunk ; I cannot find him". I pulled the boat ahead, and went and tried myself to find him, but could not ; he was gone to the bottom. I never saw deceased at all after I came on deck. The depth of the canal in that part, in the middle, is about seven feet. The prisoner gave no account of it then ; he was tipsy at the time ; he said he would go back into the cabin and dress him. I never heard him admit that he had knocked the man in. I was one who helped to get the deceased out. He did not appear to have any injuries about him. I did not know his voice when he called out, "Dick", and I did not know who he was until Dick told me it was this "Manchester Billy" as they call him ; I don't know that he and the prisoner had had any quarrel before. The deceased was a boatman by trade, but had been out of employment for the last month and had been at a loose end, I believe. I could not ascertain what they were falling out about ; but I heard my man blackguarding him, and telling him he should not come on board our boat. He did not belong to any boat.

The Coroner, addressing the jury, observed that the case appeared to be sufficiently made out and it was clearly one of manslaughter. The prisoner had been heard to threaten that he would knock the deceased overboard, and when he was taken into custody, he was found to admit at once, to the officer, that he had done so. It was necessary that this admission should be strengthened by other evidence ; and there was clear evidence given by the first witness, the watchman, also by Taylor, and by the man who was on board the other vessel, to show that he threatened to knock the deceased overboard, and did do so. There was a continuous and perfect chain of evidence, tending to implicate the prisoner. It was beyond doubt that he could have no intention to murder the deceased ; but as death had resulted from an unlawful act on his part, it certainly amounted to a case of manslaughter.

The jury accordingly, after a short consultation, found a verdict of "Manslaughter" against Chadwick ; and the Coroner thereupon made out the warrant for his committal to Kirkdale prison, to take his trial at the ensuing assizes.

## **71 12 March 1842**

**WILFUL DAMAGE ON THE SANKEY NAVIGATION** **James Webb**, a flatman in the employ of Messrs Battersby and Harvey of Liverpool, was summoned to Warrington petty sessions on Monday last, for having, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November last, injured the locks at West Bank, by entering the Sankey Navigation at an improper time. In consequence of an informality in the proceedings, the complaint was not gone into, and the solicitor who attended on behalf of the Navigation Company, stated it was their intention to proceed for the recovery of the damage done by an action at law.

## **72 30 April 1842**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** An inquest was held on Wednesday before W S Rutter Esq, on view of the body of **James Booth**, a boatman 42 years of age, residing in White Street, Pollard Street. He was in the service of a person named Lukes, a water carrier ; and it appeared that on Tuesday evening, between 6 and 7 o'clock, he was in his boat at the lock at Ancoats Bridge. **David Ogden**,

another of the hands belonging to the boat, had left him on the side of the lock to go down and make some preparations at the lock farther on, the boat having to descend the lock. Deceased told him to be sharp, as he should get the boat down to the next lock by the time the things were got ready. In about twenty minutes, Ogden and another man returned to the boat, and then found it below the lock, and the deceased was absent. His hat being seen floating on the water below the lock, it was supposed that he had fallen in, and on search being made, his body was found under the bridge. The deceased would have to open one of the lock gates and draw the boat out with a line, but he would have no occasion to cross the lock, but merely to go down to the lock side upon the hauling path. He was not tipsy, but had had two or three pints of beer. There being no evidence to show how he got into the water, the jury came to a verdict of "Found drowned".

**73 28 May 1842**

**Rochdale**

**HOUSE ROBBERY AND PROSECUTION HUNTING** At the Petty Sessions on Saturday last, before William Chadwick and Henry Kelsall Esqrs, magistrates, two old offenders named David Golding and John Ashworth were charged with having entered the house of **Mr Thomas Eastwood**, a boatman, in Church Lane on Tuesday evening, and stealing a large quantity of clothing and two bottles of ale. It appeared that on Wednesday, John Jones, one of the Manchester police stationed at Harpurhey, saw the prisoners going through Harpurhey towards Manchester. They had large bundles of clothing, and suspecting all was not right, he inquired what they had and, from the manner in which they answered him, he took them into custody. The clothing was proved to belong to Mr Eastwood. Both prisoners were committed for trial at Salford sessions. Immediately after their committal, Mr Thomas Greenwood, attorney, said he claimed the prosecution, as Mr Eastwood had been to him requesting him to take it in hand ; he had also signed a paper to that effect. Mr Chadwick, one of the magistrates, said it was curious that the magistrates' clerks must have taken all the depositions, and now Mr Greenwood must claim the case. He also said as the clerks sat there every day, and did a deal of work for which they had no remuneration, he thought they ought to have all felon cases, except they conducted themselves improperly, and that had not yet been the case. He also said it was a fact that if a robbery or burglary took place in Rochdale, there was not less than half a dozen attorneys hunting or running after the prosecution, so that they could get the fees. It was stated that Eastwood had given the prosecution to Messrs Wood and Jackson, magistrates' clerks, previous to giving it to Mr Greenwood, and had also signed a paper to that effect. Mr Greenwood contended that when Eastwood signed it, he did not know what it was. Two witnesses named Taylor stated that they were in Messrs Wood and Jackson's offices at the time, and it was read to him and explained previous to him signing it. Mr Chadwick said it appeared very clear that the magistrates' clerks were entitled to the prosecution, and if Mr Greenwood was not satisfied, he must look for redress at the Salford sessions.

**74 18 June 1842**

**Bolton**

**ALLEGED THEFT FROM A BOAT'S CABIN** **Joseph Wilkinson** was charged with having stolen 5s 10d from the cabin of a boat on the Bolton and Manchester Canal on the day previously. **Thomas Norton**, the prosecutor, stated that he was entrusted with a boat laden with potatoes (which were for sale) from Manchester to this town. On the day previously, he had sold a portion of the cargo, and part of the money (5s 10d) accruing from the sale, he placed in a cupboard in the cabin of the boat, and during his temporary absence, it was taken away. The prisoner, who is also a boatman, had been seen, during the absence of the prosecutor, to lift the "scuttle" and go into the cabin. Mr Taylor, who appeared for the accused party, said that under the circumstances of the case, it was quite compatible with the innocence of his client that he might have been in the cabin during the time prosecutor was absent. The parties (prisoner and prosecutor) were employed by different persons to sell potatoes – their boats were lying contiguous, and it was a very common thing for the men on different boats to frequent each other's cabins, and to indulge in what was called "larking". The prisoner, on the Saturday morning, had bought some mutton chops, which he had placed in the cabin of the boat, and the following morning, his appetite being keen, he went to look for them, and

very much to his dismay, he found he was minus. The thought struck him, bearing in mind that it was a common thing for boatmen to “lark” together that, as prosecutor was aware of his having the chops, he had carried them off in “gammon”, and it was for the purpose of ascertaining this that he went into the cabin. There was no proof whatever that he had stolen the money, and as the cabin was accessible to anyone, it was most likely that some other person had committed the theft, as he should call the prisoner's employer who, he understood, would give him an excellent character. Mr Forshaw, the prisoner's employer, was then called, and gave him the most unexceptionable character of 15 years standing. He said that, notwithstanding the present charge, so persuaded was he of the prisoner's innocence, that he should have no objections whatever to retain him in his service. The prisoner was discharged.

#### **75 25 June 1842**

**CHILD DROWNED** On Friday night week, about half past nine o'clock, as one of the watchmen in the employ of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal Company named Thomas Makinson was walking along the canal bank, near Rose Bridge in Ince, he perceived something in the water which attracted his attention, and which he was induced to get out of the canal in order to examine. It proved to be the body of a boy about five years old ; and whilst Makinson and some other men were examining the child, its mother, whose husband is a boatman named **Robinson** in the employ of Messrs Woodcock and Co, immediately recognised it as her son. The boat of which Robinson had the charge was moored alongside the canal wharf of Messrs Woodcock and Co, and close to the spot where the lifeless body of the child was discovered ; and the little infant had been seen by its mother playing along with some other children only a few minutes previous to its being discovered in the water. An inquest was held on the body in the house of Mr John Taberner, the Walmesley's Arms, Ince, on Monday last, and a verdict of “Found drowned” was returned.

#### **76 22 October 1842**

**INQUESTS BEFORE JAMES CHAPMAN ESQ THE BOROUGH CORONER** On Monday, an inquest was held at the William the Fourth, Lord Street, on view of the body of John Baron, aged four years, son of John Baron, carrier, of Queen Street, Hulme. It appeared that on Sunday the deceased and three or four other boys went to the side of the river Irwell, opposite to Hulme Hall, to watch some boats. The deceased by some means accidentally fell over the river bank, which is very high in that part, and coming in contact with the rock as he was falling, the breath was knocked out of him. He was got out in five minutes ; surgical aid was on the spot, but life was quite extinct, owing probably to the injuries in the fall. Verdict : Accidentally drowned. We understand that the place where this child was drowned is particularly dangerous ; it is near the new cut on the Bridgewater canal, and Mr Chapman has very properly written to Lord Francis Egerton on the subject, recommending the adoption of some measures for the removal of danger.

On Tuesday, at the house of Mr Cope, the Bull's Head, Beswick, an inquest was held on the body of **Edward Evans**, a child twenty months old, son of **Thomas Evans**, keeper of the lock house on the Ashton Canal at Beswick. The child had been taken out on Sunday afternoon by a girl about eleven years old, and had been drowned by falling into what is called the by wash, which runs down on one side of the lock. A culvert covers part of the by wash, but the entrance to the culvert is not protected in any way ; and at the end of the culvert is a “well” seven feet deep, for the water to come on a level with the canal below the lock. The child was playing near the by wash, the water running at the time pretty freely ; and the ground on each side being on a descent, the child had rolled down into the by wash, and so been washed down the culvert and the well into the canal. The girl alarmed the father of the child, who went down into the bottom of the well, but the child had been washed through. He then let off the bottom lock, which occupied twenty minutes, and the child when found was dead. Verdict : “Accidentally drowned.” At the request of the jury, it appearing that this was the third fatality which had occurred within a short time from a similar cause, Mr Chapman addressed a letter to Mr Medhurst, the agent of the Canal Company, recommending that grids should be placed over the entrance to the culvert, or that the whole of the

by wash should be covered, in order to prevent the recurrence of these accidents ; and Mr Medhurst has replied, promising the matter shall have the requisite attention.

On Tuesday, an inquest was held at the Grapes public house, New Islington, on view of the body of Elizabeth Hurst, aged eight, of Prussia Street, Oldham Road, who had also come to her death by drowning. It appeared that on Tuesday afternoon in last week, the deceased was sent to McConnell's mill with her sister's tea. Her mother having promised her some toast if she made haste back, she just left the tea and went out to go home, her way being along the side of the canal. She was never heard or seen after till her body was found by a boatman floating in the canal, opposite McConnell's mill on the afternoon of Monday last. Her friends had made every possible inquiry and search for her ; her father had travelled about 40 miles on Sunday for that purpose. There were no marks of violence on her person, and her clothes were quite entire. Verdict : "Found drowned".

### **77 26 November 1842**

**DROWNING FROM INTOXICATION** An inquest was held on Tuesday at the Navigation Tavern, Elm Street, Water Street, before Mr Chapman, on view of the body of **Thomas Oliver**, a boatman on the Bridgewater Canal, aged 48. **Samuel Wales**, boatman of Robert Street, deposed that the deceased, who had no regular employment, was a jobber, generally at the potato wharf on the new line of the Bridgewater Canal. About ten o'clock on Sunday morning, he was walking along Hope Road with the deceased, who was then steady and in good spirits, and laughing and joking as usual. Witness parted with him opposite Mr Raley's, and the deceased and a man named Jones went towards the wharf. Witness went to work about half past seven the next morning ; Jones was working with him, and they expected the deceased, but as he did not make his appearance by half past two in the afternoon, Jones went to the Bridgewater Arms and the Railway Tavern in search of him. As he could not be found, witness proposed that they should drag for him, fearing that he was drowned. He was told that the boat where the deceased slept, and in which he lived, was in the basin next to Dawson Street. He got a boat hook, went upon his boat, and felt all round. In ten minutes he perceived something under the boat, and on pulling it to the surface found it was the body of the deceased. He was in his usual dress, but without his cap ; there were no marks of violence upon his dress or body. The body was lifeless, and quite cold and stiff. He was much addicted to liquor, but was not quarrelsome. William Redfern, painter of Medlock Street, Liverpool Road, saw the deceased about half past nine on Sunday night at the corner of the Navigation Tavern ; he was then drunk, and was going towards the wharf where his boat lay. Witness assisted him under the chain which is placed at the bottom of the street on Sundays, to prevent people from going on the wharf, and saw him to the gate of the wharf. **Jones**, another boatman, deposed that deceased and he were on board the same boat from ten in the morning until six in the evening of Sunday ; the deceased then left him in bed and he had not seen or heard of him since. In returning on board, he would have to pass over two other boats. Verdict : "Found drowned".

### **78 3 December 1842**

**ROBBERY IN A PUBLIC HOUSE** George Rose, Matilda Platt and Richard Pierpoint were brought up at the Borough Court on Tuesday, charged with robbing **William Worsall** of a £5 Bank of England note and two sovereigns. It appeared that the prosecutor, who is a boatman, went into Tong's public house at the bottom of Deansgate, between five and six o'clock that morning, and had a glass of ale and, while sitting there, fell asleep. The female prisoner was then seen to go to his pocket and take something out of it, which she afterwards showed to the prisoner Pierpoint, and about which they began to quarrel. In the meanwhile, a constable was sent for, and they were given into custody. When they were taken to the lock up, the female prisoner denied having any money at all about her ; but, when searched, a sovereign was found concealed in her stocking foot. The prisoner Pierpoint said he was quarrelling with the female prisoner because she would not return whatever she had taken from the prosecutor. Rose said he knew nothing of the affair, further than that the female treated him with a glass of ale, which she paid for. The female prisoner said she

was instigated to put her hands into the prosecutor's pockets by the barmaid (one of the witnesses against her) who wished to ascertain if the prosecutor had any money about him to pay for something more to drink. Platt and Pierpoint were committed for trial at the sessions, and Rose was discharged.

#### **79 10 December 1842**

**DEATH FROM THE KICK OF A HORSE** On Saturday last, an inquest was held at the Gaythorn Vaults, Albion Street, on the body of **John Gandy**, late of 65 Hewitt Street. It appeared that the deceased, who was employed by Mr William Turner as a boatman, went on Thursday morning to clean his horse, and that while he was so doing, the horse kicked him in the lower part of the belly ; he then went home, and medical assistance was sent for, but he lingered until Friday morning when he died about five o'clock. Mr Handforth, surgeon, said that death was caused by the injury the deceased had received in the kick from the horse. Evidence was given of the vicious nature of the horse in this respect. The verdict returned was "Accidental death" with a deodand of £1 imposed on the horse. The deceased has left a widow and six children.

[Deodand – a personal chattel which had been the immediate cause of the death of any person, and on that account forfeited to be sold for some pious use – New English Dictionary]

#### **80 14 January 1843**

**BOATMAN FOUND DROWNED** An inquest was held before H Charlton Esq, coroner, at the Bridgewater Arms, Runcorn, on Wednesday upon **Thomas Datchfield**, a boatman in the employ of the Bridgewater Trustees. Mrs Mountfield deposed that the deceased had been at her house the greater part of the day. About seven o'clock in the evening, he fell asleep, and at eleven she awoke him and told him that she was about to close the house. Deceased complained of being unwell, but did not express any wish to remain ; he did not appear to be intoxicated ; he went out of the house, and she saw nothing further of him until he was brought into the house on the following morning, dead. Mr Pendlebury, boat tender in the same employ, deposed that in consequence of inquiries from the wife of the captain of the boat, he searched in the basin near to where the boat was lying, and drew up deceased. Verdict, "Found drowned".

#### **81 28 January 1843 Warrington**

**STEALING MONEY** **Joseph Gent**, a boatman, was brought up before the magistrates charged with stealing £2 and a check purse, the property of John Wright. The prosecutor, who lived at Cadishead, was at the Royal Oak public house in Warrington on Monday night last, and had a purse containing two sovereigns and a half crown, together with two keys ; he had occasion, during the time he was there, to take the purse out of his pocket, and the prisoner Gent, who was there, saw him do so. In the course of the evening, he and his brother had a quarrel about some family matters, and having stripped off his coat and waistcoat to fight him, gave them to the prisoner to hold ; when he put them on again, he missed the purse out of his waistcoat pocket ; the prisoner had left the house in the meantime, and on his return was accused of the robbery, which he denied, but was observed, whilst holding his clothes, to take something from the pockets and transfer it to his own.

#### **82 4 February 1843**

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

named Samuel Benson, in the employ of Messrs W Jackson and Sons, carriers, Piccadilly Wharf. Verdict, "Found drowned".

**83 11 February 1843 Wigan**

**SABBATH DESECRATION** A boatman named **Charles Chatterley** was charged by Mr Robert Halliwell and the police officers with being drunk, riotous and disorderly on Sunday last. Mr Halliwell stated that he was passing the Hen and Chickens public house, Wallgate, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and saw the defendant in a state of intoxication, and making a great noise. It was about the time that persons were going to the several places of worship, and many were much annoyed by his disgraceful conduct. Mr Halliwell also stated that the defendant followed and insulted him by name, and that he went and fetched the police. The police officers stated that Chatterley resisted them as much as he could, and behaved in a most unruly manner at the prison. The magistrates inflicted a fine of £5, or in default of payment, to be committed to Kirkdale for two months hard labour.

**84 25 February 1843**

**DEATHS** On the 15<sup>th</sup> inst at Birkenhead, aged 81 years, **William Hughes**, the oldest inhabitant of that town, having been a boatman and fisherman there for sixty years, previously to which he was in the Royal Navy.

**85 3 June 1843**

**DEATHS BY DROWNING** On Saturday last, a girl named **Elizabeth Brindley**, the daughter of a boatman on the Rochdale Canal, was missed from her father's boat, in which she lived ; and, having been seen last about the boat, it was supposed that she must have fallen into the canal, and a search was commenced for her body. In a short time, the body was found, and life appeared to be quite extinct. It was supposed that she had accidentally fallen into the water when attempting to cross from her father's to another boat on the canal. The same day, a boy named Thomas Bardsley, aged four years, while playing near the Union bridge over the Rochdale Canal, fell in, and was drowned before any assistance could be rendered. On Friday night week, a watchman on the Duke of Bridgewater's canal saw a boatman running with a boat hook ; and, on proceeding to the spot to which he ran, he found that there was a woman in the water, whose body they afterwards got out. The corpse was identified as that of a woman named Mary Yorke, who sometimes appeared a little disordered in mind, in which she rambled from home ; and in one of those fits, she had disappeared. Inquests were held on the bodies by Mr Chapman, and verdicts of "Accidental death" in the first two cases were returned, and in the latter, "Found drowned".

**86 1 July 1843**

**STEALING FROM A BOAT** **John Gaunt**, a boatman, was committed for trial on Monday last for having stolen a pair of stockings from the cabin of a boat in the canal basin.

**87 29 July 1843**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** Yesterday afternoon, an inquest was held before Mr Chapman, the Borough coroner, at the Oxford Road Inn, on view of the body of **William Owen** of Bradley Street, Great Ancoats Street, boatman, 34 years of age, who had been found drowned in the Rochdale Canal near to Oxford Road. It appeared that the deceased was employed in one of the boats of Messrs Joseph and William Bellhouse. On Tuesday evening, about a quarter past seven, he was left in the boat by **Joseph Bostock**, a fellow boatman ; and on Bostock's return, in about 20 minutes, he found that the deceased had left the boat. Inquiry was made, but nothing was seen or heard of him until Thursday evening, when his body was found in the canal by Thomas Timperley, a sawyer in the employ of Messrs Bellhouse, and seemed to have been lifeless for some time. It was stated on the inquest that he was a teetotaller who had broken his pledge, that he had been drinking heavily for the last few days, and was subject to fits after drinking ; but there being no evidence to show

how he came into the water, the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned". The deceased has left a widow and one child.

**88 5 August 1843**

**TRESPASSING ON THE CANAL WHARF** At the Town Hall on Wednesday last, **Mr Ralph Woodcock**, constable to the Canal Company, brought before the bench an Irish woman named Mary McConnell, charging her with trespassing on the canal quays at Wigan. He stated that the defendant and others were in the habit of coming to the boats and exchanging mugs and other articles for old ropes, iron, &c, belonging to the canal company. The defendant he found on Sunday morning last in the act of bartering for some ropes ; and she had with her a sack containing some old ropes and a quantity of iron, which she had purchased from a boatman on the quay ; he ordered the defendant immediately off the boat, but she refused, and he in consequence took her into custody. The magistrates reprimanded the prisoner, and ordered her to be discharged.

**89 12 August 1843**

**CHESTER ASSIZES** On Wednesday last, **William Hough**, a flatman of Northwich, was tried for murdering his wife Sarah Hough ; when a verdict of Manslaughter was returned against him, but he was not sentenced.

**90 19 August 1843**

**Wigan**

**BODY FOUND IN THE CANAL** On Saturday last, the 12<sup>th</sup> instant, an inquest was held before Mr Grimshaw, at the house of Mr Edmund Green, the Bridge Inn, Chapel Lane, Wigan, to inquire into the death of **Thomas Walmsley**, whose body had been found in the canal that morning, near to the railway bridge. It appeared that the deceased, who was 18 years of age, was employed as a boatman, and on the preceding Friday night about 12 or 1 o'clock, was going down the canal preparing the locks for passage of his boat, which was following. On arriving at the bottom lock, he was missed, and was not found until Saturday morning last. It is supposed that the deceased, who had been employed all day and was working in the night, laid himself down to sleep until the arrival of the boat upon the lock gate, when at the edge of the water, and whilst he was asleep, he rolled off and fell in. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

**91 30 September 1843**

**CHILD FOUND DROWNED – VERDICT OF MURDER** Yesterday an inquest was held at the Northumberland Arms, Chester Road, by Mr Rutter, county coroner, on view of the body of a child a month old, which had been found in the Bridgewater Canal.

**Robert Hough**, a boy employed in a coal boat on the canal, deposed that about eight o'clock on Thursday morning, as he was coming to Manchester with a boat, driving the horse, when near to Ashton bridge between Stretford and Throstle Nest, he saw the body of a child floating in the water. He got it to the side of the canal with his whip, and then directed the attention of a man in the boat named **Thomas Fox** to it, by whom it was got out and placed in the boat.

Peter Royle, a labourer on the banks of the canal, stated that about half past eight on Thursday morning, he received information of the body of a child having been found in the canal. On proceeding to Ashton bridge, he found it in Fox's boat. The boatman had wrapped it up in a sack, but the body, when found, was perfectly naked and quite fresh. It did not appear to have been in the water longer than the previous night. He took charge of it, and conveyed it to the Northumberland Arms. There were no marks of violence on the body. He stated that boats were passing along the canal, both ways, all night.

Mr Greaves, surgeon, Stretford New Road, stated that he had examined the body of the child that morning. It appeared to him to be a month old. There were no external marks of injury, and he had not the least doubt that the death arose from drowning. The child had been put into the water alive, and the appearances were precisely those which arose from drowning.

A verdict was recorded of "Wilful murder, against some person unknown". Information was given

to the police, but no clue has yet been obtained likely to lead to the perpetrator of the diabolical act.

**92 30 September 1843**

**DROWNING IN THE IRWELL** On Monday afternoon, a boy named **John Williams**, son of a boatman residing in Quay Street, fell from the deck of one of the packets which was on its way from New Bailey Bridge to Throstle Nest. The accident occurred opposite Ordsall Hall ; twenty minutes elapsed before the boy was got out, when restorative means were used, but in vain. Mr Chapman held an inquest on the body next day, when a verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

**93 11 November 1843 Wigan**

**STEALING COALS FROM A CANAL BOAT** A boatman named **Heap**, and his servant, were brought before the court by **Martin**, the canal constable, charged with taking a barrow full of coals from a boat on the canal on Tuesday last. Martin produced a note from the consignees in Liverpool, wishing him to apprehend anyone caught taking coals. The prisoner produced another from the same parties, and on the same day, stating that they were not aware of the order. The magistrates, on hearing the notes read, ordered the prisoners to be discharged, cautioning them.

**94 25 November 1843 Rochdale**

**MAN DROWNED** On Friday week, Mr Dearden held an inquest at the house of Mr Edmund Lord, the Summit Inn, near Rochdale, on the body of **Joseph Reddill**, aged 32 years. It appeared that the man was a boatman ; and that, on the Thursday morning, he was crossing the lock gates of the Rochdale canal, near the above named public house, when he slipped and fell into the water. It was upwards of an hour before he could be got out, and life was extinct. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**95 6 January 1844 Wigan**

**STEALING MONEY FROM A BOAT** **W Auderton**, a boatman, was brought before the county magistrates at Messrs Woodcock and Part's office, on Tuesday last, charged with stealing £1 1s 4d from **William Pilkington**, his master, from a boat in the canal. He was found drunk in a public house by Woodcock, who apprehended him. He was committed to the sessions.

**96 20 January 1844 Warrington**

**SHAMEFUL CRUELTY TO A CHILD** **George Lowe**, a boatman, and Phoebe Bibby, who lived with him, though she had a husband in the town, were charged with committing a brutal assault on a girl named **Mary Ann Lowe**, a daughter to the male prisoner. On Monday last, the girl was brought to Mr Jones at the police office by a neighbour ; her back was in a worse condition than a soldier's after flogging, in fact the flesh was cut up and blood was issuing from her ear. The child stated that her father and the female lived together, and on the Monday morning he came home, when Bibby told him she had been saying something about her, upon which he took a knotted rope and beat her very much. The child's back was here exhibited, and struck horror through the court. She then stated that after he had beat her, the woman also beat her about the head ; she had since been in the workhouse. The magistrates said they never witnessed a more cruel case, nor one which more deserved punishment. They were each fined £5, and in default of payment, were committed to hard labour for two months each.

**97 27 January 1844 Bury**

**FATAL ACCIDENT** About half past six o'clock on Monday evening, **John Taylor**, boatman in the employ of Mr Bernard Hoyles, was assisting to discharge a flat load of timber at the wharf, Bury Bridge, Elton, when a quantity of timber fell upon him. Assistance was immediately rendered to the unfortunate man, and he was extricated as soon as possible, but he was dead when got from under the timber. He was 24 years of age. On Wednesday. Mr Rutter held an inquest on the body at the

Spread Eagle public house, and a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**98 24 February 1844 Blackburn**

MELANCHOLY AND FATAL ACCIDENT An inquest was held on Monday at John Barratt's beershop in the township of Colne, on the bodies of **Robert Duxbury** aged 20 years and **Jeremiah Fletcher**, aged 16 years. Duxbury was the mate of a boat called the *Lapis*, used for carrying stone on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, belonging to Messrs Thomas and Benjamin Chaffer of Burnley, and Fletcher was the half brother of the captain of the same boat. On Friday afternoon last, the boat was going to Foulridge for stone, and Fletcher having expressed a wish to go along with it, he was allowed to do so. They arrived at Foulridge in the evening, and slept on board. On the following morning, the boat was loaded, and they set off on their return, about six o'clock, arriving at the Foulridge tunnel a little after six. This tunnel is a mile in length, and the boats are got through by means of persons, one on each side of the boat, pushing against the side of the tunnel with their feet. **Tattersall**, the captain, took the horse to the other end of the tunnel, to be in readiness for the boat when it should get through, leaving Duxbury and Fletcher to push the boat through, which they knew how to do, as they had often done so before. Some persons who were waiting at the end to take a boat through heard persons talking in the tunnel, and shortly after they heard a splash in the water. On Tattersall, the captain, coming up, they mentioned the circumstance to him. They agreed to take the boat into the tunnel, and on going about 140 yards, they came to Tattersall's boat, but no one was on board. They pushed the boat back to the Foulridge side, but met with nothing except Duxbury's cap, and the boat hook floating on the water. After a long search for the bodies, Duxbury's was found about 40 yards from the place where the boat had been, and shortly after Fletcher's was also found near the same place. It was thought that one of them had fallen into the water, and that the other, in endeavouring to get him out, had met the same fate. Verdict ; "Accidental death".

**99 16 March 1844 Wigan**

OBSTRUCTING THE CANAL **Robert Wood**, a boatman, was brought before the bench on the above charge. Mr Benison, agent, stated that the defendant came with a load of slates which he ordered to be taken out and weighed ; the defendant went away and returned drunk, when he began to throw the slates into the canal, making himself liable to a penalty of £5. Fined 5s and costs.

**100 4 May 1844 Oldham**

POLICE CASES **John Gaunt**, a boatman, was charged with drunkenness and an assault on a constable on Sunday at Walk Mill. He was fined £1 and costs, or 21 days imprisonment.

**101 4 May 1844**

BOY DROWNED IN THE IRWELL On Thursday, Mr Rutter, the county coroner, held an inquest on view of the body of George Wilson, nine years of age, son of Mr Richard Wilson of Walker Street, Cumberland Street, shopman to his brother, Mr Wilson of Bridge Street. About four o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, a flatman named **Richard Yates**, while in his boat on the Manchester side of the river near to the New Bailey Bridge, heard a boy on the Salford side call out that a lad was drowning. He pushed his boat across, and a drag being obtained from the New Bailey, the body of the deceased was taken out, just at the back of the Irwell foundry, not more than ten minutes after the alarm was given. Life, however, appeared to be quite gone ; but, by the direction of the Rev C Bagshawe, the chaplain of the New Bailey, the body was taken to the hospital of the prison, where all the restorative means were used, but without effect, by Dr Crighton and Mr Stott. The deceased had been playing with some other boys on the towing path by the side of the river ; it did not appear how he had fallen in. Verdict, "Accidentally drowned".

**102 18 May 1844**

BOY ACCIDENTALLY DROWNED On Wednesday Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, held an



**107 10 August 1844 Rochdale**

REPORTED MURDER OF A WIFE A rumour has been current in the town during the present week, that a man named **Robert Dainty**, a boatman, had killed his wife, under the following circumstances. She was with her husband, steering the boat on the canal at Haigh, when not managing it to her husband's satisfaction he, in a violent manner, struck her on the back with a piece of bar iron, with such violence as to knock her down and cause a severance of the vertebrae. The deceased expired almost instantly. We have been unable to ascertain whether the husband has been committed to gaol.

**108 24 August 1844 Wigan**

WOMAN FOUND IN THE CANAL An inquest was held on Tuesday at Walmesley's Arms, Ince, on the body of Ruth Shepherd, who was found in the canal on Saturday night. She had been drinking for some days with a boatman, and left the Britannia public house on Saturday night somewhat fresh. During the night, some boatmen who were proceeding up the canal, found a basket floating in the water, and shortly after, a bonnet. On further examination, they found the body, which they conveyed to the Walmesley's Arms Inn. The deceased resided near New Springs. There was no evidence to show how she came into the water. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

**109 24 August 1844**

MAN DROWNED IN CASTLE FIELD LOCK About ten o'clock on Tuesday night, an alarm was given in the neighbourhood of Castle Field that a man was in the lock of the Bridgewater Canal there, and the private watchman and other servants having gone to the spot, succeeded soon after in dragging on shore the body of a boatman named **Samuel Pixon**, who is supposed to have slipped in accidentally owing to the darkness of the night ; life was extinct. Deceased was 30 years of age and came from Weston-on-Trent, Staffordshire. He has left a widow and child. An inquest was held on the body on Wednesday, before Mr Chapman, and when there being no evidence of how the man got into the canal, the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

**110 24 August 1844 South Lancashire Summer Assizes**

PUSHING A BOY INTO THE CANAL **Edward Maylett**, 25, was charged with having caused the death of Thomas O'Donnell by pushing him into the canal at Manchester. Mr Monk prosecuted ; the prisoner was defended by Mr Wilkins. The prisoner was a boatman employed on the Manchester Canal, and on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July last, was at one of the locks of the canal, on the Oxford Road, when the *Emma* boat came up on its way towards the wharf at Piccadilly. He was making the necessary arrangements for the passing of the boat when the deceased, a lad about eleven years of age who had been bathing in the canal, got on the lock gate, and was standing without his clothes. Just at this time, the prisoner gave him a push not, however, it is supposed, with a malicious intention, and forced him into the water, when he immediately sank. The prisoner, when made acquainted with the circumstance, took measures for recovering the body, but was unsuccessful ; it was taken out shortly afterwards by some persons who were standing by, but life was extinct. The prisoner, when taken into custody, denied that he had any desire to injure the deceased by what he had done, and that the whole was the result of mere accident. The jury, without hesitation, acquitted the prisoner.

**111 24 August 1844**

EXTRAORDINARY OUTRAGE AND ROBBERY Patrick Pollard, a young man aged 20, was brought to the Borough Court on Thursday charged with robbery and outrage under the following extraordinary circumstances :-

**Ann Burns**, of No 3 Whittle's Croft, the wife of a boatman, stated : On Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> May about half past three o'clock in the afternoon, I went into the White House Vaults, Ancoats Lane, with a neighbouring woman, for the purpose of getting a glass of liquor. A man of the name of

James Bowler was in the vaults. I never saw him before ; he asked me to drink with him, but I declined. Afterwards, in the course of conversation, he said as I could not drink ale, he should like me to go and see his mother, who made whiskey. I asked him where she lived, and he said in John Street. I went with him, and he took me into a cellar in Back Potts Street, but I did not see any person there on my entrance. I asked him where his mother was, and he replied, "I'll give you my mother before you go". He then locked the door, and said, "What money have you got upon you?" I said, "Is it money you want?" - and just as I said that, a knock was heard at the door, and Bowler opened it, let in Pollard (the prisoner) and a man named Ogden. Bowler then caught me around the waist, and the prisoner and Ogden cut off my pocket, which had in it a shilling in silver and fourpence in copper, which they counted before my face. Ogden then said, "I thought you'd got more money than that". I replied, "God bless you, if it's money you want, I am not without money, and I'll fetch you 5s if you'll let me go out as I came in". Pollard, the prisoner, then swore an oath and said, "You are not going out of the place this night ; we have three more men to come in before you go out". I then gave some loud screams, for I thought they meant to murder me ; and the men then began to punch me, and to stifle me by grappling my throat, but I screamed again, and some persons outside hearing me, broke open the door and set me at liberty. I directly went to a policeman and told him the particulars. A woman afterwards came to my house saying she was Ogden's sister, and expressing a hope that I would not appear against him. Police-constable Thomas Green said he was the officer to whom the prosecutrix gave her information, and from her description he apprehended Bowler and Ogden, who were brought to the sessions, convicted, and sentenced to transportation for ten years for the offence. Police-constable Thomas Fletcher said he apprehended Pollard at Oldham on the Tuesday morning, and when taken he said he thought he should not get as much punishment as Bowler and Ogden, who had a bad previous character. He was committed for trial.

## 112 12 October 1844

**FATAL ACCIDENT – FIVE MEN DROWNED** About eight o'clock on Wednesday evening, the wife of the steward of the *Hesperus*, then lying in the river and intended to sail the following day for Africa, engaged a boat, manned by two hands, to go on board and bring back her husband. The night was rough, but they reached the ship in safety, and the mate, the steward, boatswain and one of the seamen having embarked in the boat, left the vessel but never reached the shore. It was supposed that they must have been upset in a squall, but it has since been ascertained that they were run down by the *Iron Duke* steam ship, bound to Dublin with the mails. The passengers on board the *Iron Duke* have published the following account of the catastrophe :-

Having come down slowly by the docks, and just having passed the Iron Ship Building Yard, the captain being on the stage keeping a look out, and one man at each paddle box, with certainly more than two men looking out on the fore-castle, several passengers being at the time about the stage in front of the chimney, the night dark and blowing hard, a cry was passed from the fore-castle, "A boat right ahead". Immediately the words, "Stop her, back her", were given by the captain, which were at once responded to ; but the boat having been so close under the ship before she was seen, from the darkness of the night, had not time to clear her, and while the engines were in the act of being stopped, was run on by the steamer and swamped, having been struck by the larboard paddle of the steamer. The ship was at once stopped, blue lights were burned, life buoys were thrown over, and the boat lowered with a crew to look for and render assistance to the unfortunate people who had been in the boat ; but after searching about for a long time – fully three quarters of an hour – were obliged to return without being able to discover any trace either of the men or boat. The rudder and oars of the boat have been picked up, but nothing has been seen either of the bodies of the unfortunate men or the boat. **William Ritchie**, one of the boatmen, has left a wife in a delicate state of health and five children, the eldest not ten years of age, totally unprovided for. The other boatman, **Hugh Jones**, is also a married man, but without family.

**113 9 November 1844**

**Wigan**

OFFENCE AGAINST THE LEEDS AND LIVERPOOL CANAL ACT Ralph Woodcock preferred a charge against **John Barton**, boatman, for allowing his boat to proceed on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal without having a person at the tiller to direct the same. Defendant was discharged on payment of costs.

**114 23 November 1844**

**Wigan**

CHARGE OF ASSAULT BY BOATMEN On Monday, three boatmen named **William Moss**, **Thomas Gore** and **Thomas Guest** were charged with assault by **Ralph Woodcock**, constable on the canal. Mr Ackerley, solicitor, appeared for the defendants. From the evidence, it appeared that the defendants were in charge of a boat which was being discharged at the Wallgate Warehouse, when the captain came and ordered the boat away to make room for another which was coming to the warehouse. Defendants refused, when the captain seized hold of their ropes, and cut them, on which a struggle ensued between the parties. The bench dismissed the case, and the captain had to pay costs.

BREACH OF THE CANAL ACT The captain in the last case appeared against another boatman, named **Thomas Melling**, for crossing the public highway with his rope, instead of taking it under the bridge, contrary to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal Act. The bench discharged the defendant on payment of costs.

**115 14 December 1844**

SUDDEN DEATH FROM APOPLEXY Yesterday an inquest was held at the Brown's Field Tavern, Brewer Street, Port Street, by Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, on view of the body of **James Eastwood** aged 50, a boatman from Southowram in Yorkshire. It appeared that about half past one on Thursday afternoon, the deceased had gone into the tap room of the Brown's Field Tavern, being then quite well and cheerful. He remained about an hour conversing with the people there, when he was observed to fall back in his chair ; some water was procured, it being thought he was in a fit, but before it could be applied, he was dead. Mr Cooke, assistant to Mr Harrison, surgeon, was sent for, but it was too late to render any assistance. The deceased, it appeared, was an intemperate man, but he was quite sober at the time. He was unmarried. Verdict, "Died from apoplexy".

**116 14 December 1844**

WOMAN DROWNED AT MARPLE On Monday, an inquest was held at the Navigation Inn, Marple, before Mr Hudson, on the body of **Hannah Kirk**, wife of **James Kirk** of Whaley, boatman. The deceased was steering her husband's boat along the basin near the ninth lock of the Peak Forest Canal on Sunday morning between twelve and one o'clock when, in consequence of the ice, the boat struck the side and she was suddenly thrown into the water. Her husband immediately jumped in and got her out, but she never recovered. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

**117 18 January 1845**

**Wigan**

COMMITTAL FOR BURGLARY On Monday, a young man named **Joseph Winstanley**, a boatman, was committed for trial at the next Liverpool Assizes for this offence. Shortly after retiring to bed on Wednesday morning last, Mrs Heys of the Fox Tavern, Chapel Lane, heard persons in the house, but being alone, she did not give any alarm ; on coming downstairs at 6 o'clock in the morning, she told the servant woman who, on going into the cellar for some ale, found that the door of the cellar, communicating with a passage at the back of the house, had been broken open by some person from the outside ; it had been properly fastened on the previous night. On examination, it was found that a new shirt, a black cloth coat, a handkerchief and some pastry had been taken. Information had been given to the police and the pawnbrokers. On Thursday morning, Winstanley went to Mr Jordan's, pawnbrokers, Chapel Lane, to pledge the shirt, which

was examined, but thought not to be the one stolen ; it was pledged for 2s in his own name ; he was subsequently apprehended and stated, on being charged with the offence, that he had not pledged any shirt. A person proved that he was near the place at an early hour on the morning of the robbery. On behalf of the prisoner, it was contended that when near the place he was accosted by two men, who prevailed upon him to purchase the shirt, and that he subsequently pawned it. The coat stolen had been pledged on the morning of the robbery at Mr Jordan's by another person unknown.

**118 8 March 1845**

**Ashton and Stalybridge**

**CHARGE OF EMBEZZLEMENT** On Wednesday, **William West**, a boatman in the employ of Mr J Boulton, was brought before J Jewett, J Lord, J Harrop and J Grimshaw Esqrs, charged with embezzling various sums of money, the property of his employer. Mr R Newton, chief constable, stated that some few days ago, Mr Boulton, the proprietor of the swift packet boats plying from Ashton to the Guide Bridge Railway Station, mentioned to him that he had some reason to doubt the honesty of the prisoner, who was a captain of one of the boats in question ; he had, therefore, taken means to ascertain the fact. The prisoner was provided with a book by his master to put down the various sums of money he might receive during each trip to the station and back. The prisoner had regularly made entries in the book, but had not put down the whole of the money he had received. Mr Newton said that he had gone down by the boat himself during the last six days, and had also sent several other persons to count the number of passengers in the steerage and in the cabin. He had then the number before him during twenty three trips, and on comparing them with the prisoner's book, he found that the difference in the numbers entered by him would amount to 14s. Considering that the number of trips were 20 per day, and supposing that the prisoner had pocketed the fares in the same ratio as he had done during the trips he had noticed, it would in the course of a week amount to a considerable sum. The bench directed that the depositions should be taken, after which the prisoner was committed for trial.

**119 12 April 1845**

**Wigan**

**OFFENCE ON THE CANAL** On Wednesday, a boatman named **Jesse Porter** was charged at the Town Hall with a breach of the bye laws of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, under the following circumstances. Woodcock, canal constable, stated that on Friday morning last, a laden boat was coming down the canal near Henhurst Bridge lock, when the defendant with an empty boat came out of the Leigh branch ; he was ordered to stop his boat, but would not, and consequently he jammed his own and the other boat in the entrance of the lock, impeding the navigation. He was fined in the penalty fixed by the bye laws, 20s and costs 16s.

**120 17 May 1845**

**Rochdale**

**THEFT FROM THE PERSON** On Wednesday, James Butterworth was charged with having, on Monday night, stolen £1 13s from the person of **James Whittom**, a boatman. It appeared that on Monday afternoon the prisoner and others were drinking at the Rake public house, Littleborough, after which the prosecutor, the prisoner and another person went to sleep in a boat in the Bank dockyard of the Rochdale Canal, Littleborough. In the morning when Whittom awoke, his money had been taken and Butterworth was missing. The prisoner had no money on him on the previous night, but when taken into custody on the Tuesday, he had 8s. He was committed for trial at the Salford sessions.

**121 21 June 1845**

**Warrington**

**POACHING BY A BOATMAN** On Saturday, **John Beckett**, captain of a vessel plying on the Old Quay Canal, was charged under the Game Act with having, on the 13<sup>th</sup> instant, killed a partridge on the preserves of G Greenall Esq, Walton Hall. The defendant was fined 20s and 10s 6d costs. Mr Nicholson, who appeared for the defence, said he should appeal at the next quarter sessions.

**122 12 July 1845**

**Altrincham**

HAY STOLEN BY A BOATMAN On Monday morning, **Thomas and Elizabeth Littler**, a boatman and his daughter, working a boat between Northwich and Worsley, were brought before Trafford Trafford Esq at Outrington Hall, charged with stealing a quantity of hay from Thomas Crosby, publican and farmer, Lymm. It appears Stead and Bradford, constables, were dispatched in search of the hay stolen, and after searching several boats in Manchester and Worsley, succeeded in finding it concealed on board the prisoner's boat in Worsley. He admitted taking it, and was committed for trial at the sessions.

**123 19 July 1845**

**Wigan**

COMMITTAL FOR RAPE On Friday afternoon, a young man named **John Sankey**, a boatman lately residing at Halsall near Ormskirk, was committed for trial at the assizes for a rape upon the person of Sarah Barlow, a child nine years of age.

**124 11 October 1845**

**Wigan**

SUICIDE BY POISON On Thursday week, an inquest was held at the Fox Tavern upon the body of an elderly man named **Robert Draper**, who had formerly been a boatman on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and at his death, lodged with a person named Gerrard in Bridge Street, and had been for some time in a desponding state of mind. At an adjourned inquest on the following day, it appeared that on the previous Monday, he applied to Mr Guest, druggist, Wallgate, for two pennyworth of arsenic, but was unsuccessful. On a *post mortem* examination being made, his stomach was found to contain corrosive sublimate. A paper which had contained the poison was also found in his clothes, with the word "poison" upon it. The jury returned a verdict of "Death by poison" whilst in an insane state of mind.

**125 1 November 1845**

**Stockport**

RAPE CASE On Monday at the county court, a stout, athletic, burly looking boatman named **Robert Robinson** alias "Rough Robin" was charged with violating the person of a married female named Mary Wolliscroft in the township of Romiley at eleven o'clock on the 22<sup>nd</sup> instant. The prisoner was committed for trial at the next assizes.

**126 8 November 1845**

THEFT FROM A BOATMAN Yesterday week at the Borough Court, a young man named William Thomas was brought before Mr Walker, charged with stealing a watch from **Joseph Long**, a boatman of Whaley in Derbyshire. On Wednesday afternoon, the prosecutor had been drinking at a public house in Deansgate, kept by the prisoner's father; the prisoner sat by him a while, and after he was gone, the prosecutor missed his watch. He gave information to the police, and on Thursday the prisoner was apprehended by police constable Breeze; a pawn ticket relating to the watch was found upon him, which he said he had bought of another man for 7s 6d. On his way to the station, he offered to find the watch if Long would not prosecute him. The officer took the ticket to Mr Kenyon's, pawnbroker, Gartside Street, and obtained the watch. Mr Kenyon deposed that the watch had been pawned by the prisoner on Wednesday night, in the name of William Julett. The prisoner said nothing in defence, and was committed for trial at the sessions.

**127 20 December 1845**

**Rochdale**

CHARGES RESPECTING CANAL BOATS On Monday, Mr Joseph Marsland, one of the proprietors of the Chamber Colliery, was summoned by the Rochdale Canal Company, under the following circumstances. It appeared by the evidence of **Thomas Kershaw** and **James Hurst**, two servants in the employ of the canal company, that on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November last, No 6 boat, belonging to the Chamber Colliery Company, was left floating in Ancoats Pool, of the Rochdale Canal, Manchester. Mr Marsland did not appear, and was fined £2 and costs. He was also fined £2 and expenses for allowing No 15 boat to float in the same pool on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November; also £2

and costs for allowing the same vessel to float in the Ancoats pool, on Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of December.

**128 20 December 1845**

MAN DROWNED On Thursday, Mr Dearden, coroner, held an inquest at the Summit Inn near Littleborough, on the body of **James Crabtree**, a boatman. It appeared that on the previous Wednesday, deceased, who was 58 years of age, was at the Summit lock, preparing for a vessel to enter the lock, when he fell in and was drowned. Verdict : "Accidentally drowned".

**129 3 January 1846 Wigan**

BRUTAL ASSAULT On Wednesday, a boatman named **Henry Winders** was charged with violently assaulting Mrs Georgeson, of the Bull and Dog public house, in Scholes. It appeared that the prisoner was laid asleep upon a bench in the house on Saturday evening last, when he was teased by a prostitute. He rose, and supposing that it was the complainant who had annoyed him, very violently assaulted her, kicking her very severely. The husband appeared in support of the case, Mrs Georgeson not being able to go out. The defendant admitted the offence, but stated that he was in liquor, and he was mistaken in the person. The Court said they could not excuse the defendant on such a plea, and fined him 40s and costs.

**130 7 January 1846 Rochdale**

CHARGE AGAINST A BOATMAN On Monday, **Thomas Ainscow** of Manchester, captain of a boat, was summoned by the Rochdale Canal Company on a charge of having, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December last, left one of the gates open belonging to one of the locks on the Rochdale Canal at Ancoats, and causing damage to the gate to the amount of 10s. The charge was proved by Sarah Jackson, and defendant was fined 25s and costs, being one fourth of the penalty.

**131 24 January 1846 Wigan**

CHILD DROWNED On Monday night last a child, eight years of age, son of a boatman named **Leyland** was, by the accidental collision of two boats at Booth's Town, Worsley, thrown into the canal, and before it could be extricated, was drowned. The boy's brother, who was with the boat at the time, brought the body on to Wigan where the matter, coming to the knowledge of the coroner, he was about taking steps for an inquest, but on the arrival of a county officer with an authority from the county coroner, the body of the child was conveyed back to Worsley where an inquest has since been held.

**132 25 February 1846**

ROBBERY BY A DOMESTIC SERVANT At the Salford Town Hall on Thursday, a young woman named Helen Bradshaw was brought before Mr Trafford on the following charge :- The prisoner, it appears, had been in the service of Mr Hugh Roberts of the Clifton Arms, Oldfield Road, and had recently left his service. After she had left her situation, various articles were missed, and suspicion fell upon her as the thief. Information was given to the police who, on searching the house where she lived in Liverpool Road, discovered a silk shawl and dress, and also a china jug and silver spoon, all of which were identified as the property of Mr Roberts. A boatman named **Brockbank** was also charged with being implicated in the robbery, but he was subsequently set at liberty. The female was committed for trial.

**133 28 February 1846 Leigh**

BREACH OF THE PEACE On Thursday, **Joseph Gore**, a boatman, was charged with having committed a breach of the peace at the Eagle and Child public house, and was ordered to find two sureties in £5 each and himself in £10.

**134 25 March 1846 Rochdale**

On Monday, **Charles Lord**, a stout robust looking young man, a boatman, was summoned for

having a few days ago assaulted **James Clay**, a low slender old man, also a boatman. He said that Lord and he had a dispute. Lord attempted to throw him into a lock in the canal, his master (**Isaac Holroyd**) however came up at the time, when he commenced a brutal assault upon Holroyd. James Kershaw, a lock tender, proved both assaults, and declared he never saw a bit of better punching in his life. He was fined 10s and costs for the first offence, and ordered to find sureties to keep the peace for twelve months, for the second.

**William Richardson**, a boatman, was fined 5s and costs for having refused to allow **Samuel Jackson** to pass his boat with an empty one, in the Rochdale Canal near the Oldham junction of the Manchester and Leeds railway, a few days ago.

### **135 11 April 1846**

**SHOCKING FATALITY** An inquest was held at Droylsden on Tuesday last, before Mr W S Rutter, the county coroner, touching the death of **Thomas Thornley**, a lock-keeper on the Ashton Canal, who died on Monday last, in consequence of injuries received whilst drinking at a public house on the previous day. It appeared from the statement of the witnesses that on Sunday morning, deceased and another man went to the King's Arms public house, where they continued drinking until service time, about half past ten in the forenoon, and on leaving the house they went into the yard to look at a new cart, and were there joined by William Hulme, a man occasionally employed as waiter. After remaining in the yard a few minutes, they went into the barn, and William Hulme and deceased began to wrestle in sport. Shortly after this, the landlord's son found deceased lying in the barn, when he complained that he had not the use of his arm, and that the back of his neck was hurt. He begged that they would allow him to sleep a short time as he thought it would do him good, and the landlord left him for about an hour, when he went again, and found him perspiring freely. About five o'clock the landlord went to see him again, when deceased complained he had lost the use of his limbs. His wife was accordingly sent for, and a surgeon was called in also, when it was ascertained that he had sustained some injury to the spine. He remained at the King's Arms all night, but was conveyed home on Monday, on which day he died about three o'clock. Deceased stated that he and Hulme had only been larking and that there was no animosity between them. An examination of the body was afterwards made, when it was found that the 6<sup>th</sup> vertebrae of the neck was injured, and also a quantity of extravasated blood in the spinal canal. Verdict accordingly.

### **136 11 April 1846**

**ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN** On Thursday at the Borough Court, before Mr Consterdine, a tall powerful looking young fellow named **Jonathan Dean** was brought up in custody charged with stealing a watch and a purse containing thirty shillings from a boatman engaged on the Rochdale Canal. From the statement of the prosecutor (who did not seem one of the sharpest men in the world) it appeared that a fortnight ago he had engaged the prisoner to assist him in the management of his boat, and that, after remaining with him a day or two, he had absconded, first visiting the cabin of the boat, in which prosecutor was asleep, and stealing his watch and purse. Information of the robbery was given to the police, but the prisoner managed to keep out of the way until Wednesday night, when he was seen and apprehended. As the officers were not fully prepared to go into the case, the prisoner was remanded until Saturday.

### **137 15 April 1846**

**SUSPECTED MURDER – ADJOURNED INQUEST** The adjourned inquest on view of the body of Daniel Drinkwater was summoned for four o'clock yesterday afternoon, at the Welsh Harp public house, Lees Street, Great Ancoats Street, before Mr Chapman, borough coroner ; but it was about five before the examination was resumed, in consequence of the difficulty of getting the jury together, and one of them was fined for non attendance.

The first witness called was Mr George Ogden, Harpurhey, who deposed : I knew the deceased. I was his godfather. He was overseer for Harpurhey, and I am one of the guardians. I last saw him on Tuesday the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, at the Blue Boar, near the Fish Market, about half past two o'clock.

He said he had been looking for me, for to let me know that he had paid the money into the bank for the property tax of Harpurhey. The sum, he said, was about £51, which he had collected. He showed me the receipt (the receipt was produced). I paid for a glass of ale for him, and left him. He seemed quite sober. I saw no injuries upon him. His clothes were clean and perfect. He was looking very well. The deceased was addicted to liquor, and when in that state was foolish – and I think he was anxious to see me, in order to satisfy me that he had paid the money. When he had money, he was very fond of treating. He was fond of going to low public houses. He was not quarrelsome at all. I ascertained that the deceased had received about 13s, as the amount of his commission upon the money which he had paid into the bank. I should think he must have had that money upon his person. When he was in liquor, he would go anywhere with anybody – it mattered not what sort of company it was.

Edward Morgan deposed : that he lived at 14 Angel Street. Knew the deceased. On Tuesday fortnight, the deceased came into the Brewers' Arms in Angel Street between three and four o'clock. Deceased was alive, and appeared to be sober. Deceased called witness over to his side of the room, and asked him if he would sup with him. He had called for a pint of beer. Witness did sup with him. Deceased gave witness a halfpenny to buy tobacco with. They smoked together. Witness's father, witness, deceased and Henry Newberry were there beside other company, and deceased paid 3s or 4s for drink they had together. It was threepenny beer they drank. The taproom was almost full at the time. Can't tell the names of all the parties, as he did not know them. After they had drunk the beer, deceased said if witness and his father would go to Thorp's beerhouse in Newtown, he would pay for a shillingworth of beer. They did not go with him. They were prevented going by John Lees, soilman, coming in and pulling deceased upon the form. Lees offered 3d to deceased's 3d for half a gallon of beer. The half gallon was called in ; and while they were drinking it, another man called John Lees, a swivel weaver, came in, and spoke to deceased, whom he knew well. When the half gallon was done, witness, his father, the two Lees, a woman who lives with Lees, the nightsoilman, and deceased went to the Corporation Vaults in Swan Street, About 5 or 6 quarts of ale came in amongst them and other persons who happened to be there. From the Corporation Vaults, witness, the two Lees, the woman, and deceased went to Turtle's Vaults. The deceased gave the woman, Sally Lees, a shilling, and told her to call for a gill of rum and twopennyworth of black beer. That they drank amongst them. All of them then went to a jerry shop behind the Fleece in Oak Street. On the way, Lees the nightsoilman threatened to beat Sally if she did not go home. She did not go home, but followed to the jerry shop. She stopped at the door as they entered the jerry shop. The deceased had given witness 3d at the Weaver's Arms, to get something to eat with. Witness then left the deceased and the two Lees in the jerry shop, and he and Sally went to the Fleece, where he paid for a pint of beer out of the 3d deceased had given him in the Weaver's Arms. He did not see the deceased that night. Was rather tipsy, and could not say what time it was when he left the deceased. Believes it was after nine. Thought he and Sally would be about a quarter of an hour at the Fleece. When they left, they went to the beer house where they had left the deceased and the two Lees, but found they had gone. He and Sally then went straight to the Weaver's Arms, where he left her. Before leaving, he and Sally had a pint of beer between them. It might be half past ten when he left Sally in the Weaver's Arms. He went home immediately and went to bed. He found in the Weaver's Arms his father and young Henry Newberry, who stays with them, and they all went home together. The next morning about nine o'clock, he saw at the Weaver's Arms John Lees, the nightsoilman. Some other nightsoilmen came in with John Lees. John Lees said he had got home between one and two in the morning, and that he had some papers in his pocket with writing on them. He said he did not know where he had got them or what they were. He said he found them in his pocket when he awoke in the morning. Lees did mention the deceased's name in the morning to witness. When witness left him in the company of the Lees, the deceased had on a suit of black clothes and a hat with crepe round. The hat produced is like the one he wore. Deceased had either shoes or boots on when he left him. Deceased was not very tipsy when he left him. There was no quarrelling that night. Deceased took his share of the drink they had. While witness was with him, deceased might have spent about six shillings and sixpence.

Deceased had nothing to eat while he was with witness.

John Lees, weaver, was next sworn : In answer to questions put by the coroner, he stated he was not sober. He could not say how many glasses he had had today. He then deposed that he lived in Clayton. He knew the deceased, whom he met last Tuesday night but one at the Weaver's Arms, between seven and eight. Deceased was drinking in the tap room with seven or eight chaps, one of whom called himself John Lees. There was a woman there with Lees. All the rest were strangers to witness. They were standing up and were middling for drink. The deceased asked witness to drink as soon as he entered. Had known the deceased 14 or 16 years. Soon after being there, the deceased asked witness and some of the others to go and have a glass somewhere else. The witness corroborated the evidence of the last witness up to the part where he left the deceased in the company of this witness and the other John Lees. He then continued. Lees asked Daniel (the deceased) to lend him some money. Witness cannot say at what time this was. Witness told the deceased not to lend him any money, as he thought it enough for him to pay for the liquor without lending money. He did not lend him money while witness was awake. They then went to a public house called the Red House in Tib Street. There were only three of them there. Should think they had three pints, for which the deceased paid. Witness went asleep there. There was no quarrelling while he was awake. About 12 o'clock, the waiter wakened him and told him it was time for him to go home, Can't tell what became of the deceased and the other man called Lees. Saw nothing amiss with the deceased before he (witness) went to sleep. Did not see the deceased again.

William Thomson, waiter at the Red House, Tib Street. He saw the deceased on the evening of the 31<sup>st</sup> of March. The last witness was along with the deceased. Thinks the other John Lees was the other man along with him, but would not swear to it. Nobody else was with him. They were all tipsy. They had either one or two quarts of penny ale. Deceased paid for it. Deceased fell or was pushed off one of the seats in the room, and his head struck against the floor. His head began to bleed profusely. The clothes of deceased were dirty as he entered. After deceased fell, his companions were inclined to go to sleep. About twenty minutes after the deceased fell, witness turned them out. He first put the last witness out, and in a minute after put out the other Lees. Drinkwater was the last put out of the house. Drinkwater was ten minutes or a quarter of an hour in the house behind the last Lees. This was about five minutes to twelve. Witness thought that by keeping Drinkwater a little longer than the others, he would become better. He did become better, and walked away very well. Witness followed him close out into the street, and deceased said he was going home. There were many people about in the streets ; did not see the two persons he was with. There seemed to be no quarrelling between the deceased and his companions ; saw no papers produced by the deceased, nor any money, except what was produced to pay for the beer. Saw neither of the others produce money or papers. While he was not in the room, papers and money might have passed between the parties. Should think the deceased was not capable to take care of himself. The deceased was respectably dressed, and the two persons who were with him were very meanly dressed. Two men, who happened to be in the tap room, and who are of bad character, crept close up to the deceased, but witness watched them, and they did not get anything from him. He told them to keep away from him, and they went away from him.

[Mr Superintendent Cochrane of the C Division stated that one of the two men who crept up to the deceased in the Red House committed a robbery on the very night deceased and they were in that house, and for which robbery he is undergoing an imprisonment of 12 months in Lancaster Castle. The other man cannot be found.]

**Sarah Jackson**, single woman : Is daughter of the keeper of the lock over the Rochdale Canal in Leech Street. Attends to the lock for her mother, her father being dead. On Wednesday morning, the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, was awoke about 5 in the morning for the lock key by a boatman. On the boatman's return with the key, he brought witness a man's hat. The hat produced is the one he brought. There was a piece of white calico on the hat. Saw the deceased pulled out of the water at a place about a boat's length from where the hat was found.

John Heatley, surgeon, Harpurhey : Saw the deceased and conversed with him on Tuesday morning, the 31<sup>st</sup> of March. Deceased then had on a dark dress coat, either blue or black, and dark plaid

trousers.

The Coroner suggested that an adjournment should take place, to allow time for the production of further evidence. He thought the public were much indebted to Mr Beswick and the police for having issued a handbill on the subject of the case, and for the exertions they had made in this matter.

The inquest then adjourned at 20 minutes past 9, to Tuesday next at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

### **138 6 May 1846**

On Tuesday, at Runcorn, **Robert Jones**, a flatman who has been for some time insane, rushed into the street, ran into a greengrocer's shop, seized a knife and cut his throat, nearly severing his head from his body.

### **139 8 May 1846**

**SINGULAR SUICIDE BY A BOY** An inquest was held on Thursday at the Minshull Arms, Downing Street, Chorlton, before Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, touching the death of George, son of Mr Robert Edwards, inn keeper, whose body was found in the Rochdale Canal by a boatman, near to the Union Company's warehouse in Piccadilly, between 12 and 1 o'clock on Wednesday. The body was much decomposed, and appeared to have been in the water some days. His mother stated that he had left home about a quarter before six o'clock on Sunday evening, since which time she had seen nothing of him until found in the canal. He had been absent during Sunday afternoon, but went home to his tea, when his mother asked him if he had been to see his aunt, Mrs Lea of Great Ancoats Street, to which he replied in the affirmative, stating she was very well. Having been to see Mrs Lea herself, his mother knew that he was telling an untruth, as she had found Mrs Lea very poorly, and she threatened to acquaint his father. On hearing this, the deceased ran out without his cap, saying he would go and drown himself, and his mother never afterwards saw him alive. She stated that her son was a very self willed, bad tempered boy, who required correction ; but that though he required to be dealt with severely at times, his father had not beaten him for the last five months. Verdict, "Found drowned".

### **140 13 May 1846**

**STEALING FROM THE PERSON** On Wednesday evening, a boatman named **Robert Lister**, in company with an abandoned female named Ellen Murray, were drinking in a vaults in Chapel Street, Salford, when a woman named Glass, who called at the house to hawk "sheeps-trotters", observed the woman Murray steal Lister's watch. She did not mention the circumstance at the time, but in a while afterwards, police constable Hill, whilst passing the vaults, heard the two women quarrelling, and when he entered, the woman Glass charged Murray with having robbed a man of his watch. The officer accordingly took her into custody, and on searching her at the office, a watch was found in her possession. Next morning she was placed in the dock with several other prisoners, amongst whom was Lister, who had been found drunk and incapable early that morning in Greengate. Lister was fined 2s 6d, which he paid, and was then liberated, and Ellen Murray was remanded until Friday, in order that an owner might be found for the watch. On Thursday afternoon, however, Lister, having become sober, had discovered that his watch had been stolen, and therefore went to the police office to give information, when it was ascertained, from the description he gave of the watch, that it was the one found in the possession of the female prisoner Murray, although Lister had not recognised her when they were in the dock together. She was committed for trial.

### **141 3 June 1846**

**CHILD RUN OVER** An inquest was held before Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, on Friday last, on view of the body of **Francis Schofield**, aged 1 year and 8 months, the son of a boatman living in Little Peter Street, who it appeared was run over by a cart about 5 o'clock on the previous day. The child was playing in Little Peter Street at the hour above mentioned, when two one horse

carts, driven by a man named G Halliday, were passing along the street at the time, and the child was knocked down and run over. The carter was, of course, taken into custody at the time, as the accident was supposed to have resulted from his carelessness, but no evidence of this appearing at the inquest, a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned, and he was subsequently liberated.

#### **142 3 June 1846**

**ASSAULT BY A BOATMAN** A sturdy looking young boatman named **Dixon** was brought up before Mr Maude on Monday, charged under a warrant with assaulting a companion in the most savage and violent manner. The complainant, a young fellow following the same calling, seemed to possess considerably more physical strength than brains, judging at least by the stupid way in which he told his story, the gist of which was, that they had been drinking together when a brawl took place, and Dixon got his (complainant's) "nob into chancery" and inflicted upon it a modicum of punishment that had made him remember it ever since. The prisoner gave a different account of the transaction, making it appear that he was first attacked, and that he did not mean to hurt complainant. Mr Maude : Oh no, you would certainly be very delicate about hurting him, I dare say. [Laughter.] Prisoner : Sartinly, sur, aw never thowt o' sich a thing. Mr Maude : Well, you must find two sureties in ten pounds to keep the peace for three months. The prisoner then stepped from the dock, evidently puzzled to know where his bail was to come from.

#### **143 24 June 1846**

##### **Warrington**

**ASSAULT BY BOATMEN** **John Crowther, William Jones** and **William Braddock**, three boatmen in the employ of Messrs Bradley, Barrow and Orme of Tipton, were brought before the magistrates on Monday, charged with assaulting Stead, one of the Cheshire constabulary stationed at Lymm. That officer stated that, between 12 and 1 o'clock on Sunday morning, he heard a great noise on board one of the boats then lying in the canal ; on approaching the boat, he heard several persons quarrelling and fighting in the cabin ; he interfered, and told them he was a constable, and that they must desist from making such a noise, whereupon they immediately jumped upon the bank and threatened to throw him in the canal ; he remonstrated with them, when Jones and Crowther struck him. Braddock at the same time encouraged them. With the assistance of Mr Irwin, they were afterwards taken into custody. They were fined 5s each for the costs incurred, and discharged.

#### **144 1 August 1846**

**FATAL ACCIDENT** An inquest was held yesterday morning at the Infirmary, by Mr Chapman, on view of the body of **John Horsfall**, a boatman aged 29 years, resident in Whittles Croft, Mather Street, who had died in the Infirmary on Thursday. The deceased engaged on Monday morning to assist a man named Mulcaster to pull down some buildings in York Street, opposite the chapel, a work to which he was quite unaccustomed. At near ten on Thursday, he and Mulcaster were hauling down the gable of the building, when an alarm was given by a man, stationed for that purpose, and they ran to get out of the way. The deceased, however, was thrown down by the loose bricks slipping from under his feet, and part of a stone doorway, a portion of the falling mass, was projected upon the middle of his back and his left leg, causing a compound fracture of the latter. He was taken to the Infirmary, where he died in the course of the afternoon, having never rallied. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death". There appeared to have been the greatest recklessness of conduct on the part of Mulcaster, who was himself only a yard from the unfortunate deceased when the bricks came down, and he escaped almost by a miracle. His temerity, it is not improbable, will cost him his life some day.

#### **145 12 August 1846**

**BOY DROWNED IN THE ROCHDALE CANAL** An inquest was held at the Brown Cow public house in Woodward Street yesterday afternoon, before Mr Chapman, on view of the body of Samuel James, son of George Clegg, sawyer, deceased, aged 9 years, who came by his death as follows :- **Robert Heeds**, a boatman, said that about half past five o'clock in the afternoon of the previous day,

he was told by some children that a little boy was in the canal close at hand ; and that they (the children) had seen the body come up to the surface three different times, and then sink to the bottom. Witness immediately went to the lock house for a drag, and on his return soon found the body, but not being able to lift it with the drag, he was obliged to go back and obtain grappling irons. He then succeeded in bringing the body ashore, when every attempt was made to restore animation, but without avail. Other evidence was given showing that deceased had fallen into the canal whilst trying to reach some floating sticks, and the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

**146 5 September 1846**

**Wigan**

**SWINDLING A HORSE DEALER** On Wednesday at the Town Hall, Ralph Unsworth of Wigan and **John Gill** of Lathom, a boatman, were charged with defrauding Mr James Sixsmith, livery stable keeper of Wigan, of the sum of three pounds and a horse. Unsworth offered to sell him a horse on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August last, which he agreed to purchase if it proved satisfactory, and on a trial, he agreed for its purchase for £3 and an old mare. The amount was accordingly paid, and the exchange made, but on the next day suspecting the horse to be unwell, it was examined by Mr Cooke, farrier, who found it to be glandered, and he fancied he recollected having before examined the same horse for a boatman, when he stated such to be the fact. Further evidence not being present, Mr Acherley, who appeared for the complainant, begged for a remand for the production of Mr Fouracre, to whom the horse had been before sold, and who returned it. Mr Hilton, who appeared for the defendant, opposed the adjournment, but the case was ultimately adjourned to yesterday morning.

**147 21 October 1846**

**Rochdale**

**CAUTION TO BOATMEN** At the Rochdale petty sessions on Monday last, the following persons were summoned by the Rochdale Canal Company, and fined in the penalties named for the offences stated :- **George Hurst**, captain of a vessel called the *Mary Ann*, for having on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September last broken a hang lock off the Long Lees lock gates, near the Summit, and wasted a considerable quantity of water. The defendant pleaded that he was forward in liquor at the time, and was very sorry for what he had done. Fined in the mitigated penalty of 50s and costs. Messrs Marsland and Co, for having allowed No 3 boat to float in the Ancoats Lane Pool, Manchester on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September. Fined 40s and costs. **Zachariah Jackson** for having done damage to a lock on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September last. Fined 25s and costs. **Thomas Mills**, for having wasted water at the Lane End lock, Chadderton, was fined 10s and costs.

**CHARGE OF ATTEMPTING TO DROWN A PERSON** On Monday last, **James Sharples**, a boatman, was brought before the magistrates under the following circumstances :- Mr Fowler, superintendent of the police, stated that on Saturday evening last, the prisoner, in company with another man not yet in custody, went on board a vessel lying in the basin of the Rochdale Canal, broke a lock off the cabin of the boat, and threw the captain into the canal ; the man narrowly escaped being drowned. As the prisoner had only been apprehended on Sunday evening, and the captain was not aware of his apprehension, he was remanded to this day (Wednesday).

**148 18 November 1846**

**Ashton and Stalybridge**

**OBSTRUCTING THE FOOTPATH** On Monday at the Stalybridge petty sessions, a boatman named **Samuel Hatfield** was charged with obstructing the public highway at Staley on the 26<sup>th</sup> October, by allowing his horse to stand halfway across the road, the rope of the boat being held tight by the horse. Mr Charles Cheetham Bayley appeared to prove the case, and stated that the obstruction caused by the boatmen at this place were such as to call for the especial attention of the magistrates. On asking the defendant his name, he had refused to give it, and it had been found necessary to send a constable after him to Bugsworth. The defendant was fined 10s and costs, amounting to £1 6s.

**149 2 December 1846**

**Runcorn**

**FLATMAN DROWNED** On Monday, an inquest was held at the Bridgewater Arms before Mr Churton, coroner, on the body of **Joseph Hignett**, flatman, who was found in one of the basins of the Bridgewater Canal. From the evidence, it appeared that the deceased fell in from the darkness of the night. Verdict, "Found drowned".

**150 23 December 1846**

**Warrington**

**HONESTY THE BEST POLICY** William Cooper and Sarah Cooper, his daughter, who appeared to be in moderate circumstances, residing at Preston Brook, were brought before the magistrates at the sessions room on Saturday last, the former charged with stealing a purse, the property of **Joseph Williamson** of Manchester, a boatman, containing 30 shillings and several pawn tickets of wearing apparel and a silver watch, pledged with Mr Fisher of Manchester. Sarah Cooper was charged with receiving the pawn tickets, knowing them to have been stolen. Mrs Williamson stated that she was at Preston Brook about two months ago, and lost her purse, containing 30 shillings in silver and a number of pawn tickets, on the tunnel bridge. She made diligent search and enquiry for it at the time, but could hear nothing of it until a few days ago, when she was informed that two of the pawn tickets which were in the purse when it was lost had been taken to Mr Fisher's shop for the purpose of redeeming some of the articles. Mary Ann Ogden said she kept a beer house in Tickle Street, Manchester, and that the female prisoner came to her house and wished her to go with her to redeem some articles which she said were pledged; she refused to go, but sent her servant, Ann Ashmore, and on presenting the tickets they were detained, and the girl was ordered to send the person who gave them to her. On her return, she informed the prisoner what had taken place, when she immediately left; information was then given to W Ridont, the police constable, who apprehended the two prisoners. The father admitted having found the purse, and also having spent the silver it contained, and that he had sent his daughter to Manchester to redeem two bundles out of pledge, and that when she returned and told him what had taken place at the pawn shop, he burnt the remainder of the duplicates. After these facts were related, they were both committed for trial at the Knutsford Sessions.

**151 2 January 1847**

**MAN FOUND IN THE ROCHDALE CANAL** About half past eight o'clock yesterday morning, a boatman named **Samuel Lamb**, in the employ of Messrs J J Veevers, carriers, discovered in the Rochdale Canal, at the bottom of Minshull Street, whilst passing along in his boat, the dead body of a man apparently about 40 years of age. The body appeared to have been a short time only in the water and, as far as we have been able to learn, bore no external marks of violence. The unfortunate man was very respectably attired, having on a black dress coat and waistcoat, and a pair of dark plaid trousers. He also had on low shoes and grey worsted stockings, and in height appears to be about 5 feet 8 inches. Upon his person was found three memorandum books and a quantity of loose papers, as well as a large door key, three small keys on a ring, a broken watch key and part of a watch seal with the initials JB on the stone. The only other property found upon him was a small piece of pork, and a card case containing several cards, and bearing the address "Thomas Fothergill, hop and vinegar merchant and dealer in foreign cigars, No 47, Shudehill, Manchester". The only money found upon him was 3 1/2d in copper. The police were informed of the circumstance, and the body was removed to the White Horse public house in Fetter Lane, where it lay up to last evening without being owned. We should state that the police went to Mr Fothergill to see if he knew anything of the deceased, but owing to it being New Year's Day, his establishment was closed, and he could not be found.

**152 6 January 1847**

**Leigh**

**STEALING FROM THE PERSON** On Thursday evening last, **Ellis Horrocks**, a boatman of Oldfield Lane, was charged before Mr J Pownall with stealing 12s from the person of **John Eastwood**, another boatman. From the evidence of the prosecutor, Luke Eastwood, his brother, and

Sergeant Oakes of the county constabulary, it appeared that the prosecutor and prisoner had been drinking together at Astley, after which the parties went to the prosecutor's boat, where the felony was committed on Tuesday morning, the prisoner taking the money out of the prosecutor's pocket whilst he was asleep. He afterwards, on the discovery of the felony, offered to give 5s to settle the matter. He was with difficulty taken by the police. Committed for trial.

**153 17 April 1847**

**Wigan**

SUSPICIOUS FELONY On Wednesday, two boatmen, who had been remanded to that day, were charged with robbing another boatman named **Ralph Forshaw**. The boat the prosecutor belonged to was on Thursday night last laying at the Canal Wharf in Chapel Lane, and he was asleep in the cabin waiting for the captain. During his sleep, he was robbed, and on informing **Mr Woodcock**, canal police officer, the prisoners were suspected, as they had been seen about the previous day, and were bad characters ; search of them was made, and they were apprehended at the Windsor Castle public house. Upon **Windle** was found a half sovereign and two shillings, and upon **Chamberlain** two half crowns, four shillings and two sixpences, one of which was owned by the prosecutor. The sum was nearly the amount taken from the prosecutor. They were again remanded to Monday, when it is believed that further evidence will be produced.

**154 21 April 1847**

**Ashton and Stalybridge**

STEALING FROM A BOAT On Monday, at the Town Hall, Ashton, William Holland and Johanna Shaw were charged with stealing coal from a boat belonging to **Jonah Harrop** Esq of Bardsley. The case being proved, they were committed for trial.

**155 21 April 1847**

**Warrington**

STEALING A DUCK On Monday **Ralph Norman**, a boatman, was brought up charged with stealing a duck, the property of Mr Peter Davis of Penketh, farmer. On Thursday evening, a labourer named Seed saw him walking along the brook towards the canal, and when at a tunnel which takes the water from the brook, where several of prosecutor's ducks were swimming, a scuffle amongst the ducks was heard ; the prisoner immediately after came away with something black in his hands ; he crept behind a bush, put what he had in his hand into a small basket, and went in the direction of Sankey Bridge. Seed gave information to the prosecutor who, on counting his ducks, missed a black and white one. Search was made the same evening at the prisoner's house by Richard Griffith of Penketh, police officer, who found the small basket described, marked in several places with blood and feathers ; and also the duck's wings. He was committed to the sessions for trial.

**156 21 April 1847**

**Wigan**

ROBBERY FROM A CANAL BOAT The prisoners, **Joseph Windle** and **Edward Chamberlain**, who had been remanded on a charge of robbing **Ralph Forshaw**, a boatman, were brought up for final examination. An additional witness was produced, and the prisoners were committed for trial at the next quarter sessions.

**157 12 May 1847**

THE FRUITS OF INTOXICATION – A MAN FOUND DROWNED An inquest was held on Monday by Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, at the Moulders' Arms in Great Ancoats Street, on view of the body of Michael Doyce, a factory overlooker, of Hayes Street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, aged 30 years. **Elizabeth**, the wife of **James Hunt**, lock-keeper of Pickford Street, stated that about two o'clock on Sunday afternoon, a boatman came to her house and said he believed there was something in the lock, as the water would not level. Her husband accompanied him with a grapnel, with which he for some time searched in the lock, when he at last laid hold of the deceased, whose body, with assistance, he dragged to the side. Deceased had no hat on, though in other respects he was fully dressed. He had a large cut on the top of his head, extending from the crown to the

middle of the forehead and laying bare his skull, which was dreadfully fractured. There was also a larger cut near the deceased's left ear, and his left thigh was broken ; she believed these injuries had been done by the lock gates. Pickford Street was not a thoroughfare, the canal crossing the street, but people frequently passed over the lock gates. Another witness, a female, spoke to seeing deceased intoxicated in that street about 12 o'clock on Saturday night when, as she imagined, he was in search of lodgings and tried to enter her house, but being repulsed by her, he passed on in the direction of the canal. Other evidence was given, showing that deceased had been seen drunk in the neighbourhood, and his acquaintances stating that he was a man fond of liquors, the conclusion come to by the jury was that the unfortunate man had fallen in the canal whilst in a state of intoxication. Verdict, "Found drowned".

**158 9 June 1847**

**Wigan**

PETTY SESSIONS **Thomas Makinson**, one of the agents to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal Company, charged **William Grundy**, a boatman, with obstructing the road on the canal ; fined 10s and costs.

**159 19 June 1847**

DEATH FROM DROWNING Yesterday afternoon, an inquest was held by Mr Chapman, the borough coroner, at the Old Quay Tavern, Cobden Street, touching the death of **John Roylance** of Lachford near Warrington. The deceased was about 18 years of age, and was in the employ of Messrs Barnby, Faulkner and Co as a boatman on board the *Wasp* flat. It appeared from the evidence adduced at the inquest that **John Fish**, of 24 Back Wall Street, captain of the flat in which the deceased was employed, after seeing the flat laden with goods for Liverpool, went home at half past ten o'clock on Thursday night leaving the deceased, who was quite sober, at the far end of the vessel. About twenty minutes to eleven o'clock the same evening, Mr Levi Vesty, residing in Tiplady's Buildings, Hampson Street, Salford, heard a plunge in the river near to the flat, and a cry of "Oh! Oh!" He gave an alarm, and search was immediately made, but it was about half past one on Friday morning before the body, which was identified as that of Roylance, was found. Verdict, "Drowned accidentally".

**160 30 June 1847**

**Warrington**

THE BREAK O'DAY BOYS Patrick Griffin, Patrick Connolly and John Nugent, three stout athletic Irishmen, who stated they came from the county Galway, were brought before the mayor and Messrs Greenall and Green on Monday, charged with committing a violent assault upon **John Yates**, a boatman. The deputy constable, Mr Jones, stated that he was out on duty between one and two o'clock on Sunday morning last, accompanied by police officer Wilson, when they were informed that a man had been very much abused in Bridge Street by three Irishmen assaulting him with a bludgeon, and that they were gone in the direction of Bank Street. The officers immediately proceeded to the end of that street, when they met the prisoners, one of whom dropped the bludgeon then produced. Witness asked their names, when Griffin said, "We are the break o'day boys – that is our name". John Yates said that he was passing down Bridge Street on Sunday morning, a little after one o'clock, when he arrived opposite the Ship public house, three men rushed out of the passage and struck him a violent blow on the head, which staggered him, and he fell down on the footpath ; the attack was so sudden that he could not recognise any of the party, but he could clearly see they were three in number. Mr William Forster, landlord of the Ship public house, said that he was going to bed on the above morning, when he saw three men rush from the passage adjoining his house and strike a man twice very violently as he passed down the street. Two of the prisoners, namely Griffin and Connolly, were the men that struck the blow, as he saw them very distinctly ; he called out to them, and said he would give information against them, when they went in the direction of Bank Street. The prisoners had nothing to say in defence, when they were ordered to find bail and, in default, they were committed to the House of Correction for six months.

**161 4 August 1847**

**BRUTAL ASSAULT** At the borough court on Monday, before Mr C J S Walker, a labourer named Patrick Molloy was brought up, charged with committing a violent and dangerous assault on a boatman named **Joseph Woodier**. As Woodier, however, was in an unfit state to appear in consequence of the injuries he had received, the case was not gone into, but the prisoner was remanded for a week. The following are the facts of the case. On Saturday evening, the parties had been drinking together in Gaythorn Street, when some familiarities were observed by Woodier to pass between his wife and Molloy. This, it appears, enraged him, and he forthwith struck Molloy, when a fight ensued between them of the most brutal and savage kind. In the course of it, Molloy obtained the mastery, and punished his antagonist severely, kicking him in the chest and resorting to other savage acts. Ultimately, they were separated, and both men walked home, but on Sunday a report reached the police that Woodier was dying. He was visited by Mr Golland, who directed his removal to the Infirmary, and who stated that he was in a highly dangerous state. Molloy was apprehended in consequence the same afternoon. On Monday, the symptoms of the injured man were considerably improved, and we believe he is now out of danger, although unable to appear in court for a week.

**162 21 August 1847 Bolton**

**DEAR LODGINGS** A young lady named Elizabeth Burns made her appearance at the Borough Court on Thursday last on a charge of stealing four sovereigns from **George Hammond**, a boatman from Cheshire. The prosecutor “wur nivver a' Bowton afoor” Sunday, when he came in by the train in the evening. He had about five shillings of loose silver in his pocket, and four sovereigns in a purse, and was in search of lodgings, when he met the prisoner and another in Bridge Street, and they seemed “such noice bodies” that he treated them to a noggin of whiskey. The prisoner said she could find him “noice lodgings” and he went home with her, and lost his purse and the four sovereigns. When apprehended, she had about 17s on her, which was ordered to be paid to the borough treasurer towards her maintenance, and she was committed for one month. He “thowt loike” he “owt to ha' th' brass”, but the court thought to the contrary ; that the town should not sustain any loss by his folly.

**163 1 September 1847**

**MURDER AT TIPTON, STAFFORDSHIRE** At Wolverhampton on Friday, a man named Malony, who had been in custody on suspicion of being concerned in the death of a boatman named **Thorpe**, was fully committed for trial for the offence. The prisoner, in his defence, said that the deceased had been beaten by a man named Cavanagh, and that he had nothing to do with it. According to his account, there had been a good deal of fighting, and Cavanagh armed himself with a bludgeon, and gave the prisoner one, although he did not want to take it, saying they could manage with their fists. That they then went down the Tipton Road, and shortly afterwards, Cavanagh beat a man who cried out for mercy. The prisoner added that he called out to Cavanagh not to kill the man, upon which he desisted and they returned to town together. He disclaimed any further knowledge of Thorpe's death.

**164 4 September 1847 Rochdale**

**CAUTION TO BOATMEN** On Wednesday. **John Wilson**, a boatman, was fined 25s and 15s 6d costs for wasting water in the Rochdale Canal by leaving a lock gate partially open.

**165 15 September 1847**

**CHILD DROWNED** An inquest was held before Mr Roberts, the deputy coroner, on Friday at the George IV public house in Great Mount Street, on view of the body of **Edward**, son of **Thomas Ainscow**, a boatman residing at Leigh. From the evidence of a man named William Blackshaw, employed at the silk mill of Messrs G and J Smith in Lower Moseley Street, it appeared that he was looking through one of the factory windows on the previous day at noon, when he saw the deceased

playing on the banks of the Manchester and Salford Junction Canal close by. Immediately afterwards, he heard a scream, and a woman's voice crying, "My child's drowned", when he stripped off his clothes, and jumping through the window, rescued the deceased from the water. He was quite dead, however, when taken out of the canal. As it appeared, the child had gone to play at the spot and had fallen in accidentally. The jury returned a verdict accordingly.

**166 29 September 1847**

**Warrington**

**SUICIDE** On Sunday morning, a man named **Peter Ratcliff**, a boatman, at Townend, hung himself in his bedroom. Deceased and his wife lived on good terms, and went together to the market on Saturday evening, after which they spent some time together at a public house. Nothing particular was observed in his demeanour during the night ; but on Sunday morning, he again went to the public house and got intoxicated ; he returned home at ten o'clock and went to bed, and near one o'clock, when his son went upstairs to call him to dinner, he was found suspended from the bed post by a woollen comfortable.

**167 4 December 1847**

**A BOATMAN DROWNED** An inquest was held on Thursday in Regent Road, Salford, before Mr Henshall, deputy coroner, on view of the body of **Joseph Davies** aged 32 years, a boatman in the service of the New Quay Company. From the evidence of **Peter Roylance**, the captain of the boat in which deceased was employed as mate, it appeared that on Wednesday morning about nine o'clock, witness and deceased were proceeding to Liverpool on board their boat, the *Vulcan*, and were passing along the Irwell about two miles below Barton Bridge, when in moving the tiller rather suddenly, it broke, and deceased fell overboard. At that time, the river was about three feet higher than usual, and the unfortunate deceased, being unable to swim, only rose to the surface once, after which his body disappeared. Roylance obtained some assistance and grappled for the body about an hour and a half, when at length the unfortunate man was found a few yards distant from the spot. At that time, a boat came up on its way to Manchester, on board of which the deceased was placed, and his remains were brought to Salford, to await the coroner's inquest. Verdict, "Accidentally drowned". The unfortunate man has left a wife, but no children.

**168 24 December 1847**

**MURDER AT SHREWSBURY** Shrewsbury, Friday. Considerable excitement has been caused in this district during the past few days, from the circulation of a report that a boatman named **Thomas Hinton** had been so brutally ill used by a party of navigators that he shortly afterwards died. The short facts, as far as they have yet been elicited, were as follows :- The deceased, who was in the employ of Messrs Whitehouse, the carriers, was standing near the Old Factory bridge when, from some trifling cause, a disturbance arose, and after a few angry words, the navies left, but shortly afterwards returned armed with heavy pieces of wood, and having driven off deceased's companions, they ill used him most cruelly ; one knocked him down, another gave him a blow on the head with an earthenware jug, and a third kicked him in the ribs. They then left him bleeding on the ground. He was taken to an adjoining inn, where he died on Monday. An inquest having been opened by Mr Gordon, the coroner, and the surgeon having stated that the injuries were the cause of death, the inquiry was adjourned for additional evidence. Four or five persons have already been apprehended.

**169 29 December 1847**

**FATALITY TO A BOATMAN** An inquest was held on Thursday at the Royal Infirmary, before the City Coroner, on view of the body of **Henry Faulkner**, a boatman aged 28. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> November, deceased was assisting to unload timber from his boat at the Harrington Carrying Company's Wharf, Piccadilly, when a large piece fell upon him and fractured his right leg. Amputation was deemed necessary and was performed, but notwithstanding the attention paid to him, he gradually sunk and expired on Sunday last. Verdict, "Accidental".

**170 15 January 1848 Rochdale**

MAN DROWNED On Tuesday evening, Mr Clarke, deputy coroner, held an inquest at the Navigation Inn, Drake Street, on view of the body of **Thomas Buckley**, boatman, aged 31 years. About half past six o'clock on Tuesday morning, deceased was on his boat in the basin at the Canal Yard, when he fell into the water, nearly half an hour elapsed before the body was recovered when, of course, life was extinct. Verdict, "Accidentally drowned".

**171 29 January 1848**

CHARGE OF ASSAULT AND ROBBERY On Monday and Tuesday, three young men named Thomas Fletcher, **Henry Abrams** and John Fletcher, were taken before the county magistrates, at Mr Gaskell's office, on a charge of having violently assaulted the watchman on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Dean Lock. It will be recollected that the old man was attacked in the office, where the thieves, after violently assaulting him, took from thence a bag of silver, and on his pursuing them they threw him into the canal, from which however he got out, the prisoners in the meantime escaping. From the incomplete state of the evidence, the prisoners were again remanded. It appears that Abrams, who was formerly a boatman, has latterly worked as a collier, and since the depression of labour has resumed his old occupation.

**172 5 February 1848 Wigan**

CHARGE OF ASSAULT On Wednesday, **Thomas Wignall**, a boatman, was charged before the magistrates at the Town Hall with committing an assault upon Edward Barclay and his wife. The woman stated that she was with her husband at John Lyon's Queen's Arms beer shop in Green Street, where the defendant was, when after some words between them about the sale of a horse, the defendant struck her and her husband very violently. A witness was called to corroborate her evidence. The defendant called a witness to prove that he was first assaulted by the complainant's wife, and he merely retaliated. The magistrates thought he was the aggressor, and fined him 5s and the expenses.

**173 1 March 1848**

SUICIDE AT THE CHORLTON POLICE STATION An inquest was held before Mr Chapman, city coroner, at the Salutation Inn, Chatham Street, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, on Wednesday, on view of the body of **John Brockhouse**, a boatman aged 51 years, who hung himself in the lock ups at the Chorlton Town Hall, where he had been placed on a charge of felony. He contrived to hang himself by attaching his neckerchief to one of the bars of the grating by which light and air are admitted to the cell. He had been visited only about 20 minutes before the commission of the act, at which time no suspicion was entertained of such an attempt. Verdict, "Temporary insanity".

**174 12 April 1848**

FATALITY TO A BOATMAN An inquest was held on Monday at the Royal Infirmary, before Mr Chapman, the city coroner, on view of the body of **Thomas Leader**, aged 15 years, a boatman in the service of the Grand Junction Canal Company. From the evidence of deceased's uncle, it appeared that on the 7<sup>th</sup> March, he and deceased were coming to Manchester on the Bridgewater Canal, in charge of their boat, when on entering a lock near Sandbach the deceased, in stepping from the boat, accidentally missed his footing and got his left leg severely crushed between the boat and the coping stones of the lock. A surgeon who was called to him shortly after the accident advised his immediate removal to the Manchester Infirmary, where he was forthwith brought by railway and where, in consequence of the injury he had sustained, he died on Thursday last. Verdict, "Accidental death".

**175 10 May 1848**

A BOATMAN DROWNED The city coroner, Mr Chapman, held an inquest at the Three Sugar Loaves public house, Water Street, on Monday, on view of the body of **Peter Clare**, boatman of

Warrington, aged 24 years, whose body had that morning been found lifeless in the Bridgewater Canal. The deceased, it appeared, was in the service of Messrs Nall and Co, carriers of this city, he had been drinking until a late hour on the previous evening at the public house where the inquest was held, when on returning to his boat which lay in the canal basin, and in the cabin of which he usually slept, he is supposed to have fallen into the water and to have been drowned. He was considerably advanced in liquor when last seen alive. Verdict, "Found drowned".

**176 31 May 1848**

**Leigh**

CHARGE OF FELONY On Monday last, a boatman named **John Cartwright** was placed before the bench on a charge of stealing some planks belonging to Messrs J T Wood and Co, coal proprietors, Hindley Green. The prosecutors were called several times, but did not answer. The man was therefore discharged from custody. [The poor man has, we think, very good grounds for an action of false imprisonment. He has been incarcerated in the lock ups for five days, on a charge of stealing goods which would, we believe, have turned out to be his own property, and the prosecutors do not come forward to make him any recompense.]

**177 7 June 1848**

**Ashton**

STEALING BEEF On Monday, **Joseph Bailey**, a boatman and Margaret Mach were charged with stealing 5lb of beef, the property of Samuel Kinder of Stalybridge. The case being proved, they were committed for trial.

**178 10 June 1848**

DEATH BY DROWNING OF A MAN UNKNOWN Yesterday morning between ten and eleven o'clock, a boatman named **Samuel Gore** was proceeding along the river Irwell in his boat, when on passing that part of the river known as "Throstle Nest", he observed the body of a man standing upright in the water. By means of a boat hook he got the body landed, but life was quite extinct, and information of the circumstance having been sent to the Salford Town Hall, the police on their arrival removed the corpse to the Bridge Inn in Regent Road, where it now lies awaiting the coroner's inquest. The unfortunate deceased appears to be about five feet six or seven inches in height, and is dressed in a dark tweed coat, dark mixture trousers, white neckerchief and shirt, with plaited front, and blucher boots far worn. He has black hair and whiskers, but we are unable to attain any account of his age. Up to last evening, his body has not been identified.

**179 12 July 1848**

**Ashton**

CHARGE OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS On Monday at the Stalybridge Petty Sessions, a boatman named **William Berry** was charged by **John Grimes** with having, while in his service, thrown a stone at his horse, by which he had broken its leg. The magistrates were of opinion that the case was more suited to the proceedings at the County Court, they therefore did not adjudicate upon it.

**180 22 July 1848**

**Rochdale**

A SERIOUS LARK On Wednesday, **William Sharples**, a boatman, nearly 30 years of age, was brought up by the county police charged with stealing a cheese, the property of Mr Simpson, carrier, Lower Place, Castleton, who left his horse and cart at the door of the Prince Albert beer house, Oldham Road, Castleton ; and whilst there, the prisoner took a large cheese from it and, meeting Mr Simpson in the lobby, offered to make him a present of it, but Simpson refused to take it and gave him into the custody of the police. The prisoner declared he only did it for a lark. He was reprimanded, and discharged on the payment of costs.

**181 26 July 1848**

**Wigan**

WOMAN DROWNED On Friday, an inquest was held by Mr Rogerson at the house of Mrs Elizabeth Kershaw, the Canal Coffee House, Wallgate, upon view of the body of **Mary Meadows**,

wife of a boatman, who was drowned on the previous night. The boat to which deceased's husband belonged was passing through the canal lock opposite to Mr H Wood's factory. The unfortunate woman was at the helm when a sudden rush of water struck it, and in consequence, the tiller on board swerved, hit her, and knocked her off the boat into the pit of the lock. Her husband, observing the occurrence, instantly plunged down to rescue her, but his efforts were unavailing, as she was carried under the boat and did not rise again. Some time elapsed before she could be recovered, and life was then extinct. Verdict, "Accidental death".

**182 25 November 1848**

**SUICIDE THROUGH DISTRESS** An inquest was held on Thursday at the Flower Pot public house in Deansgate, before Mr Chapman, coroner, on view of the body of a boatman named **John Inman**, aged 27 years, residing in Gaythorn. The deceased, it appeared, was formerly in the service of the Merchants' Company, but for some reason or other he had been discharged, and not being able to meet with employment, he became very low spirited, and was that morning found dead in a stable near his lodgings, having hung himself from a beam. Verdict, "Temporary insanity".

**183 2 December 1848**

**GIRL FOUND DROWNED** Mary Wych, the young girl mentioned in the *Courier* a short time back as not having been seen since she was discharged from Kingston Mill, Hyde, five weeks ago, was found drowned in the Peak Forest Canal, Flowery Field, on Wednesday morning by a boatman named **William Chadwick**. An inquest was held on the body on Thursday at the house of Mr Sourbutt, and a verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

**184 2 December 1848**

**SINGULAR DISAPPEARANCE OF A BOY FROM HIS PARENTS' HOUSE AND SUBSEQUENT FINDING OF HIS DEAD BODY** On the 16<sup>th</sup> ult, a little boy named John Grey, 12 years of age, the son of John Grey, letterpress printer of Mottram Street, Salford, left home to go to a school he attended in Bury Street ; but as he did not return at night, his parents went to the schoolmaster to make some enquiries respecting him. They were surprised to find that the boy, although the weekly school money had been regularly given to him, had not been to school since April, and that he had then represented to the master that he was going to work at Throstle Nest. An unavailing search was made for the boy who, it was supposed, fearing that his truant playing would come to his parents' knowledge, had run away and gone to some relatives living in a distant part of Yorkshire to avoid being punished, but as no intelligence could be gleaned of him, his parents gave up further search in despair. On the morning of Thursday last, however, a boatman named **Thomas Harrop** discovered the body of a boy floating in the canal near the coal wharf at the bottom of Stanley Street, Salford, which was immediately conveyed to the Veteran Tavern, Stanley Street, where he was identified by his parents. An inquest was held on the remains on the same day and place, before Mr Rutter, the county coroner, and, in accordance with the facts adduced, the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

**185 9 December 1848**

**DREADFUL ACCIDENT** On Tuesday about 12 o'clock, **Thomas Mander**, a boatman about 20 years of age, was in the act of whipping a horse along the towing path of the canal near this town, when the animal kicked him violently on the forehead, producing a dangerous wound of nine or ten inches in length. The scalp was divided and the frontal bone fractured, the lower portion being driven into the brain, part of which protruded. The bones of his nose were also fractured. He was immediately taken to the Dispensary, where he has been attended to by Mr Cartwright, surgeon, whose patient he is, and also by Dr Topham and Mr Dehane. The young man still remains sensible, but is not expected to recover, the injuries being of such a frightful character.

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**186 3 January 1849**

**Warrington**

MAN DROWNED On Monday, an inquest was held at the house of Mrs Norman, the Black Bear in Latchford, on view of the body of **Henry Wood**, a flatman, who was found drowned in the top locks of the Old Quay Canal on Saturday morning. The last time he was seen alive was about three o'clock on Saturday morning, when police officers Heyes and Dagnall, who were on duty at Latchford, found him leaning against a gate near Mersey View. He was moaning at the time, and said he wanted to go to the top locks. The officers took him as far as the Black Bear Bridge, and showed him on the canal bank, and then left him, as he assured them that he could find his way though the morning was very dark. Verdict, "Found drowned". Both his legs were broken in passing out of the canal into the locks, it is conjectured, when they probably would be caught between the gates on shutting.

**187 24 February 1849**

ROBBERY BY BOATMEN At the Salford Town Hall on Saturday, three boatman named **Robert Chapman, James Bent** and **Ellis Horrox** were charged by police-constable Thomas Harrison with having stolen a quantity of ropes, the property of their employer, Silas Whitby. The officer, Harrison, adduced evidence to show that the prisoners had been on board their master's boat, the *Mary*, ostensibly to borrow a sack, having obtained which, they filled it with ropes stolen out of the vessel, and afterwards sold them to a man in Manchester, known by the cognomen of "Irish Jack", a marine store dealer. They were all committed for trial at the sessions.

**188 28 March 1849**

**Bolton**

SUDDEN DEATH On Sunday evening, **Robert Flitcroft**, clerk at the canal wharf, went with two friends into the Commercial Inn about ten o'clock, and was taken suddenly ill, and died in the course of half an hour. Mr Bancroft, surgeon, was in attendance. The deceased was 64 years of age and a man of quiet industrious habits.

**189 28 March 1849**

**Rochdale**

STEALING FROM A BOAT At the petty sessions on Friday, **James Mellor**, who had been previously convicted of felony, was charged with having stolen a rope worth 35s from a vessel in the basin of the Rochdale Canal, the property of **Mr Joseph Grimes**. He offered the rope for sale to **James Schofield**, another boatman. Committed for trial at the next Salford sessions.

**190 11 April 1849**

THE FRUITS OF DRUNKENNESS At the New Bailey on Monday, before Mr H L Trafford, a young man named **Thomas Howarth**, a boatman, was committed for trial at the sessions for having robbed another man (also a boatman) named **Abel Brierley** of five sovereigns. It appeared that on Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of March Brierley and prisoner were travelling in a boat from Stockport to Manchester, and the master, **Mr Boden**, had entrusted Brierley with five sovereigns to pay the canal dues. On the way, however, he got beastly drunk and went to lay down in the cabin of the boat, when the prisoner paid him a visit and abstracted the money out of his pocket. After the robbery he absconded, and tried to keep out of the way ; but the police, having information, kept a lookout for him, and he was taken on Saturday near Gorton.

**191 28 April 1849**

**Warrington**

INQUEST An inquest was held on Thursday at the Bridewell, before Mr Hewes, on view of the body of **Edward Jewitt**, boatman, who died on Tuesday. The deceased was a boatman, and on Tuesday afternoon he was unloading some wheat at Barton, when by accident a plank fell upon his head and fractured his skull. He was taken to Warrington in a spring cart, and on the way home, he died. Verdict, "Accidental death".

**192 30 May 1849**

**MURDERERS IN EMBRYO** A female of anything but prepossessing appearance, and who gave the name of **Ann Christian**, was yesterday brought before Mr Maude at the Borough Court, charged with stabbing a boatman named **Thomas Brierley** with a knife, thereby disabling him and inflicting other injuries. The parties, we ought to state, cohabit together, and on Monday evening had a quarrel, when the woman caught hold of a table knife and stabbed her paramour in the chest. A struggle then ensued, the wounded man trying to deprive the woman of her weapon, when she drew it through his hand, and nearly severed his wrist. Mr Beswick reminded Mr Maude that the prisoner was the same woman whose depositions he (the magistrate) had had occasion to take some short time ago at the Royal Infirmary, in consequence of the dangerous state in which she lay from wounds inflicted upon her by the very man whom she had stabbed, so that it appeared that the tables were turned, and she had been the aggressor. Mr Maude read both the parties a lecture on their savage brutality, which he intimated would probably have a bloody termination one time or another, and he fined the female 40s, committing her in default of payment for two months.

**193 14 July 1849**

**Runcorn**

**ASSAULT BY A BOATMAN** **Matthias Barlow** was charged before Mr Thomas Parr and Mr Thomas Lyon with having assaulted **Mr John Wilton**, clerk in the service of the Bridgewater Trustees. The defendant had moored his boat in the canal so as to obstruct the passage. Mr Wilton requested him to remove it, but he refused and would not allow the mooring line to be unfastened. Mr Wilton then cut it, and turned the boat adrift ; whereupon the defendant threw a heavy piece of sulphur ore at him, which cut through his hat and wounded the back part of his head. Fined 40s, and in default of payment, committed for two months. The defendant is a very turbulent fellow, and at the time of committing the offence was under recognisances to keep the peace.

**194 19 January 1850**

**A MAN DROWNED WHILST IN A FIT** An inquest was held at the Royal Infirmary on Thursday by Mr Herford, on view of the body of a boatman named **Thomas Lamb**, aged 28 years, who was drowned under the following sad circumstances. On Tuesday afternoon, he was assisting to tow a flat through the Tib lock on the Rochdale Canal, below Oxford Road, when he was seized with a fit and rolled into the canal, sinking to the bottom like a stone. He was got out almost instantly, and as soon as assistance could be obtained, was taken in a cab to the Infirmary, but owing to his exposure to the cold and other causes, he died the same day. Verdict, "Accidentally drowned whilst in a fit".

**195 2 February 1850**

**Bolton**

**BURGLARY AT RIVINGTON** On Monday last at the County Sessions Room, Little Bolton, eleven men were brought up on suspicion of being implicated in the robbery at the house of Mr John Marsh, farmer, Rivington, on the 20<sup>th</sup> instant. Their names are :- Jonathan Taylor, Wigan, collier ; Thomas Ball, Chorley, labourer ; William Hindley, Wigan, labourer ; James Unsworth, Wigan, collier ; Edward McKnight, Wigan, weaver ; **Peter Taylor**, Wigan, boatman ; **Samuel Leyland**, Wigan, boatman ; **James Taylor**, Wigan, boatman ; Charles Fielding, Habergham Eaves, collier ; Patrick Corrigan, Wigan, weaver ; and Thomas Henry, Wigan, weaver. This affair has created considerable interest in the town ; and during the proceedings, which lasted six hours, the sessions room was crowded in every part. Mr H M Richardson defended six of the men. It was announced to the prisoners, William Leyland and Charles Fielding, that they were discharged, sufficient evidence not being found against them. Mr Andrew Milne, superintendent of the county police, was the first witness called. He said that on the 20<sup>th</sup> instant he was informed that the house of Mr Marsh had been broken open, and he consequently proceeded there. He described the broken panes of glass, which he measured, and through which a man might have entered. On Wednesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> instant, he apprehended two of the prisoners, Peter Taylor and James Taylor, in a cottage at Wigan. On Thursday the 24<sup>th</sup>, he received a key, which he produced, from Sergeant France, and on the same day he tried and found it fitted the lock of Mr Marsh's safe. Sergeant France deposed that

on the afternoon of the 22<sup>nd</sup> instant, he apprehended the prisoner Jonathan Taylor, and searched his house in Queen Street, Wigan, where he found a key hidden behind the fire grate, and a dark lantern and some bludgeons. He found a wound on Jonathan Taylor's head, and blood on his coat, waistcoat and shirt. He also apprehended Corrigan and Henry on Saturday last. William Fisher, a Wigan policeman, deposed that he assisted in searching Jonathan Taylor's house, and found behind the grate a stocking foot containing 16 sovereigns. The same night, he apprehended William Hindley, and found blood on his coat. On the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup>, he assisted in apprehending McKnight and Unsworth. Inspector Scott of Egerton detailed the apprehension of Unsworth, and said he attempted to slip off a handkerchief, which was produced. Mr Pimblett, a publican of Wigan, deposed that Jonathan Taylor and Hindley were drinking in his house, and that the former displayed a number of sovereigns. Mt Stout of Wigan said he saw Ball alight from the train at Farrington ; and a railway porter named Lancaster, deposed that Ball was drunk, and exhibited a number of sovereigns there. A witness named Richardson, and Mr Parker of the Parker's Arms, stated that Ball, while in the latter's house, was possessed of 25 sovereigns, two spade ace guineas and a brooch, which he dropped, and it was afterwards found in the room where he had been sitting. Sergeant Ludlam stated that he apprehended Ball at his house in Chorley. In consequence of Mr Marsh being unable to attend, the court adjourned at half past seven o'clock until nine the next morning, when the magistrates proceeded to Rivington to take the evidence of Mr Marsh, who stated as follows :- I live in Rivington and keep a few cows. My house stands by itself. The next inhabited house is occupied by Mr Mangnall, a farmer. Myself and wife, and my sister in law, Martha Eatock were the only persons living in the house on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January. I and my wife went to bed at eight o'clock, leaving Martha Eatock up. After I had been in bed about four or five hours, I heard a noise outside the house, and I and my wife got out of bed and went downstairs. I lighted two candles, and left them on the kitchen dresser. I then returned upstairs, and looking through the bedroom window, saw several men in the yard. My wife then gave me a hand bell and my gun. I heard a crash of windows breaking, and steps on the stairs. I went to the top of the stairs and saw several men coming up. Some of them had staves and old rusty swords, with lighted candles and coverings over their faces, with holes to see through. As the first man came up, I struck him with the bell as savagely as I could. I cracked the bell with the blow. He fell back. I wrenched a staff out of one of their hands, and fought with the staff until the lights went out ; and two men closed in on me and got me down, and a third came to assist them. They said, "Kill him, hill him". I said, "You haply have done so already". I was then a good deal cut and beat about the head. I made no further resistance. I lay on the floor, and two men were left to guard me. One man came and asked me to open the closet door, and some of them went into the closet, leaving me alone. Before they left, some of them asked if we had any refreshment in the house. I said I had some ale in the cellar. Whilst the men were rummaging about, I slipped into a room which has a window, looking into the portico, and I slid down one of the pillars into the garden. I then got over the garden wall, and went to Mangnall's and roused the family, but my clothes being covered in blood, they were afraid to return with me. A son, however, set off or more assistance. I staid there about half an hour till more men came. We then went to my house and found some of the county police there, but the thieves were gone. I went upstairs and looked into a drawer in which I keep my money ; it was all gone. I received £50 13s 10d and £9 for rent, about ----- of January, which I placed in the drawer with other money which I had before. Mr Marsh then identified the hat ; his sister in law the brooch ; and there being no evidence against James and Peter Taylor and Thomas Henry, they were at once discharged. The rest were remanded till Thursday, when Jonathan Taylor, Thomas Ball, James Unsworth and Edward McKnight were again brought up (the other prisoners, Patrick Corrigan and Thomas Henry, having been discharged on Tuesday night) and a further remand till Monday was applied for. Mr Marsh being still unable to attend, Mr Richardson opposed the application on behalf of Unsworth and McKnight, alleging that he was prepared to prove an alibi. The magistrates, however, were decided to remand. Thomas Tootal of Wigan, slaker ; John Pearce alias Nuttall of Wigan, weaver ; and William Taylor also of Wigan, labourer, who were apprehended on Tuesday, were also remanded. Ball has made a statement which, it is said, implicates all the parties,

and also one not yet in custody.

### **196 23 February 1850**

**INFANTICIDE AT STRETFORD** Between one and two o'clock on Saturday afternoon last, as a boatman in the service of the Bridgewater Trust named **Samuel Sharples** was coming with his boat from Altrincham to Worsley, he observed, when near the canal bridge at Stretford, a bundle floating on the surface of the water. Having landed it with his boat hook, he discovered that it was the dead body of a male infant tied up in an old shawl, when he took it to Mr Ridyard's coal yard and delivered it up to a policeman who was sent for. An inquest was held upon the body on Tuesday by Mr Rutter, coroner, when evidence was given to show that it had been born alive and afterwards drowned in the canal. Mr Stevenson, surgeon of Stretford, gave it as his opinion that the child must have lived three or four days and he thought it had been in the water about a week. Two women, who had been called in after the finding of the body, deposed to having found between four and five pounds of sand tied up in its nightdress, no doubt placed there as a weight to sink it when thrown in to the water. The navel string was tied, and it bore the appearance of a fine healthy child. The jury returned a verdict of "Wilful murder" against some person unknown. At present the police have not the slightest clue to the natural mother who, there is little doubt, is the person who has sacrificed the infant.

### **197 4 May 1850**

**BRUTAL SCENE – SALE OF A WIFE** About two o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, an auction sale of a very unusual character took place in Tonmann Street, Knott Mill, where a boatman named **Peter Cawley** offered his wife for sale by Dutch auction to the highest bidder. The disgraceful scene was enacted about half past two o'clock, amidst a large crowd of spectators, the husband, who also acted as auctioneer, exhibiting his wife on the ground with a rope tied round her waist. The woman, who was tolerably young and good looking, was accompanied by her own brother, also a boatman, who seemed to regard the business as perfectly legal and unobjectionable. The first bid offered was 15s, a price objected to by the husband, who stated that the wedding ring worn by his wife had cost 10s, and the marriage fee 5s, and he would not, on that account, sell her for less than a sovereign. Addressing a boatman in the crowd named **James Jakeman**, the woman said, "Thee bid for me, Jim, I'll make thee a rare good wife", on which Jakeman bid 19s 6d, and "the lot" was at once knocked down to him. The moment the brutal scene was at an end, the vendor and purchaser, accompanied by the woman and her brother, adjourned to a neighbouring beerhouse to spend the purchase money and have a "spree"!

### **198 4 May 1850**

#### **Stockport**

**FATAL ACCIDENT AT MARPLE FROM TAMPERING WITH FIREARMS** On Monday, an inquest was held at the Navigation Inn, Marple, before Mr Charles Hudson, coroner, on view of the body of **Matthew Barber**, a boatman aged 38, who had lost his life through the effects of a wound in his belly made by a pistol bullet, under the following circumstances :- Deceased, two other boatman named **William Bennett** and **Robert Woolley**, assisted by **Henry Wilson**, a boy, formed the crew of a boat plying between Bugsworth and Manchester on the Peak Forest Canal. The boy had a pistol, which he said he had bought two years ago for the purpose, as he represented, of killing rats. He had been in service on that boat for near two months, and had usually kept the pistol &c in a cupboard in the cabin, frequently firing it off for sport, and both the deceased and the other boatmen well knowing that he had it. On Saturday, when the boat lay in Manchester, the boy loaded the pistol with a ball, intending to shoot at some flour barrels ; but the captain coming up at the time, prevented it ; and the pistol was again placed in the cupboard. In the afternoon, the boat proceeded on its way to Bugsworth, getting through the locks at Marple a little before midnight ; and when it reached the top level, Robert Woolley, who had been shutting off the locks, came on board the boat to get his supper. He went to the cupboard in the cabin in which were a little water, two pellets and a percussion cap. The pistol was then in the cupboard. Deceased was at this time

standing on the hatchway of the boat, steering. On perceiving the percussion cap, Woolley, taking out the pistol, said, "I'll put it on, and we'll be 'bout this stuff ; I'll take it and fire it across the water, and we'll be 'bout this stuff out of the cabin". Deceased said, "Yes, do ; it'll be better done away with". Woolley then seated himself down in the cabin, and observed that he had examined the pistol that morning when he cleared out the cupboard, and saw that it was not loaded ; he was only going to fire off the percussion cap. He stretched out his arm, pulled the trigger, and a loud report resulted. Deceased, who was steersman, had to change his position from time to time, immediately afterwards fell, having received the ball with which the pistol was charged in his groin, and died the following afternoon. After some deliberation, the jury returned into court with a verdict of "Homicide by misadventure".

### **199 15 June 1850**

**A WOMAN STABBED BY A MAN** On Thursday, a man named **Henry Warner**, a boatman, was brought up at the Borough Court before Mr F R Hodgson, charged with having stabbed a young married woman named Mary Jane **Proudlove** with a knife, so seriously as to endanger her life. The prisoner, as it appeared, is courting a sister of the woman Proudlove's, who resides with her mother and brother (the latter also a boatman, and a friend of the prisoner's), in Bradley Street, Ancoats, and some words having arisen between the lovers in the course of their wooing on Monday evening last, a family row ensued, and the prisoner received a good thrashing at the hands of his innamorata's brother. Nothing daunted, however, the prisoner went next night to renew his suit, when Mrs Proudlove began to upbraid him about his behaviour on the previous evening, and being intoxicated, he got so exasperated that he pulled out his pocket knife and stabbed her in the arm. From the way in which the prosecutrix and her friends gave evidence, however, it was manifest they did not wish to press the charge, seeing which the bench treated the case as one of simple assault, and fined the prisoner £5, or in default to be imprisoned two months.

### **200 3 August 1850**

**IN THE COUNTY COURT OF LANCASHIRE AT WARRINGTON** – In the matter of the Petition of **JAMES ROBINSON** formerly of Wilderspool Road, Latchford, near Warrington, in the County of Chester, provision shopkeeper, farmer, boatman and stone dealer, at present of Ward's Fold, Latchford, near Warrington aforesaid, boatman and stone dealer, an insolvent debtor. Notice is hereby given that the County Court of Lancashire, holden at Warrington, acting in the matter of this petition, will proceed to make a final order thereon, at the said court, on Thursday the twelfth day of September next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon precisely, unless cause be then and there shown to the contrary.

R STEVENSON

### **201 24 August 1850**

#### **Rochdale and Middleton**

**DEATH FROM DROWNING** On Wednesday, an inquest was held at the Railway Inn, near the Blue Pits Station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on view of the body of **Abraham Marsden**, a boatman. On Monday evening, deceased, who had been drinking hard, when crossing the lock bridge of the canal near the house at which the inquest was held, fell into the water and was drowned. Verdict, "Accidentally drowned".

### **202 7 September 1850**

**ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN** At the New Bailey on Thursday, before Mr L Trafford and Mr Jos Peel, **Adam Howe**, a boatman, lately in the employ of Messrs William Jackson and Sons, carriers, was charged with having robbed his employers of £5 5s. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of April last, he was employed as driver on one of Messrs Jackson's luggage boats, plying between Runcorn and Manchester, and was entrusted with £5 5s, made up in seven parcels of 15s each, wherewith to pay wages of as many fellow servants whom he was to meet at Runcorn. After receiving the money, however, he absconded, appropriating it to his own use, and no further intelligence was heard of him until

Wednesday last, when he was apprehended in Hulme. The charge being fully made out, he was committed for trial at the sessions.

**203 12 October 1850**

**STEALING A HORSE** At the Salford Borough Court on Monday, a boatman named **George Pilkington** was charged with stealing a horse and bridle belonging to Mr James Johnson, beer retailer, Hampson Street, Salford. On Sunday night, the 21<sup>st</sup> ult, Mr Johnson saw his horse safe on some vacant land behind his house, but on the following morning, the horse was missing as was also a bridle from the stable adjoining. Between eight and nine o'clock on Monday morning, a man named James Grimshaw, a milk dealer and neighbour of Mr Johnson's, saw the prisoner riding on the missing horse in the direction of Broughton Road, Salford. He knew the horse, and asked the prisoner what he was going to do with it. The prisoner replied he was only walking it out. Information was given to the police, and on Friday last, Pilkington was apprehended at Sandbach by the Cheshire constabulary. Superintendent Taylor, of the Salford police, brought him from that place, and learned that the horse had been sold to a "knacker". The prisoner had been several times convicted of felony. He was committed to the sessions.

**204 2 November 1850**

**CHARGE OF STABBING** At the Borough Court on Monday, a man named John Bott, a bricklayer, was charged with stabbing a man named **Thomas Feargan**. The man who had been stabbed was unable to appear in consequence of the injuries he had received. The prisoner and Feargan, according to the evidence of several witnesses, were fighting in Great Bridgewater Street on Saturday night, when Feargan called out, "I am stabbed". The prisoner ran away, but was caught in Lower Moseley Street. Feargan, who is a boatman, was stabbed in four places, and would not be able to attend in court for a week. Mr Roberts, who appeared for the prisoner, said he understood he was intoxicated at the time of the offence, and that Feargan was going to rob him. The case was remanded to Monday.

**205 18 January 1851**

**Rochdale and Middleton**

**SUDDEN DEATH FROM INTEMPERANCE** On Wednesday morning, between eight and nine o'clock, **Michael Ackroyd** of Lower Place, a boatman, after returning from a neighbour's house, fell down and expired immediately. He was 40 years of age, and on the Monday and Tuesday had been drinking to excess.

**206 18 January 1851**

**Runcorn**

**EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF EARTHENWARE** At the petty sessions on Tuesday, before Sir Richard Brooke, Bart (chairman), Richard Brooke, Dennis Brundrit and Philip Whiteway Esqrs, **Joseph Chadwick**, the owner and captain of the flat *John*, hired to the Bridgewater Trustees, and his brothers, **Samuel and William Chadwick**, hands on board the same flat, were charged with plundering the cargoes entrusted to them. A most trifling circumstance led to the discovery of an extensive and deep-laid system of plunder. George Lewis, a constable appointed under the act for the better protection of property and preservation of the peace on navigable rivers and canals, observed a basket handed over from a party on board the flat *John* to William Eccleston, a pier head man of the Bridgewater Trustees. He followed the party, and saw it deposited in the pier head hut ; he pointed it out to the father of Eccleston, the harbour master ; he told his son to return the basket. The witness saw Eccleston deliver the basket on board the flat, but he made a proposition to break the mugs, and there would be no more bother about the matter. The witness then reported the case to Mr Howarth, the agent. He directed him to watch the flat. In observance of this order, he did watch ; and about an hour afterwards he saw William and Samuel Chadwick throw from the stern of the flat a heavy body into the dock, and afterwards Samuel Chadwick threw something into the dock from the bow of the vessel. On the following morning, in company with Mr Evans, he searched the flat, and found a basket containing earthenware, and in other parts of the cabin found

other articles of ware. Mr Robert Evans, foreman of the Bridgewater Trustees, confirmed this statement and further deposed that by order of Mr Howarth, the agent, the dock was run dry. In the place where the stern of the flat had been lying, there was a box and a sack connected together with a strong rope ; in the position where the bow of the flat had been, a quantity of earthenware, loose, was lying. He, previously in company with the last witness, searched the flat, and in the cabin found a basket containing earthenware, and other earthenware which was produced ; this had been kept entirely from any other property. The bag and the box found in the dick contained earthenware. So far, the property had not been identified ; but by the active and vigilant exertions of the worthy chief constable, who took a tour into the Potteries, four distinct identifications were proved, and Mr Richardson stated that there were four others as clear as those proved and that further, he could establish six other cases which would implicate the prisoner. Mr Thomas Harlow, warehouseman of Messrs Morley and Co of Shelton, deposed to ordering a certain quantity of flat dishes and six ewers, a new pattern which had never previously been sent out, to be packed on the 17<sup>th</sup> September in a crate B & S 48 – these were a registered pattern and had only been exported, they had not been sold in England ; the ware now produced was part of the lot. The packer proved that he had packed the goods and sent them to Etruria Wharf, to be forwarded to Runcorn ; as to their further destination, he knew not. James Mountford, warehouseman at Mellor, Venables and Co, Burslem, identified a quantity of jugs, bowls and dishes as having been packed in a crate marked WM and forwarded to Runcorn. Thomas Wroge, packer to Messrs Ridhway and Co, Stoke Lane, identified four baking and six flat dishes as being part of the contents of a crate marked R15, which he packed on the 21<sup>st</sup> November last. James Handley, warehouseman to Messrs Barker and Sons, Burslem, identified two jugs, a registered pattern, which were packed in a crate marked XT on the 4<sup>th</sup> October. Hall, of the Lancashire constabulary, deposed that in consequence of information received, he went to the house of Peter Byrom of Rixton, where he found a quantity of earthenware, which he now produced (two jugs were identified as being part of the crate XT). Ellen Byrom, wife of Peter Byrom, deposed that the ware had been exchanged with the prisoner Joseph Chadwick for a cheese. This witness gave her testimony with great reluctance, and it was not until after a threat of commitment that the facts could be elicited from her. James Dobson, porter to the Bridgewater Trustees, proved the shipping of a crate marked R15 on the 7<sup>th</sup> December, on board the flat *John*, of which the prisoner Joseph Chadwick was owner and master, and William and Samuel Chadwick were hands. James Catterall proved the shipment of 20 crates, marked B and S44 on the 15<sup>th</sup> November ; 100 crates marked AB on 20<sup>th</sup> December ; and three crates marked XT on the 15<sup>th</sup> October, on board the same flat. Mr Richardson deposed that he apprehended Joseph and Samuel Chadwick at Liverpool on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January and William Chadwick on the 5<sup>th</sup> at Runcorn. The earthenware was unpacked at the Town Hall and shown to the prisoners. Joseph and William Chadwick denied any knowledge of it ; Samuel said he had pilfered the ware, but his brothers knew nothing of the matter. The box belonged to him, and the bag to the boat. When the ware was brought by the witness Hall, he told the prisoner Joseph that he was charged with having sold it, he replied that it was of no use to deny it, he had done so. Four witnesses, who had been successively put in charge of the flat *John* after the Chadwicks had been apprehended, deposed that earthenware had been brought on board the flat whilst in their care. Mr James Nicholson, who defended the prisoners, contended that the case must fail, as no ownership of the ware had been proved. The different packages deposed to belonged to parties in America ; the different cargoes had been delivered to the satisfaction of the Bridgewater Trustees, who had paid the freight ; and no one complained of any loss. The ware having been found on board the flat might appear suspicious, but he had only to deal with facts. As regarded William Eccleston, he contended that there was no evidence to prove that he had any knowledge of the contents of the basket, and his previous good character – he having been twenty years in the service of the Bridgewater Trustees – ought to have weight with the bench. The prisoners were all committed to take their trial at the ensuing Knutsford sessions. The case created great interest, and occupied the attention of the magistrates upwards of four hours. Messrs Davenport and Co of Longport ; Adams and Jones of Stoke ; Furnival and Co of Cobridge ; and Baker and Co of Fenton, were prepared to identify other portions of the ware, but

the magistrates did not think it necessary to enter into any other cases.

### **207 15 March 1851**

**CHARGE OF MALICIOUSLY SHOOTING** Yesterday (Friday), having been remanded from the previous day, a young man named **John Chantler**, following the occupation of a boatman, was brought up at the Salford Town Hall, before Messrs H L Trafford and John Kay, charged with maliciously firing a loaded pistol at a young married woman named Elizabeth Rothwell, with intent to do her some grievous bodily harm. From the evidence of the prosecutrix, it appeared that she left her own house in Rupert Street, Ordsall Lane, about seven o'clock on Tuesday evening, for the purpose of visiting her father's house in Blackburn Street, which runs parallel with Liverpool Road, and that when she got nearly opposite a row of houses in Blackburn Street known as Blackburn's Buildings, she observed a man standing in the road who, after she had passed, crossed the street and followed her. Turning her head to look at him, she observed him pull something out of his pocket, and at that time thought he was about to throw up a pigeon, but immediately afterwards she heard the discharge of a pistol, and felt something like a ball pass her bosom. Feeling very greatly alarmed, she hurried to her father's house as quickly as she could, and on her arrival told her father she had been shot at. After staying there about three quarters of an hour, she set off on her return home, her father accompanying her because she felt so alarmed, and when they got near Blackburn's Buildings, she saw the man who had followed her standing in the road, and by the light of a lamp saw it was the prisoner. She said to her father, there's Channy [ a bye name given to the prisoner ] and her father went to him and said, what are you loading that pistol for? His reply was, "I don't know", and he crossed the road and followed them at a distance of about 15 or 20 yards, and pointing the pistol at them, fired again. A woman who heard the report then opened her door, and witness being alarmed took shelter in her house until her father came to take her home. She did not know why the prisoner should shoot a pistol at her, except that he and her husband had had a few words. The prisoner had since worked for her husband, and on Saturday last came to ask for some money which he said was due to him. She (witness) told him that he owed her husband more money than he claimed, and told him he had better let it stand against that. This he was unwilling to do, and she told him he might get it as he liked. He said he would have his money one way or another, and left the house quite vexed. John Crook, the father of the prosecutrix, confirmed her evidence in every particular, but he would not undertake to swear to the prisoner. It was a dark night, and he did but get a very imperfect sight of the prisoner, and he was so much agitated and put about that he really would not like to swear to the man. He had little doubt, however, from his general appearance that he was the man. The policeman who had apprehended the prisoner said he utterly denied the charge, but when he was locking him up in the cell, he made use of an expression, whether addressed to him (the officer) or not he could not tell, viz, "They should have paid me, and then". For the defence, witnesses were called to prove that the prisoner was at home at his lodgings at the time described, and that consequently the prosecutrix must be mistaken. Mr Roberts, solicitor, who appeared for the prisoner, cross-examined the witnesses very offensively, and then addressed the bench on behalf of his client. His observations were principally addressed to the spectators in the gallery, and consisted for the most part of imputations on the bench, the police and all connected with the administration of justice in Salford. This is a growing evil, which the bench would do well to put an effectual stop to, if not for the sake of their own dignity, at least for the protection of the witnesses that are brought before them. Ultimately the prisoner was discharged.

### **208 10 May 1851**

**DISHONESTY OF A BOATMAN** On Monday, **Jesse Mills**, a boatman, was brought up at the Borough Court before Mr Maude, charged with having robbed his employer, Mr Paul Ogden, carrier, of 28s in money. Ogden had sent the prisoner to Saddleworth in charge of a boat, and had given him 28s to pay the canal dues, but instead of applying the money as directed, the prisoner spent it in a beer house. On investigating the charge, Mr Maude was of opinion that it was a breach of trust only, and not a felony, and on that ground, the prisoner was discharged.

### 209 5 July 1851

MANCHESTER BOROUGH COURT **George Kay**, a boatman, was charged with stealing a pair of shoes from another boatman named **Abraham Johnson**, having taken them from his feet while the latter was sleeping in a public house. He was fined 20s and the value of the shoes, or fourteen days imprisonment.

### 210 12 July 1851

DEATH FROM FALLING INTO A LIMEKILN On Tuesday afternoon, an inquest was held before Mr Herford at the Royal Infirmary on the body of a boatman named **James Buckley**, aged 53, who had come to his death by falling into a limekiln. About six o'clock on Wednesday morning week, a man named Robert Johnson, in the employ of Mr Brocklehurst, the proprietor of lime works near Pinmill Bridge, went to open the gates of the premises, and whilst doing so he heard a scream from within. On making a search, he saw the deceased, whom he had previously warned from the premises, in the limekiln. He was got out as soon as possible, but his feet and back were severely burned. He was conveyed to the Infirmary, where he died about two o'clock on Tuesday morning last. His brother stated that his sleeping near the kiln had been caused by destitution resulting from intemperance. Verdict, "Accidentally burned".

### 211 2 August 1851

ANOTHER MANSLAUGHTER JUST PREVENTED On Thursday, a boatman from Wigan named **Robert Culcheth** was brought up at the Borough Court, charged with being concerned in a murderous assault, which was committed about midnight on Monday on the person of Patrick Lyons, beerseller of Chester Street, Hulme. From the statement of Lyons, who appeared very ill whilst giving his evidence, it seemed that late on Monday night he and a friend left the Rose and Crown beer house in Lombard Street, Deansgate, to go into Hulme, and that in Great Bridgewater Street they were met by the prisoner and some other boatmen who, without saying a word, made an attack on them. He (Lyons) was knocked down and kicked so dreadfully as to lose all consciousness, and ever since, his life has been almost despaired of. This evidence was confirmed by two or three respectable witnesses, one of whom said he heard the kicks bestowed on the complainant at a distance of 30 yards. Another witness said there were six boatmen at once abusing prosecutor, and tried which could get the most kicks at him. The landlord of the Rose and Crown said the prisoner and several other boatmen had been drinking at his house, where their conduct was very bad indeed. One of their companions had been robbed, as they asserted, in his house, and they made an agreement to attack and beat every person who came out of the house, in order to be revenged. Mr Maude said the prisoner ought to thank God he had not to answer a charge of murder, for it was clear he and his companions had beaten the prosecutor until they believed him dead. The interference of the police had prevented murder. He then committed the prisoner for trial at the sessions.

### 212 22 November 1851

A MAN AND A BOY DROWNED During the present week, Mr Herford has held inquests on the bodies of two persons who have been drowned – a boy nine years old, named Thomas Cricket, and a boatman from Rochdale named **James Schofield**, aged 26 years. The boy Cricket worked at the wharf of Mr Libby in Para Street, and whilst playing amongst some boats moored in the canal during his dinner hour on Monday, he is supposed to have fallen into the water. When he was missed, his father and others dragged the canal, and his body was found a few yards from the wharf. Schofield was drowned on Wednesday evening, near the tunnel on the Bridgewater Junction Canal in Allport Town, having slipped from off the boat whilst dragging it out of the tunnel with a boat hook. His father and brother, who were with him at the time, used prompt means to rescue him, but, it being dark, some time elapsed before his body could be found. In both cases, the jury returned verdicts of "Accidental death".

**213 22 November 1851**

**SHOCKING ACCIDENT** On Friday last, some boatmen were employed at the Dale Street wharf of the Rochdale Canal, lowering goods through a hoist into their boat, when the rope broke and a heavy bale fell on one of the men, named **Scott**, breaking his spine and causing his death on Sunday. At the inquest before Mr Herford on Monday, a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**214 6 December 1851 Ashton**

**FATAL ACCIDENT IN THE FOG** An inquest was held on Monday, before Mr Rutter, on the body of **William Garry**, a boatman, who accidentally walked into the canal between Ashton and Stockport during a thick mist on Friday night last. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**215 17 April 1852 Rochdale, Middleton &c**

**INQUEST** On Wednesday, Mr Deaden held an inquest at the Hopwood Arms, Slattocks, about two miles from Middleton, on view of the body of **John Strong** of Manchester, boatman, aged 34. On Monday morning, deceased was found dead in the cabin of a boat on the Rochdale Canal, near to the above named public house. A short time previous, he had been assisting to load lime from the boat. Verdict, "Found dead".

**216 22 May 1852**

**FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE ROCHDALE CANAL** On the afternoon of Monday week, a boatman named **Thomas Oldknow** was engaged in the management of a flat on the Rochdale Canal near Middleton. From the position of the boat, it seemed probable that it would strike with considerable force against the side of the canal, and he therefore dropped a "fender" over the side ; but while he was holding it, the violence with which the boat struck caused him to fall into the water. Before he could be rescued, the boat again lurched to the side of the canal, and crushed him severely. He was taken out as soon as possible and conveyed to the Infirmary, but he died on Saturday morning, leaving a wife and seven children. On Monday an inquest was held on his body, and a verdict of "Accidental death" returned.

**217 17 July 1852**

**A BOATMAN DROWNED** Mr Rutter held an inquest on Monday at Droylsden on **Robert Brunt**, aged 60 years, a boatman on the Ashton Canal. On Saturday afternoon, he and **Smith**, the captain of a boat, left Manchester for Bugsworth, for stone, and they reached the Clayton lock at Droylsden where deceased, whilst opening the paddles, slipped into the canal, it is supposed, for he was not missed until his hat was seen on the surface, whirling in an eddy caused by the passage of the water through one of the sluices below. The captain instantly took steps to afford help, but the unfortunate man was not found for near upon half an hour, as he had been sucked down and carried through the sluice hole into the lock. He was much bruised by coming in contact with the walls and with the bottom of the boat, and life was extinct. Verdict accordingly. The deceased had been a boatman all his life.

**218 16 October 1852 Leigh**

**EMBEZZLING MONEY** On Tuesday, **Matthew Perry**, a boatman, was taken before Mr J S T Greene, charged with embezzling £1 10s, the property of Messrs Henry Farmington and Co, coal proprietors, West Leigh. The money was given to the defendant on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September last by Mr J T Part, cashier to Messrs Farmington and Co, for the purpose of paying the dues on the North Staffordshire Company's Canal, for two boats laden with coal, which he was engaged to take to Anderson in Cheshire, but did not take boats to Anderson, neither did he return the money. Nothing was heard of him from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September until Saturday last, when he was apprehended in Manchester. He was committed to take his trial at the next quarter sessions.

### 219 13 November 1852

**BRUTAL ASSAULT – COMMITTAL FOR MANSLAUGHTER** At an early hour on the morning of Wednesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst, a man named John Wilkinson, while passing down Water Street, heard a noise on the other side of Regent Road Bridge, and on going to the spot, he found two men struggling violently together on the ground. One of them, a young and powerful man, was holding the other, who appeared much older than himself, and beating him most unmercifully. Wilkinson begged of him to desist, and he got up, leaving the old man lying on the ground, but not until he had kicked him three or four times about the body. On asking him why he had done so, he said that while sleeping on the ground he was awakened by the old man endeavouring to get his watch from his pocket. Wilkinson then went away, but afterwards saw both the men walking in different directions. The man who had been so brutally assaulted went up Egerton Street, where meeting a police officer, he gave information of the manner in which he had been treated, and requested to be taken to a surgeon. Seeing that he was very much hurt, the officer took him to the Infirmary, when he gave his name as William Wellesley, 52 years of age, and stated that he was employed as a watchman in a field in Water Street. He suffered very great pain, and died on Friday morning. From information which he gave, the police made search for the man who had assaulted him, a boatman named **William Abbott**, and he was apprehended on Saturday evening in Liverpool. On Monday the prisoner, who is a well built, powerful man, was brought up at the Borough Court, charged with the crime of manslaughter when, in addition to the above facts, it was stated that a few minutes after the assault had been committed, the prisoner went to a street sweeper named McLeod and, while conversing with him, said that a man had attempted to rob him of his watch – that he had beaten him, but hoped a doctor would be sent to him. Mr Baker, house surgeon at the Royal Infirmary, stated that the death of the deceased was caused by the extreme violence that had been used towards him, three of his ribs being fractured and one of the lungs injured. The prisoner, in his defence, entered into a long and rambling statement about the deceased having endeavoured to steal his watch, but he was committed to take his trial at the assizes.

### 220 12 February 1853

**BOY DROWNED IN THE ROCHDALE CANAL** Mr Herford held an inquest on Saturday at the Railway Inn, Deansgate, on view of the body of a boy eleven years old named Leastwise, who was drowned on the Thursday night previous by falling into the Tib Lock, near Gaythorn, on the Rochdale Canal. About three weeks ago the deceased worked in a silk mill, and lived with his mother in a cellar in Trumpet Street, but having left his work he got a beating, and next morning, as his mother was taking him back to work, he ran away from her. He soon after engaged himself to **Frederick Tinsel**, a boatman on the Rochdale Canal, as horse driver, saying that he had not run away but that his mother sent him to pick up jobs when she went to her work, and he continued to look after the horse until Thursday night. He was so very venturesome, running across lock gates and getting into dangerous places, that Tinsel warned him several times, but with little effect. On Thursday night, as they were passing through the Tib locks, he was suddenly missed, and about ten minutes after, something having been felt between the lock gates and the boat, a hook was put down and grappled the obstacle, which proved to be the dead body of the lad. He had not been set to do any dangerous work, but was ordered to keep by the side of the boat. The mother was examined, and stated she knew he was hauling, but she thought he should have his fill of it, and then probably he would stick to his work the better when he came back. Verdict, “Accidentally drowned”.

### 221 March 5 1853

**INQUEST** On Monday, Mr Herford held the following inquest, on view of the body of **Richard Butler**, aged 68, a boatman from Ashley, who fell into one of the locks on the canal, and was drowned in the tunnel. Verdict accordingly.

### 222 11 June 1853

**INQUESTS IN MANCHESTER** Mr Herford, the city coroner, has held inquests during the week.

On Tuesday at the Bird in Hand, Great Ancoats Street, on view of the body of **Thomas Stock** of Bradley Street, son of a boatman, who on Saturday fell into the lock of the Ashton Canal, near Goulden's Buildings, while looking at a boat in the lock. He was taken out quite dead after having been immersed a quarter of an hour, every means to restore animation having proved useless. It is supposed that he turned giddy and fell in.

**223 9 July 1853**

**Rochdale and Middleton**

INQUEST On Tuesday, Mr Dearden held an inquest at the Navigation Inn, on view of the body of **William Moss** of Barnsley, boatman, aged 33 years. Deceased and two others were employed by Messrs Sharp and Co of Rotherham, and on Monday, whilst unloading some timber from a boat in the canal yard, Rochdale, the chain of the crane broke, and Moss was so severely injured on the head that he died the same evening. Verdict, "Accidental death". **George Duncan**, another of the men, was seriously injured, and but little hope is entertained of his recovery.

**224 6 August 1853**

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE At the City Police Court on Thursday, a young woman named **Hannah Moss** was charged with having attempted to drown herself in the Ashton Canal. For the last two years, the prisoner had cohabited with a boatman, by whom she had an illegitimate child, and on Wednesday, in consequence of his refusing to give her any money to purchase something to eat, she attempted to commit suicide by jumping into the canal. She was, however, immediately taken out by another boatman and given into custody for the rash act. Mr Maude remanded the prisoner until Saturday, instructing the police to bring the man with whom she cohabited before him at the same time.

**225 10 September 1853**

MURDER OF TWO CHILDREN BY THEIR STEPFATHER A coroner's jury at Stockport have felt it incumbent upon them to return a verdict which has sent one of their fellow townsmen for trial at the next Liverpool Assizes, on the fearful charge of having murdered two children of the tender ages of 8 and 4 1/2 years, dependent on him for support and protection, as the husband of their mother. The evidence against him is as yet entirely of a circumstantial character, but it makes out a case of suspicion strong enough to warrant the jury in coming to the conclusion they have. The facts at present known are soon related. About two years ago, Thomas Moore, a grinder in a factory, married Esther Higham, a widow with two children by her former husband, James then aged 6 years and John aged two and a half. Moore seems to have been a man of vagabond habits, and had not lived with his wife and family more than six months out of the two years, leaving his wife to maintain herself and her children as best she could. In consequence, they have been relieved by the union, and warrants have been out for his apprehension to answer the charge of neglecting them. Such a warrant there was in force against him last Friday, the execution of which had been purposely delayed to see if he would reform. We do not hear, however, that he was guilty of beating his wife or step children, or that he showed any animosity towards the latter ; in fact, Taylor, his father-in-law, says that he used to fondle them, so that his ill treatment consisted in allowing them to starve. The family lived with James Taylor, the wife's father, in Marsland Street, Portwood, and Moore had been at home a month on his return from a ramble. On Friday morning, the children went out and never returned, and on Saturday afternoon, Moore was taken into custody under the warrant spoken of. About noon on Monday, he was taken before the magistrates at the Court House, and while they were hearing the charge against him, news was brought of the discovery of the dead bodies of the children. About twelve o'clock, as a boatman named **Thomas Fletcher** was going along the canal at Stockport in his boat, he saw in the water, near Whalley's bridge, the face of a child. After proceeding to his destination at the Lancashire bridge, he returned, with another person, to the place where he had seen the child's face ; and, after looking for some time, his companion, a young man named Crabbe, found the dead body of James in the water. The finding of this body led to the institution of a further search, and about five yards from the place

where the first body was found, another man found the body of John, the younger child. The magistrates determined to remand the prisoner for a week.

### **226 17 September 1853**

**STABBING AT STRETFORD** At the New Bailey on Wednesday, James Barlow was charged with having stabbed **William Garner**, a boatman. The prosecutor reached Stretford on Sunday evening with his boat from Leigh, and went to the tap room of the Dog and Partridge public house for some refreshments. He found the prisoner there (a stranger to him), sat down by his side, and got a pint of ale. After drinking a portion of it, he placed the remainder on the table, from which the prisoner immediately took it, and poured the remainder into his pot. The prosecutor, of course, remonstrated, and told him that if he had asked him he would have let him drink. The prisoner asked him when he was going out ; the reply was, "Not before I leave for good". The prisoner then said, "That will do, then". He afterwards became very turbulent, and the landlord's step son put him out of the house and shut the door. Some ten minutes elapsed, and the prosecutor then went out and saw the prisoner standing beside a cab opposite the door. Barlow walked across the road, and said, "Dost recollect what I told thee?" The prosecutor asked, "What by that?" to which the prisoner made no reply, but put his hand into his right hand trousers pocket, drew out a knife, and stabbed him in the left side just below the ribs, which caused the blood to flow profusely. Two men passing at the time seized the prisoner and gave him into the custody of one of the county police. The prosecutor was conveyed to the house of Mr Stevenson, surgeon, Stretford, where his wound was dressed, and he was afterwards conveyed to the Royal Infirmary, where he remained until Tuesday morning. The prisoner said nothing in defence, and was committed for trial to the assizes.

### **227 10 December 1853**

#### **Altrincham**

**PETTY SESSIONS** Thomas Aldcroft of Timperley, farmer, and **Thomas Kearsley** of Manchester, boatman, appeared to answer the complaint of Mr Orme, police officer, for discharging and depositing a boat load of night soil, which had been brought from Manchester, on a public highway in Timporley called Deansgate Lane, which runs along the canal for half a mile up to or near the station on the railway, thereby causing an obstruction. Mr Walworth, superintendent of the night soil department, Manchester, appeared for the defendants. After a lengthy hearing, the magistrates convicted the defendants in the mitigated penalty of 20s and costs. Mr Walworth said he should confer with the town clerk of Manchester, after which he would give notice to the magistrate's clerk whether the town council of Manchester would appeal against the conviction. It appears that the farmers of Timporley have had their manure brought from Manchester in boats along the Bridgewater Canal, and have for years unloaded it upon this road without any complaint made until recently, when several persons have been summoned for the like offence. The ground of defence is that the road is a private occupation road and not a public highway, and to settle the matter finally, an appeal will be necessary. The manure laid along the road is unquestionably a great nuisance, as well as an obstruction to the public passing along the road.

### **228 10 December 1853**

#### **South Lancashire Assizes**

**STABBING A CANAL BOATMAN AT STRETFORD** James Barlow (26) was indicted for feloniously stabbing **William Garner** at Stretford on Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> September last. Mr Owens prosecuted ; the prisoner was undefended. The prosecutor was a canal boatman, and came with his boat from Leigh to Stretford. On arriving at the latter place, he went into a public house, the Dog and Partridge. Garner ordered a pint of ale, and after it came, the prisoner took it up, drank part of it, and put the remainder in his own glass. Garner remonstrated, but the prisoner became so outrageous that he was ultimately put out of the place by desire of the company. Some few minutes after, Garner went out, and a row occurred between them. In the course of it, the prisoner, while chasing the prosecutor, took out his knife and stabbed him. Guilty, with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

**229 17 December 1853**

**Bolton**

PETTY SESSIONS William Prescott was committed for trial for stealing a donkey, the property of **Thomas Lee**, boatman of Aspull.

**230 24 December 1853**

INQUESTS By Mr Herford, coroner for the city. On Tuesday, on **Mary Ann Cross**, wife of **William Cross**, a boatman of Bank Court, Bank Street, Hulme, aged 23. About seven o'clock on Monday morning, the deceased, while crossing the Bridgewater viaduct, was suddenly attacked with vomiting and sickness, and on being taken into an adjacent house, died almost immediately. Verdict, "Died from natural causes".

**231 1 April 1854**

ATTEMPTED GAROTTE ROBBERY On Friday evening about twelve o'clock, as a boatman named **Samuel Smith** was proceeding along Union Street, Ancoats, he was attacked by several men, who seized him by the neck and pulled him to the ground. One of the men held him down tightly by the neck, while the others proceeded to rifle his pockets. He managed, however, to call out for assistance, and a police officer who was in the neighbourhood ran to him. He succeeded in catching two of the men, named William Bowler and Thomas Aspinall, and after a desperate struggle kept them until another officer came to his assistance. Smith, the man who had been attacked, was almost insensible ; but, on recovering, found that they had not succeeded in getting anything from him. On Monday, the two men were brought up at the City Police Court, and committed for trial.

**232 23 July 1854**

**Todmorden**

SERIOUS LOSS **Johnson Fletcher**, a boatman, who was in charge of two narrow boats, tied up the boats on Sunday last and turned his horse into Shaw Wood without leave. After rambling about, it fell into the bottom of the quarry, breaking its back in such a manner that the bones protruded through the skin ; it died immediately.

**233 26 August 1854**

**Rochdale and Middleton**

INQUESTS On Tuesday, an inquest was held at the Swan with Two Necks, Oldham Road, by Mr T Ferrand Dearden, on **John Gaunt**, a boatman, who came by his death on Saturday last through an injury received whilst loading a boat. Verdict, "Died by the visitation of God".

**234 18 November 1854**

FATAL ACCIDENT On Tuesday, Mr Herford, city coroner, held an inquest on a boatman, 73 years of age, named **James Marsh**, who died at the Infirmary from the effects of a compound fracture of the left leg, caused by the kick of a horse in a stable at Thornham.

**235 18 November 1854**

ALARMING BURGLARY NEAR LIVERPOOL – APPREHENSION OF THE GANG About a month ago, at an early hour in the morning, four desperadoes with blackened faces and armed with guns and bludgeons, broke into the premises of Mrs Charles, a widow occupying a solitary house, at Halsall near Ormskirk. Two of them forced their way into the bedroom, where the old lady and another woman, a relative, were sleeping, and with many abusive threats demanded her money. She said she had no money except for a few shillings, which were in her dress pocket. With many frightful oaths they said they knew better, that they were aware of the existence of a safe in the house containing £2000, and that if she did not show them where it was, they would shoot her. With remarkable presence of mind, she replied that there was a safe in the house, but that it had been removed to another place, giving them an indefinite direction. They then demanded her keys, with which they opened and ransacked all the cupboards and drawers they found in the house, overlooking, fortunately, a second bunch of keys in a little corner cupboard, one of which was, in

fact, they key to the safe. They succeeded in finding nothing but two guns, a few shillings in silver, and a verge watch. Information was given to the police, and a few days ago it was ascertained that the watch had been pledged at Mr Shepherd's in Lime Street. On Thursday, a little girl went to the shop to redeem the watch, stating that she had been sent by a man who was waiting at Chadwick's public house in Argyle Street, until she returned. She was detained, and intelligence forwarded to the police. Detective officers Murphy and Carlisle went to the public house, where they succeeded in apprehending a flatman, who was subsequently identified as one of the burglars ; and they afterwards apprehended the remaining three at Runcorn. They are all flatmen, and their names are **George Clarke, Simon Barlow, Charles Tomlinson** and **John Leech**. Barlow has been identified as the man who presented the gun at Mrs Charles and Tomlinson as the man who held the candle. A gun, which, it has been ascertained, was one of those stolen, was found at the house of one of the prisoners. Barlow and Tomlinson have been twice convicted at Knutsford, and Leech has been several times in custody. About a week after the outrage at Mrs Charles's, an attempt was made to force an entrance into a detached house about a mile from Ormskirk, which had apparently failed in consequence of one of the burglars cutting himself severely with the glass, probably in breaking the pane, the window being much smeared with blood. Singularly enough, Tomlinson's hand, when apprehended, had all the appearance of having met with precisely such an accident.

**236 23 December 1854**

**Lancashire Winter Assizes**

MONDAY DECEMBER 18 **James Donnelly**, 22, boatman, charged with having feloniously stolen a mare and spring cart, the property of William Griffiths of Ashton-under-Lyne, was sentenced to twelve calendar months imprisonment with hard labour.

**237 13 January 1855**

MANCHESTER POLICE COURT **James Booth**, a boatman, was committed for trial for stealing, and Richard Mulhall, a marine store dealer, for receiving, between seven and eight cwt of pig iron, the property of Messrs Sharp and Roberts, iron founders, Oxford Road.

**238 28 April 1855**

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

**239 10 May 1855**

ATTEMPTED MURDER THROUGH JEALOUSY On Tuesday, a young man named Edward Apinall, about 26 years of age, employed as a drawer in at Messrs Clark's Mill, Bradford, was charged at the New Bailey, before Mr Trafford, with having attempted to drown a young woman named Mary Connolly, to whom he was paying his addresses. The following is the statement made in evidence by the prosecutrix, who is a factory operative, residing in Granby Row.

I reside at No 3 Granby Row, Manchester, with a widow woman, and am employed in a cotton factory. I have been acquainted with the prisoner for about 12 months, and frequently met him. On Saturday night last about eight o'clock, I was sitting at the window of No 3 Granby Row, and the prisoner came past the window and beckoned of me, and upon that I put on my bonnet and shawl and went out to him. We walked together through Hulme, and on the road towards Stretford, until we came to a canal bridge ; we turned under the bridge and walked along the canal bank for a short distance, to a place where there is a tree growing. I then said to him, "This is a very queer way ; I do not like this way, let us turn back". He said, "No, I won't turn back", and asked me to sit down. We sat down off the towing path. We had been sitting about five minutes when I said, "It's time for me to be getting home, it's getting late". He said, "I don't intend that you shall ever go home again". I got up and he got up. I began to walk away towards Manchester. I said, "You cannot talk that way, you are not in earnest". He said, "I am in earnest, and I don't intend you to go home again", and, pointing to the canal, he said, "There you go!" He was between me and the canal, and was about half a yard from the canal bank. He got hold of me round the waist and pulled me

towards the canal. I got hold of his neckerchief with one hand and his braces with the other, and struggled very hard. I said, "Oh, Ned, save my life!" He replied, "No, I don't intend to save your life, for there you go". I said, "Ned, do spare my life until I see my mother ; I am not in any club, so that I could not be buried decently ; cannot you bridle your passion until I see my mother? If you take my life, you will be taking two, for I am certain my mother will never live if you take my life – she has but me". He said, "It does not matter, there you must go, it was my intention when I came here". He then got hold of my neck with one hand and my leg with the other, and tried to force me into the canal. I said, "I will not leave loose of my hold, and if you put me into the canal, you shall go too". He said, "You can go to the bottom and I can swim". He attempted to bite the hand by which I held his handkerchief ; he then threw me down and got both his hands to my throat, and knelt with one knee upon my chest. I turned on one side, and got upon one knee, and begged him to save my life and let me go. He said, "You have deceived me, and there you go!" I begged his pardon several times, and said I would never do so again. He still stuck to me, and I struggled with him on the ground, still holding him by the neckerchief for a very long time. At last I found myself nearly "done", and then screamed out, and continued to do so for about ten minutes, I think, and then a boatman came up. At that time, I was on my back on the towing path, still holding him by the neckerchief. My firm belief is that his intention was to throw me into the canal, and that he would have done so if I had not held by the neckerchief. When the prisoner said that I had deceived him, he referred to my having gone with another young man to his mother's, and taken tea with him. A fortnight last Sunday, he asked me why I had gone with the young man ; and I said he asked me to go with him, but I did not intend to keep his company. I had never been the same way with the prisoner before last Saturday night. It might be about nine o'clock when the first attack was made.

**Peter Bartley**, a boatman of Wigan, said : I am in the service of Messrs Green and Co, common carriers. On Saturday night last, I and **Henry Rose**, and another man, left Manchester with our boat a little after ten o'clock. When we arrived at Throstle Nest bridge, about two miles beyond Manchester, I heard a female voice shrieking out, "Ned, save my life!" That was repeated many times. I then hastened the horses on, and about 200 yards beyond Throstle Nest bridge, and at a place where there is a tree, I came to the prisoner and Mary Connolly. I could see them about twenty yards before I got to them ; she lay on the towing path, about a yard from the canal, and had hold of the prisoner's neckerchief. As soon as she saw me, she said, "Oh! Master save my life". She was then on her feet, and said, "I'll throw my life into your hands". They both got up when the horse was close upon them. Rose came up immediately after me, and asked the prisoner what he meant, and he said, "I intend to drown her". Another boatman and a woman came from the boat to us, and we then took the prisoner and gave him into the custody of George Lawton, whom we met with near the toll bar on the turnpike road. I saw that Connolly was very weak, and we had to support her, first one and then another holding her up by the arm. The captain of the boat corroborated Bartley's evidence, and said that he lighted a lantern, and on examining the ground about where the prisoner and prosecutrix were found together, it bore all the appearance of a severe struggle having taken place. Police-constable Lawton, into whose custody the prisoner was given, produced the dress which prosecutrix wore on Saturday night. It was torn in several places, and daubed with sludge, as if she had been rolled on the ground. The prisoner was given into custody to him at ten minutes before eleven. He told him the charge against him, to which he replied, "Oh, nonsense!" There were marks around his neck as if the prosecutrix had had her hands round it. A young woman named Elizabeth King said that two or three weeks ago the prisoner came and asked her to go to the house of the prosecutrix to fetch her out. He said he had been once and did not like to go again himself. She went, and he accompanied her, and on the way he said, "The next time he caught her, or heard tell of her, being in any young man's company, she should never go home no more". Mr Trafford, addressing the prisoner, said he was much surprised that he did not stand in the dock to answer the most serious charge that could be preferred against a man – that of committing wilful murder. Had those boatmen not come up, he would have succeeded in putting prosecutrix in the canal. If he had, nothing could have saved his life, he believed. He ought to thank Heaven, as long as he lived, that his object had not been accomplished. He should send him to answer to the

highest tribunal he could for this charge, as he had no doubt it was his intention to drown the young woman, and that was caused by that cursed passion of jealousy. He was then committed to take his trial at the next Liverpool assizes. The prisoner was taken from the New Bailey in a coach, on Wednesday morning, to the Ordsal Lane Railway Station, whence he was sent on by train to Liverpool. The prosecutrix was waiting at the prison gates to see him depart, and accompanied the coach to the station where, in tears, she expressed the most affectionate regard for her worthless lover.

**240 14 July 1855**

**Warrington**

**CRUELTY TO ANIMALS** On Tuesday, **Thomas Willenhall**, a boatman, was charged before Mr Johnson with having cruelly beaten a horse at Preston Brook belonging to the Bridgewater Trustees. Two witnesses proved that the prisoner held the horse by the bridle, and struck it in a very cruel manner about the head. The agent of the Trustees said that they had a great number of horses in the care of boatmen, and it was necessary that they should make an example of the prisoner. The magistrate was glad that the prisoner had been apprehended for this offence. Fined 40s and costs, or in default, committed to Knutsford House of Correction for a month with hard labour.

**241 8 December 1855**

**Burnley**

**SINGULAR DISCOVERY OF A COPY OF BISHOP JEWELL'S APOLOGY** On Saturday last, the 1<sup>st</sup> instant, as a boy about 10 years old named **James Dean**, son of **John Dean**, boatman of Burnley Lane, was going with his sister's breakfast to the factory, on passing the weir on the river Brun just below Bank Hall, the seat of General Sir James Scarlett, he saw something on the lower stones of the weir which, on going nearer, he discovered to be a large book, lying with the leaves open, and completely saturated with water. Finding that it was too heavy for him to lift, he left it on the weir until his return from the factory, when on obtaining the assistance of another boy, they succeeded in extricating it and took it to Dean's house, when it was found to be a copy of Bishop Jewell's famous "Apology for the Church of England"; his defence of the same against "Mr Harding's Objections, &c"; two or three other works by the same learned preacher. We give the title pages of two of them almost in extenso, as follows :- "A View of a seditious Bulle sent into England from Pius Quintus, Bishoppe of Rome 1569 ; taken by the Reverend Father in God, John Jewell. &c, &c". "Sermons preached before the Queen's Majestie at Paul's Crosse by the Reverend Father John Jewell, late bishoppe of Sarisburie. Whereunto is added a short treatise of the sacraments gathered out of other his sermons made upon that matter in his Cathedral Church of Sarisburie". His last work is dated from London, 27 Octobris 1567. Most of the works are printed by John Norton, printer to the King's most excellent Majestie 1621. The whole forms a huge volume of seven inches thick, and kept together by an iron clasp, and a chain of iron links upwards of two feet in length was fastened into one of the backs by three bolts. Unfortunately, the persons who got possession of the volume began immediately to dry it by the fire, when of course it fell to pieces, but the leaves were carefully preserved and the whole works are tolerably perfect. The volume has been purchased by Mr William Chaffer, and is now in the hands of a Mr Newman, a very skilful binder, who will reproduce it as far as he can in its original form. Many of our readers will recollect that by an order of Queen Elizabeth, "Bishop Jewell's Apology" was, along with the Holy Bible, the Book of Homilies, and the works of other eminent Protestant divines, to be fixed at some convenient place in every parish church, so that the people resorting thereto might be able to read the same. It was further ordered that these books should be fastened each to a desk by a chain for the better security thereof ; and from several written documents found, the volume evidently once belonged to the parochial church of Burnley, and has been abstracted therefrom. Amongst other papers found in the leaves was one of a very recent date, having upon it, "Prayers are desired for Susan Hitchon of this town (Burnley). Prayers are desired for James, son of Henry Clegg of this township, and for Henry Woodhead of Habergham Eaves". There is also a bill or account, "2 askings (banns of marriage) 1s ; churching 8d, &c". We hope the thief will be discovered. Few churches have been so robbed of ancient books (some highly valuable as parochial records) as St Peter's Church, Burnley.

**242 15 December 1855**

**Lancashire Winter Assizes**

SUSPECTED ROBBERY AT ASTLEY **William Willgoose**, 26, boatman, was indicted for having, at Astley on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, feloniously stolen from the person of John Stirling, one jacket, one purse, two shillings in money and other articles of his property. The jury found the prisoner not guilty. The recorder drew attention to the trifling nature of the evidence, and reprobated the idea of the case having been sent to the assizes. There was quite enough to occupy the attention of the jury, without their time being taken up with such paltry cases as the present charge had turned out. He would allow costs in this case ; but should another of similar description come before his notice, he should most certainly refuse to comply with all requests for costs.

**243 15 December 1855**

**Manchester City Court**

STEALING COALS **William Brownlow**, a boatman, was charged with stealing a quantity of coals from the coal house of Mr Abrahams, Town's Yard, Pollard Street. It was proved by two witnesses that the prisoner had been seen to break open the coal house and take a quantity of coals in a barrow to the cabin of his boat. The prisoner admitted the offence, but said that during the night someone had taken all the coals out of the cabin of his boat, and he had taken the coals from the place named, believing that they were his. He was liberated on promising to return the coals he had taken, and to repair the damage he had done.