

MANCHESTER TIMES 1881 TO 1900

1 January 1 1881

NINE CHARGES AGAINST A PRISONER At the Wolverhampton Police Court on Wednesday, **Edward Evans**, a Welsh boatman, was sent to gaol for six months on no less than nine charges – five of them being assaults, three on policemen and two on civilians. On Tuesday night, he was mad drunk in a public house, and the police were called in to eject him. He violently assaulted them, and made his escape to the canal where, getting on a boat he, with the assistance of other boatmen, effectually kept the police at bay for a considerable time. The police, finding themselves overmatched, obtained the assistance of some civilians, and got the prisoner to the police station. Another boatman named **Howells**, who had assisted Evans in resisting the police, was sentenced to four months hard labour.

2 February 5 1881

STRIKE OF FLATMEN IN LIVERPOOL It was stated in Liverpool on Monday that the flatmen employed by the Bridgewater Navigation Company intend striking, notice having been given them of a reduction in wages varying from 3s 6d to 7s 6d per week.

3 February 12 1881

MANCHESTER QUARTER SESSIONS The business of the general quarter sessions of the peace for the city was commenced on Thursday morning at the Sessions Courts, Minshull Street.

On Thursday the following sentences were passed :-

Nine months imprisonment and seven years police supervision : **William Ashton**, 28, boatman, stealing a collar and bridle and a shovel, belonging to the Bridgewater Trustees,

Yesterday, the following sentences were passed :-

Eight months imprisonment : **James Proudlove**, 38, boatman, theft of a warming apparatus, the property of James Gilson.

4 April 30 1881

ALLEGED MANSLAUGHTER BY A CARTER Yesterday afternoon, Mr F Price, district coroner, held an inquest at the Britannia Inn, Ordsal Lane, Salford, upon the body of **Hannah Huntington**, aged 14 months, the daughter of **Henry Huntington**, boatman, 27 Wilburn Street, Salford, who was killed by a coal cart passing over her body on Thursday. The evidence of the mother, who was sitting at her doorstep when the accident occurred, and that of a man named Thomas Ward, showed that on the afternoon in question, the deceased was playing in the street with an indiarubber ball. A man named Shaw, coal carter, was coming up the street. Shaw was on the shaft of the cart, with his back to the horse, and was putting coal from the front to the back of the cart to relieve the horse of part of the weight, when the deceased ran or fell off the pavement into the road, and the wheel of the cart passed over the whole length of her body, crushing her head and exposing the brain. Shaw was cautioned, and expressed a desire to give evidence. He then stated that he did not see the child, and that before getting on to the shaft he had looked up the street to see if it was clear, and he saw no one in it. When he saw what he had done, he went for a doctor and for a policeman, who took him into custody. Mr Price said it was very much to be regretted that Shaw did not stop the horse while he was removing the coal, and then there could have been no blame attached to him. The mother ought not to have allowed so young a child to play in the street, A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned, and no blame was attached to the carter. At the Salford Police Court yesterday, before Mr J Makinson, Shaw was placed in the dock and charged with causing the death of Hannah Huntington by wilful negligence while in charge of a horse and cart. The case was adjourned until today.

5 May 7 1881

A FATAL QUARREL A boatman named **Thomas Whittle** was on Tuesday remanded on a charge

of having caused the death of **Thomas Smith**, also a canal boatman, who has died at the Leigh Workhouse from a broken spine. On Saturday night, the two men quarrelled in a public house. They left to fight, and Smith fell or was thrown over a wall, death ensuing on Monday morning.

6 June 18 1881

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court on Thursday, **William Robinson alias Pendleton** and **John Carroll**, boatmen, were charged with having stolen about 100 lb weight of lead, the property of Messrs Hardman and Co, chemical manufacturers, Newton Heath. The lead was seen in the yard of Messrs Hardman's premises on Tuesday, and was subsequently missed and found in the cabin of a boat moored in the canal a short distance away, and of which the prisoners were in charge. The police were communicated with, and on a search being made, other portions of the lead were found in the canal. The prisoners, who said they knew nothing about the lead, were committed for trial at the sessions.

7 July 16 1881

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court on Tuesday, before Sir John Iles Mantell and Mr Thomas Dickins, **John Eden**, boatman, Cadishead, was committed for trial at the assizes for having unlawfully wounded his wife **Elizabeth** by striking her on the head with a poker. Mr Hamilton, barrister, appeared for the prisoner. The prosecutrix stated that her husband came home on Monday afternoon under the influence of intoxicants, and in answer to a question put by her, he said he did not want any tea. He then took off his jersey, rolled up his sleeves, took a child a few weeks old from her arms and threw it into a cradle. He got possession of a poker, and struck her with it about the arms and head, inflicting several serious wounds. She became insensible in consequence of his ill usage. Her injuries were subsequently attended to by a surgeon. When apprehended, the prisoner said he was drunk when he committed the assault, and he did not know what he was doing.

8 July 23 1881

MYSTERIOUS DROWNING CASE AT NEWTON HEATH At the Manchester County Police Court on Monday, before Sir John Iles Mantell and Mr T Dickins, Thomas Green, aged 17 years, living at 9 Saville Street, Newton Heath, was charged with having caused the death of Annie Doolan by pushing her into the Rochdale Canal at Newton Heath. Mr Superintendent Bent, in opening the case, said that about ten o'clock on Sunday night, the young woman was seen walking along Grimshaw Lane, Newton Heath, the accused being by her side. He was observed to have one arm around her waist. The next that was seen of her was shortly afterwards, when a boatman found her drowned in the canal. The young man stated that she told him that she would have a bathe, that she went some distance from him, and that he afterwards saw her floating in the water. She was undressed. Soon afterwards, Green saw a boatman approaching, and he called to him saying that there was a woman bathing a short distance away. The boatman went to where she was, and cried out, "Yes ; she's bathing ; she's dead, with her head under the water". There was no mark of violence on the body. Her clothing was hanging on a rail by the side of the canal, and in her dress pocket was found a bottle containing a brown liquid, but what the nature of it was, was not known at present. The young woman was said to have left the house where she resided at ten o'clock, and to have been then in good spirits. In answer to Sir John Mantell, Mr Bent stated that the accused gave information of the occurrence to the boatman, and was taken into custody as he was going in the direction of home. His brother, it seemed, had married the sister of the deceased. Daniel Fletcher, residing at 117 Mill Street, Bradford-cum-Beswick, stated that he saw the young woman and Green walking along Grimshaw Lane, he having his arm around her waist. He did not see them speak to each other. He also saw that as they passed down the slope leading from the bridge to the canal side, she went first and he followed. Witness stood on the bridge until they had got some thirty yards away along the bank of the canal. In reply to the Bench, witness said that a quarter of

an hour subsequently, he met some women running for a constable, saying that some person had been drowned. He had heard no screaming. He saw the woman's clothing hanging on a rail on the canal bank. The clothes, which were not torn, seemed to have been hung on the rail with care. The hearing of the case was then adjourned till Wednesday. Green, as he was about to leave the dock, said that when they got to the canal side she told him to stand aside, as she was going to bathe. He pressed her not to go into the water.

On Tuesday, Mr Frederick Price, district coroner, yesterday held an inquest at the Royal Oak Inn, Miles Platting, touching the death of Annie Doolan. Thomas Green, the youth who on Monday was charged, at the Manchester County Police Court, with having caused the death of the deceased, was present during the inquiry. Patrick Doolan, bricklayer, 7 Hague Street, said he was the father of the deceased. She and Green were not "keeping company" but they were very friendly, and she treated Green as a boy. On Sunday night, Green called at her house with a message, and afterwards he and the deceased went out together. Witness never saw her alive afterwards. The deceased had been out all the previous night, and she had told witness that she and two other girls had had a bathe in the canal. She sometimes took more drink than was good for her, but witness did not see her take any on Sunday, except a little beer. Witness had been told that that part of the canal in which the body was found was very filthy, and he thought the filth might have overpowered her. Nothing had occurred at home to cause the deceased to drown herself. Mr Shaw, surgeon, deposed to having made a *post mortem* examination of the body. The cause of death was drowning. There was no trace of drink in the stomach. The bottle which was found in the deceased's pocket contained a quantity of whisky. **Edward Postles**, one of the boatmen who took the body out of the water, stated that as he was going along the canal bank he saw Green, and heard him call, apparently to someone in the water, "Come out ; there's someone coming". Witness asked what was the matter, and Green told him that a girl was in the water having a bathe, and would not come out. Witness then saw the body floating in the water face downwards. He waited until a policeman came, and then got the body out. In reply to a question by the Coroner as to why he did not get the body out at once, witness said he had been told not to take bodies out until the police came. Mr Price said this was a mistaken notion ; bodies should be taken out as quickly as possible, as if they had been in the water only a few minutes, life might be restored under proper treatment. Thomas Green said he and the deceased were walking along the canal bank on Sunday night, when the deceased said she and two other girls had had a bathe on the previous night, and she would have another that night. Witness tried to dissuade her, but she would go into the water, and she asked him to wait on the bank for her. Witness went some distance off. He heard her splash into the water. Subsequently, a boatman came up who, when his attention was directed to the woman, said she was dead. In answer to the jury, witness said that the deceased, so far as he could see, was quite sober. She told witness she could swim well, and as he could not swim, he had no idea that the woman was drowning until he was told so by the boatman. In answer to the Coroner, witness said he did not push the woman into the canal. The Coroner said the jury, after this evidence, could not have a moment's hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the deceased had been accidentally drowned while bathing. The young man Green had given his evidence very clearly, and he (the Coroner) could not help thinking that it was a little hasty on the part of Mr Hogg to give him into custody. He ought first to have inquired into the whole of the circumstances. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death". At the County Police Court on Wednesday, before Sir J Iles Mantell, Mr Superintendent Bent requested that the youth named Thomas Green might be discharged from custody. He stated that there was not the slightest evidence against the prisoner, and there was no reason to believe that he had anything to do with the death of the deceased woman. The coroner's inquest had been held, and a verdict of "Accidental death" returned. The prisoner was then discharged.

9 August 20 1881

THE KILDWICK MYSTERY The adjourned inquest in reference to the death of George Todd, a mill hand of Farnhill, near Kildwick, was resumed on Wednesday, at Bradford, and again adjourned until Monday week, in order to give the police time to pursue their inquiries. The deceased left his

father's house on Sunday week to go to Skipton, and early on the Tuesday morning was found in a dying state on the Midland Railway near Kildwick. The deceased was seen by **Alfred Simpkin**, a boatman, at Skipton on Monday week. He was with two young women, and went with them to two or three public houses, at each of which he paid for a pint of beer. At the last house, the Cork and Bottle Inn, he told witness that he had 4d and a sovereign, but he did not want to "break into the sovereign" because he might spend it. He said that the 4d was for his railway fare. Witness advised him not to change the sovereign. The witness and deceased walked together towards the Cork and Bottle Inn. The deceased went in and left the witness at the door. Witness went in about five minutes later, but the deceased had then left by the back door, having apparently slipped witness. This would be about eight o'clock. There was no trace of the deceased afterwards till he was found next morning on the railway near Kildwick. The object of the adjournment of the inquest is, if possible, to obtain more information on this point.

10 December 17 1881

ALLEGED MANSLAUGHTER AT BURNLEY At Burnley yesterday, Richard Heap, 20 years of age, was charged with killing his father, **Kemp Heap**, a boatman 53 years of age. On Saturday, the prisoner fetched his father home from a beerhouse in Gannow Lane, and kicked him on the way. On arriving at the house, he kicked him in the chest and broke his ribs, which caused his death. The prisoner was committed for trial for manslaughter.

11 December 24 1881

FATAL ACCIDENTS AT PRESTON On Tuesday, Mr Gilbertson, coroner, held inquests in three cases of fatal accident. The first was one in which John Sidgreaves, calico printer aged 56 years, was found drowned in a mill lodge in Stanley Street. It was supposed that he had walked into the water on the previous night, but had been drinking heavily, and the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned". The second was held on the body of William Calvert, stonemason, aged 35 years. On the 6th inst, the deceased was assisting to unload some heavy stones, when his hand was jammed against the wall and seriously injured. He was advised to have the hand amputated, but delayed the operation until too late to save his life, and he died from blood poisoning on Sunday last. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned by the jury. An inquest was also held at Tarleton, on the body of **John Ashcroft**, aged 30 years, a boatman on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. He left Liverpool on Wednesday night last, which was very foggy, to go to Hesketh Bank, and on reaching Lathom, he went to open the locks. After he had opened four, he was missed, and he was found in the canal dead. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned in this case also.

12 February 11 1882

LIFEBOAT CREW CHARGED WITH COWARDICE During a heavy gale a few days ago, the flat *Heela* of Runcorn, laden with iron ore, ran ashore at Llanddulas, North Wales, and two of the crew, named **James Williams** and **Robert Hughes**, were drowned, the captain alone saving his life by swimming ashore. There is a lifeboat station in the neighbourhood, but although the vessel was seen drifting to the shore in broad daylight, no assistance was rendered by the crew of the lifeboat to the imperilled seamen, and the unfortunate men perished within fifty yards of the land. The Coroner (Dr Evan Pierce), who held the inquest on the bodies, said he wished he had the power to commit the crew of the lifeboat for manslaughter. He characterised them as a very brave "fair weather gang", who went out to practise, as they called it, when the sun shone brightly, but would not come out of their holes when called upon to rescue the lives of their fellow beings in a storm. He considered their conduct unmanly, unworthy, cowardly and careless, and that it was owing to their failing to render assistance that the lives of the two unfortunate men had been sacrificed. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

The secretary of the Lifeboat Institution telegraphs to us as follows : With reference to the wreck of the smack *Heela*, off Llanddulas, North Wales, on Sunday afternoon the 20th ult, it should be mentioned that, as shown by the sworn evidence of the captain, the vessel was upwards of fifty

years old, that the wreck took place during a blinding snowstorm, and that no signal of distress whatsoever was shown by those on board the wreck. It should also be stated that the crew of the lifeboat are labouring men, working at the neighbouring slate quarries, no boatmen or fishermen being available in the locality. However, a full enquiry is now being made by the district inspector of the National Lifeboat Institution into all the circumstances of the case, but in the meantime, the facts above mentioned should not be overlooked.

13 April 15 1882

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

Acquittals : **Walter Barker**, boatman, theft.

14 April 15 1882

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Manchester City Police Court on Tuesday, **Thomas Wynne**, boatman, was summoned for working a horse whilst it was in an unfit state. It appeared that on the 10th inst, a policeman observed a horse which was in the defendant's charge, drawing two boats on the canal at Winton. The animal was at the time suffering from sores on its back and sides, and was generally in an emaciated condition. The defendant was fined £3 and costs, Sir John Mantell remarking that the case was one of great cruelty, and that he wished he had the power to order the prisoner a dozen lashes with the cat.

15 June 3 1882

THROWING A GAMEKEEPER INTO A CANAL At Middlewich Police Court on Thursday, three canal boatmen – **John Bowed**, **John Palin** and **Arthur Palin** – were charged with assaulting James Higgins, a gamekeeper. Higgins and some others were playing cricket on the green in front of Lawton Hall on Whit Monday, and observed the three prisoners picking rhododendrons in the garden. On being pursued, they ran off in the direction of the canal. Being overtaken near the bank, John Palin turned and struck the keeper on the head with a stone, knocking him down. He got up again, and closed with the defendant. Arthur Palin cried out to his brother to throw him into the canal, and Palin did so, but fell in also himself. The keeper managed to get out, but the effect of the severe blow on his head and the unexpected immersion rendered him half senseless. One of the defendants threatened to throw him in again, but he eluded him. The charge against Bowed was dismissed, but each of the Palins was fined 40s and costs.

16 June 17 1882

MANCHESTER CITY SESSIONS The quarterly sessions of the peace for the city of Manchester were opened at the Sessions Court, Minshull Street, on Thursday. The following cases were dealt with yesterday :-

Eight months imprisonment : **John Underhill**, 23, boatman, stealing from the person.

17 June 17 1882

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Salford Police Court on Saturday, before Mr J Makinson (stipendiary), **William Gough** (14) and **Thomas Gough** (10), children of a boatman on the Manchester, Bury and Bolton Canal, were charged on remand with wilfully and maliciously throwing stones and pieces of wood on the rails of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway with intent to endanger the safety of persons travelling thereon, and to upset, injure and destroy the engines and carriages of the company. Mr Hockin, who prosecuted on behalf of the company, said he would judge, from the ages of the prisoners, that they did not know the serious nature of the act they had committed and, therefore, he proposed to proceed against them under the section which gave the Stipendiary power to deal with them summarily. The prisoners, it appeared, obtained a number of very large stones and pieces of timber, some of the latter being several feet long and two

or three inches thick, and rolled them down the railway embankment near Windsor Bridge. The offence was committed on Monday evening at about half past nine o'clock, when trains were passing in quick succession, and had the obstruction not been speedily removed, a serious accident would undoubtedly have happened. The obstruction was first discovered by Henry Bradburn, the pointsman in the engine shed at Windsor Bridge, who found that something was interfering with the working of his signals. Evidence was then given showing that the prisoners were seen leaning over the embankment wall near to the spot where the obstruction was found. When apprehended, the prisoners admitted the offence, and said that another boy had helped them. William was ordered to receive eight and Thomas four strokes with a birch rod.

18 July 1 1882

YESTERDAY'S POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court yesterday, **Thomas Cox**, boatman of 102 Derwent Street, Salford, was charged with attempting to drown his daughter, six years of age. It was shown that on the previous day, the prisoner was observed by two men abusing his wife at the river side. The child was then standing a short distance away, crying. The prisoner suddenly picked up the child and threw it into the river. Some men who saw the prisoner do this ran towards the spot, but before they could come up, the prisoner jumped into the water and got the child out. The prisoner now pleaded that the affair was quite an accident ; the child was no worse. Sir John Mantell remanded the prisoner for a week.

19 July 8 1882

YESTERDAY'S POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court yesterday, **Thomas Cox**, boatman, was charged on remand with the attempted murder of his daughter, six years of age. It appeared that on the 29th ult, about half past four, the prisoner was on his boat on the river Irwell with his wife and child. He quarrelled with his wife and struck her. The child screamed, and the prisoner, leaving his wife, then took the child in his arms and threw it into the water. Two men who were in a field near ran up to the rescue, but before they could get to the water, the prisoner jumped in and drew out the child. For the prisoner, evidence was now adduced to the effect that the child was knocked into the water by the tiller swinging round, and that the prisoner jumped into the water directly the child fell in, and drew it out. The prisoner was committed for trial at the assizes.

20 July 15 1882

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Salford Police Court on Saturday, **William Fisher**, boatman with no settled residence, was charged on remand with stealing a number of articles of furniture of the value of £4, the property of John Apsley, Joseph Street, Pendleton. The case for the prosecution was that a few months ago the prisoner, his wife, and the prosecutor lived together in Oldham. About nine weeks ago, the prosecutor left Oldham and went to live in Pendleton, taking with him the prisoner's wife, who acted as his housekeeper. The prisoner found out the new place of residence, and on June 30th proceeded thither, and during the temporary absence of the prosecutor and the woman, effected an entrance to the house, and carted away portions of the furniture, some of which he sold. The defence was that the furniture was the property of his wife. The prisoner was committed for trial at the sessions.

21 July 22 1882

Manchester Summer Assizes

CHARGE OF ATTEMPTED MURDER **Thomas Cox**, 26, boatman, was indicted for having, at Barton-upon-Irwell on the 29th June last, attempted to drown **Alice Ann Cox**, his daughter, with intent to murder her. Mr McKeand prosecuted, and the prisoner was defended by Mr Foard. The case for the prosecution was that on the day in question the prisoner, who was master of a barge, was seen when at Barton to be beating his wife. The child cried out, and thereupon the prisoner left his wife and, seizing the little girl, threw her into the river. Two men ran up to the waterside and said they would give the prisoner into custody, whereupon he jumped into the river and brought out the child. His Lordship was surprised that the prisoner was not indicted for a lesser offence, and

directed the jury to acquit him of the offence with which he was charged. The prisoner was accordingly acquitted.

22 August 26 1882

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Salford Police Court on Monday, Susan Garner, married woman, described as having no settled residence, was charged with attempting to commit suicide by jumping into the Irwell on the 17th instant. The case for the prosecution showed that on the afternoon of Thursday last, **Richard Addy**, a boatman, nephew to **Mark Addy**, heard a scream, and on running down to the river side, near to Everard Street, he saw the prisoner floating in the water. He jumped in, and with assistance rescued her and took her to Mark Addy's house, where she was seen by Police-constable Thom, who removed her to the Salford Royal Hospital, where she remained until Saturday. When first charged by the policeman, the prisoner said, "I jumped in, and I'll do it again if I get a chance", but she now stated that she was seized with a fit and fell in. She was committed for trial at the quarter sessions.

23 August 26 1882

FATAL ACCIDENTS AT BARNSELY The Barnsley police authorities yesterday received reports relating to three shocking fatalities occurring on Thursday. Enoch Marsh, four years of age, residing at Penistone, set himself on fire by playing with matches in a bedroom, and died from the injuries received ; **Timothy Haigh**, eight years, son of a boatman of Goole, during play fell into the canal at Carlton and was drowned ; and Henrietta Trow of Wombwell died from the effects of being scalded by a pan of water falling from the fire.

24 September 2 1882

THE MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR AT LEICESTER On Saturday, the Leicester police made great efforts to clear up the mystery at Leicester Abbey, but without success. At an early hour that morning, the water was run off the canal, and a minute search was conducted for several hours by a large party, but no body was found. The bottom of the canal, however, is very muddy, and the circumstances were of such an extraordinary character that the chief constable determined to detain the man until a further search could be made. The greatest excitement prevails in the neighbourhood.

What is believed to be an important discovery in connection with the mysterious finding of a blood stained hammer and marks of a struggle on the canal bank has caused great excitement in Leicester. A boatman named **George Griffin** reported to the police that he had seen a body, believed to be that of a female, with a handkerchief over the head, in the canal. His statement is fully confirmed by the men in the two succeeding boats. Dragging operations till late on Thursday failed to recover the body. The water will be drawn off to admit of a thorough search.

25 September 9 1882

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS **James Igo**, boatman, was charged at the Salford Police Court with stealing an overcoat of the value of 30s, the property of William Hayton of 17 Hanover Street, Salford. The prisoner, it appeared, was on Saturday evening sitting behind the prosecutor in the Prince of Wales Theatre, Salford. The coat was placed upon the seat in front of the prisoner, who during the performance, stole it and took it home. The prisoner was sentenced to one months imprisonment with hard labour, and his wife, who was charged with receiving the coat knowing it to have been stolen, was discharged.

26 September 16 1882

THE BOATMEN'S BETHEL, KNOTT MILL The twenty third anniversary of the Sunday School in connection with the mission carried on in this city, under the superintendence of the Rev James Shipman, for the boatmen and their families, took place on Sunday, when sermons were preached by the Rev W Gelley, the Rev W J Woods BA, and Mr R Hankinson of Pendleton. There are about

150 children attending the school. The collections amounted to £10 13s 9d.

27 September 16 1882

DEATH OF A CENTENARIAN The death is announced, at the advanced age of 100, of **Mrs Mary Ashley** of 15 Fisher Row, St Thomas's, Oxford, who expired on the 4th inst. Mrs Ashley, who enjoyed very good health almost up to the time of her death, was the widow of **Thomas Ashley**, a boatman who died a few days since at a very advanced age. The remarkable age of the deceased has been verified by the registrar of births, deaths and marriages.

28 September 23 1882

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court on Thursday, three boatmen named **William Shaw, James Oxley** and **James Cross** were summoned before Sir John Mantell to answer a charge of throwing nightsoil into the Bridgewater Canal at Old Trafford. Mr Prest, barrister, supported the information. On August 31st, the defendants were in charge of a boat loaded with nightsoil and, while the boat was being taken along the canal, Oxley threw a large quantity of nightsoil into the water. Evidence was given that the defendants were acting in concert, and a fine of 15s was imposed upon each of them.

29 November 11 1882

THE FLOODS AT CHESTER The residents of the houses alongside the river Dee have been driven to take refuge in the upstairs apartments. A family at (?Shocklack?) were beset by the waters, which dashed so violently against the house that they signalled to some boatmen to bring them off. An old man named **Parker** gallantly put out with his boat, but he had only proceeded a short distance when it was completely engulfed, and he was drowned.

30 December 9 1882

THEFT FROM THE SHROPSHIRE UNION RAILWAY COMPANY At the Chester County Police Court on Saturday, **Robert Evans**, boatman of Bootle, employed by the Shropshire Union Railway Company, was charged with stealing sixty one feet of spruce planks, the property of the company. The timber was stolen from the company's wharf at Ellesmere Port, and was brought by the prisoner to Chester and sold to a Mr Harrison. The prisoner pleaded guilty to the charge. The Chairman (the Rev R Richardson) asked if the boatman had timber of their own to dispose of, and on being informed by the detective of the company that they had not, said it was a very serious case. People buying from these men must know that they were buying stolen property. If the company could prove that these men never had timber to sell, he thought the purchaser ought to be prosecuted. It was high time that temptation to these poor fellows was stopped. A fine of 20s and costs, in all £2 19s 6d, was inflicted, or a months imprisonment.

31 December 23 1882

THE SALFORD HUNDRED HUMANE SOCIETY The annual meeting of the Humane Society for the Hundred of Salford was held on Monday at the Town Hall. The Mayor distributed the medals awarded for saving life, as follows :-

Gold medal : **Richard Bruce**, boatman, 85 Liverpool Road, Manchester.

32 January 6 1883

THE RIVER WEAVER TRUST A somewhat awkward blunder, writes a correspondent, has been discovered in the management of the dues received by the Weaver Trustees. The Act of 1840 empowered the River Weaver Trustees to build three churches at different points on the river for the spiritual benefit of the flatmen and labourers engaged in the salt trade. By the 19th section of the Act, the trustees are empowered to provide schools, to be annexed to each church, at a cost of not more than £150 for such schools, wherein instruction shall be given to the children of watermen and labourers on the river Weaver "by the respective ministers or curates in such manner and at such

times as the Bishop of the diocese shall decree". Instead of confining themselves to the amount stipulated in the Act, the trustees have discovered that for the past twenty years they have been paying £500 per annum – in point of fact that they have spent quite £10,000 of the ratepayers' money, in addition to £1000 spent in building these schools, in supporting Church of England schools. The salaries of the masters and mistresses of the schools have been paid by the trustees, while children have been educated therein whom the Act was not intended to benefit. The matter has on several occasions been forcibly represented to the trustees, and in order to ascertain the actual position of affairs, the trustees referred to their solicitor who, in reply, wrote as follows :-

Northwich, Cheshire, October 23 1882

Dear sir, Weaver Schools – Previous to the year 1854 the Weaver Trustees, in addition to paying the masters of the Weaver Schools, made an additional donation to four of the national schools in the neighbourhood of the river ; but at the annual meeting in 1854, a resolution was passed that such annual donations should be discontinued after June 1855. At the annual meeting in 1855, on a motion to rescind the resolution of the previous annual meeting, an amendment was moved and carried that, before rescinding such resolution, the opinion of counsel should be taken as to the legality of continuing such donations. A case was accordingly prepared and laid before Mr Cowling and before Sir Frederick Thesiger, both of whom were of opinion that the donations to the four national schools could not be legally continued, and Sir F Thesiger also adds, "Indeed, I am bound to point out to the trustees that they are not authorised to pay the masters of the different schools which were built, it being expressly provided that "instruction is to be given by the respective ministers or curates", whose incomes are fixed at certain maximum and minimum amounts by the 6th section". Yours truly,

J L TRAFFORD

The origin of the payment of the salaries was a resolution passed in 1843, when the trustees ordered that a building should be given up for the purpose of a school for the children of flatmen and haulers on the river, the trustees not having any immediate occasion for the building. On the application of two clergymen, it was ordered that a schoolmaster be provided for the school at a salary of £50, "for the present year". This arrangement was afterwards discontinued, and fixed salaries were paid to both masters and mistresses of all the schools, and in addition to this all other expenses of maintenance and repairs, amounting altogether on the average of the last four years to £452 per annum, with houses for the masters rent free. In Board rates, the trustees contribute to the Winsford, Weaverham and other school boards £159 per annum, making a total payment for educational purposes of £611. It should not be forgotten that those schools are no longer Weaver schools for the use of the children of the flatmen and others employed on the navigation, but have for some years past become public elementary schools, in order to obtain the Government grant and inspection. The income of the trust is about £20,000 ; and after paying all expenses, the balance is handed over to the county for the benefit of the rates. It will, therefore, be seen that for the past 20 years, the trustees have been applying large sums from county funds for the benefit of schools connected with the Church of England.

33 March 17 1883

DEATH FROM BURNS Mr F Price, district coroner, on Monday held an inquest at the Black Horse Inn, Salford, upon the body of **Emma Cousin**, aged five years, daughter of **James Cousin**, canal boatman, 10 Smith's Yard, Hope Street, Salford. The deceased with two younger children was on Friday left in the house for a few minutes, during which time she, in endeavouring to light a piece of paper at the fire, ignited her clothes. She was severely burned all over her body and died shortly afterwards. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

34 March 31 1883

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court, **James Davis**,

boatman, having no settled residence, was charged on remand with being on enclosed premises for a supposed unlawful purpose, and with assaulting police-constable Gresham. It appeared that on the 20th inst about one am, the officer found the prisoner on the premises of Mr Horner, Beechfield, Talbot Road, Old Trafford. The prisoner, who had a bag in his hand, ran across the garden, but was followed by the officer and caught. A severe struggle took place, and the prisoner was very violent, tearing the officer's clothes to pieces, and attempting to seize him in the lower part of the body with the intention of seriously injuring him. In self defence, the constable was ultimately obliged to knock the man down with his truncheon. The prisoner, who appeared in court with his head bandaged, was sent to prison for three months.

35 April 14 1883

SALFORD HUNDRED QUARTER SESSIONS The general quarter sessions of the peace for the hundred of Salford were opened on Monday at the Assize Courts, Strangeways, Mr W H Higgin QC (chairman of the court) presiding.

The following sentences were passed on Wednesday :-

Six months imprisonment : **Joseph McDonald**, 23, boatman, for obtaining money by false pretences from John T Cross, at Stretford on the 24th ult (with two years police supervision).

36 May 5 1883

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court on Monday, before Sir John Iles Mantell (stipendiary) and other magistrates, **James Aspinall**, canal boatman, living at Burscough, near Ormskirk, was charged with cruelty to a horse. It appeared that on Saturday, Police-constable Davies saw the prisoner working a horse on the canal bank near Barton. The animal was suffering from several serious wounds, was in an emaciated condition, and was drawing a boatload of 35 tons. Sir John Mantell, who had seen the horse, said a worse case he thought he had hardly ever known. Not to speak of the wounds upon it, the horse was a mere skeleton and totally unfit for work. The prisoner was sent to gaol for a month.

37 May 19 1883

YESTERDAY'S POLICE NEWS At the Salford Police Court, yesterday, Annie Constantine, 6 Wenlock Street, Hulme, was charged with attempting to commit suicide. **William Wood**, Sunnyside Street, Salford, boatman, was crossing the Regent Road Bridge, Salford, that spans the River Irwell, at 8.25 yesterday morning, when he noticed the prisoner in the water. By the assistance of a boat hook, he succeeded in dragging her to the side and getting hold of her hand, but she wrenched herself from his grasp and went further into the water. He again pulled her to the side, and got someone to hold her by the boat hook, while he threw a rope round her, but she got hold of it and threw it away. With assistance, he succeeded in rescuing her, but not before she was "nearly drowned". She seemed determined to drown herself. Prisoner's husband said she had been unwell for about seven months and under medical treatment. Police-constable Cole, of the Manchester City Police Court, took prisoner into custody, and on the way to the station, she said, "I shall never be any better". Mr Makinson remanded the prisoner in order that she may be examined by the police surgeon.

38 July 14 1883

CHARGE OF CHILD MURDER AT PENDLETON At the Salford Borough Police Court on Wednesday, Elizabeth Johnson, aged 57, and Emma Johnson, aged 27, mother and daughter, were charged with causing the death of an infant child during the past week ; also with concealing the birth of the child, and secretly disposing of its dead body. The younger prisoner, who is a cripple, was provided with a seat in the dock. Mr Superintendent Donohoe, in applying for a remand, stated that the two prisoners were charged with causing the death of a child, whose body was found wrapped in a piece of sacking on the canal bank near Cock Robin Bridge, Pendleton, on Saturday afternoon. The person who found it was a boatman named **Lewis**, and he gave information to the

police, who had ascertained that the prisoner Emma was the mother of the child. It was an illegitimate child. On Saturday afternoon, a man named James Parkinson, living at 3 Nuttall Street, Pendleton, saw the older prisoner throw the bundle over Cock Robin Bridge, and as it alighted on the ground instead of dropping into the water, he said to her, "Mrs, that parcel didn't fall into the water", whereupon she remarked that it didn't much matter, as it only contained a cat. These facts coming to the knowledge of the police, Parkinson was taken to Johnson's house, where he identified the elder prisoner, who made the following statement, "My daughter called me into her room on Friday morning, and said to me, "Mother, see what's here", and showed me the dead body of a child in a mug. I was afraid, and consequently I wrapped it up in some sacking and threw it over the bridge". Mr Donohoe said he did not at present intend to call any evidence if the magistrates would remand the case. Both prisoners now stated that the child never lived at all. They were remanded for a week.

39 August 11 1883

DEATH FROM DROWNING Mr F Price, district coroner, held an inquest on Tuesday at the Waverley Hotel, Eccles New Road, Salford, touching the death of a man whose dead body in a decomposed condition was found in the river Irwell near Mode Wheel, Weaste. A woman named **Ellen Quinn**, living at 11 Willow Street, Bradford, near Manchester, identified the body as that of her husband who, she said, was a canal boatman aged 41, and left home on the 2nd January last to go with his boat to Northwich. She added that on Wednesday morning the 3rd January, about one o'clock, she was informed by the master of the deceased (**Mr Thomas Bird**) and one of the deceased's fellow workmen that he had been accidentally drowned in stepping from one boat to another. She thought there might have been a struggle between deceased and some other men. Several members of the jury intimated that they thought there should be some further inquiry into the case, but ultimately an open verdict was returned.

40 September 15 1883

MURDERS At the Old Bailey on Wednesday, **Richard Pierce**, boatman, was acquitted on the charge of attempting to drown his wife by thrusting her off his boat into the Grand Junction Canal.

41 October 13 1883

CHARGE OF ATTEMPTED MURDER AT RUNCORN At Runcorn Police Court on Wednesday, **Jas Phillips** and **Herbert Bell**, flatmen, were charged with attempting to murder Agnes Ford. Ford was drinking with the prisoners on Wednesday afternoon, and in the evening she refused their request to go on board a flat. It is alleged that they dragged her to the edge of the Mersey in Dukesfield, knocked her to the ground, and kicked her. The woman remembered nothing more until she was rescued by Custom Officer Goodall, who found her clinging to the river wall up to her chin in water. The prisoners were remanded.

42 October 27 1883

At the Preston quarter sessions on Saturday, **John Ashurst**, boatman, was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment with hard labour for stabbing a man named John Towers in a public house at Blackburn.

43 October 27 1883

MURDERS – THE MURDER OF A YOUNG WOMAN AT LIVERPOOL On Saturday morning, at the Liverpool Police Court before Mr T S Raffles, stipendiary magistrate, Lewis Parry, 30, was charged with the wilful murder of Susannah Hutton, 18, on the banks of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, on Saturday night week. Mr Marks conducted the case for the prosecution, and the prisoner was undefended. Martin and Stebbin having given evidence, the prisoner was remanded.

At the Liverpool Police Court on Tuesday, before Mr Raffles, stipendiary magistrate, Lewis Parry, 32, engineers' labourer, was charged on remand with the wilful murder of Susannah Hutton, 18, on

the night of the 13th inst. The young woman was murdered in a stone yard near the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Her head and body were horribly mutilated, and she was then thrown into the canal by the murderer, who escaped by wading through the water. The prisoner had been drinking with the deceased previously, and was seen coming away from the canal with his clothes saturated with water. Mr Marks prosecuted, and the prisoner was undefended.

James Maguire, a young man living at the public house, No 12 Summerseat Street, deposed to the prisoner and the deceased being in the house named for two hours on Saturday night week. They left shortly after ten o'clock, and were both sober.

Charlotte Wright, mother of the last witness, gave similar evidence. She added that on the following Monday evening, the prisoner again visited her house and asked, "Has my friend been here?" Witness inferred that he meant the young woman in whose company he was on the Saturday night, and replied in the negative. He then said if she came she was to go up to his mother, who was ill and wished to see her.

The prisoner, when asked if he had any questions to put to the witness, denied that he was in the house on Monday night.

Thomas Kahoe, insurance collector, stated that about twenty minutes past ten on the night of Saturday the 13th inst, he saw a man and woman walking down Plum Street in the direction of the canal. The man had his arm round the woman, forcing her along. Witness could not recognise either of them, and followed them as far as a railway bridge across the canal. They entered a flag or stone yard near the canal, and shortly afterwards, witness heard the woman scream. Witness changed his position, and saw the man moving about and stooping as if to pick something up. He could hear stones rattling about, and then the man disappeared, and again screams were heard. Witness blew a whistle which he had, and then ran into Plum Street and fetched a police-constable. The constable and he went back to the place together, but could find nothing. A flatman said the man had gone across the canal. They went in the direction indicated, but could not find anything.

Edward Martin, a pointsman on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, said that on the night in question, he was in his cabin on the railway bridge crossing the canal near Plum Street when, about 10.35, he heard a woman screaming in the stoneyard. About five minutes afterwards, he left his cabin to get some water, and then looked through the girders of the bridge into the stoneyard below. He observed a man walking about, and then saw him drag a woman from behind the flags. He dragged her by the shoulders for a few yards and then let her fall into a sitting position, propped against his knees. He next moved away and she fell upon her back. After dragging her a few yards further, the man threw her into the canal. The witness shouted, and the man ran towards another point of the canal opposite to some coalyards. The witness reported the matter to his inspector, who informed a police officer. The constable fetched some grappling irons, and the body was found in the canal.

Police-constable John Boyd deposed to dragging the canal and finding the body of the deceased.

Walter Stebbing, yardman with Messrs Littler and Co, coal merchants, said he lived in the coalyard of his employers near the canal. He was proceeding home on the night of the 13th inst, and was going into the gateway of the yard, about 10.35, when he saw a man on the top of the gate of the next coalyard. Over the gate there is a roller with spikes on, and the man was fast on the spikes, being hooked by his clothing. The witness asked him what he was doing there, and he replied, "I have been robbed, beaten and thrown into the canal". He (Stebbing) told him he had no business to come over the gate, and the man said he knew "Crutchie", who was a flatman employed by Messrs Littler and Co. The witness helped him to get loose, and found that his clothes were wet up to his waist. The man then dropped from the gate and fell to the ground. The witness picked him up and looked into his face, but did not recollect having seen him before. He identified the prisoner as the man whom he helped off the gate. He followed the prisoner up into Leeds Street, and fetched a man named McGarry, who was employed at the coalyard the gate of which the prisoner was fast on, and they again caught the prisoner in Leeds Street, but allowed him to go.

Philip McGarry deposed to accompanying the last witness and to capturing the prisoner. The prisoner was wet up to the waist, and witness said to him, "I have a good mind to commit you in

charge for trying to commit suicide". Some words followed, and they allowed the prisoner to go. The prisoner said he lived in Firth Street, Birkenhead.

Two other witnesses stated that they saw the prisoner running down Leeds Street on the night of the 13th with his clothing wet up to his waist.

Elizabeth Hutton, mother of the deceased, said she had identified the remains which were at the Prince's mortuary as those of her daughter. The deceased had worked for the prisoner's wife.

Police-constable Henry Mylchreest deposed to examining the stoneyard by the canal, and finding blood about the place. He also found the piece of flag (about a foot square) produced.

Detective Inspector Marsh stated that in company with other officers he arrested the prisoner in his own house on the night of the 18th inst. At the detective office the prisoner made a statement, partly verbal and partly written by himself, in which he admitted having been drinking with the deceased, but stated that he left her early in the evening. Subsequently the prisoner was charged with the murder of the deceased, and made no reply.

Dr Pughe, who made a *post mortem* examination of the body of the deceased, said he found a ragged cut over the left eye, about 1 1/2 in long, and running partly into the left temple. The cheekbone was completely crushed, the left upper jaw fractured, and several teeth had been knocked out. The cause of death was injury to the brain. There were several cuts on the lower part of the body, and no evidence of immersion in water. The injuries to the head must have been inflicted by a stone or other hard substance. He had examined the stone produced, and thought it might have been the one used. Upon it were short hairs, as if from the eyebrows, and also human blood.

Mr Marks said there was one other important witness, a flatman, who, although warned by the police, had not turned up.

Mr Raffles said the man must be produced at the trial.

The prisoner was then formally charged, and requested a witness to be called. The witness not being forthcoming, the prisoner was committed for trial at the assizes.

44 November 10 1883

Manchester Winter Assizes

THEFT OF TIMBER **James Catton**, 29, boatman and **John Carroll**, 30, boatman, were indicted for having, at Manchester on the 20th October, stolen 17 cwts of timber of the value of 20s, the property of George Satterthwaite. Mr Sington prosecuted and the prisoner Catton was defended by Mr Blair. The prisoners were engaged in unloading two small canal boats, with cargoes of firewood, and they were seen by two policemen, who were onlookers, to hide a certain quantity of wood in a recess in the stern end of the boat, and to throw other timber into an adjoining canal boat. Both prisoners were found guilty, and they were each sentenced to six months imprisonment.

45 November 24 1883

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court on Monday, before Sir John Iles Mantell and Mr T Dickins, **Henry Smallwood** and **Samuel Marsden**, boatmen of Runcorn, were charged with working a horse whilst in an unfit state. On Sunday afternoon, the prisoners were in charge of the horse on the canal bank at Old Trafford. The animal was in a thoroughly starved condition and very lame, and was altogether in so wretched a state that it could not be brought to the court for examination by the magistrates. Sir John Mantell said that a worse case of that kind had never come before him, and the elder prisoner (Smallwood) would have to pay a fine of £3 and costs, or suffer two months imprisonment. The other prisoner (Marsden) was fined 10s and costs, or one months imprisonment.

46 December 1 1883

MANCHESTER POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court, Strangeways, on Wednesday, before Mr J S Mayson (in the chair) and Mr W W Cooke, **John Sheldon**, boatman, Noah Mottram, labourer, Robert Moss, labourer, and John T Benson, baker, all of Macclesfield, were charged with night poaching at Trafford Park on the 20th and 21st inst. Mr W Cobbett

prosecuted. From the evidence, it appeared that on the night of Tuesday the 20th and the morning of Wednesday the 21st last, five keepers in the employ of Sir Humphrey de Trafford were lying within a cover known as Attens Wood, which was situate just outside the precincts of Trafford Park, and which was in the occupation of a tenant of Sir Humphrey de Trafford. The keepers were watching for poachers. A little before one o'clock on the morning of the 21st inst, the keepers saw seven men, among whom were the four prisoners, coming across a field from the direction of Trafford Park, and approach the boundary fence of the wood. They carried nets and pegs, and were armed with sticks and stones. When the men reached the boundary fence, they at once commenced operations. They divided themselves into two parties, and placed nets along the fences of the wood, their intention no doubt being when they had completed this to walk about the wood and drive the hares and rabbits into the nets. When, however, the nets had been placed, the keepers came from their hiding place and approached three of the poachers, the other four being some 200 yards away. One of the keepers, named Charles Smith, seized Mottram, and a struggle ensued between them. Blows were exchanged, and Smith knocked his opponent down and gave him into the custody of another keeper. The other two poachers ran away in the direction of the canal, and were followed by a keeper named Henry Spencer. One of them jumped over the fence of the canal and succeeded in getting away, but the other, Sheldon, was brought to bay. Sheldon struck at Spencer with a stick, but the blow was evaded, and Spencer then hit Sheldon, who thereupon ceased fighting and returned quietly with Spencer. All this had taken place without attracting the attention of the other four poachers, who were at work in another part of the wood, and the keepers, having secured their prisoners, went after the four men. As soon as they came in sight of the poachers, two of the latter ran away. The other two fought the keepers with sticks and stones. Moss made a most strenuous resistance. With large stones, he struck Spencer in the ribs and on other parts of the body, and completely disabled him ; he also struck Smith on the head and the arm with a thick stick. After a severe struggle, however, he was overcome and secured ; but the other man made his escape. At a quarter past one the same morning, James Gill saw two men running along the bank of the Worsley Canal at Stretford, about half a mile from Attens Wood. Gill ran after them and succeeded in catching Benson, who was subsequently identified by the keepers as one of the men whom they had seen laying the nets. The whole of the prisoners were taken to the police station at Old Trafford and were charged with night poaching, when Sheldon said, "We have come to the wrong place, I think". When the wood was visited later on in the morning, six live rabbits were found in the nets which the poachers had set, and a number of sticks and stones were found on the ground where the struggles had taken place. Mr Cobbett stated that there were 17 previous convictions against Moss, including several for offences against the game laws. There was also at the present time a charge pending against him for assaulting a gamekeeper in Cheshire on the 4th of the present month, in respect of which there had been a reward of £30 offered. The question whether the prisoners should be admitted to bail was raised, and in order that this might be determined, the prisoners were remanded till yesterday, when they were committed for trial at the assizes. Mr Alderson appeared for Moss.

47 January 5 1884

DEATHS FROM DROWNING An inquest was held on Monday before the Deputy City Coroner (Mr S Smelt) on the body of **Peter Worthington**, boatman, aged 49, of 9 West Fleet Street, Salford, who was drowned in the Bridgewater Canal on Friday afternoon. About two o'clock that afternoon, the deceased was in front of Thompson, McKay and Co's warehouse, Castlefield, and in climbing over some boards overhanging the canal to his boat, fell into the canal. Several persons who were about got the deceased out with a ladder, after he had been in the water about three minutes, but all efforts to restore animation were of no avail. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned. An inquest was also held touching the death of Joseph Pollitt, aged 11, son of Samuel Pollitt of 6 Back Hadfield Street, Woodward Street, who had also met his death by drowning. On Sunday afternoon, the deceased and several other boys were playing on the side of the Rochdale Canal near Prussia Street, Ancoats, having got there by creeping through a hole in the wall. The deceased was pulling

a basket about in the water, when he slipped and fell in. Another boy held his hand, but the deceased called out for him to let go or he would pull him in as well. The boy then let go, and the deceased fell into the water. Assistance was obtained, and several men jumped into the canal to recover the deceased, but when he was recovered he was dead. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

48 June 28 1884

YESTERDAY'S POLICE NEWS At the Manchester County Police Court yesterday, a boatman named **Richard Draper** of Runcorn was charged with working a horse in an unfit state on the canal bank at Barton. From the evidence of Police-constable Bannister, it appeared that the prisoner had a horse, which was very lame, attached to a coal boat in which were 50 tons of slack. Sir John said that he had so many of such cases that he did not know how to deal with them. He would not give the defendant the option of a fine, but would send him to prison. The prisoner was sent to gaol for one month with hard labour.

49 August 16 1884

EXTRAORDINARY SHOOTING AFFAIR At the Liverpool Court on Tuesday, **Miles Vickers**, a flatman, was charged with shooting a young man named Joseph Rice on Monday afternoon. The prisoner was on his flat on the canal near Burlington Street at the time named, and was annoyed by some boys throwing stones at him. The injured man was leaning on a bridge over the canal with some companions, and did not appear to have thrown any stones ; but the prisoner went into the cabin of the flat, and coming up again with a gun, fired it at Rice and his companions. Rice was severely injured about the chest and face by the shot, and now lies in the Northern Hospital. The prisoner was remanded for a week.

50 September 20 1884

SUPPOSED MURDER AT LIVERPOOL Early on Thursday morning, the body of a little girl was found floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. It was afterwards identified as that of Ann Pollard, aged between 12 and 13 years, who lived with her parents in a court in Hornby Street, Liverpool. The mother of the girl states that she believes the girl has met her death by foul play. Mrs Pollard sent her girl out on an errand about six o'clock at night and, as she became anxious at her not returning, inquiries were made, and it was found that the girl had been on a flat, but the flatman (**Josiah Owen**) said she had left some time previously. There are no marks of violence on the body, which was in a nude state when found. The police have charge of the flatman. The inquest will be held today.

51 September 27 1884

THE LIVERPOOL CANAL TRAGEDY The Liverpool Coroner (Mr Clarke Aspinall) held an inquiry on Saturday morning touching the death of Ann Pollard, aged thirteen years, the daughter of a carter living in No 8 house 13 court Hornby Street, whose body was found floating in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal near the Lightbody Street Bridge on Wednesday last. Mr Marks appeared at the inquiry on behalf of the police authorities, and Mr H Neale watched the proceedings on behalf of the man **Owen**, who was present in court.

The first witness called was Elizabeth Pollard, who said she was the wife of James Pollard, a carter, and resided in 8 house 13 court Hornby Street. Ann Pollard was her daughter, and she would have been thirteen years of age on the 6th of November next. Witness last saw her alive at ten minutes to six on Tuesday night last. Deceased was sent a message to Great Howard Street by witness, who waited her return on the canal bank close to where a flat lay. Witness had been picking cinders at some works close to the bank, as her husband was out of work, and these she had sent her daughter with to try and sell for three halfpence. Sherwood Street was the nearest street to the spot where she awaited her child, and witness remained there until about seven o'clock, but the deceased did not come back. Witness then returned home, and she did not see her daughter again until the following

day, when her body was taken out of the canal. Witness was then searching for cinders again in the same place with a little girl. Her child was quite naked when she saw it. The husband of witness had been down at the canal at half past ten on the previous night to inquire after the deceased. The place was about 20 minutes walk from where they lived. She had never missed her daughter for a whole night before. She was sure the body was that of her child, who had always been in good health. Witness had never had any trouble with her, and deceased had always behaved well.

Dr F W Lowndes deposed that he made a *post mortem* examination of the deceased on Thursday afternoon at the request of the coroner. The body was that of a well formed, well nourished and muscular girl, rather tall for her alleged age. It was his opinion that the girl had been violated within a short interval before her death. Her body had all the appearance of death from drowning, both internally and externally, and it was his opinion that the girl had died from drowning. There was a large jagged wound on each leg. Both legs were broken about the ankles, the fractured bones protruding. These injuries, he believed, were caused after death. There were no indications of natural disease.

The inquiry was adjourned until October 2nd. A Government reward of £50 has been offered for such information as may lead to the conviction of the murderer or murderers of the deceased girl. A further sum of £5 is offered for the recovery of the clothes of the girl. The clothing worn by the deceased is described as follows :- Dark blue stuff frock, deep flounce round bottom of skirt, hooked down the front of body, sleeves torn out, black merino skirt with polonaise, black imitation sealskin jacket, white linen apron and white calico chemise. All the clothes were much worn.

The flatman **Josiah Owen**, under arrest on suspicion of having murdered the girl, has been discharged from custody.

52 **October 25 1884**

THEFT OF BANK NOTES At the Cheshire quarter sessions held at Chester Castle, **George Bushell**, 30, flatman ; **Thomas Hoxworth**, 42, flatman, and **Elizabeth Hoxworth**, 35, described as a housekeeper, were indicted for stealing eleven Bank of England notes, eight being for £5 each, and three for £10 each ; and four cheques, one for £6, two for £5 each and one for £3 ; and four pieces of paper bearing the name of Richard John Jones, shopkeeper, Llanfairfechan. They were further charged with receiving the notes well knowing them to have been stolen. It appeared that the wife of the prosecutor left Llanfairfechan for Manchester on the evening of the 1st inst, for the purpose of making some purchases, taking the money before mentioned, which was wrapped up and placed in a basket which she was carrying. On arriving at Chester station, she got into a train, thinking it was the Manchester train. She was informed that she was in the wrong train, and went to the Manchester train. While she was sitting in the compartment of the first named train, the male prisoner sat near the basket. When she reached Manchester, she discovered that the money had been stolen. Mrs Jones at once returned to Chester, where she gave information to the police. On the 6th inst, the female prisoner presented at Parr's Bank, Runcorn, a £5 note to be cashed ; and on subsequent inquiries being made the three prisoners were arrested on the charge. After hearing the evidence, the jury found the prisoners guilty. Thomas Hoxworth was sentenced to six months imprisonment, George Bushell to three months, and Elizabeth Hoxworth to one months imprisonment.

53 **February 7 1885**

A canal boatman named **Henry Allen** was apprehended at Bath yesterday afternoon, by direction of the Home Office, for having a quantity of dynamite in his possession unlawfully. A few days ago, some alarm was created near Freshford by an explosion on the banks of the Kennet and Avon. It was afterwards ascertained that a boatman in the employment of a local firm of canal carriers had possession of explosives, and was heard to state that he had secured them from the Severn Tunnel Engineering Works. Allen was arrested in pursuance of enquiries, and will be charged before the Bradford-on-Avon magistrates today with illegal possession of dynamite.

54 September 26 1885

PAINFUL DEATH OF A CHILD A dreadful occurrence has taken place on the Shropshire Union Canal. Two boats were passing between Chester and Ellesmere Port, when a boy named **Owen Owen**, son of one of the boatmen, put his head out of the cabin just as the other boat approached. It struck him full on the forehead, completely smashing in his skull and causing instantaneous death. At the inquest before Dr Churton on Thursday night, a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

55 October 17 1885

SUSPICIOUS DEATH **Benjamin Milward**, canal boatman, died on Thursday evening at his home in Birmingham under circumstances that point to foul play. He came from a voyage last Monday, and then bore traces of severe maltreatment. He told his daughter he had been in a drunken row, but did not say when or where. Someone kicked, but it was in the dark, and he could not say who it was. He lingered on till Thursday, when he died without divulging anything further as to how he was injured.

56 January 30 1886

FOUND DROWNED Mr F Price, district coroner, held an inquest at the King's Head Hotel, Barton-upon-Irwell, on Wednesday, on the body of a woman named Anne Lowe. **Peter Green**, 1 Crowther Street, Salford, a boatman, said he found the body of the deceased on Monday last in the Irwell, near the entrance to the canal leading to the Barton lock, at Barton. He informed the police, and the body was removed. Evidence was given showing that the deceased, who was the widow of James Lowe, a log wood grinder, had lived at Eccles for the last seven or eight years. She left the house on Sunday morning, and nothing was heard of her until the following day, when she was found in the river. Deceased had once been addicted to drink, but had not drunk much for some time. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

57 February 13 1886

LIFE ON CANAL BOATS Mr John Aldersley Davenport of Nantwich, Cheshire, one of the inspectors appointed under the new Canal Boats Act, has reported to the Nantwich Rural Sanitary Authority and to the Local Government Board the nature of his interesting work under the Act since May last. Mr Davenport, who with Mr Smith of Coalville, has always taken the deepest interest in the water gypsies, states that the weak point in the Act is the inability of the inspectors to reach children for educational purposes. At Chester today, at Birmingham tomorrow, it is impossible, he states, to get at the children, who always accompany their parents in the boats. Mr Davenport asks – are the children to go uneducated? At present, beyond floating Bethels or Sunday Services at Nantwich and Chester, there are in his district absolutely no moral or educational influences at work among canal boatmen, their wives, and children. Mr Davenport found scarlet fever cases on board two boats. In these cases, he had the boats moored in a suitable situation, strict isolation was effected, and medical attention secured. The Act generally has wrought a great improvement in the habits and conditions of canal boatmen.

58 March 20 1886

FOUND DROWNED An inquest was held at the Manchester City Coroner's Court on Wednesday, before Mr S Smelt, deputy coroner, touching the death of a woman unknown, aged about 40, now lying at the Fairfield Street Mortuary. The body was found in the Rochdale Canal on Sunday last by a man named **Snape**, a boatman. He informed a police-constable, by whom the body was taken out of the water. It was dressed in a red merino dress, a long black cloth jacket, a black beaded bonnet, a red striped skirt, brown woollen stockings and elastic sided boots. In the pocket of the dress, there was 4 1/2d in copper, a sixpenny piece and a pair of black gloves. The head was badly injured. There was no name or mark by which the deceased could be identified. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

59 June 26 1886

A boatman named **John Allen** was charged at Windsor with stealing a gold watch, chain and appendage, worth about £40, the property of Captain Graves, who had accidentally dropped the articles in the Thames. The prisoner, who recovered the valuables from the river and pawned the watch and chain in London, was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

60 July 17 1886

Manchester Summer Assizes

A QUESTION OF IDENTITY **Thomas Cullen**, 37, labourer, was indicted for having, at Manchester on the 24th January 1875, married Margaret Bennett, his wife, Mary Cullen, being then alive. Mr McKeand prosecuted, and Mr Wharton defended. The defence was that the prisoner was not the man who married Mary Kehoe, his alleged wife. Kate Kehoe, sister of the prosecutrix, said she was a bridesmaid at the prisoner's marriage with witness's sister, Mary, on the 14th March 1863 at a chapel in the parish of New Ross, County Wexford, Ireland. He lived with her sister nine years and then deserted her. There were five children of the marriage. Witness was certain of the prisoner's identity. He then wore a slight moustache. On one occasion, the prisoner was ill using her sister, and witness threw a basin at him which cut him on the left ear. The prisoner had the cut now. She said, in cross-examination, that "she knew the prisoner's eyes, features and skin". Annie Fox, another sister of the prisoner's alleged wife, said she was present at the marriage in 1863. She had seen the prisoner several times in Manchester, and he had always run away up a back street. The last time she saw him, he was with the woman Margaret Bennett. Cross-examined : She did not identify the prisoner by the cut, but by the features. Mr Wharton : I suppose you never heard of a Cullen before. Witness : Yes, many a Cullen, but that's the right Cullen. {Laughter}. Agnes Tornan, married, said she was the prisoner's daughter. She was eight years old when he left home. The prisoner's father was a boatman. She had identified the prisoner as her father, and was sure of his identity. Michael Kennedy, living in Manchester, said he had known the prisoner for thirty years. He had known him when in Ireland. He knew the prisoner before he married Mary Kehoe. Witness and the prisoner were boys together ; they both left Ireland in 1872. He saw the prisoner in Liverpool, and afterwards in 1873 he met him in Hyde Road, Manchester. They then had dinner together. He was perfectly certain of the prisoner's identity. Cross-examined : Until the previous week, he had not seen the prisoner for four years. He was then wearing a beard, but previously wore simply a moustache. Margaret Bennett said the prisoner told her he came from Wexford when she went through the form of marriage with him in 1875. She had lived with the prisoner 11 years, and they had had no disturbance. She had had one child. Ever since she had known the prisoner in 1874, he had worn a beard. He told witness his father was a boatman. He told her his parents were dead, and she understood that he had never been previously married. A witness named Dennis Dunn, 6 Regent Street, Liverpool, a dock labourer for 25 years, was called for the defence. He said he had known Cullen for a couple of years at the Liverpool docks. It was before 1871 that he knew the prisoner, and he had known him for some time before that. The prisoner then wore whiskers and a beard. Martin Hoyne, 3 Worsley Street, Hyde Road, Ardwick, said in 1873 he came over from Liverpool, and became acquainted with the prisoner in 1873. The prisoner then wore full whiskers and a beard. The prisoner told him that he had been in England since 1866, and had come from New Ross. Samuel Constantine said he knew the prisoner to have been a respectable man, and to have been in one employment for 11 years. This completed the evidence. Counsel then addressed the Court, and the prisoner made a statement to the effect that the cut on his ear was received from a winch while at work at the docks. The Judge ordered the prisoner to be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for 12 months.

61 September 4 1886

SUICIDE OF A DRUNKARD An inquest was held at the Manchester City Coroner's Court yesterday, before Mr S Smelt, deputy coroner, touching the death of George Mercer, aged 57, late of 3 Alma Street, Pendleton. It appeared that the deceased was of intemperate habits, and had several times had *delirium tremens*. On Tuesday night, he was seen in a state of intoxication in Knott Mill

Market by a man named James Willoughby. Willoughby tried to persuade him to go home, but he refused to do so. On Thursday morning, his dead body was found at the bottom of the Bridgewater Canal at Castlefield, by **David Summerfield**, a boatman. The jury found that the deceased had committed suicide whilst of unsound mind.

62 October 30 1886

DROWNED IN THE BRIDGEWATER CANAL An inquest was held at the Manchester City Coroner's Court yesterday, before Mr S Smelt, deputy coroner, concerning the death of **Henry Irvin**, aged about 70, of no settled residence or occupation. The deceased used to hang about the Bridgewater Canal, and help the boatmen to get the barges through the locks. He was engaged in doing this on the evening of Tuesday last, and was pulling one of the lock gates to, when he slipped and fell into the water. Some time elapsed before he was pulled out by means of a boat hook, and he was then found to be dead. The jury found a verdict of "Accidental death from drowning".

63 December 11 1886

SEVERE GALE Early on Thursday, the Dearne and Dove Canal, belonging to the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company, overflowed its banks at Worsborough near Barnsley, doing serious damage to several works in the valley.

On Thursday, the scene around Runcorn and Widnes docks was of a most exciting character. A flat, the captain of which was called **Holden**, of Fiddler's Ferry near Warrington, was capsized between the western point and Runcorn, on the Cheshire side of the Mersey, and his youngest son and assistant flatman named **Whalin**, were drowned. His eldest son was saved by a Bridgewater Navigation Company's vessel, which went to the assistance of the flat. A Widnes flat, belonging to a man named **Cooper**, was also sunk. Three men on it were saved, but one had his arm broken.

64 January 8 1887

FATAL ICE AND FOG ACCIDENTS Mr F Price, district coroner, held an inquest at Stretford on Monday, touching the death of **William Heald**, aged 28, a labourer on the Bridgewater Canal and lately living at Water Meetings Cottages in Stretford. On the evening of Thursday last, the deceased finished his work on the canal bank, near the Barton aqueduct, and began to go towards home. There was a thick fog prevailing at the time, and owing to this, the deceased mistook the position of the water as he was walking along the bank, and fell into the canal. The plunge in the water was heard by a boatman named **Samuel Drinkwater**, who endeavoured to rescue the deceased, but without success. His body was not recovered until the following day. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

Mr F Price, district coroner, held an inquest in Salford on Saturday, touching the death of **Joseph Sharp**, eleven years of age, lately living at 13 Middlewood Street, Oldfield Road, Salford. The deceased had for some weeks acted as driver for a man named **William Moffatt**, a boatman on the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal. Moffatt stated that on the evening of Thursday last, he went to the Clifton Aqueduct over the river Irwell, where there were a pair of empty boats drawn by a horse, which the deceased was leading. The latter called out to witness that he was at the turning to the aqueduct. There was a dense fog prevailing at the time, and witness called out to the deceased by name two or three times, but received no reply. Witness went forward, and found the hauling line lying slack on the bank. He followed it until he came to the horse, which was in the water, about the middle of the aqueduct. He felt along the side gears, and found the deceased entangled in them. Witness disengaged him, and drew him to the bank, but found that he was dead. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

65 March 12 1887

A SUPPOSED POACHER DROWNED Mr F Price, district coroner, held an inquest at Barton-upon-Irwell on Tuesday, touching the death of **Peter Wilkinson**, a boatman, late of 19 Whitworth's Court, Barton. The deceased left home on the afternoon of the 24th of February, saying that he

would not return before morning. He, however, never returned at all, and on Sunday last his dead body was found in the Irwell near Barton Weir. He was known to have been a companion of some men who were lately apprehended for poaching in Trafford Park, and it is supposed that he was drowned whilst swimming across the river to escape arrest. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

66 May 28 1887

A WOMAN DROWNED Mr F Price, district coroner, held an inquest at Barton-upon-Irwell on Monday, touching the death of **Mary Lawton**, about 42 years of age, the wife of **Joseph Lawton**, a river boatman in the employ of Messrs Grant, Forbes and Co. On the 21st of March last, she was with her husband in his boat upon the river Irwell, and accidentally fell into the water. Her body was not recovered until the 21st inst. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

67 June 11 1887

TRAGEDY IN MANCHESTER

MURDER OF A WOMAN – SUICIDE OF THE MURDERER A brutal murder was committed in Ancoats at an early hour on Wednesday morning. A man named James Dodd, following the occupation of a knocker-up, and living at 14 Back Hadfield Street, Woodward Street, cut the throat of a woman named Harriet Turner, with whom he had for some four months past been living. The woman almost immediately expired, and the murderer rushed away declaring his intention to commit suicide. The neighbourhood is the lowest and most squalid part of the city. Dodd was left a widower about a year ago, with seven children, of whom the eldest is a young man about 20 years of age. His family consists of five boys and two girls. About four months ago the woman Harriet Turner, who was about 30 years of age, came to live with him, and the nine people occupied a small house of two rooms, one upstairs and one downstairs. The whole family slept on the floor in the small upper room, all huddled together. Both Dodd and the woman were looked upon as peaceable, well disposed people, and got on pretty well with each other. The children, so it is stated, were the chief cause of any friction which might exist. They say that Turner (who had two children of her own staying in a neighbouring house with her mother) was anxious to get rid of them, and tried to induce Dodd to get them away. They also say that they were ill treated by her. The neighbours, however, state that Turner took good care of the house, and that quarrels were infrequent. About three on Wednesday morning, or shortly after, the eldest of the children was awakened by a smothered cry. At that time, the dawn was far advanced, and he was able to see what was transpiring. Sitting up in bed, he found his father and the woman in a deadly struggle. Dodd had a razor in his hand, and with this he had already inflicted a fearful gash on the woman's throat. The blood was covering the bed, but she was still able to make an effort to free herself. The young man cried out to his father to let go the woman, but Dodd declared that if he was not quiet he would kill him. The son then rushed into the street, and gave the alarm to the neighbours. Before there could be any effective interference, however, the work had been completed. The woman lay dying on the bed, while the man had run downstairs and was in the street. Passing his son, he said, "Goodbye lad, you'll never see me again". Then he disappeared in the direction of the canal, his intention being apparently that of suicide. Dodd was dressed at the time of committing the tragedy ready for his usual morning work. He wore the old blue suit of a gasman, a white muffler, and had blucher boots. He was a man under the medium build, with brown hair and a slight moustache. On the house being entered, the woman was found all but dead, and she expired before Dr Hunter arrived from the Ancoats Hospital. The body was covered up, and the eight children in the room were taken away to neighbouring houses. The search after the murderer proceeded until Wednesday.

On Thursday forenoon, police-sergeant William Wild was on duty about half past eleven o'clock near Union Street, Ancoats, when a boatman told him that the body of a man had been seen floating in the Rochdale Canal, Union Street. The police officer went to the place indicated, and saw some boys in the water dragging a man's body towards the embankment. The body was brought on to the bank, and it was identified shortly afterwards by one of Dodd's sons as that of his father. In the

pockets were found a razor smeared with blood and 2 1/2d. The body, which was identified by other persons besides deceased's kin, was conveyed to the Fairfield Street mortuary, where the body of the murdered woman also lies.

INQUEST AND VERDICT

An inquest was held at the City Coroner's Court yesterday, before Mr Sydney Smelt, deputy coroner, on the bodies of Harriet Turner (or Seymour) and James Dodd.

James Dodd, son of the last named, was the first witness called. He said he had seen and identified the body of Harriet Turner, who lived with his father at 14 Back Hadfield Street, Ancoats. His father was a boltmaker by trade and forty years of age. Witness lived in the house along with Turner and his father, and two sisters and three brothers. There were two rooms in the house – one downstairs and a bedroom upstairs. They all slept in the one bedroom. About six o'clock on the night of Tuesday last, his father and Harriet Turner came home drunk and went to bed together. Harriet Turner kept falling out with his father before they went to bed. She said that if he did not stop the children from giving impudence, she would fire something at them. His father said he would have none of her bother. She had given him bother enough, and he wished she had never come to live with him. After they went to bed, Harriet Turner still kept quarrelling with his father. Between eleven and twelve o'clock, witness and his sisters and brothers went to bed. His father and Turner kept quarrelling until they went to sleep. About three o'clock on Wednesday morning, witness heard a struggle, and he saw his father leaning over Turner, who was kicking her feet on the floor. His father was pushing Turner's head on the pillow, and he wiped a razor and put it in his pocket. Blood was coming from Turner's neck, and also from her nose and mouth. After he had pushed her head back on the pillow, he got a jug and had a drink of water. After getting the drink of water, he ran downstairs. At the top of the stairs, as he was running away, he said to witness, "Good bye ; you will not see me any more". He then ran out, and witness ran after him, but he lost sight of him just after he had gone out. His father was dressed in a gasman's blue suit of clothes. After he ran away, witness did not see his father again till his dead body was found. Turner and his father had lived together about four months. They were constantly quarrelling about different things. She wanted his father to take off him (witness) the money he earned by selling sand. When his father ran away he screamed, and Mr Hayes's son came and sent for the police. A man named Evans was the first to go into the house. The razor used was his father's own razor. It was a new one, and had a black haft.

Samuel Evans, of 7 Back Hadfield Street, said that on Wednesday morning he heard the last witness screaming. He went out and saw James Dodd, the deceased, running down the street, and the last witness running after him. Dodd disappeared round the corner. The lad then came back, saying that his father had threatened to cut his throat with a razor if he did not go back. Witness went and informed the police.

Mande Harrison said she lived at the Globe Inn, No 9 Wesley Street. She heard the first witness shouting, "Help, police" ; "Help, murder". She put her head out of the window and asked him what was the matter. He told her that blood was coming from the throat of the woman with whom his father was living. After dressing, she went into deceased's house and went upstairs. Turner was lying on the floor on some old bags which were used as a bed. Her head was almost severed from her body. The body was warm but the woman was dead. There were, she thought, about six children in the room when she went in. They were all crying and asking to be taken away. The oldest was a young woman about 23 years of age. She was not quite right in her mind. The eldest boy, James – the first witness – was about 20 years old, the next boy was about 14, and the next about 11. There were only two in this family with any intellect. The room was all covered with blood and was in a dreadful state. Witness covered the woman up and left the house.

Alfred William Hunter, residential medical officer at the Ancoats Hospital, said he was called into the deceased's house about half past four o'clock on Wednesday morning. The woman was quite dead, her head being almost cut off from her body. There were several small cuts about the neck. The gash across the throat consisted of two distinct and heavy cuts. There was very little blood left in the body when he arrived.

John Rosebery, living at 5 Sykes's Court, Chester Road, said he was a boatman. He saw the body of Dodd about a quarter past 11 on Thursday morning in the Rochdale Canal, when he was passing in a boat. The body was under the Union Street Bridge. He went to give information to the police, but on returning, found the body had been got out. Dodd had all his clothes on.

William Wild said he got information from the last witness, and had the body removed to the Fairfield Street mortuary. He searched the clothes, and found a razor in the left hand side coat pocket. It was marked with blood. The body was identified, first by the son and afterwards by a sister. There were a few coppers in the pocket.

Mrs Harriet Turner, living at 23 Carruthers Street, Ancoats, said the deceased, Harriet Turner, was her daughter. Her proper name was Harriet Seymour, and she was the widow of Charles Seymour, engineer of St Helens. Her daughter, after her husband's death, lived with James Dodd. She had two children of her own. She often told witness that James Dodd had threatened to kill her. Dodd was very jealous, and when she left him, used to keep a perpetual watch on her. Her daughter frequently promised witness to leave Dodd, and did so on one or two occasions, but was always induced to go back to him. The witness, who seemed a respectable woman, appeared to be in very deep distress and cried a good deal.

The jury found that the woman Harriet Turner had been murdered by Dodd, and that Dodd committed suicide. There was no evidence to satisfy them with regard to Dodd's state of mind at the time.

68 June 18 1887

STRIKE OF CANAL BOATMEN The strike of boatmen on the Kendal and Preston Canal has terminated, the men taking the reduced rate of payment offered by the colliery proprietors. The strike has continued over six weeks. The dispute arose through the masters' suggesting that the rate of payment for conveying coal from Preston to Kendal should be reduced from 1s to 11d per mile. The distance is 57 miles. The new scale of payment will represent a reduction in the wages of the boatmen of about 4s per week.

69 July 30 1887

A BOATMAN DROWNED An inquest was held at the Manchester City Coroner's Court on Monday, before Mr S Smelt, deputy coroner, touching the death of **James Bamford**, a boatman aged 59, lately living at 21 Berry Street, Chapel Street, Ancoats. On Wednesday night, he was going down the Rochdale Canal with his boat, in company with two other boatmen. He wanted them to stop to get some beer, but this they refused to do. They shortly afterwards missed him, and at length went on without him. On Friday, his body was found floating in the canal near Butler Street. There was no evidence to show how he got into the water, and the jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

70 September 24 1887

MYSTERIOUS DROWNING CASES IN SALFORD Mr F Price, district coroner, on Tuesday held an inquiry, in Salford, into the circumstances attending the deaths of **John Holt**, aged about 45, a boatman, and Ellen Royle, aged about 50, a charwoman, whose bodies were found floating in the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal near Ordsal Lane on Sunday last. It was stated that Royle had for some time been living with Holt as his wife. They were together in the neighbourhood of the canal on Saturday night, and were both then the worse for drink. About half past two o'clock on the following day, Holt's body was taken from the water by a boatman named **Parkinson** who, about an hour and a half afterwards, recovered Royle's body from the same spot. There was no evidence to show how they had got into the water, but Parkinson said that it was his opinion that Royle had fallen into the canal, and that Holt was drowned in trying to save her. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

71 November 19 1887

THE CHESHIRE POACHING AFFRAY At Altrincham Police Court on Thursday, before Messrs H Bleckley and J Gaskarth, two men named William Scott and Edward Connor of Deansgate, Manchester, were charged with assaulting Sergeant Cooper and Police-constable Proudlove of the Cheshire Constabulary, with intent to do grievous bodily harm, and also with stealing 17 geese, the property of Mr Hil Kirk, farmer, Brooklands. Sergeant Cooper, one of the injured officers, was still unable to appear. Police-constable Proudlove, who appeared in the witness box with his head bandaged, identified the prisoner Scott as one of the men who assaulted him. He could not speak to Connor. William Hill, labourer in a brickyard at Stockport, stated that early in the morning of the 5th of November, he was in a beerhouse in Stockport, when Scott and a number of others came in and spoke about having been in an affray that morning. He “stood” them two or three half gallons of beer. Witness gave his evidence most reluctantly, and was cautioned by Superintendent Leighton to speak the truth and the whole truth, and Mr Bleckley asked if he was in the habit of being so generous with people he did not know. Witness replied that sometimes people treated him, and he returned it in that way. In reply to the prisoner Scott, Hill admitted he was out poaching on the Adlington estate the week before the Sale affair, but not that night. Scott vigorously asserted it was a “plant” on the part of the Stockport gang, who were near Timperley at the time of the affray, to lay it on the Manchester men. At this point, the case was adjourned until the afternoon to admit of the attendance of other witnesses. When the case was again called, **Thomas Evans**, boatman in the employment of the Shropshire Union Canal Company, and a mate named **Hopley**, deposed that on the night of the 4th November, Scott and three other men got on the boat at Manchester and got off at Timperley. Evans said he dared not refuse them for fear of having his brains knocked out. The gang was not quite so large as usual. Usually, they came in a “ruck”, jumped on the boat, and never asked permission. He did not hear the men say it was too light to work. Connor was discharged, but Scott was again remanded, Superintendent Leighton stating that he should be able to get other men who were implicated in the affair.

72 January 7 1888

THE AFFRAY WITH POACHERS AT BROOKLANDS At the quarter sessions at Knutsford on Wednesday, William Scott, 31, labourer, and James Lee alias Chitty, 40, blacksmith, were indicted for unlawfully and maliciously wounding Sergeant Cooper and Constable Proudlove on the 5th November. There was a further count charging them with stealing 17 geese, the property of William Hill Kirk, farmer. Mr Marshall was counsel for the prosecution. From information received at Altrincham about midnight on the 4th November, Sergeant Cooper and Constables Proudlove and Daintith proceeded along the South Junction line. On passing a hut used by platelayers, sounds were heard and, on Sergeant Cooper asking who was there, an affray ensued, in which he and Proudlove were very seriously injured. Two boatmen gave evidence, showing that depredations on estates surrounding Manchester were systematic. In reply to Scott, **Hopley**, the mate of the boat *Laura*, said that often gangs of 10 or 13 used to ride on the boat, and they had also conveyed gangs back to Manchester with the produce ; in one case, one bag contained 45 rabbits. He had never heard of Scott stealing fowls. William Smith, who said he came from Stockport, deposed to seeing Scott in a beerhouse there on the morning of the 5th November. He was then with a number of other men. In reply to Scott, he said he did not remember going to Dunham Park with him one night, and getting a share of the spoils. He saw Scott one morning in Ancoats after he had paid a visit to Heaton Park the previous night. Scott made a long statement to the effect that, although he was on the boat, it was too light that morning to go poaching, and he returned home to Manchester. He was innocent. Lee protested his innocence, and called witnesses to prove an alibi. The jury returned a verdict of guilty against Scott and acquitted Lee. The Deputy Chairman said Lee was most fortunate. There was not the least doubt he was out that night along with the rest. As for Scott, he had been rightly convicted, and would be sentenced to 18 months imprisonment with hard labour.

73 January 28 1888

INTIMIDATING A WORKMAN At Salford Borough Court on Tuesday, a boatman named **George Green**, living in Sunnyside Street, Ordsal Lane, Salford, was brought up under warrant before Mr J Makinson, stipendiary magistrate, charged with intimidating **Robert Millington** of 2 Rigo Place, Hulme. Mr Hockin said he appeared to prosecute on behalf of **Mrs Sarah Pendlebury**, who owned a considerable number of boats used for the conveyance of goods on the Bridgewater Canal. In consequence of a dispute with regard to wages, a strike had recently taken place amongst Mrs Pendlebury's boatmen, the prisoner being one of the strike hands. In order to fill up the vacancies of the men who had left her employment, Mrs Pendlebury advertised for new hands, and the prosecutor was engaged as a boatman. On the 19th inst, Millington was going to his boat, and when on the bank near Regent Road Bridge, he was met by the prisoner and five or six others. Prisoner asked him where he was going, and the prosecutor said he was going to his boat. Prisoner then said, "You are going into the canal", put his fist in Millington's face, and threatened to "knock his head off". He did not, however, actually commit an assault ; but Millington was so afraid of what might happen that instead of going to his boat he went home, and had not been at work since. Mr Hockin added that he did not wish to press the case, the prisoner having been brought up as a warning to others. Evidence having been given by Mrs Pendlebury's manager and other witnesses, the Stipendiary said had Mr Hockin pressed for punishment, he should certainly have sent the prisoner to gaol for two months. He had been guilty of a serious offence, and he hoped it would be a warning both to him and others. Prisoner was liberated on his own recognisance of £5 to come up for judgement when called upon.

74 March 31 1888

A RASH WOMAN At the Leigh Police Court on Tuesday, Ellen Greenough, wife of Robert Greenough, collier, Astley Green, was charged with attempting to drown herself and child, aged two and a half years. It appeared that the woman had been quarrelling with a neighbour, and her husband remonstrated with her. She thereupon went to the canal with the child and jumped in. **William Wild**, boatman, Runcorn, got them out, after they had sunk once. The woman, it is said, strongly resisted his efforts. She was remanded.

75 August 4 1888

A BOATMAN DROWNED Mr S Smelt, deputy city coroner, on Tuesday held an inquest touching the death of **David Fox**, 38, a boatman, late of Kings's Lane, Nantwich. On Friday evening, the deceased was navigating his boat through the canal at Castlefield, when he fell into the water. He was taken out and conveyed to the Royal Infirmary, but died there on Sunday from pneumonia brought on by the immersion. A verdict was returned of "Accidental death".

76 November 17 1888

SINGULAR CASE OF MANSLAUGHTER Mr Brighthouse, county coroner, held an inquest on Monday at Ince on the body of Richard Ainsworth, painter, of Ashton-under-Lyne, who met his death in a singular manner. Ainsworth and three others were on a scaffold underneath the railway bridge crossing the canal, repairing the girders, when a canal company's boat came along. The men shouted to the man in charge, **James Lyon**, to pull down the boat's funnel, as it would catch the scaffold, but he took no notice, and as the boat was passing, the funnel knocked down one of the planks and pitched the deceased into the water. The boatman, it was stated, went on his way, but the deceased's fellow workmen attempted to rescue their comrade who, however, seemed dazed, and was dead when brought out. Lyon said he heard no shouting, but others present stoutly maintained that they frequently cried out. The jury, after careful consideration, decided that Lyon had been culpably negligent, and the Coroner committed him for trial at the assizes on a charge of manslaughter.

77 November 17 1888

CHARGE OF MANSLAUGHTER At the Wigan County Police Court on Thursday, **James Lyon**, a boatman living at Lathom near Ormskirk, was charged with the manslaughter of Richard Ainsworth of Ashton-under-Lyne. On Friday afternoon last, the man Ainsworth, in conjunction with three other men, was engaged in painting an iron bridge of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, which spans the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. He was working on a scaffold. The prisoner came up at the time in charge of a boat. The funnel of the boat upset the deceased's scaffold, and he was drowned. The three comrades of the deceased deposed that both they themselves and the deceased shouted loudly to the prisoner to lower the chimney, but he refused. The warning to the prisoner was first given when the boat was about thirty yards from the scaffold, and was continued up to the time when the scaffold was upset. He was committed to the Liverpool assizes for trial.

78 December 29 1888

ATTEMPTED MURDER AND SUICIDE NEAR LANCASTER A young woman named Isabella Ramplin, the daughter of a Lancaster artist, is in custody on a charge of attempted murder and suicide. On Thursday afternoon, she left her parents' house, taking her six months old infant with her. Some lads were on the canal bank near Lancaster, when they saw Ramplin throw the child into the water and then jump in herself. Three canal boatmen were sheltering from the rain some distance off, and were attracted by cries for help. **Thomas Cummings** plunged into the canal and brought the child to the side, and a rope being thrown over the head of the mother, she was dragged to land. She remained unconscious nearly half an hour.

79 January 19 1889

AN UNKNOWN BOY DROWNED The Salford police were informed on Thursday that a boy, homeless and unknown, had been drowned under rather peculiar circumstances. A canal boatman named **John Foster** states that on Saturday night he was going along Piccadilly when a boy, an entire stranger, came up to him, and said that he was homeless and destitute, and would take it as a favour if allowed to go on the boat of which Foster had charge, and work for his food. He did not want any wages, and Foster took him and put him aboard his boat. On Thursday morning about six o'clock, as the boat was on the Hampson Street lock of the Manchester, Bury and Bolton Canal in Salford, the boy fell overboard and was drowned. His body was shortly afterwards recovered and taken to the police mortuary in Silk Street, Salford, where it awaits identification. Deceased is described as being about 14 years of age, 4ft 6in in height, with brown hair and fresh complexion, and dressed in brown corduroy trousers, check shirt and lace up clogs.

80 January 26 1889

A LAD FOUND DROWNED Mr F Price, county coroner, on Monday held an inquest on the body of William Dyson, a lad of 13, lately living with his parents at 25 High Street, Denton. On the morning of the 23rd December, the deceased was sent an errand by his mother. He never returned home. A boatman named **Foster** stated that on the 12th inst, while taking his boat along the Ashton Canal, through the locks at Ancoats, he saw the deceased, who asked to be allowed to go with him. Deceased was taken on board. On Wednesday last, the boat was in the locks near Ordsal Lane, Salford, of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal. Deceased slept in the boat that night, but was missed early on Thursday morning. His body was afterwards found in one of the locks. Deceased is believed to have fallen in whilst trying to jump from the boat to the shore. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

81 April 20 1889

CHARGE OF UNLAWFUL WOUNDING OF A BROTHER At the Altrincham petty sessions on Monday, **Job Taberner**, boatman, Altrincham, was brought up in custody, charged with unlawfully

wounding Thomas Taberner, his brother, about midnight on Saturday. The prosecutor, a labourer, stated that his brother insulted him on Saturday afternoon, but of this he took no notice. Shortly before midnight, he heard the prisoner threatening his mother, and went into the house and requested him to be quiet. He followed witness outside, threw him down, picked up a large piece of rockery stone in the garden outside, and struck him on the head with it. He remembered being struck once, and then he became unconscious. Dr Golland deposed that he found prosecutor suffering from three contused wounds on the top of the head, two extending to the bone. Such wounds might have been caused by the stone produced, on which there appeared to have been blood. William Drinkwater, joiner, stated that he saw the prisoner strike his brother three times on the head with the stone produced. Prosecutor was unconscious. Prisoner was committed for trial, bail being accepted, himself in £200 and another surety in £100.

82 May 11 1889

SINGULAR DROWNING CASE An inquest was held at Northwich on Wednesday on the body of **Harry Littler**, 13, son of a flatman employed by the River Weaver Navigation Trust, along with another named **Ernest Perry**, 15, in managing a mud barge or hopper, used to convey mud from a floating dredger. The deceased, who was new to the work, tampered with the controlling hopper, the handle of which knocked him into the mud in the middle of the barge and, the hopper opening, he went down with the mud into the river. He came to the surface half suffocated, and sank before assistance could be rendered. The Coroner said it was disgraceful to employ lads in the management of heavy boats like that, and the jury appended to their verdict of "Accidental death" an expression of opinion that men should be employed.

83 June 15 1889

FATAL FIGHT IN MANCHESTER An inquest was held at the Manchester City Coroner's Court on Monday, before Mr S Smelt, deputy coroner, respecting the death of Charles Russell, aged 37, a labourer lately living at 12 Joddrell Street, Deansgate. On the evening of Saturday last, the deceased was drinking in a tavern near the Bridgewater coal wharf with a man named **Richard Wright**, aged 32, a boatman living at 18 Bradshaw Street, Hulme. A quarrel took place between them, and they went out upon the wharf to fight. The deceased was knocked down and fell with his head against the doorstep of a table. He was assisted into the stable, where he lay upon some straw until the next morning. A policeman was then called, and he was removed to the Royal Infirmary, but died on the way there. Spectators of the fight described it as a perfectly fair one. The jury returned a verdict of "Manslaughter" against Wright, and the coroner committed him for trial at the next assizes.

At the Manchester City Police Court on Tuesday, before the stipendiary magistrate (Mr F J Headlam), **Richard Wright**, boatman, 18 Bradshaw Street, Hulme, was charged with causing the death of Charles Russell, labourer, Joddrell Street, Deansgate, by striking him in the course of a quarrel which took place between them on Saturday. Dr E T Milner, surgical officer at the Infirmary, on Tuesday stated that death was due to haemorrhage on the brain, more probably caused by falls than by blows. There were several bruises on the back of the head. John Chainey Travis, a groom, said the deceased challenged the prisoner to fight, but the latter did not want to do so. Russell, however, persisted, and they together went out of a beerhouse, where the quarrel took place, on to the wharf. They there began to fight. The prisoner repeatedly said he did not want to have anything further to do with the deceased, who however continued to attack him. Deceased fell several times. The fall which rendered him unconscious was not in consequence of a blow from the prisoner. He fell as he was striking at the prisoner. Wright was committed for trial at the assizes, bail being allowed.

84 September 11 1889

DROWNED IN THE CANAL An inquest was held on Monday at the city coroner's court, on the body of Walter Bartley, aged 10, who lived with his mother in Melbourne Street, Hulme. On

Saturday afternoon, the deceased was playing on the bank of the Rochdale Canal near Castlefield lock, and was seen to fall into the water. A man who witnessed the occurrence, but who was unable to swim, called to a boatman to bring his boat hook, and the body was recovered about three quarters of an hour afterwards. The jury found that the deceased had been accidentally drowned. An inquest was also held by Mr Smelt on Monday, touching the death of a lad named John Hancock, 17 years of age, whose occupation and place of residence were unknown. The deceased and another lad had been sleeping under the canal bridge in Piccadilly on Thursday night, and at about six o'clock the following morning were bathing, when the deceased fell into the "bywash" and was drowned. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

85 September 28 1889

ATTEMPTED MURDER AND SUICIDE IN MANCHESTER

A SAD CASE At the Manchester City Police Court on Wednesday, before Mr F J Headlam, stipendiary, Mary Hannah Barlow, a single woman 29 years of age, living with her parents in Granville Street, Salford, was charged with attempting to murder her illegitimate child, Florence, aged six years, by throwing her into the Bridgewater Canal, and also with attempting to commit suicide by jumping into the canal. Police-constable George Newton said that about five o'clock on Sunday evening, he was called to the Hulme locks on the Bridgewater Canal, near Egerton Street, and there found the prisoner lying unconscious on the towing-path. The child had then been taken into a neighbouring house, and was having its clothes dried. Witness removed the woman to the Royal Infirmary, where she had been detained as an inpatient until Wednesday. She made no reply when charged. John Walker, labourer of Queen Street, Hulme, said that he was walking along the canal side, when he saw the prisoner and a little girl coming towards him. When about 40 yards away, the prisoner threw herself and the girl into the water. They were immersed for about five minutes before witness, with the assistance of a man with a boat hook, managed to get them out. The woman was then insensible, but the child was not. **George Booth**, a boatman of Liverpool Road, stated that he saw the prisoner and the girl walking along by the canal. He afterwards heard cries of "Murder", and on turning round saw the two in the water, which at that part was five or six feet deep. He got them out with a boat hook. The mother had hold of the child's head, and would not let it go when called to, and witness had to knock her hand away. Dr E S Reynolds, the resident medical officer at the Royal Infirmary, said that the prisoner when taken to the institution was suffering from nothing but immersion. She was in a low and desponding condition, and it was not considered advisable to let her leave till Wednesday. The mother of the prisoner, a woman named Hannah Barlow, was then called, and said she was the wife of George Barlow, a night watchman, living in Granville Street, Salford. Her husband was ill with rheumatism and could not work. The prisoner and her married sister were both out of situation and lived at home, and this fact seemed to prey upon the prisoner's mind. There was nothing to support the family with the exception of the earnings of the witness and her little girl, which amounted to but a few shillings a week. The prisoner stated that her reason for doing what she was charged with was that her father was out of work and ill at home. There was not enough money coming in to keep them all, and she thought she was better away. She was very sorry for her act, but was hardly aware of what she was doing at the time. Mr Headlam committed the prisoner for trial at the assizes, but considered the condition of the family so deplorable that he handed Mrs Barlow some pecuniary assistance. Mr Ashley, the officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, said that the society he represented were also willing to render assistance.

86 October 5 1889

A DRUNKARD'S DEATH An inquest was held at Blackburn on Monday on the body of a weaver named Joseph Henry Johnson, of 27 Infirmary Street, Blackburn, who lost his life through getting drunk on Saturday night. When in an intoxicated condition, he was seen to stagger along the towpath of the canal, near the Bolton Road locks, and to fall into the water. A boatman named **Walmsley** saw what had happened, and attempted to rescue the man, but it was so dark that ten

minutes elapsed before Johnson was taken out of the water, and he was then found to be dead. The jury came to the conclusion that death was accidental, though due to the man's drunken condition.

87 November 16 1889

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS At the Altrincham petty sessions on Monday, George Hopwood, carter, Gorton, and Thomas Rostron of Stanley Grove, Longsight, were summoned for being concerned in cruelty to a horse. Rostron was fined 41s including costs, and Hopwood 2s 6d and costs. **Samuel Morris**, boatman, Runcorn, and James Daniel, porter, Altrincham, were also summoned at the instance of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and each fined 10s and costs.

88 March 1 1890

DROWNING OF TWO LOVERS An inquest touching the death of Robert Barnett, 21, and Edith Lowe, 20, who were drowned at Warrington on Sunday night, was held on Wednesday by Mr W T Husband, deputy coroner. It was stated that Barnett was a tripe dresser, and his sweet heart was a weaver at Cockhedge Mill, Warrington, and the daughter of a butcher. The two had been courting for some ten or twelve months, and a walk they frequently took was by the side of the river Mersey in the direction of Woolston. On Sunday evening they had a walk over Warrington Bridge, through Latchford, as far as the Ship Canal Works, where they turned off the highway into a footpath which goes across some fields and over the Mersey and Irwell Canal, which is crossed by means of a swing bridge. The night was very dark and foggy, and the lovers failing to see that the bridge was partly open, appeared to have walked straight into the canal. John Collins, a carter, heard someone cry, "Oh!", and immediately afterwards, "Help". He ran in the direction of the sound, but though he procured a lamp, he could see nothing. He, however, gave information to the police, who early on Monday morning went to the spot, and finding an umbrella on the bank of the canal, commenced dragging operations, the bodies of the two lovers being ultimately recovered. The foreman of the jury, Mr J Houghton, said the road over the canal was a private one, and although a great many people went over it, they were really trespassers, and went at their own peril. **John Rathbone**, the attendant at Dobby's locks, which are near the swing bridge, said there was no one to look after the bridge, and it was left entirely to the option of the boatmen passing up and down the canal whether they closed it or not. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

89 May 10 1890

Manchester Spring Assizes

PLEADED GUILTY **Thomas Threlfall**, 22, boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing 70lb of provender, the property of his employer, James Eastop of Droylsden, on the 5th April. Having been several times previously convicted, he was sentenced to hard labour for a year.

90 May 17 1890

FOUND DROWNED NEAR AGECROFT The District Coroner (Mr F Price) has held an inquest concerning the death of Bryan Norton, a coal miner, 50 years of age, late of St Helens Road, Leigh. Last Friday week, the deceased left home slightly under the influence of liquor, with the intention of transacting some business. On Sunday morning, his body was found by a boatman named **John Warburton**, of Wellington Street, Pendleton, in the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal, in front of Agecroft Hall. It had apparently been in the water some time, and there were no marks of violence. An open verdict was returned.

91 May 24 1890

A MAN FOUND DROWNED AT OLD TRAFFORD Yesterday morning, a boatman named **Nicholls**, of Runcorn, found the body of a man, whose identity has not been discovered, in the Bridgewater Canal near Throstle Nest. The following description of the body is given by the police:- Height 5ft 8in ; complexion fair, with dark brown hair ; whiskers thin, sandy. There was no coat on the body. The dark brown cord trousers were patched with blue serge. The body appeared

to have been in the water four or five days, and was removed to the Northumberland Arms awaiting an inquest.

92 June 7 1890

SALFORD HUNDRED INTERMEDIATE SESSIONS The business of these sessions was concluded on Tuesday at the Assize Court, Strangeways, Mr W H Higgin QC, chairman, presiding. **John Seymour**, 36, boatman, charged with having, on the 9th May at Ashton-under-Lyne, stolen two sacks of flour, the property of his employer, Mr T G Platt, was acquitted.

93 July 26 1890

A boatman named **Thomas Carrington** died in the Blackburn Infirmary on Thursday from injuries caused by the kick of a horse on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, near Chorley.

94 August 8 1890

DROWNING FATALITIES An inquest was held on Saturday at the Eccles Town Hall, by Mr J F Price, deputy district coroner, touching the death of Edward Rothwell, 61 years of age, a tinsmith worker, late of Alma Street, Eccles. Deceased had suffered from chronic rheumatism in the head. About seven o'clock on Friday evening, a boatman named **William Oakes** saw him sitting on the canal bank near Trafford Road Bridge, and some time afterwards he was found drowned in the canal at Moss Reach. There were no marks of violence on the body. An open verdict was returned.

95 August 29 1890

WORK AND WAGES Two hundred and twenty flatmen and 100 quay porters in the employment of the Shropshire Union Canal Company came out on strike at Ellesmere Port on Monday. The dispute is said to have arisen in consequence of the discharging of two men belonging to the Upper Mersey Watermen's Association because they refused to do work which was contrary to an agreement made with the company. The strikers say they will not resume till the two men are reinstated.

The men sought an interview on Wednesday, through their trade union officials, with Mr Thomas Hales, the company's traffic manager. Mr Hales intimated that he was quite willing to see any man employed by the company, but he declined to recognise the right of any other individual to interfere in the dispute. The canal company do not object to their men joining the Flatmen's Union, but they say that their flatmen were under a distinct engagement to go on duty on Saturday afternoons when traffic was urgent, and to give a fortnight's notice in case of leaving their service. The company now have under consideration the propriety of prosecuting the men who summarily went on strike.

96 September 5 1890

A BOATMAN DROWNED IN THE BRIDGEWATER CANAL An inquest was held yesterday by the Deputy Coroner for the city (Mr Sidney Smelt) concerning the death of **Robert Snape**, boatman, 27 years of age, and late of Henry Street, Leigh. On Monday night, Mrs Snape retired to bed, leaving the deceased sitting on the deck of his boat, which was lying in the Bridgewater Canal at Castlefield. The deceased had had a little drink, and the following morning his body was found in the canal close to the boat. There were no marks of violence on the body. The jury returned an open verdict.

97 October 10 1890

DEATHS

THE LATE REV JAMES SHIPMAN The remains of the Rev James Shipman, for thirty one years minister to the Boatmen's Bethel, Manchester, were on Tuesday interred at the Ardwick Cemetery. The funeral cortege left the residence of the deceased gentleman, Trafford Park, Chester Road, Old Trafford, at 1.30 pm.

98 **October 10 1890**

FOUND DROWNED IN THE ROCHDALE CANAL An inquest was held on Wednesday by the Deputy City Coroner (Mr S Smelt) touching the death of **Alan Wilday**, boatman, 15 years of age, late of Newton Bank, Middlewich. About three o'clock on Monday afternoon, the deceased was missed from his boat, which was lying in the Chorlton Street arm of the Rochdale Canal, near Minshull Street, and his body was afterwards found close to the boat. He had had a fit whilst at breakfast that morning, and it is supposed that he may have fallen into the water while suffering from a second attack. An open verdict was returned.

99 **October 24 1890**

SALFORD HUNDRED QUARTER SESSIONS The business of the sessions was resumed on Wednesday at the Assize Courts, Strangeways, before Mr W H Higgin QC. The following additional sentences were passed :-

Three months imprisonment with hard labour : **John Hodgkinson**, boatman, for thefts on the 21st and 22nd August.

100 **November 14 1890**

A DESPERATE ASSAILANT Before Mr H Boddington and Mr W Charlton, at the Manchester City Police Court on Monday, J Cassidy, a carter, was charged with inflicting grievous bodily harm upon **Francis Lead**, boatman, and also with attempting to stab him. The prosecutor said that he and the prisoner were together in the Welsh Harp beerhouse, Lees Street, Ancoats, on Saturday night. They began to quarrel, and prosecutor struck the prisoner. The latter then took off his belt, and swinging it round, hit the prosecutor on the eye with the buckle. He then pulled a knife out of his pocket and made two attempts to stab prosecutor, but was prevented by the interference of some of the persons present. Soon afterwards, he left the room, but returned again almost immediately with a large carving knife, with which he rushed at the prosecutor, but was again fortunately prevented from doing any injury. He was subsequently given into the custody of Police-constable Marshall and taken to the Canal Street police station. He stated that he was very sorry for what he had done. The prosecutor was on the point of choking him when he knocked him down. He denied altogether having attempted to use the knife. The Chairman sentenced the prisoner to two months imprisonment with hard labour, which was the severest penalty he said the Bench could impose.

101 **December 5 1890**

A WOMAN DROWNED IN SALFORD An inquest was held on Tuesday by the Salford Borough Coroner (Mr F Price) on the body of **Sarah Jackson**, 37 years of age, the wife of **Thomas Jackson**, boatman in the employ of the Cheshire Salt Union. About a quarter past eight o'clock on Monday night, the deceased left her husband's boat, which was lying near the Oldfield Road Bridge on the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal, in order to make some small purchase. As she did not return, a search was instituted, and her body was found between the bows of two boats over which she would have had to pass to get to the bank. The night was extremely dark, and there were no lights near the spot. An open verdict was returned.

102 **January 23 1891**

SEVERE WEATHER – RIVERS FROZEN – ACCIDENTS AND DEATHS The weather throughout England and the Continent was terribly severe on Saturday and Sunday. In Manchester, the temperature, according to observations taken by Mr J Casartelli, optician of Market Street, between 9am on Sunday and 9 am on Monday was 24 degrees maximum and 14 degrees minimum. The maximum temperature between Saturday at 9am and Sunday at 9am was 32 degrees, the minimum reading being 14 degrees. Saturday and Sunday have been the two coldest days in the present year. During the season of frost, however, the four coldest days so far have been the 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd of December. On the 20th, the thermometer reading was, minimum 9 degrees ; 21st, minimum 12 degrees ; 22nd, minimum 8 degrees ; and 23rd, minimum 12 degrees. On Monday

and on Wednesday, there was a fall of snow, with a higher temperature, and there has since been a general thaw.

THE RIVERS AND CANALS A correspondent, writing on Monday, said : The frozen out boatmen on the Manchester Ship Canal (Bridgewater Canal undertaking) had some hopes in the middle of last week that the frost was about to clear off, and so give them a chance of getting free. After two or three days thaw, however, the frost set in again with increased severity. Some boats have been icebound at Lymm for over a fortnight, whilst others have been over a month in getting from Runcorn to the Duke of Bridgewater's collieries at Worsley, a journey usually done in a day or two. The iceboat, drawn by a large number of horses, manages to get through daily. The flats and steam tugs belonging to the Canal Company have long since given up the attempt to get through. Many of the boats belonging to private firms have made desperate efforts, but without success.

ICE ACCIDENTS At Wakefield, on Sunday, **Isaac Whiteley**, aged eight, son of a boatman, ventured on the ice on the Aire and Calder Navigation Canal, and was drowned.

DISTRESSED MANCHESTER – ANCOATS AND RED BANK The weather has had much to answer for in Manchester. To be without a fire in such weather as has lately been experienced was bad enough, but there have been many without either fire or food. An excellent attempt to cope in some way with the distress of Ancoats has been made during the past week by the Rev William Muzzell, rector of St Mark's, Holland Street. This effort takes the form of a small wood chopping factory. It is situated in an old Ancoats mill. Here, anyone out of work and anxious to earn a little money for food in order to keep body and soul together, may obtain a fair wage by sawing a chopping blocks of timber into firewood. So far, a number of the unemployed really needing help have taken advantage of the opportunity, and this effort to help the distressed may be said to have been not unsuccessful. In other directions, similar useful work is being done to alleviate the distress.

Ancoats, Angel Meadow and Hulme have not stood alone as districts in which the starving have been found during the severe season of frost. A district bordering upon Angel Meadow – Red Bank – has suffered quite as severely. Red Bank is made up of a curious mixture of tanneries, bleachworks, oilworks, factories and slums. The slums predominate, some of the oldest, worst and filthiest houses in Manchester being found in the district. There are none of the regular streets of Collyhurst or Hulme ; crowded houses in courts and blind alleys form its chief architectural features. The larger number of the poor who live in the district are those who are thrown out of work in consequence of the frost. Others are gas workers, while others again are those who pick up a living by hawking, or in suspicious ways. Among all there has been severe distress. In a small court off Red Bank lives a market porter who, when in good work, earns about 13s or 14s a week. He has not done much lately, and has had to live from hand to mouth. To keep his wife and three children alive, he has had to pawn almost everything. He is a teetotaller. In another court was a man who had five children. One of them is a crippled woman whose body is covered with sores, the result of ill feeding and uncleanness. The father was out of work. Unfortunately, when he was able to earn anything, he often spent the money in drink. Naturally, little is left in the house in the way of food. When the place was visited by Mr Bagnall, the hon conductor of the Cathedral Mission, the house was almost devoid of furniture, every saleable stick having gone to the pawnshop. One of the applicants for help who waited on Mr Bagnall on Monday was a young man, a teetotaller, at present out of work. As in other cases, almost everything had gone to the pawnshop. The poor fellow said that both he and his wife had only had one meal since the preceding Saturday. Our representative on Tuesday found Mr Bagnall busily engaged in arranging for the opening of a soup kitchen in the Red Bank Ragged School. The institution of this kitchen, which is referred to below, is the result of the efforts of Mr Scott, and its work will be conducted under the auspices of the Cheap Meals Committee.

The great change in the weather during the last day or two will do much towards reviving the hearts of the distressed of Manchester. If it continues, it will, no doubt, take away the great cause of much of the present suffering and hunger experienced by the poor. Something good resulted, no doubt, to unemployed labourers from the work of clearing the streets from the frozen snow which had

accumulated on the footways, and which the Corporation were endeavouring energetically to remove by means of an army of extra hands on Tuesday evening.

At the usual Sunday morning breakfast in the Charter Street Ragged School, there were present upwards of 600 men, women and children, many of them in a very destitute condition. The distress of the present winter has been very much felt in this neighbourhood, and for the last three months near 20,000 free meals have been provided for the needy. The meeting on Sunday was addressed by Councillor McDougal, Mr W E A Axon, and Mr James Boyd. On the previous Thursday, over 920 children had their usual supper in the school. Through the kindness of Mr F O Bentley and the subscribers to the St Christopher Fund, there have been received 100 pairs of clogs and stockings for distribution amongst the poor children of the neighbourhood.

103 February 20 1891

A BOATMAN FOUND DROWNED IN THE ROCHDALE CANAL An inquest was held at the City Coroner's Court on Wednesday relative to the death of **James Grimshaw**, canal boatman, 34 years of age, lately in the employ of the Ship Canal Company. On Tuesday afternoon, the deceased was working his boat past the Rochdale Canal offices, Ancoats. He left the boat at the Brownsfield Tip lock to get a lock ready lower down the canal. It was found shortly afterwards that he had got the lock ready, but nothing was seen of the deceased himself, and as his cap was floating on the water, it was supposed that he had been drowned. Drags were accordingly put into operation, and the body of the deceased was recovered. An open verdict was returned.

104 February 20 1891

THE CASTLEFIELD CRANE ACCIDENT The adjourned inquest on the body of William Armitage, 40, a steam crane driver, late of Everard Street, Salford, was held on Tuesday before Mr Sidney Smelt, deputy coroner for the city. The deceased had received fatal injuries through the fall of a crane which he was working at the Castlefield wharf of the Bridgewater Canal undertaking. Mr Newman (Messrs Grundy, Kershaw and Co) watched the proceedings on behalf of the Manchester Ship Canal Company, and Mr Murphy (Messrs Banks, Battersby and Booth) on behalf of the widow and relatives of the deceased. **John Yates**, a boatman, residing near Warrington, stated that he brought a load of timber to the Castlefield wharf on the 7th inst. He went under Armitage's crane, and they commenced with a tree weighing 2 1/2 tons. He did not notice any slip of the load, but the structure fell, and Armitage was badly injured. William Ward of Old Trafford said he superintended the unloading of the timber brought by the last witness. He did not see what caused the smash. The crane was repaired two or three months ago, and he had not heard Armitage complain about it since then. Witness had been at the place 20 or 30 years, He had not known of any accident to a crane before. Mr Newman asked if there was not a notice up that workmen who found anything out of repair must report it. Witness said there was. The Coroner said a man would naturally do that without any notice. **Mr Francis Wiswall** of Runcorn, chief engineer for the Bridgewater Undertaking of the Ship Canal Company, said he superintended the erection of the crane in question, some 16 or 17 years ago. He had examined it since it fell. He found that one of the trust rods, which was of wrought iron and had no flaw in it, had been unequal to the strain upon it, and had broken. The whole structure rested upon the trust rods. The crane was supposed to be equal to 10 tons, but they had not called it a 10 ton crane. He believed it was registered at eight tons. It lifted over five tons last September. The Coroner asked how it could break down with only 2 1/2 tons upon it. The witness said he could not tell unless the load slipped, or the ironwork had been affected by the long frost. The break was a "drawn break". A juror said the rod was corroded at the end. The witness said it was strongest at that point, and the corrosion had no connection with the accident. The Coroner asked what precautions were taken to secure safety. The witness said the cranes were examined periodically. He had had no complaint about the one in question since it was overhauled about three months ago. In 1887, they spent a considerable sum upon it. A juror said he had had considerable experience of cranes, and he had no doubt that in this case, the metal of the trust rod had become porous through the frost. Police-constable William Stuart said he took

Armitage to the Infirmary, where death supervened on Saturday week. Thomas Armitage said the deceased, who was his brother, complained to him the last time he saw him alive of the state of the runners or cross girders. He alleged that they were rotten, and that he would be killed if something were not done to them. He also complained of the behaviour of the foreman, John Withington, when he wished to state his requirements. John Withington was thereupon called. He stated that the deceased had made no complaint to him since the crane was last repaired. Mr Wiswall said the deceased had had opportunities to complaining to him and others, if he did not like to speak to Withington. The condition of the girders which he alleged were rotten had nothing to do with the accident. The jury found a verdict of "Accidental death".

105 February 27 1891

A BOATMAN FOUND DROWNED AT CASTLEFIELD An inquest was held on Friday by the Deputy City Coroner (Mr Sidney Smelt) concerning the death of **Thomas Gough**, a boatman, 35 years of age, late of Vine Street, Runcorn. The deceased was in the employ of the Manchester Ship Canal Company. On Wednesday night, about ten minutes to eleven, he was at the company's offices in Castlefield. He was perfectly sober at the time, and left after getting some bills signed, apparently with the intention of returning to his boat. The night was excessively foggy, and the deceased's body was afterwards found in the canal about 200 yards from the boat. An open verdict was returned.

106 March 27 1891

A BOATMAN FOUND DROWNED AT STRETFORD On Wednesday, Mr F Price, the district coroner, held an inquest on the body of **John William Kay**, 25 years of age, a boatman lately in the employ of the Rochdale Canal Company. On Monday night, the boat of which the deceased was mate was undergoing repairs at Stretford. The deceased was seen leaving some vaults in an intoxicated condition, and was cautioned to be careful how he made his way to the boat. The next morning he was missed, and his body was afterwards found in the water. An open verdict was returned by the jury.

107 July 24 1891

DROWNING CASES **George Thomasson**, aged eight, son of **Joseph Thomasson**, boatman of Marsland Green, near Leigh, was drowned on Saturday night in a deep part of the canal near Morley's Hall Bridge, whilst bathing with a companion.

108 August 28 1891

MYSTERIOUS DROWNING CASE AT CASTLEFIELD

CHARGE OF MURDER Shortly before midnight on Wednesday, a woman, whose name is at present unknown, was drowned under very mysterious circumstances in the Bridgewater Canal at Castlefield. Two canal boats were at that time lying in what is known as Jackson's Basin, near the Ship Canal Company's wharves. On one of these was a man named James Duggan, who is a finisher, and believed to be resident in Manchester. Duggan had got on the boat for the purpose of sleeping there, and had obtained the captain's permission. He was very drunk at the time. Just before twelve o'clock, a carter, who was going on duty at the Ship Canal Company's wharves, was passing the bridge which crosses the basin in which the boats were, when he saw a woman standing on the stern cabin of the boat where Duggan was, and heard her twice ask, "Are you in?" Wilkinson, the carter, thought it probable that the woman was the boatman's wife, and passed on. After walking a few yards, he suddenly heard a cry from a man, whom he thought was the prisoner, that there was a woman in the cut. Running back to the spot, he found that the woman had disappeared. The prisoner stood against the door of the cabin, and when asked by Wilkinson to hand him a boathook, refused to do so. It is possible, however, that this refusal was to be accounted for by his drunken condition. A man named Bushell came to Wilkinson's assistance, and the body

of the woman was recovered, but too late for it to be possible to restore animation. Wilkinson then held the prisoner until Police-constable Evans came up, and the officer took him into custody on a charge of causing the woman's death. The woman is known to the police as a loose character, and is said to come from the neighbourhood of Whit Lane, Pendleton. She is about 27 years of age, 4ft 10in in height, with gray eyes, brown hair and a very heavy fringe, and is dressed in a blue bodice with white spots, gray stuff dress, gray skirt, red corsets, black stockings and red hat, with elastic side boots much worn. The body lies at the Bridgewater Street mortuary for identification. As appears from the report which follows, Duggan has been remanded for further inquiries, the police believing that material witnesses may have left the district owing to the moving of the canal boats in the early hours of the morning.

At the City Police Court yesterday morning, Duggan was charged with the wilful murder of the woman by pushing her into the canal. The prisoner looks about 30 years of age. The proceedings took place in the Stipendiary's court.

Police-constable John Evans, A53, said he arrested the prisoner at 12 o'clock on Wednesday night and charged him with wilful murder. He found him on a canal boat at Castlefield. The body of the deceased then lay on the bank close to the boat. Witness asked prisoner how the woman came by her death, and the prisoner replied, "She has fallen off the cabin". Witness then said, "How has she fallen from there?" to which prisoner answered, "I do not know anything about the woman. I was lighting the fire in the cabin". Witness asked him what right he had on board the boat, and he said he had permission from the captain. Witness asked him as to the right of the woman to be on the boat, and he repeated his former statement that he knew nothing about her, as he had been down in the cabin lighting the fire. Witness then went down into the cabin, and found that there were no traces of anyone having meddled with the fire grid at all, and he told the prisoner so. Prisoner answered, "I was just going to make it". He was told he would be taken to the police station, but made no reply. On his arrival at the station, he was too drunk to be charged, but at ten minutes to six that morning the formal charge was made and the prisoner replied as before, "I know nothing about her. I was lighting the fire at the time". Witness was first informed of the occurrence in Chester Road by a lad who ran up to him and told him. The lad took him to the canal.

Mr Headlam : Were there any people there?

Witness : I found two men named Wilkinson and Bushell. A boatman came up afterwards. Wilkinson had hold of the prisoner and was on the boat. Wilkinson made a statement to the effect that he had seen the deceased a few minutes previously standing on the top of the cabin. He was going to his work at the time, and heard her ask, "Are you in?" Just after passing on, he heard the prisoner shout, "Come back, matey, there is a woman in the cut". He ran back and tried to get her out, but as he failed to do so, called to another man named George Bushell. Together they recovered the body. The prisoner made no observation upon hearing Wilkinson say this, beyond repeatedly saying he knew nothing about the woman as he was making the fire. He seemed very frightened.

The prisoner said that all he heard was a splash.

Frederick Wilkinson, carter, living in West Liverpool Street, Pendleton, said when he noticed the woman as stated, and heard her ask twice, "Are you in?" there were two boats side by side, the woman being on that nearest the wharf. Hearing a cry, which he thought came from the prisoner, that there was a woman in the water, he ran back and found Duggan standing at the door of the cabin of the boat farthest from the bank. Witness asked him if he had got hold of her, and he said no, he could not reach her. Witness asked where the boat hooks were, but prisoner seemed dazed and very drunk. He told witness to look round for one and get it himself. Witness recovered the body with the assistance of a man named Bushell.

Mr Superintendent Mead then applied for a remand and stated that the inquest would be held today. A remand was granted until today.

109 September 16 1891

MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF A SCHOOLBOY An inquest was held at Widnes on Tuesday night

relative to the death of a boy named **Alfred Abram**, son of a flatman. It was stated in evidence that on the 28th August deceased went home and complained that the schoolmaster had struck him on the head with a ruler. He suffered from severe pains in the head. Dr Hutchinson attended him, but he gradually sank, and died on Sunday. The inquiry was adjourned until Friday for a *post mortem* examination to be made.

110 October 2 1891

THREATENED STRIKE OF WATERMEN Considerable dissatisfaction has been caused amongst the watermen plying on the river Weaver by the recent action of the Salt Union Limited. This syndicate has, since its formation, employed some 150 men to navigate the vessels conveying salt from their works at Northwich and Winsford to Liverpool. A few weeks ago, the Union ordered about 30 of their steamers and barges to be moored, and discharged 70 men. The craftsmen, who are all members of the Flatmen's Union, have held several meetings, and though it is admitted that the salt trade is far from brisk, it has been ascertained that some of the men have now to work as many as 16 hours a day. Communications have been addressed to the Salt Union, asking that in future the boatmen should be employed 10 hours a day, which would necessitate the working of the barges now lying idle, and the reinstatement of the hands. No answer has yet been received, and a general strike is contemplated.

111 December 4 1891

FATAL PLAY An inquest was held on Monday morning by Mr S Smelt, Deputy City Coroner, on the body of **Martha Ann Haigh**, aged six, the daughter of a canal boatman named **Reuben Haigh** of Leinster Street, Hulme. On Friday morning, the girl and her little brother, aged four, were in their home playing with matches. The boy struck one of the matches and put it against the girl's nightgown, thus setting it on fire. Mrs Haigh, hearing the girl's screams, ran downstairs and tore the gown off, but deceased had by that time been severely burnt, and she died afterwards. A verdict of accidental death was returned.

112 December 24 1891

WALKING INTO THE RIVER At Leeds on Tuesday, a boatman named **William Lamb**, 25, and a labourer named Patrick Cowan, 65, lost their way in the fog and walked into the river and were drowned.

113 February 12 1892

CHARGE OF KILLING A BOY On Saturday night, two boatmen, named **Jeremiah Edwards** of Oldbury and **Thomas Williams** of Tividale, were arrested at Oldbury on a charge of causing the death of **John Willie Barratt**, aged nine years, who was found drowned in the Birmingham Canal at Deepfields on January 8. The deceased took his father's breakfast to the Spring Vale Works near Bilston on January 6th, and he was then wearing an overcoat and a hat which bore a particular mark upon it. At the inquest, it transpired that the boy had been robbed by a boatman, and the body was found minus the overcoat. Since then the overcoat and hat worn by the deceased had been traced to the possession of the prisoners, and when arrested Williams admitted having had them in his possession.

114 February 26 1892

BOATMEN CHARGED WITH MURDER At Bilston on Tuesday, two boatmen named **Richard Williams** (*sic*) of Tividale and **Jeremiah Edwards** of Oldbury, were committed for trial, charged with the wilful murder of **John William Barrett**, a little boy whose body was found in the canal near Bilston. The deceased was seen returning home after taking his father's breakfast, and nothing more was heard of him until the canal was dragged, and his topcoat and breakfast can be traced to prisoners, who said they found them.

115 June 17 1892

STRIKE OF BOATMEN The boatmen and firemen employed by the Rochdale Canal Company are on strike, in consequence of a misunderstanding with the company. About two months ago, it is said that the company agreed to give the same wages as the Ship Canal Company, whose printed list of rates shows 1s 2d per ton for cargo from Liverpool to Sowerby Bridge. They now refuse, we understand, to pay more than 1s per ton. The men who are members of the Upper Mersey Boatmen's Association are supported by the National Federation of Shipping and Carrying Industries.

116 July 1 1892

ROCHDALE CANAL COMPANY An arrangement has been made between the Rochdale Canal Company and their boatmen, under which normal working with all classes of boats will be resumed immediately.

117 August 5 1892

SUICIDE OF AN IRLAMS-O'-TH'-HEIGHT OVERLOOKER On Friday Mr F Price, District Coroner, conducted an inquiry at the Pack Horse Hotel, Irlams-o'-th'-Height, concerning the death of William Ingham, aged 60, who lived at 22 Manchester Road, Irlams-o'-th'-Height. Deceased was an overlooker at Cottrill's mill, Pendleton, which has been running short time for the last twelve months. He left home on Thursday at five o'clock to go to his work, and at seven o'clock his dead body was found floating upright in the Manchester, Bury and Bolton Canal, near Park House Farm Bridge, by a labourer named Smith. A boatman named **Harris** assisted to recover the body. The feet were tied together by a piece of twine round the ankles, and there were bruises on each side of the head, probably caused by passing boats. The body was identified and conveyed home. The widow told the jury that a brother and daughter of the deceased were inmates of the Prestwich Lunatic Asylum, and deceased visited his daughter on Saturday, when, he said, she sang for him. He did not seem depressed, and she had not noticed anything unusual in his manner. A juryman, however, said deceased was subject to wandering in his mind, and the jury returned a verdict of suicide while temporarily insane.

118 August 19 1892

AN ENRAGED BOATMAN SHOOTS AT SEVERAL MEN Some young men were chaffing a boatman on Wednesday night at Polesworth, near Tamworth, as his boat passed underneath a bridge, when **Johnson** picked up a gun and fired among them, wounding one of them named Joseph Harding in the arm. Johnson is in custody.

119 September 23 1892

SEQUEL TO A PATRICROFT ELOPEMENT Before Mr Leresche, Mr H Carver and Mr W W Cooke, Alfred Hosbourne, a private in the 3rd Hussars, stationed at the Curragh, and **Mary Wardle** of Monton, Patricroft, were charged with being concerned in the theft of a quantity of wearing apparel, &c, of the value of £15, the property of a man named **Wardle**, who is the husband of the female prisoner. Mr W F Anderson prosecuted, and said that the case was of rather a singular character. It seemed that the prosecutor was a boatman working under the Bridgewater Trustees, and the male prisoner for several weeks before the 9th of September had been on sick furlough from his regiment, and had lodged next door but one to the Wardles. Prosecutor, on arriving in Manchester on the 9th inst after a journey to Liverpool, received information which caused him at once to go home, and he then found his wife absent. The Hussar was also missing from the neighbourhood. Wardle's house had been stripped of £15 worth of goods. These were afterwards found on the Leeds platform of the London and North Western Railway in Manchester, and a left luggage ticket referring to the articles was in the name of the male prisoner. Hosbourne was arrested in Manchester, but the woman was not taken into custody till several days after, and there was no doubt that in the meantime she had been to Leeds waiting for Hosbourne to come forward

with the goods belonging to the deserted husband. Both prisoners pleaded guilty to the theft, and in reply to Mr Leresche admitted that they had "arranged an elopement to Leeds". Hosbourne further said that he was 29 years of age, and the woman 39. He had known Mrs Wardle for years, and it was drink which had led to the arrangement for elopement. Mr Alderson said that this was not the first time that Mrs Wardle had left her husband. No doubt the woman was the worst of the two, and divorce proceedings would be instituted. Mr Leresche committed the male prisoner for one day and the female for two months with hard labour.

120 November 25 1892

FATAL ACCIDENT TO A CANAL BOATMAN On Saturday night at 7.30, **Edward Chrimes**, aged 18 years, of Wharf Tavern, Stoke-on-Trent, boatman, met with a fearful death. He fell into the canal at Barnton, near Northwich, whilst driving a boat horse. The animal fell upon him, kicked out, and struck him on the head, death being instantaneous.

121 December 30 1892

ICE ACCIDENTS A sad fatality in the Bolton district was reported on Tuesday. A boatman named **Jesse Bowles**, 21, in the employment of the Darcy Lever Coal Company, was piloting a coal barge into the Bury Canal when, owing to the slipperiness of the deck through the frost, he fell out of the boat and on to the frozen surface of the canal. The ice gave way, and Bowles was submerged. It was some hours before his body was recovered.

122 January 6 1893

A boatman named **Henry Pemberton** was remanded at Wolverhampton on Saturday, charged with attempting to murder his wife by cutting her throat.

123 April 14 1893

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

124 April 21 1893

DROWNED IN THE SHIP CANAL Mr F Price, the County Coroner, held an inquest on Wednesday at Barton concerning the death of **George Rear** aged 55, a boatman in the service of the Manchester Ship Canal Company, who lived at 12 Mees Square, Barton. On Monday evening last, the deceased was seen on his barge at work, but some little time later he was not to be found. On a search being made, his hat was observed floating in the canal alongside the barge. Further search resulted in the finding of the body of the deceased in the canal on the Barton side. It is not known how the man got into the water. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

125 June 23 1893

MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF A HULME BOATMAN Mr F Price, Coroner, held an inquest at the Brotherton Liberal Club, Salford, on Tuesday, touching the death of **Charles Heath**, 70 years of age, a boatman in the employ of the Ship Canal Company, lately living at 11 Clarence Place, Hulme. The duty of the deceased man was to haul river flats from Hulme locks to the warehouses near Bailey Street Bridge in Salford. He left home at half past 11 on Friday night to go to work on the night shift. Shortly before three o'clock on Saturday morning, he was found lying unconscious on the river bank near Regent Road Bridge. He was removed to the Salford Royal Infirmary, where it was found that his skull was fractured. He died a few hours after admission. It is conjectured that after hauling up a flat to Bailey Street he mounted his horse, and that on going to sleep he fell from

the animal's back on to the towpath. There was, however, no actual evidence in support of this theory, and the jury found an open verdict.

126 June 23 1893

WORKING A HORSE TO DEATH At Altrincham on Monday, **Thomas Gough**, boatman, Runcorn, was charged with cruelty to a horse. The animal was frightfully lame, and had two large wounds on the breast and back. It was so weak it could not walk to the knackers' yard, and had to be slaughtered on the spot. The bench said the horse had simply been worked to death. Defendant would be sent to prison for one month without the option of a fine.

127 July 28 1893

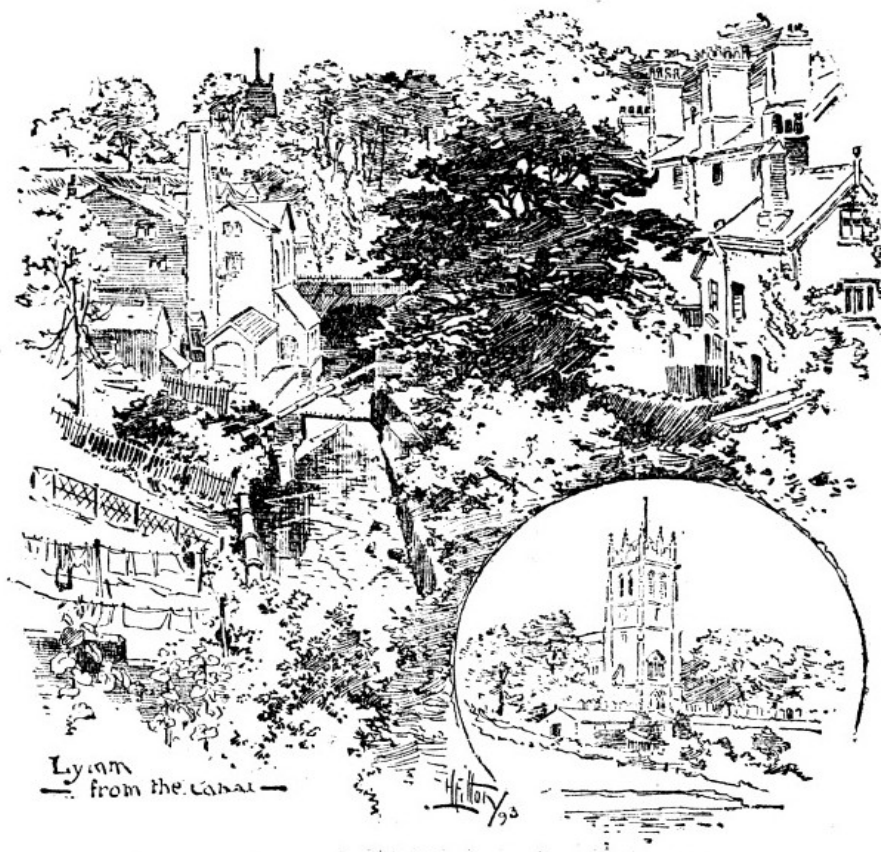
A WOMAN'S SUICIDE **Margaret Vickers**, wife of a canal boatman on the Lancaster Canal, poisoned herself on Monday with carbolic acid at Preston. Her husband went to a public house, and refused to go home with his wife when asked. She said she would return, and did so 20 minutes later. She then told him that she had drunk some carbolic acid. She died soon afterwards. The deceased was 21, and had been married five years.

128 August 11 1893

REWARDS FOR BRAVERY On Saturday, the Mayor of Nelson presented **John Duckworth**, boatman of Nelson, with the certificate of the Royal Humane Society and a gratuity of £1 from the society, recognising Duckworth's gallantry in recently rescuing from drowning two boys who had fallen in the canal at Nelson. A similar presentation was made to **Robert Burrel**, boatman of Accrington, for rescuing another lad who fell into the canal at Nelson.

129 September 8 1893

SKETCHES BY OUR OWN ARTIST





130 February 23 1894

SHIP CANAL NEWS

COMMEMORATION OF THE OPENING Besides the hoped for Royal visit at the opening of the Manchester Ship Canal, a movement is now on foot to have a thoroughly practical and useful celebration of the event in the shape of a British and Colonial Industrial Exhibition, to be held in St James's Hall in this city, in September and October next. The success of the Royal Jubilee Exhibition held at Old Trafford in 1887 has to a number of gentlemen suggested that a commemoration of the great work which Manchester has carried out in the construction of the Ship Canal, and thus opening it as a seaport to our colonies and the world at large, could not be more fitly celebrated, the exhibition to be especially designed to show the various products of our dependencies and colonies – India, China, Australia, Jamaica, Ceylon, Trinidad, Demerara and our various possessions in Africa. For the exhibition itself, a more central and suitable building than St James's Hall could not have been found, its capacity for such a purpose being unequalled in the provinces. One third of the space in the hall is to be allotted to Colonial products, which is sure to prove one of the most attractive features of the exhibition. Altogether, there are to be more than 20 different sections, including engineering and machinery, colonial products, marine models, electricity, decorative works, dyes, paints and colours, sanitation and ventilation, articles for construction of buildings, furniture, carriages, fuel, gas, smoke abatement, sports and pastimes, food and drinks, arts and sciences, musical instruments, hardware, jewellery, ecclesiastical and educational requirements, photography, and a ladies' section for fancy and ornamental work. To carry out this extensive scheme, it is intended to erect as an addition to the hall a special dynamo shed and machinery hall. It has also been decided that diplomas of gold, silver and bronze shall be awarded, the judging to take place two days before the opening, so that the exhibitors shall obtain immediate benefit from awards made.

TRAFFIC There was an auction at the fruit saleroom, Pomona Docks, on Tuesday, principally of

oranges, brought by the steamship *Engineer* from Valencia. Although not a very large number of buyers attended, everything offered was disposed of on fairly satisfactory terms. The *Engineer* had a champion record in her arrival at and despatch from Manchester. She reached the dock at 12.50 on Friday mid day and, beginning her discharge at two o'clock, she completed it by six o'clock on the following morning, or in 14 1/2 working hours, although her cargo included 6,600 boxes of oranges. She left Pomona at noon on Saturday, reached Partington about half past three, and took in 210 tons of coal for her bunkers, She finished coaling about seven o'clock in the evening, and passed through Eastham on her way to Valencia on Sunday morning. The *Engineer* has a time charter to a firm of Manchester fruit brokers, who are running her regularly between here and Valencia.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT RUNCORN The provision of a graving dock at Runcorn is receiving the earnest consideration of the directors of the Canal Company, and it is confidently expected that the conducting of operations will not be delayed a moment longer than possible. The necessity of making conveniences for the repairing of vessels becomes daily more important, and the decision of those in authority is keenly awaited. There used to be four shipbuilding yards at the Old Quay, in close proximity to the Mersey, and if the graving dock was placed in this locality, it would be a splendid position on the bank of the canal. The stonework of the old docks is also undisturbed, so that to a great extent matters are ready to the hands of the company. The recommencement of constructing vessels would be a boon to the town. It is understood that instructions have been received in Runcorn to build three new barges, about 100 feet long, 20 feet beam, and close upon 10 feet deep for the company. These are larger than the fleet of barges constructed a year or two ago.

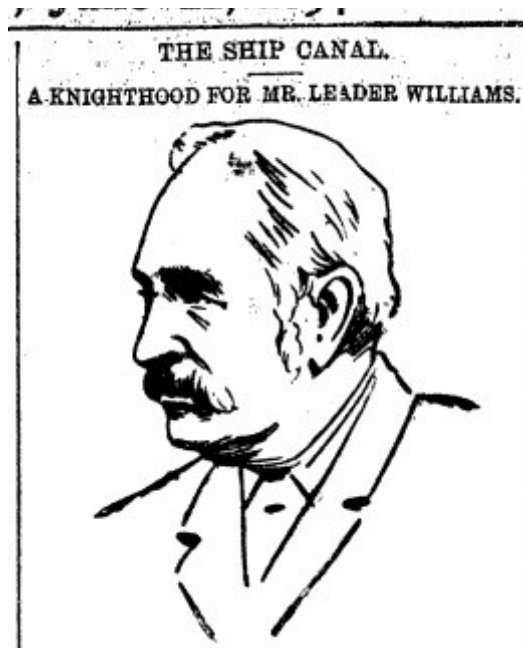
THE THREATENED STRIKE OF FLATMEN – SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE A conference was held on Wednesday afternoon at the Bridgewater Canal Office, Chester Road, to deal with the threatened strike of the flatmen in the employ of the Ship Canal Company. Mr **Collier**, the manager of the Bridgewater Canal's undertaking, and the traffic managers from Manchester, Liverpool, Runcorn and Warrington, represented the company. Mr Billam, Mr Gatley and four other members of the Watermen's Association attended on behalf of the men. At the end of a friendly discussion of all the various points involved, an amicable settlement was arrived at to the satisfaction of both sides. A strike has thus been prevented.

131 April 20 1894

SAD DROWNING FATALITY The coroner of Preston and district received information on Tuesday of a sad drowning fatality at Whittle-le-Woods. A lad named **Thomas Green**, aged 12, son of a canal boatman, was on the boat with his father, who on approaching a lock told him to go and prepare it. The lad went to open the lock, but in doing so stumbled into the water and was drawn under and drowned. The father with the boat hook recovered the body, but life was extinct.

132 June 22 1894

We understand that Lord Rosebery has notified to Mr E Leader-Williams, engineer of the Manchester Ship Canal, that her Majesty has been graciously pleased to confer on him the honour of knighthood. **Mr Edward Leader-Williams**, chief engineer of the Manchester Ship Canal, is the eldest son of the late engineer of the river Severn Navigation, and it was on these works that he commenced his professional career, which has been mainly devoted to river and canal improvement works. The work of the Severn Navigation, on which he was engaged between 1844 and 1850, included the construction of locks and weirs, embankments, dredging &c, which resulted in a greatly improved navigation in the reach of 42 miles between Stourport and Gloucester which, in dry weather, before the completion of the works, was not navigable for loaded barges. On the completion of the Severn works, Mr Leader-Williams was appointed engineer of the Great Northern Railway, which was then being made through Lincolnshire, and subsequently was engaged on the work of improving Shoreham harbour by extending it in the direction of Hove. This completed, he



was for several years on the works of the Admiralty Pier, Dover. In 1856, Mr Leader-Williams received the appointment to the river Weaver Trust. From his designs, and under his superintendence, large and important works were carried out. The Northwich lock and weir were removed, the Delamere Dock at Weston Point constructed, and parliamentary powers were obtained for widening the western end of the navigation, and constructing new docks, 200 ft long by 40 ft wide, with 15 ft of water over the sills, and 20 ft of water in the canal. These improvements enabled vessels carrying cargoes of from 200 to 300 tons to use the navigation, which formerly could only accommodate sailing flats and barges of a capacity at the most of 80 tons. The outside quay walls of the Weston Docks now form the inner embankment of the Manchester Ship Canal at that part of its course. Powers were also obtained for constructing the Anderton lift near Northwich, by which the Trent and Mersey Canal was joined to the Weaver Navigation by a vertical lift 52 ft high, thus saving the water and time which would have been lost if locks had been adopted. The remarkable success of this lift led Mr Williams to design the swing aqueduct at Barton, admitted to be the chief engineering wonder of the Ship Canal. Mr Leader-Williams was engineer to the Bridgewater Navigation Company, and was also a member of the conservancy committee. In 1882, after a meeting at the residence of the late Mr Daniel Adamson on the subject of a ship canal to Manchester, Mr Leader-Williams and Mr H H Fulton CE prepared plans of the project. The design of Mr Fulton was to have a tidal canal, which would have necessitated docks of enormous depth at Manchester, and that of Mr Leader-Williams the use of locks after using the tidal estuary of the Mersey for some distance. Mr James Abernethy, consulting engineer, was called in, and pronounced in favour of the scheme of Mr Leader-Williams, which was adopted and carried out.

133 June 22 1894

POLLUTION OF THE BRIDGEWATER CANAL Mr Humphreys from the office of Messrs Grundy, Kershaw and Company, the Ship Canal Company's solicitors, prosecuted at the Manchester County Police Court on Tuesday, a boatman named **T Goodwin** for throwing cinders into the Bridgewater Canal between Cornbrook and Stretford on the 31st of May. It was stated that boatmen were in the habit of pitching cinders, nightsoil, &c, chiefly at night, into the canal. The dredging operations going on day by day turned out 400 or 500 tons of rubbish a week, and the offence now charged was as a rule difficult to detect. Mr Yates fined the accused 10s and costs, or 14 days imprisonment.

134 October 26 1894

SALFORD QUARTER SESSIONS The Quarter Sessions of the Salford Hundred were opened on

Monday at the Assize Courts, Strangeways, before Mr J E W Addison QC MP (chairman) and other magistrates. The following amongst other sentences have been passed :-

Twelve months imprisonment with hard labour : **Albert Hemingway**, 28, boatman, for stealing, with violence, from Matthew Shawcross, a sovereign purse and key on a pathway between Ellenbrook and Worsley on the 15th inst.

135 October 26 1894

George Shaw, a boatman, was remanded at Hanley on Monday, charged with attempting to murder his wife. It was alleged that he kicked the woman, attempted to hang her, and subsequently threw her into the canal, whence she was rescued in an exhausted state. She was too ill to attend the police court. Bail was refused.

136 December 7 1894

A WOMAN FOUND DROWNED An inquest was held by Mr S Smelt, Deputy City Coroner, on Monday afternoon, on the body of **Elizabeth Ivins**, aged 25, the wife of a boatman, living in Henry Street, Bedford Leigh. Ivin's boat was in Castlefield wharf, in this city, on Saturday night, and the woman, her husband and brother were in the cabin. She went out to fetch some coal. As she did not return within a reasonable time, he went to look for her. After a search, he recovered her dead body from the water. It is supposed that she missed her footing and fell into the water. An open verdict was returned.

137 August 2 1895

DEATH OF A CHILD FROM STARVATION A shocking case of death from starvation was investigated by Mr Yates, coroner at Northwich, on Friday afternoon. The deceased was **Ellen Hatton**, aged three months and 13 days, the daughter of a boatman named **William Hatton** who, with his wife, was in court, having been arrested by the police under a warrant issued by the RSPCC. Inspector Maguire of the Royal Society stated that on the 22nd last he found the child, with its mother, in a slum of the town. It was in a terribly emaciated and dirty condition, and was covered with sores and vermin bites. It was sucking an empty bottle. He took charge of the child, and took it to his own home, where it was medically treated, but death took place on Thursday. Dr A H Marsh, who made a *post mortem* examination, said the body weighed 5 lbs, the average weight of a child of that age being 12 lbs. The body had the appearance of a skeleton, with the skin drawn tightly over it. The cause of death was want of food. The mother made a statement, in which she declared that she had given the child a quart of milk a day. Dr Marsh said a quart of milk a day would have kept the child in good health. The father said he was away on his flat, and knew nothing of the child's condition. The jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against both parents, and they were committed for trial at the next assizes.

138 December 27 1895

THE DENSE FOG – SEVERAL LIVES LOST The first severe touch of winter was experienced in Manchester and a wide district on Friday. A fog, which increased in density, made its unwelcome appearance early in the morning, and for the remainder of the day the city was almost in darkness. Vehicular traffic was conducted with the utmost difficulty. In the evening, the fog became so dense as to seriously interfere with the tram service, and considerable delay was also experienced on the railways, many of the trains being much behind time in reaching Manchester. The fog was accompanied by a sharp frost.

About six o'clock on Friday morning, a man named Hankey, while endeavouring to cross the Latchfield locks on his way to his work, stepped into the canal. The splash made by the falling of his body was heard, but it was impossible to attempt to save him, as the water could not be seen from the top of the locks.

A sad drowning case happened at Northwich early on Friday morning. Charles Danteth, a married man aged 43, a tin smith employed in the town, was proceeding along the bank of the river Weaver

to his work, and accidentally walked into Hunt's lock and was drowned before assistance could be rendered.

Thomas Heyes, labourer, residing at Marston near Northwich, was proceeding to his work at the Winnington Chemical Works early on Friday morning, when he walked into the Trent and Mersey Canal and was drowned, his body being recovered sometime afterwards. Two other men have had narrow escapes from drowning in the river Weaver.

Four warehousemen were walking along the Bridgewater Canal at Preston Brook on Friday, when they fell into the water. One named Joseph Johnson was drowned. The others had miraculous escapes. At Runcorn, Edward Hodgson, weigher at the docks, fell into the Dry Graving Dock while on his way to work. He was seriously injured.

Margaret Pickering, 20, fell into the canal at Runcorn on Friday night and was drowned, and on Saturday morning a workman named Chamberlain met a similar fate.

A sad drowning case, owing to the dense fog, occurred in St Helens late on Friday night, the victim being George Hankey, collier, of Double Locks. He was proceeding home along the road near the canal side when he walked to the water's side and fell in. A railway signalman named Marsh attempted to rescue him, but failed. A short time previously, Marsh had pulled a young woman out of the water who had slipped in the same spot.

Richard Dutton, a boatman residing at Runcorn, was found drowned on Saturday night in the Liverpool and Leeds Canal at Ince, near Wigan. It is surmised that he fell into the canal when going to attend to a lock in the heavy fog which prevailed.

Mr S Smelt, Deputy City Coroner, held an inquest on Monday at the Court, Minshull Street, on the body of **Albert Edward Kershaw**, 18 years of age, a boatman, who had lived in Ducie Place, Liverpool Street, Salford. Kershaw and another man named **John Burns** were in charge of a boat bound for Failsworth, along the Rochdale Canal, on Friday night. It was found necessary, owing to the fog, to "tie" up the boat at a lock near Boundary Street, Newton. While Burns was attending to one of the lock gates, he heard a splash and a shout. Running to where the sounds proceeded from, he saw Kershaw struggling in the water. He tried to reach him, but lost sight of him in the fog. Twenty minutes afterwards, the body was recovered. A verdict of "Drowned by falling into a lock in the fog" was returned.

139 August 12 1898

SAD TRAGEDY AT BIRKENHEAD

LOVERS COMMIT SUICIDE What is supposed to be a double suicide was notified to the Dukinfield police on Wednesday. Shortly before four o'clock, a boatman named **Endley**, of Astley Street, Dukinfield, was taking a boat down the canal, when about forty yards from Well Bridge he saw a woman's shawl on the towing path. He stopped the boat and dragged through the water with the boat hook, when he found the bodies of a man and woman. He got out and informed the police, and the two bodies were taken out of the canal. In response to inquiries by the police, Thomas Garner of Oldham yesterday arrived at Dukinfield, and stated that the body of the woman was that of his sister, Lilian Garner, aged 23, of 2 Gower Street, Oldham, the other being that of James Clough, aged 23, of Primrose Bank, Oldham. Both were mill operatives. They left home on Tuesday. A pocket book was found on the body of Clough, in which had been written a long history of both, and their reasons for committing suicide together. They were engaged to be married, but he was out of work. The occurrence has caused a great sensation in Dukinfield, and large crowds have congregated in the neighbourhood of the canal.

Inquiries made from the friends of the parties in Oldham show that Miss Garner has been employed as a winder at the Decker Mill, and has lived with her widowed and bedridden mother at 2 Gower Street, off Egerton Street. The young fellow, who is also 23 years of age, was a carrier out of employment, and has lodged with a relative of Miss Garner at Primrose Bank. He formerly resided in the neighbourhood of Gower Street, in which district both parties are very well known. The young fellow is said to have been of a very jealous disposition, but has had great influence on Miss Garner, who is described by the neighbours to have been somewhat weak minded in comparison

with the strong will of her lover. The course of love in their case does not appear to have run smoothly, quarrels being frequent, principally due to his jealousy. In fact, his jealousy appears to have bordered on insanity, as one of the neighbours stated that if Miss Garner spoke kindly to a dog he was jealous about it. The last occasion on which they were seen together was on Monday night. At eleven o'clock, they were seen and heard talking on the front door step of Miss Garner's home. High words were passing between them, and judging from the tone of the voices, the neighbours concluded that they were having a quarrel. On Tuesday morning, Miss Garner went to her work as usual, but at breakfast time went away, after first asking a companion to "reckon" for her, and telling her that "she would know more about it afterwards". She left the mill, and was not seen again as far as is at present ascertained. The next information the relatives had of her whereabouts was the information brought from Dukinfield yesterday morning that her dead body, together with that of her lover, had been taken from the canal.

140 November 4 1898

THE BUGSWORTH TRAGEDY

PRISONER COMMITTED FOR TRIAL Yesterday, before a full bench of magistrates in Chapel-en-le-Frith Town Hall, **John Cotton**, boatman, was charged with the murder of his wife Hannah at Bugsworth on October 26th. Mr Brown, solicitor, prosecuted for the Public Prosecutor. Additional evidence was given. The accused, who questioned the witnesses and took much interest in the proceedings, was formally committed to Derby Assizes for trial on the capital charge of wilful murder.

141 December 16 1898

Correspondence

THE BOATMEN'S BETHEL

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MANCHESTER WEEKLY TIMES"

Sir – Please allow me to make a Christmas appeal on behalf of the Boatmen's Bethel, Castlefield. The Boatmen's Bethel is a branch of the Manchester and Salford Sailors' and Boatmen's Mission, and a good work, social and religious, is still being done in the above district. Services and meetings are held on Sundays, and during the week through the year the boat people are visited by the missionary (Mr S B Bell), and in addition to which the Sunday School is well attended by children and adults. As most of the people are poor and in needy circumstances, the missionary and voluntary workers at the Bethel are desirous of providing a Christmas treat for those who live in and about the vicinity of the Bethel, so as to somewhat brighten their Christmas cheer, but this can only be done by again appealing to the kind sympathy of our friends. We, therefore, beg respectfully to appeal for help, so that we may be able to provide a substantial breakfast or other meal for those poor people. Donations may be paid to Mr Joseph Hallworth (treasurer), 10 and 12 Major Street, Mr Richard Brutton (hon secretary), 7 St James's Square, or to myself. Yours etc

GEO PARTINGTON

80 Clifton Street, Old Trafford. 14 December 1898

142 December 23 1898

THE BUGSWORTH TRAGEDY – EXECUTION AT DERBY **John Cotton**, aged 66, boatman, who was sentenced to death at the recent Derbyshire Assizes for murdering his wife at Bugsworth, near Whaley Bridge, on October 26th, was executed in Derby Gaol on Wednesday morning. The deceased woman was only 36 years of age, and the evidence tendered at the trial showed that jealousy was the cause of the crime. Cotton beat his wife about the head with a poker, fracturing the base of her skull. The defence was that the prisoner had received provocation.

The prisoner, since his conviction, has exhibited the utmost contrition, and had paid deep attention to the ministrations of the prison chaplain, to whom he more than once admitted the justice of his sentence. He received Holy Communion on Tuesday, and throughout the day the chaplain was in frequent attendance in the condemned cell. Cotton retired early to rest on Tuesday night, but his sleep was constantly disturbed, and early in the morning he again welcomed the presence of the

chaplain. He partook sparingly of breakfast, and just before eight o'clock the sheriff's representatives presented themselves to summon him to his doom. The usual procession was quickly formed, and half way to the scaffold the party was met by Billington, the executioner, who was assisted in the preliminary process of pinioning the prisoner's arms by his son. Cotton, who remained perfectly silent, walked firmly to the scaffold, where the younger Billington strapped the culprit's legs, whilst the executioner placed the noose round the prisoner's neck. All this was accomplished in the most expeditious manner, and while the chaplain was repeating the words, "Remember not the offences of thy servants", the bolt was drawn, and the body disappeared from view. Subsequent examination showed that death had been instantaneous. Although it was not completely light, a large crowd gathered outside the prison to watch the hoisting of the black flag, but no sympathy was exhibited for the prisoner, whose boast had been that he had killed two previous wives.

143 January 20 1899

THE GREAT GALE A storm which raged with such terrific force on Thursday last week was the most violent that has visited Manchester and district in recent years.

LEIGH Charles Glover, boatman, West Lane, Leigh, arrived home on Friday night after a thrilling experience during Thursday night's hurricane. He and his mate were taking a flat laden with slack coal across the Mersey from Garston to New Ferry, when the gale smashed their yardarm, leaving the boat helpless. For seven hours, immense waves broke over them, and eventually the boat collided in the darkness with a Norwegian barque at anchor. As the boat was sinking, two of the barque's crew swung themselves from the jibboom to the boat's deck, tied ropes around the two benumbed men, and hauled them into the barque.

DAMAGE AT WALKDEN During the height of the gale at Walkden, a huge gable end at the Duke of Bridgewater Trustees' extensive new depot, which is in course of erection, was blown out. Fortunately no one was injured.

A NANTWICH CHURCH SECURED BY ROPES During Thursday afternoon at Nantwich, it was found necessary to secure with ropes one of the pinnacles on the church tower, which was rocked to and fro by the wind.

144 June 9 1899

EXCITING MIDNIGHT SCENE At the Manchester City Police Court on Tuesday, William Henry Turvin (38), striker, living at 80 Irlam Street, Newton Heath, was placed in the dock before Messrs Hugh Kerr and W Sharratt, on a charge of having attempted to murder his wife and having tried to commit suicide. His head was enveloped in bandages.

Police-constable James Westerby (C33) stated that about half past two on Monday morning, as he was on duty in Holland Street, Oldham Road, he heard screams in the direction of the Rochdale Canal. Hurrying to the spot, he saw a man and woman struggling together in the water. By lying on the bank, witness was able to reach the man, and taking hold of the shoulders of his coat, pulled him to the side. The man, however, clutched witness's coat sleeve, and tried to drag him into the canal, and in self defence witness was obliged to strike him on the head with his truncheon. The blow stunned him, and witness was able to hold him until, in about three minutes, two boatmen named **Luke Speed**, of 44 Silver Street, Hulme, and **Joseph Ashley**, of 13 Tomlinson's Place, Salford, came up. With the assistance of these men, both the man and woman were recovered from the water. They were unconscious, but in a short time the woman came round, and was able to walk to the hospital. Turvin was conveyed in an ambulance, still in an unconscious condition, to the Ancoats Hospital, where both were detained until Tuesday. The man was then taken to the Canal Street police station, and charged with having wilfully attempted to murder his wife by throwing her into the Rochdale Canal near Royle Bridge. In reply he said, "I say nothing ; only I shoved her". He was then charged with having attempted to commit suicide by drowning in the canal, and said, "Yes, I did".

On this evidence, prisoner was remanded until next Monday in order that the boatmen and doctor

may be called.

145 November 10 1899

GLEANINGS FROM THE POLICE COURTS At Chester Assizes on Friday, Mr Justice Bucknill passed sentence upon three men for bigamy. **John Hickson**, flatman, was sentenced to two months as an offender of the second class,

146 January 26 1900

EXTRAORDINARY CANAL BOAT FATALITY On Monday, the Preston Coroner was informed of the death, under extraordinary circumstances, of **Peter Bibby**, aged 38, a canal boatman of Whittle-le-Woods, Chorley. On Sunday, Bibby, accompanied by his wife, was taking two canal boats from Whittle Springs to Wigan on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The boats were drawn by a horse, a rope joining the two boats. When near Chorley Workhouse Bibby, who was walking along the tow path, struck the horse with a twig, causing it to start. The rope broke, and the portion attached to the horse twined round Bibby's leg, and the animal galloped off, dragging the unfortunate man along the tow path. After going some distance, his feet caught against a bridge and he was flung into the water, but the horse still galloped on, dragging him through the water until stopped by a boatman who was coming in the opposite direction. The rope was firmly twined around his leg when he was taken from the water, and he was quite dead. His wife was a horrified spectator of the occurrence.

147 February 23 1900

THE LABOUR WORLD

NOTES AND COMMENTS BY JOSEPH BURGESS

THE UPPER MERSEY WATERMEN AND PORTERS' ASSOCIATION

From my earliest years, I have taken an interest in canals and flatmen. While still in petticoats I was fished out of the Rochdale Canal, half drowned, the result of an innocent attempt to push a boat away from a wharf. I sent it into mid stream, but got so far out of the perpendicular, there was no getting back, and but for a providential rescue by a stonemason at work near, the writer of these notes would have been drowned over forty years ago. After this, until I reached the mature age of thirteen, it was my dearest ambition either to go to sea, to become a pirate or an admiral, it didn't matter much which, or to steer a canal boat, and I could many a tale of adventure relate of my voyage on the Hollinwood and Manchester Canal and my desperate attempts to get a berth at Liverpool as cabin boy. What fools we fledgling mortals are, to be sure!

Was this the influence of heredity? My paternal great grandfather and his brothers came into Lancashire to help to dig the Bridgewater Canal. My paternal grandfather and his brothers were what in those days were termed "navigators" - we call them navvies now - and after the canals were built, they took on annual turns as boatmen. Whatever the cause, it is with a fellow feeling that I turn over the annual reports of the Upper Mersey Watermen and Porters' Association, and with feelings of no little pride and satisfaction I note the flourishing condition of that society.

It has always seemed to me that the most difficult classes of men to organise are the nomadic - those whose occupation does not tie them to one district. Therefore I have never joined in the sneers some Pharisaical labour leaders have uttered against the men who have failed to make strong unions of seamen, watermen, dockmen and waterside labourers generally. Mr Ben Tillett had some remarks on this subject in a contemporary the other week which seemed to me to be eminently just. It would serve to smooth down the asperities of Labour controversy if some labour journals would cultivate the habit of putting themselves in the other fellow's place. There is found to be a heavy percentage of lapses in all unions the members of which never have regular work and pursue nomadic occupations. But this only makes it all the more welcome when a really successful union of this class of labour is established.

The Upper Mersey Watermen and Porters' Association is such an organisation. At the end of 1899 the membership was 1001. At that date the balance to the credit of the society was £1294 12s 10d.

This shows a very fair value per member, as things go. Actual cash in the Runcorn Savings Bank amounted to £1216 3s 3d, office fixtures were valued at £76 4s 11d, and the treasurer had £2 4s 8d in hand.

I look in vain in the items of expenditure for any dispute pay. The society is in the happy position of being recognised by the Manchester Ship Canal Company, the bulk of its members being servants of that concern. It is also recognised by all the other firms using the Bridgewater Department of the canal, and the result is that disputes, wherever they arise, are settled by conference and mutual concession. It was not always so. In 1825 the association spent its last shilling on a dispute. This was worth doing, as it taught the employers to respect the union. That the members are of opinion that the union has come to stay is evident from the fact that they have authorised the purchase of a building for offices at a cost of £550.

The Upper Mersey Watermen and Porters' Association has branches in Liverpool, Runcorn and Manchester. The president, **Mr Joseph Billam**, has an office at 41 Port Street, Piccadilly, Manchester. The central office is at Runcorn, in Irwell Lane, and it is there that the general secretary, **Mr Ellis Gatley**, is to be found.

There is but one feature in connection with this society which might be copied to advantage by more pretentious organisations. It is affiliated with the Trades Councils of Liverpool, Manchester and Runcorn ; it sends delegates to the National Federation of Watermen, Lightermen and Bargemen, and it is a member of the National Federation of Trades. This is a testimony alike to the clear headedness of the officials and the broad mindedness of the members. I want to see all classes of workmen realise that they cannot stand alone, that they must rise and fall together.

I gather from a remark made by the president in a letter accompanying the balance sheet that the National Union of Dockers has no longer a branch in Manchester. The reasons for the failure of this effort are not stated. They may be inferred from what I have said already as to the difficulty of organising this class of labour. But the dockers in Manchester are not to be left entirely to go their own way. The Upper Mersey Watermen and Porters' Association contemplate taking up the work abandoned by the National Dockers. They have my best wishes for their success.

But it must not be assumed that it is all sweet milk with the society. An extract from the report indicates that some of the members are becoming indifferent to their best interests. The report says, "Substantial advances have been secured on timber cargoes from Manchester and Salford Docks of 1d per ton. There is, however, some danger of the earlier concessions being lost by the apathy or selfishness of our members. Every flatman entitled to rest of six hours, and working during such rest period, or acting as porter ashore, except where special arrangements exist to the contrary is an enemy of our union, and should be treated accordingly, and his conduct reported to the executive". This is a stern warning, and ought not to go unheeded. It would be an interesting, if a sad, record were all the boons won by organised effort, and subsequently lost by treacherous conduct, tabulated. I hope the watermen will take heed.

The income of the society is debited to three funds – funeral, benevolent and management. Funeral benefit explains itself. It is sufficient to note that the allowance is £6. The benevolent fund is instituted to pay the contributions of members who are sick or out of work, providing such cases are regularly reported to the branch or general secretary. In cases of extreme distress, money grants may be made from this fund when approved by the executive or sub council. I notice that grants to the amount of £23 11s were made to such members in 1899. The management fund has to meet all the expenses incident to the conduct of the society. On December 31st 1899, there was a balance to credit of the funeral fund of £725 3s 3d ; to management fund £527 18s 1d ; to benevolent fund £41 11s 6d – a total of £1294 12s 10d.

The occupation of a waterman is decidedly dangerous. The Executive in this connection pay a tribute to the boon the Workmen's Compensation Acts 1896 have proved. They say, "The Workmen's Compensation Acts 1896 enable compensation for injuries to be obtained for almost all sections where the Act applies, and where the worker is not wilfully negligent. It behoves all our members, therefore, who may be injured by defective plant, gearing or tackle to apply at once to the General Secretary or President, who will willingly give advice, and if inquiries justify, take all

necessary steps to recover. It must be thoroughly understood that when the claim is sustained, any legal expenses incurred by the association must be repaid". That the Act is not a dead letter is proved by the statement that £1250 has been obtained on behalf of members injured.

A significant passage in the report of the Executive reads, "Important changes are contemplated which will regain all the advantages of earlier years as to rates, work and overtime. Some of these questions will be submitted by ballot to the members". There is just a possibility that the peace which has lasted since 1895 may be broken during 1900. Watermen and porters who are not members of the association should take note. If advantages are gained they will want to share them. Don't they think that as men they ought to take their part in preparing for the emergency? Besides, once there is a rupture, something may be lost now enjoyed. With closed ranks there is little danger of that happening, but it might happen, and a wink is as good as a nod to a blind horse. Therefore I commend to these the motto of the association for 1900 ;"Close up our ranks, convert or clear out every non-unionist or defaulter ; thus perfecting our union to achieve greater conquests for Labour".

148 April 27 1900

THE SHOOTING OUTRAGE AT BURTON

ACCUSED COMMITTED FOR TRIAL At Burton-on-Trent Police Court on Friday, three boatmen named **Benjamin Nixon, Harry Banks** and **Emmanuel Lloyd** were committed for trial, charged with wilfully and maliciously doing grievous bodily harm to five children. One of the prisoners, but which is not quite clear, owing to contradictory and conflicting admissions, fired a shot gun from a canal boat at the children on a bridge. As a consequence, five of them were treated at the Infirmary, and the pellets extracted from their face, head and arms were produced by the doctor in court. One child still awaits an operation.

149 December 7 1900

THIS BUSY WORLD Thus when **Mrs Worrall**, a boatman's wife, was fined five shillings at Runcorn for declaring her child attended school at Salford, she craved for revenge – with several Rs. Did she use rope, dagger, axe, cord or flame? Did she, red and angry like the raging dog star, scorch the Clerk of the Court? Or in the manner of the raging bullifant, trample on the bench? Pish! The revenge of a sucking dove. No : she paid the fine in twenty threepenny bits as a protest. Horrible! Most horrible!

150 December 14 1900

NEWS IN BRIEF At Wigan on Sunday night, **Richard Barrow**, 55, boatman of Whittle, Chorley, was drowned in the Leeds and Liverpool Canal at Abram, Wigan. Barrow, whose eyesight was defective, had walked into a lock, and was drowned.