

GRAYS AND TILBURY GAZETTE AND SOUTHEND TELEGRAPH
1889 and 1899

1 5 January 1889

THAMES HAVEN

SUPPOSED FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE THAMES On Thursday the 27th of December, **Arthur Hind**, the Customs waterman at Thames Haven, left for his usual weekly trip on business to Gravesend. As he did not return, a telegram was dispatched to Gravesend by Mr Hawke, the Customs officer at the Haven, and a reply was received that Hind had left Gravesend, another man accompanying him in the boat. The boat was found aground on Friday in the vicinity of the Haven, and filled with mud and water. No tidings have been received of the men, and it is feared they have been drowned. Both men are married, Hind having a wife and four children, and his mate a wife and five children. This sad event has cast a deep gloom over the residents at the Haven.

2 12 January 1889

GRAVESEND PETTY SESSIONS

CHARGE OF UNLICENSED PILOTAGE **George Alex Petrie jun**, a waterman, was summoned for continuing in charge of a ship after a qualified pilot had offered his services. Mr G Clinch appeared for complainant, and said that complainant had given signals with the pilot's flag and with his whistle, which were well understood, as a tender of his services as a pilot. By remaining in charge of the vessel, defendant had rendered himself liable to a penalty not exceeding £30.

Robert Thomas Hudson, licensed pilot for exempt ships, said that defendant was an unlicensed man. On Friday, witness went in his boat for the purpose of offering his services to the exempt ship *River Sorgan*. Got to within 20 or 30 yards of the vessel. Had the pilot's flag up ; there was no fog ; blew his whistle ; saw defendant on the starboard side of the bridge ; he looked at witness, and then went to the port side. His hand moved as if working the telegraph. The ship moved away. Witness hailed the ship two or three times, and defendant looked round. Rowed ashore and went to Fenchurch Street by the 9.30 train. Went to Wapping, boarded the ship, and saw the captain. Defendant was then on board ; saw him work the telegraph. He said to witness he had no business to board the ship, and told him to get out of her. He said he was in charge. Witness told him he should make an example of him. He then asked the captain to order witness off. The captain said that defendant told him that, as his was an exempt ship, he could employ anyone he liked. It was not true that witness was no nearer to the ship than 200 or 300 yards.

Thomas James Hudson, complainant's son, corroborated. When his father blew his whistle, the ship replied by three or four blasts. The vessel steamed away, and they could not catch it.

Cross-examined : Complainant held the pilot flag up by his hands as the staff was broken.

Complainant said the flag was fully displayed.

Defendant said he was called by Row's apprentice to take the ship, as there was no pilot ; there were none on the pier ; he never saw Hudson. The captain told complainant he didn't see him, and asked him what he meant by coming on board. It was hazy, and they could not see more than 400 or 500 yards. Complainant, if he had wanted the ship, could have gone on board before, as the ship was lying off Gravesend for two hours.

Arthur Edward Jennings said that he was on the Pier when the ship came up. Saw defendant go aboard. Complainant's son said he wished his father were there, then defendant would not have the ship. Afterwards, saw complainant half way between the piers. Witness was abreast of the Town Pier ; heard him blow the whistle ; was about 50 yards off ; the ship was further off ; should say complainant was never nearer to it than 100 yards. Complainant held up something ; you couldn't tell whether it was a flag or a handkerchief. The ship was already well under weigh ; could not say if it was full speed ; when witness heard the whistle the ship was abreast of him.

Cross-examined : Complainant was holding the flag from the time he started. Heard him hail the ship as he was getting across the water.

William Dove said he fetched defendant, there being no pilots about. The ship was going full speed

when off the Clarendon Hotel.

Cross-examined : Stood on the Terrace Pier and saw Hudson start. Saw something in his hand, but did not know what it was. There was no whistling or hailing. Heard none. The ship was at the Town Pier Buoy when complainant started. He started 15 or 20 minutes after defendant went on board.

James Simons, jun, waterman, said he was in the steamer *Brankelow* off the Town Pier. Heard a whistle and saw complainant rowing. The ship was well over towards the north shore when complainant rowed under his stern. The steamer was 350 feet long. The ship was going full speed. Complainant did not get to within 150 yards of the ship. Saw him hold up something, but did not know what it was. Pilot flags were usually held in the hand by a staff.

Cross-examined : The stern of the *Brankelow* was abreast of the Town Pier ; might have been a little above it. It was moored to the second boat. The ship was above the *Brankelow* when defendant passed her stern.

The Chairman said that they felt some doubt whether the flag had been properly displayed. It would have been more satisfactory if the captain had been called.

Mr Clinch said it appeared he was at sea, but the burden of disproving complainant's evidence lay with defendant. The evidence as to the whistle being answered from the ship had not been denied.

The magistrates retired and, on their return, dismissed the summons.

3 19 January 1889

THE DROWNING OF A PILOT

THE DUTIES OF THOSE WHO FIND BODIES Mr W G Penman held an inquest on Saturday on the body of **Richard Cock**, aged 56, an exempt Trinity House pilot of Berkley Road, Gravesend.

Mary Ann Cock, deceased's wife, identified the body and said that he was weak in his legs through rheumatism, and used a stick for support. She knew of none who bore him ill will. He was not subject to fits.

Edward Stevens said he saw deceased on the Terrace Pier about 6.30 am on the 11th inst. Saw him again twenty minutes later at the Pier Master's office, About seven he went away towards the Terrace. He had a stick and seemed well.

George Tovey, Thames Conservancy waterman, said at about 7.50 am he went to the Commercial Bridge and saw something floating in the river eight or ten yards from the water's edge. Called the attention of **Cook**, a waterman, who was mopping out his boat. He said several times it was nothing. Witness said if Cook would not go to it, he would. Got into Cook's boat and rowed to the object, which was found to be the body of deceased lying face downwards. Cook held the body while witness went back. Left Cook in charge and went for the police. Thought at first the body would be that of one of the watermen drowned in Higham Bight. Did not notice a stick. There was a little tide running down, and deceased might have been carried by it from the Terrace Pier. From the water to the lamp at the bottom of the Bridge was, he thought, about 100 ft. There was a guard about six inches high round the bridge. Cook did not show any surprise when his attention was called to the body, or make any remark when it was found to be deceased.

Dr Andrews said about 8.15 he was called to the Commercial Bridge. Deceased was then dead, but he should think he had not been many minutes, as the body was warm. He thought deceased could not have fallen from the Terrace Pier, as it would have taken a longer time for the body to come down. Deceased had foamed at the mouth more than usual in such cases. This led witness to suppose he had had a fit.

PC Deadman said that on reaching the bridge he saw deceased in the water, held by Cook. The head was a little above the water. Witness sent for a doctor, and had the body got out. Artificial respiration was attempted, but there seemed to be no signs of life. 21s and other articles were found on the body.

The inquest was adjourned and resumed on Monday.

James Cook, waterman, said he went down to the Commercial Pier on Friday about 7.30 am. Tovey came up in about ten minutes, and said he thought there was a body there ; they rowed to the

object ; witness laid hold of deceased's coat, and Tovey rowed to the pier. Tovey fetched the police. Witness asked someone on the bridge to help him get the body out of the water, but was told he must leave it alone till the police came ; a policeman came along afterwards. Witness saw deceased in the Terrace Hotel, about six. He left about 6.30. When witness held the coat collar, the face would be partly out of water. It did not feel warm. If deceased had gone down the bridge, witness would probably have seen him. Witness was on good terms with him. The bridge was slippery after the tide left it. It was not correct that witness said two or three times, "It's nothing". It was not true that he was reluctant to take hold of the body. Did not think deceased could have fallen from the bridge while witness was there. The body was perhaps 20 yards from the boat.

Alfred Butler, greengrocer, said that he was on the Commercial Bridge about 7.55 am on Friday. Saw Cook in the boat holding the body, which was still in the water. Had passed Tovey running up Whitehall Place just before. Mr Walter got into the boat and turned the face of the body up. Witness went away about five minutes and came back. Mr Forss and Mr Row had then got the body on the bridge and were working the arms. Witness helped. Froth was coming from the mouth. Saw no signs of life. Felt the body under the shirt, and it was quite warm. The doctor came afterwards.

Dr Andrewes (*sic*) said that he had made a post mortem examination. Found a bruise on the right side of the forehead, which went right through the skin. Found some water in the lungs, which were congested, as is usual in cases of drowning. There were no signs of apoplexy or a fit of any kind. The heart was fatty and the organs generally not healthy. Believed the cause of death was drowning. Thought that when froth came from the mouth, it was a sign of some remaining life. Did not think the body could have been very long in the water. Should think not 20 minutes. The papers in his pocket were not wet. Thought it probable that deceased had slipped and been stunned by the fall.

Mr A Hooper of the Terrace Hotel said that deceased was quite sober when he left.

Henry Walter, Customs waterman, said that when he went to the bridge, deceased's head was under the bottom of the boat. He got it out of the water. Cook said they must leave the body alone until the police came. He thought that was the impression on the minds of the men who were present.

The jury found a verdict of "Accidental death", and requested the Coroner to ask the Press to make known that it was not necessary when a body was found to keep it in the water till the police came.

The Coroner said that such a course was neither according to law nor humanity. The proper course was first to land the body, then to send for a doctor, using at once means for resuscitation, then to send for the police.

4 26 January 1889

TILBURY

CHARGE OF SMUGGLING Henry Simpson was charged with receiving and concealing 5 lbs of tobacco at Tilbury Docks on the 22nd inst. John Hutton, Customs' officer, said on the day in question he went on board the *Oakdale*, where defendant was the steward. The dutyable stores had been brought out on the previous day, and he asked the defendant to again produce them. He said a few cigars was all he had. About an hour afterwards, the waterman came to witness and told him he had found a quantity of tobacco in the lazarette. He went back to the defendant, when he saw the tobacco produced, and he asked him if he knew anything about the tobacco. He first said he knew nothing about it, and then he admitted he did, and next he said he had "left it there" and forgot it. The single value and duty was £1 12s 6d. Witness told him he could not be offered the usual option, the amount of tobacco being over four pounds. **William Alline**, the waterman, said he found the tobacco produced on the 22nd inst, in a cupboard on the *Oakdale*. He called the examining officer to see it concealed under some tins of meat and cooking utensils. Defendant was fined double duty and costs, £3 13s 8d.

5 2 February 1889

A LIVELY CORPSE A woman named Girvin, living at Burham near Rochester, has just had a

narrow escape from being buried alive. She fell into a kind of trance, which was mistaken for death. A coffin was ordered, and the usual preparations made for a funeral. But while a number of relatives were gathered at the bedside bewailing their bereavement, the supposed corpse startled them by suddenly rising up in bed and asking what was the matter. The woman is making good progress towards convalescence, and the order for the coffin has been countermanded.

6 2 February 1889

FATAL COLLISION About 3.30 am on Saturday, the barges *Content* and *Confidence* belonging to Robins and Co, Northfleet, and loaded with cement, were being towed by the tug *Bristol* in St Clements Reach when, becoming detached from the tug, they were run into by the steamer *Devonshire* and sunk. The steamer lowered a boat, and the mates of the barges were saved. One of them attributed his deliverance to his dog. The two captains were drowned. Their names are **Benjamin Nettlingham** and **John Sutton** ; the latter has left a wife and three children. The bodies have not yet been found. A reward is offered for their recovery.

7 9 February 1889

INQUEST ON A THAMES HAVEN WATERMAN Mr Woodgate, Deputy County Coroner, held an inquest on Thursday at the Sun, Lower Higham, Kent, on the body of **Arthur Hind**, aged 34, Customs waterman who, with T J Hollingum, was drowned on the 27th December.

Charles Hind of Dartford, manager to Messrs Beadle and Co, coal merchants, identified the body as that of his brother, who, he said, had lived at Thames Haven. He was married and had four children.

Henry Hawkins of Gravesend, Customs waterman, said that deceased had been in the Customs about two years. Saw him leave the Custom House bridge, Gravesend, about 5 pm on the 27th December, with T J Hollingum, in a skiff. It was a squally day with rain at intervals. He was going to Thames Haven. Both were healthy and sober and were experienced in the management of boats. Did not think there was any danger in their going. The boat was sound and nearly new. It had an ordinary lug and foresail, two sculls and a boat hook. The boat, he believed, steered well, and did not require ballast. It was nearly high water when they started, and the wind south west. Everything went all right while they were in sight. They rowed, but Hollingum said they were going to sail when they got lower down. Believed deceased could swim, but not Hollingum. The latter had on an overcoat, deceased had not.

David Freeman, labourer of East Tilbury, said on Tuesday about 7 am he found the body on the mud in Higham Bight, face downwards. Witness sent for the police.

Alfred Bull, Kent County Constabulary, Higham, said that he was called to Higham Bight on Tuesday, and brought the body up. Found no marks of violence, and it had the appearance of having been drowned. A silver watch and chain, 16s 1 1/2d and other articles were found on the body.

The Coroner, in summing up, remarked that many men engaged on the water would not take the trouble to learn to swim. He had found that the majority of sailors could not swim.

Verdict, "Found drowned".

8 2 March 1889

FIRE ON A BARGE On Monday about 8 am, the barge *Conwy*, lying in the West Branch Dock, was found to be on fire. The Dock Company's police and Fire Brigade were soon on the spot and got their hydrants to work. In a short space of time the fire was got under. Several bales of rags and casks of oil were damaged.

9 9 March 1889

FINDING OF THE BODY OF BENJAMIN NETTLINGHAM On Wednesday Mr W J Harris held an inquest at the Huggens Arms, Northfleet, on the body of **Benjamin Nettlingham**, captain of the barge *Confidence*, who was drowned through a collision between the steamer *Devonshire* and the

barges *Confidence* and *Content* in St Clements Reach some time ago. Evidence of identification and of the finding of the body by a man named Robins having been taken, the inquest was adjourned till the 21st, as a Board of Trade inquiry is pending.

10 9 March 1889

TILBURY

ACCIDENT ON A STEAMER On Saturday, **Guy Harcourt**, aged 19, an apprentice on board the steamer *Lancing*, caught his foot in a rope and fell down the hatchway, breaking his left thigh. He was taken to Gravesend Hospital.

11 23 March 1889

THE FATAL COLLISION IN ST CLEMENTS REACH An adjourned inquest was held on Thursday by Mr W J Harris at the Huggen's Arms, Northfleet, on the body of **Benjamin Nettlingham**, who was drowned on the 26th January, in consequence of a collision between the steamer *Devonshire* and the barges *Content* and *Confidence*. Mr J A Fairfield was present on behalf of Messrs Robins and Co, owners of the barges, and a gentleman from Messrs Thomas, Cooper and Co was present on behalf of Messrs Mills and Chaytor, owners of the steamer. The following verdict was returned : "That the deceased came by his death in a collision between the steamer *Devonshire* and the barge *Confidence*. The jury, however, are of opinion that the steamer was being navigated at too great a speed, having regard to rule 28, which requires vessels to be navigated in a careful manner with regard to other vessels on the river."

The Board of Trade inquiry into the above collision concluded on Friday. The case for the *Devonshire* was that owing to no lights being visible on the barges, they were not seen until the steamer was within two lengths of them. Owing to the eddy tide, she did not answer the helm. Her speed was four knots ; had a stern light been shown, it must have been seen. The decision was that the collision was caused by the tow ropes breaking, and the barges not exhibiting a stern light, and that the *Devonshire* was not in fault.

12 23 March 1889

GRAVESEND COUNTY COURT – TUESDAY

Before Judge Homersham Cox and a Jury.

MAKING A BOOM **Thomas Walter** v Paul A Ralli. Claim £15 for making and fitting a boom to a yacht. Mr Clinch appeared for plaintiff and Mr Rubac, barrister, for defendant.

Plaintiff said he kept the Privateer public house and was also a waterman. Defendant was the owner of the yacht *Yarana*, which visited Gravesend last summer. Witness had attended to yachts as waterman. On the 8th June was with Mr Cranfield, captain of the yacht, who had employed him. The captain had asked who could make a new boom. Told him there was only one man in Gravesend who could – Mr Jackson. Took Sandford and Jackson to the yacht. The captain, defendant and his wife were there. Defendant and the captain gave Sandford instructions to do the work, and gave him the measurements. Afterwards saw the two at work on the job. When the work was finished, the captain told witness to pay the men and give them some beer. Their names were Waters, Henry Powell, Geo Jackson, Jack Randall and Geo Sandford. Paid the men £15 (receipt produced) and gave them the beer.

Cross-examined : Paid the £15 in cash to Sandford. The captain came to the Privateer on the evening of June 8th, with two or three more. He did not ask for the bill, and witness did not ask him to go into the next room. Gave the captain the bill. Did not ask the captain about commission. Witness had nothing to do with the work. Saw men at work. Did not notice particularly where they were at work.

George Sandford, shipwright, said that on the 8th June he went to the yacht and saw defendant and the captain. Heard no conversation between the captain and plaintiff. Received £15 from plaintiff ; gave the receipt produced, and divided the money with the men.

Cross-examined : It was paid in cash. The spar was brought down in the rough ; it had to be got on

to the shore. The crew of the yacht helped to do that. The men chopped it, trimmed it, and made it suitable to the yacht. They worked night and day. A blacksmith made the rings but witness and others fitted them to the work.

George Jackson, spar maker, said that after the work was finished, he saw plaintiff pay the £15 to Sandford in cash. Saw the money counted. The £15 was for labour only.

Cross-examined : Witness received £3 as his share.

[The bill was here produced, which charged the men's time at 7s per day, and overtime 14s per day].

George Waters, shipwright, gave similar evidence. Each man received £3. Overtime began after 5 o'clock and, as it was in the London river, charged double. Defendant told them to get the work done quickly and he was not particular to a few pounds. Witness's share of the overtime was two days of nine hours at 14s a day. They did not work by the hour.

His Honour : You get all you can.

Witness : That's it.

Cross-examined : After leaving off at 5, went on again at 5.30.

By his Honour : Worked on till 11.

William Henry Powell, shipwright, gave similar evidence. £15 was a fair charge.

Cross-examined : Saw the money counted.

Mr Rubac, for the defence, said that his client would lose more by defending the case than by paying the amount demanded. He believed the charge exorbitant and refused to pay it as a duty to yacht owners using Gravesend, and in the interest of Gravesend itself ; for if such charges were allowed to pass, work would go to other places. The charge was utterly exorbitant. He should contend that the £15 was not actually paid, for he could prove that, after it was said to have been paid, plaintiff offered a commission to the captain, and it was not likely he would have offered a commission which, if his statement was true, must have come out of his own pocket. He should contend also that plaintiff was acting as defendant's agent, whose duty it was to look after defendant's interests, and that even if he paid the £15, he must have known from his experience that it was a most exorbitant charge, which he ought not to have paid and therefore was not entitled to recover.

William Cranfield, captain of the yacht, said that he went to London and bought the spar and had it brought to Gravesend. It was then octagonal. Asked plaintiff to get some men to make it up and fit it. He said he could, and witness trusted to him to do it. Could not say how long the men were at work on it. It ought to have taken five men three days to do the work without overtime. After the work was done, told plaintiff to pay the men and give them a drink. Did not tell him what to pay them ; left that to him. Went to the Privateer in the evening ; asked plaintiff for the bill ; plaintiff called him into a back room and asked what commission he was to pay witness. Said 5 per cent. Plaintiff said that was no use to witness. He gave witness the bill and witness refused to pay because it was an exorbitant charge. Plaintiff called Sandford in and said himself that he thought it was too much.

Cross-examined : Plaintiff, after witness had said the charge was too high, told him he had paid the £15, and showed him the receipt. Witness offered him £7 10s. Did not think it improper for Walter to offer him five per cent commission. He was allowed to take it by his master. Believed it was the custom to pay extra after 5 pm. Saw the men at work after five. Could not say it was not three nights.

Richard Wadley, yacht captain, said he was with Cranfield on the evening of the 8th June. Plaintiff called Cranfield into another room. Cranfield called witness in and showed him the bill ; witness said it must be for material and all, and advised Cranfield not to pay ; said £7 10s was too much for it.

John William Fay of the firm of Fay and Co, yacht builders of Southampton, said that for turning a spar like the one in this case £6 to £7 would be a fair price. They earned 6s 6d a day. Overtime was usually paid at a quarter more than day work. Sunday work was paid double.

William Watkins, yacht builder and spar maker, Blackwall, said that £15 was far beyond a reasonable price. The rate paid to workmen in London was 1s a foot, and as this spar was 61 feet

long, the amount to be paid to the workmen in London would be £3 1s.

Cross-examined : Overtime up to 9 was reckoned 1 1/4, and from 9 to 12 1 1/2 hours to the hour. Knew nothing of the spar now in question beyond what he had been told.

Defendant said that he knew that the captain received from tradesmen five percent commission on the orders he gave.

His Honour, in summing up, said the jury had to consider whether the £15 was actually paid and, if so, whether the charge was so unreasonable that he ought not to have paid it. For instance, if instead of £15 a charge of £1500 had been made, no jury would hold that plaintiff would have been justified in paying it.

The jury retired, and on their return the foreman said they were agreed that the money was paid, but on the second point they differed, and there was no chance of their coming to an agreement.

After some discussion between the legal representatives, his Honour decided, as he said he had absolute discretion to do, to change the venue, and ordered a new trial to take place at the Sevenoaks County Court.

13 23 March 1889

TILBURY

FRACAS BETWEEN WATERMEN **James Clark** was charged with assaulting **Henry Minchen** on the 11th inst at Tilbury. Mr Clinch defended. The prosecutor said that about 5.30 he walked up to the Tilbury Post Office with the defendant. Defendant had had a drop of drink. Defendant said, "You -----, if you don't take that lot back in my son's boat, I'll drown you", alluding to a box. He smacked witness with his half shut hand on the face and on the lips. Witness walked up to look for a policeman, and then went to the telegraph office. Afterwards, walking back, he saw Mr Allen. Clark then came and abused witness, "From a pig to a dog". On the pontoon, he assaulted witness, but did not strike him. He then went on the way to Gravesend in his boat, and the defendant shouted, "You ----- Irish sod. I'll come and drown you". By Mr Clinch : He had been working with you? - Yes. He got rid of you? - I got rid of him. (Laughter) Were not you running up the tube trying to overtake him? - No. After you pushed him, did he not put up his two hands and knock your hat off? - My hat came off. The witness added he knew nothing of law. Though you don't know anything of law, you know something of police courts? The Chairman said he had better not press the question. The witness vigorously protested that it was "an attempt to degrade him". Mr Clinch said he would not put it if the Chairman thought best not. **Luke Allen**, Sussex Place, Gravesend, said he was a waterman, At 5.30 on Monday week, the 11th, he was in the tube at Tilbury station. There was a whistle for Clark to come up. There was a job for the *Chimborazo*. He started to go ; began to run up the tube. Minchin ran after him, caught him and shoved him up against the side of the tube. Clark knocked Minchin's cap off. The Chairman : Was the pushing intentional? Witness : Yes, because both wanted to get the job. Mr Clinch asked for costs. The defendant : I don't like to be done, Mr Clinch. You were not there, but that man I said all along he would throw me over. (Laughter) The Chairman said the case was dismissed, each side to pay his own costs.

14 30 March 1889

RAINHAM

THEFT OF BRASS Thomas Shepherd was charged with stealing a quantity of brass harness mounting, of the value of 15s, the property of Messrs Randall and Fowle, on the 24th March. John Scriven said on the 24th he hung the harness produced upon the stable of the house ; he afterwards missed it, and did not see it until it was at Grays Police Station. PC George Emery said he accosted defendant in a beerhouse on the 24th, and asked him to account for a whip he had in his hand ; prisoner said it was his property ; the other man who was with him had other articles on him ; whilst searching the prisoner the other man got away. There was another charge of stealing from a barge a clock and other articles, the property of **Ambrose Hills** , on the 23rd. Prosecutor said he left his mate in charge of the barge ; his mate he knew as "Henry", nothing more. He went back on

Monday and the articles mentioned in the charge were missing. PC George Emery said on Sunday night at about 9.45 pm, he was on duty in Hornchurch Road, near Hornchurch, where he met the prisoner and his brother. He told them they would have to go with him. He asked them to account for the possession of the clock. He said, "I bought it in Barking, and gave 2s 6d for it two months ago". He added that the brush and towel were his property. Prisoner pleaded guilty. The Chairman said it was clear that the prisoner was getting his living by dishonesty. He would be sent for three weeks on each charge, the sentences to follow each other.

15 30 March 1889

TILBURY

ANOTHER ASSAULT **Richard Rand**, waterman, was summoned by **Edward Lillie**, pilot, for assault on the 15th inst at Tilbury. There was a cross summons. Mr G Clinch appeared for Lillie and Mr Drawbridge for Rand. Edmund Lillie, a Trinity House pilot, the appointed pilot for the *Minerva* and ships of the same line, said when he could not go himself, he sent his man, **Ferguson**. In consequence of something which happened, he was told not to send him any more. The Customs House boat was alongside of the boat, and defendant's boat was there also. The mate shouted out, "That you, Mr Lillie?" Witness said, "Yes, I'll be there in a minute". They brought their boat outside defendant's boat, into which he stepped to get to the ladder. He touched the ship's side with his hand. Defendant shoved the boat away, and pulled complainant's leg off. By the Bench : It's customary for men to step from one boat to another. I was in danger of being knocked under and cut up by the ship's propeller. I gave him no provocation, and did not do anything to him afterwards, except to say I would make an example of him. By Mr Clinch : I heard Rand's mate say, "Don't have the man overboard", alluding to me. Richard Rand (as complainant in the cross summons) was called for the defence. He was engaged by Mr Ferguson to row him off ; Lillie rowed after them and shot his boat under the discharge pipe ; then Lillie jumped upon the boat and placed his foot upon the defendant's stomach. Defendant was lying down, and Lillie was dragging the two boats (his own and Rand's) after him, having one hand on the ladder of the ship. **Henry Cavell**, the waterman who was with Rand in the boat, said Lillie flew out of his boat and knocked Rand down. By Mr Clinch : Rand didn't complain of Lillie's foot being upon him. Mr Ferguson, pilot, said he went to the ship and got engaged. It was understood he should pilot the ship, and he gave orders for the boat to leave the ship. The other boat was trying to push his boat so that it would come under the hot water. The Chairman, after consultation, announced that the Bench unanimously convicted Rand, and dismissed the other case. He was fined 10s and costs.

16 30 March 1889

THE GUARDIANS' ELECTION

The nominations closed on Tuesday as follows :-

Stanford le Hope – **Ambrose Ellis**, Stanford le Hope, barge owner.

17 30 March 1889

GRAVESEND

THE WATERMEN'S LANDING STAGE At the Gravesend Town Council on Wednesday, the Town Clerk read a letter from Mr Stride of the Tilbury Railway Company, in reply to communications from the Council submitting plans for a new watermen's landing stage. Mr Stride enclosed tracing of a second scheme which, he believed, had been prepared by the engineer of the Thames Conservancy. The Company would not object to this scheme and would make the terms of their letter of April 28 1887 to apply. The Town Clerk explained that the scheme was that suggested by Councillor Butchard, viz, to construct the stage on the west side of the Town Pier. He also said that as the letter referred to contributing £40 towards removing the mud, which £40 had been paid, he wrote to Mr Stride for explanation, and had received a reply that the meaning was that the Company did not withdraw from their offer to subscribe £40 towards the alteration of the landing place, provided such should not be taken as an admission of liability to remove mud from the

causeway.

The Town Clerk said Mr Stride must have forgotten that the £40 had been paid, and he thought it would be advisable to ascertain the opinions of the watermen as to the suitability of the scheme.

Councillors **Jury** (a pilot) and **Williams** (a waterman) considered it would be suitable.

The Town Clerk said he thought the proper plan would be to apply to the Thames Conservancy to carry out the work. If they did not, he did not know where the money was to come from.

Mr Williams said that the Conservancy would be likely to make an expensive job of it.

Councillor Butchard said he did not believe the Conservancy would do the work, and proposed that the Council should proceed with it without delay.

The Town Clerk said that if it was meant that the Council were to pay for it, he could not recommend the adoption of the motion.

Mr Williams said the Conservancy had ample funds. They collected from every ship passing up the river, and something for those unloading. The object of those payments was such works as the one in question.

It was agreed that the Clerk be directed to ask the Thames Conservancy to undertake the work.

18 6 April 1889

KNOCKED OFF BY THE FORESHEETS On Friday the adjourned inquest was held at the Lobster Smack on the body of a boy found in the river. It was identified as that of **Jas Blowden**. The mate of the barge *Charles* said deceased was on the barge with him, and was missed on the 29th January. It was supposed he was knocked into the water by the foresheets, Verdict, "Accidental death".

19 6 April 1889

INQUEST ON A MAGAZINE KEEPER On Wednesday. Mr Penman held an inquest at the Town Hall, Gravesend, on the body of **Richard Cook**, aged 58.

Henry Cook, lighterman and waterman, identified the body as that of his father, who lived with him at 5 New Street, Gravesend. Deceased had been for some time in the employ of Messrs Brock and Co, as magazine keeper. On the 18th February, about mid day, witness left deceased on board the magazine *Nancy*, off Higham Bight, apparently in his usual health. Deceased had to trim and fix the riding light on the magazine *Alfred*, 50 to 100 yards higher up the river. He went to and fro in a small boat. Early next morning, heard that the boat had been picked up empty. Went to the *Nancy*, but deceased was not there ; went on board the *Emma and Harriett* sand barge, near the Ship and Lobster. One of the crew said that about 11.30 on the previous night, cries had been heard, and one of the men had seen a man hanging to a boat drifting by. He called to him to hold on, but he sank before he could be reached. When witness went to the magazine, he noticed that the riding light of the *Alfred* was not lit ; thought it had been blown out by the wind, and that deceased going to relight it had slipped overboard.

Geo Taylor, fisherman, said that he picked up the body in Higham Bight that morning, lying in the mud at high water mark. Waited till the tide was high enough and then took the body to New Bridge, and gave it in charge of the police. Brought it to Gravesend because he recognised who it was, and thought it the proper thing to do.

The Coroner said it ought to have been landed at the Ship and Lobster.

Hugh Kelly, Customs Examining Officer, said that about 12.15 am on the 19th February, **Henry Cordaroy** told him he had picked up a boat opposite the Ship and Lobster. Finding the boat belonged to Messrs Brock and Co, he sent for the manager, Mr White, and handed it over to him.

Wm White, deceased's son-in-law, and manager at Gravesend for Messrs Brock and Co, said that deceased had been in their employ about three years. About 1 am on the 19th February he went to the Customs bridge and saw the boat *Alfred*. It was the one deceased used. Deceased did not to his knowledge go ashore that night. There was no one on either of the magazines.

The Coroner said that Cordaroy was away in his barge.

PC Marshall said he took the body to the mortuary. Found several articles but no money on it.

Henry Cook, recalled, said deceased had usually a few shillings by him. Witness had searched the magazine but found no money there. Deceased was supposed to be always on board, but he sometimes went home for provisions, &c. Had never known him to leave the magazine after dark unless to go to the other.
Verdict, "Found drowned".

20 27 April 1889

GRAVESEND PETTY SESSIONS

THREATENING John Wood, waterman, was summoned for assaulting **John Lathbury Doust**, pilot. Mr G Clinch appeared for complainant, who said that he had had a dispute with defendant about taking a ship to London. Afterwards saw defendant in Gravesend with another pilot. Defendant stopped him, called him disgusting names, and threatened to drown him. Defendant had been to him to settle the matter, but witness declined, Ernest Pearce, for defendant, said that he heard defendant and complainant quarrelling in Milton Place on Thursday week. Cross-examined : They were 18 or 20 feet off. Defendant was bound over to keep the peace for six months and ordered to pay the costs, 29s 6d.

21 4 May 1889

GRAVESEND PETTY SESSIONS

WATERMEN AND PILOTS Jas Pilgrim, waterman, was summoned for threatening **Henry George Row** and assaulting **William Edward Richbell**. Henry George Row, exempt pilot, said that on the 26th April defendant threatened to do for him. On the following day, defendant used abusive language to him. Did not knock defendant down on Saturday, but there was a scuffle. Witness was on the new bridge. Defendant said, "Here comes the ----- . Have you got a razor for him to give to his wife?" Defendant put his hand in witness's face, and witness put out his hand to protect himself. Defendant's brother came behind with a stick, and threatened to cut witness's head off. Defendant then took the stick and hit witness on the leg. Defendant had got hold of witness's watch chain, which broke. They had had disputes about working ships. William Edward Richbell, pilot, said that about 8.30 on the 27th he was on the bridge. Defendant said, "Here the ----- comes", and also something about giving a razor to cut a wife's throat. Row asked defendant what he meant by it. Defendant put his hand up and they struggled ; neither fell. They had another struggle near the Commercial. Some time afterwards, defendant met witness outside the pilot's room, struck him, and used very abusive language. George Cotman said he saw defendant strike Richbell. Defendant said that Row knocked him down, and was about to call witnesses, when the Mayor said that provocation had been given, and dismissed the case, which he said ought not to have been brought before the court.

22 18 May 1889

BENEFIT SMOKER A successful smoking concert took place on Wednesday evening at the Rising Sun. The room was crowded and a most enjoyable evening was spent. The concert was for the benefit of **Mr S Keeble**, a waterman who has been laid up for the past twelve months through an accident.

23 25 May 1889

GRAYS LOCAL BOARD

THE DUNG NUISANCE On the morning of May 13th, William Savill, George Turner and William Russell, carmen in the employment of Mr Thompson, farmer of Stifford, slopped and spilled a quantity of stable dung along the High Street, and such has occurred in consequence of the dung being conveyed in open carts instead of covered ones.

Mr Borradaile : I think something should be done to put a stop to the carting of this material at all. I have been asked by some of the residents at the lower end of the street to bring this matter before the Board in the strongest possible manner. It is not only a filthy nuisance, so that they cannot have

their windows open when the carts are going by, but it is positively in many cases making them ill, and they are suffering from sore throats consequent upon this stuff being unloaded. One gentleman down there – Mr King – was having his dinner when the hatches of a barge were being opened, and it actually made him sick.

Mr Boatman : I quite believe it.

Mr Borradaile : Our powers ought to be exerted to the very utmost to prevent the nuisance.

The Chairman : I don't suppose we can prevent the barges coming there.

Mr Borradaile : Cannot we prevent a nuisance that is injurious to health?

The Clerk : Yes, anything that can be proved to be injurious to health.

Mr H E Brooks : They will have to find some other place to put it.

The Clerk : If it is such a nuisance that a man cannot enjoy his life, it is as bad as an injury to health. I don't know if this is the ordinary stuff. (A voice : It is not).

Mr Borradaile : It is stuff of a most filthy description, and is kept, I am told, until it is absolutely putrid.

Mr Sims : We have it now from the American ships.

The Chairman : We are all satisfied that it is a great nuisance, but can we get rid of it?

The Clerk : It is alleged to be a nuisance injurious to health, this business of a wharfinger – the unloading of this filth, and if it makes the inhabitants sick, it is an absurd thing to think it may go on.

Mr Howell : The first thing we ought to do is for someone to make a proper complaint in writing to this Board.

Mr Borradaile : I am prepared, if you like, to lay a complaint before the Board officially.

The Chairman : Can we prevent it being landed there, Mr Hatton?

The Clerk : I have prosecuted people over the water successfully several times. They used to bring the stuff from London dustbins there, and so on. We have altogether stopped it. They don't bring it at all now. If this be such rotten stuff that the mere inhaling of it will make a man sick, I certainly think it is time we did something. It all depends upon the evidence. If it is the stuff you say it is, it is most certainly your duty to take it up.

Mr Sims : The stuff is the manure from the cattle coming over in the ships.

The Chairman : I don't think that is a smell injurious to health.

Mr Borradaile : This stuff will be found to be not only manure and ordinary litter of the ships, but it is also portions of the animals that have been killed on the voyage, and it is in an absolutely stinking condition. I believe if we don't take some steps, and we get anything like the weather we are at present having, it will be far more injurious to us than all the cesspools in the neighbourhood.

Mr Sims : The most objectionable is the refuse that comes from the City. What they call "mixture". That is partly animal matter and partly vegetable. It is that nasty sour stuff. I don't think there is anything injurious in the smell of good wholesome manure, but that stuff is really the worst of any I have seen.

Mr H E Brooks : Can we not appoint a committee of the Board with power to act? They could engage somebody who would watch this business, and then we could have evidence before us.

The Surveyor : We are at the present time prepared with evidence, but what passed during the past fortnight is not a bad case. I have not observed during the fortnight any real slaughterhouse stuff, but it has been genuine stable dung.

Mr Sims : If a man has got a wharf and he does not allow the stuff to remain on the wharf, and it is taken away for agricultural purposes, it is all right.

The Clerk : If any man carries on a business so as to cause an injury to health, he must stop it or employ such means as will prevent injury to health. I don't think any vested interests should allow a man to go and make another man ill.

The Chairman : But would ordinary stable or cattle manure have that injurious effect?

The Clerk : You should direct me to write to the wharf owners and tell them that, from information we have received, we believe they have been carrying on their business on occasions so as to create not only a nuisance, but also a nuisance which is injurious to health, and ask them to exercise such

supervision as to prevent any cargoes of an obnoxious kind being landed there, and that in the interest of the public you will feel it your duty if they do to bring the matter before the magistrates. This suggestion was agreed to, it being also understood that the Clerk would write to the Mr Thompson named in the report, and call his attention to the nuisance caused by his men allowing the stuff to be dropped from their carts.

24 8 June 1889

TILBURY

ACCIDENT AT THE DOCKS On Monday **Thomas Burgess**, aged 26, had his back injured by a hook running into it while working in a barge in Tilbury Docks. He was sent to Gravesend Hospital.

25 15 June 1889

GRAVESEND COUNTY COURT

TUESDAY – Before Judge Homersham Cox

CLAIM AGAINST A PILOT FOR COLLISION **W Knight v J P Moore** – In this case, plaintiff, a barge owner, sued defendant, a pilot of Gravesend, for damage done to the barge, through a collision alleged to have been caused by negligence in navigating a steamer. Application for the amount had been made to the owners of the steamer, but they referred plaintiff to the defendant, who was in charge of the steamer, which was under compulsory pilotage. **Alfred Hubbard**, master of the sailing barge *Mary Dove*, said that on the 31st March he was going from Rainham to Westminster ; was almost opposite the Tunnel Pier at noon, on the north side of mid channel, heading straight up the river ; had a bridge pilot on board. The tide was about half high. The sails were braild up to prepare to lower the masts at London Bridge ; was at the tiller ; saw the steamer *Avoca* come along to the south. She came close to the barge right along the port side. She then passed about her own length, ported her helm, came across the bows of the barge and dropped anchor so as to bring her up to a sudden stop. No warning was given. The barge was moving with the tide. The mate had the port oar out. The steamer swung to her anchor across the stream and the stern of the barge came into collision with the middle of the starboard side of the steamer. The stern of the barge was broken and the barge driven back. The anchor chain was jammed so that the anchor could not be let down at the moment. In consequence, the barge struck another vessel, breaking her own mizzen and sustaining other damage. Cross-examined : Watched the *Avoca*, and said to the pilot as she passed, “Do they mean letting go the anchor?” When they had put out the anchor, they asked if the barge was going to let out theirs. The steamer went a good point out of a straight course and then began to swing. Thought she was only a few seconds getting athwart the barge. His Honour here suggested that the matter should be referred to some gentleman conversant with navigation. This not being agreed to, he said he must have an assessor. It was ultimately decided that the case should be referred to Capt Ronaldson or, failing him, to Capt Sanderson, to decide as to the charge of negligence and the amount of the damage, and that his Honour should give judgement as to the points of law at the August Court.

26 15 June 1889

GRAVESEND PETTY SESSIONS

WORKING BARGE WITHOUT LICENCE **Barry Boggins** was summoned for navigating the sailing barge *Sarah* without being duly licensed. **Mr H C Simmons**, inspector of the Watermen's Company, said that on Friday he saw defendant navigating the barge on the river. Defendant had no licence and no licensed man with him, but only a woman on board. He had taken three freights to the Canal, and complaints had been made of his navigating the barge without a licence. Fined 21s and 11s costs.

27 22 June 1889

PETTY SESSIONS

CLAIM BY A WATERMAN Captain Gargill was summoned by **Samuel John Jones** for £1, for assisting in navigating a smack. Defendant did not appear. Superintendent Berry said he served the summons on board the smack at Billingsgate on the 12th inst, to the mate, who said defendant was not there, but would be on board in two or three hours. Complainant, a waterman, said that defendant engaged him to assist in taking the smack *Doggerbank* up to London, and the price agreed on was 20s. He believed it was an exempt ship of 55 tons. After he had gone on board and given some orders, a pilot named Hudson offered his services. Defendant engaged him and refused to pay witness, defendant saying he was not going to pay two men. The Bench, as defendant made no defence, ordered him to pay the amount, with costs.

28 29 June 1889

THAMES HAVEN

FINDING OF THE WATERMAN HOLLINGHAM On Monday Mr W G Penman held an inquest at the Town Hall, Gravesend, on the body of **Thomas Josiah Hollingham**, Customs' waterman, who was drowned in the Thames six months ago.

William Joseph Hollingham, retired Customs' waterman, identified the body was that of his son by the watch and buttons shown to him by the police, and also by the boots. Last saw him alive on the 27th December ; he said he was going with **Arthur Hind** ; he was then well ; he lived at 1 Waterloo Street, Gravesend ; he left a wife and five children. Witness on going to the Customs House next morning was told that deceased had not arrived at Thames Haven. Deceased could swim a little. The boat was sound when witness saw it afterwards.

Henry Hawkins, Customs waterman, said on the 27th December he was on the New Bridge about 5 pm. Saw deceased and Hind leave the Customs House in a skiff. It was squally weather. Both of the men were accustomed to manage boats. The boat was in good condition. They said they were going to set the sails when they got below Gravesend. It was flood tide. Witness could not see them for about 200 yards. Both were rowing. Had a telegram about 7.30 from Thames Haven that they had not arrived.

Walter Powell of Bromley, Bow, master of the barge *Mary Ann*, said that he was dragging sand early that morning. About four o'clock the body came up from under the sand, which had been removed by the bag. Witness took it to New Bridge, and PC Jayne took charge of it.

PC Jayne said he received the body about 5.15 am and took it to the mortuary. Found the watch, chain &c, on the body. The watch had stopped at 5.50. The body was so decomposed that a sail had to be got under it to get it out of the water.

Verdict, "Found drowned".

29 13 July 1889

FATAL COLLISION AT TILBURY Mr W G Penman held an inquest on Monday at the Town Hall, Gravesend, on the body of Clement Caine, aged 72, who was drowned on Sunday through a collision between the barge *James* and the fishing smack *Alfred*. Mr C R Gramshaw was present on behalf of the owner of the *Alfred*. A representative of the owner of the *James* was also present.

Caroline (Starbrice?) of Poplar, sister of deceased, identified the body.

Edward George White, fisherman of Gravesend, said he met deceased about 6 pm on Saturday. Deceased asked him to take him for a sail in the *Alfred*, belonging to Mr Shuttlewood, 75 West Street. Was going away after fish from the back of the Three Crowns. Deceased met witness about seven and went with him in the *Alfred* to Hole Haven, where they stayed the night. About 4 am on Sunday, they sailed into the river at flood tide with two sails. The wind was about WNW. They sailed across the river to the south shore and then back. There was a steamer coming down and a barge coming to the south shore was approaching them. Witness put the tiller down when he saw the barge, to turn the boat round. A few seconds afterwards, when about half way round, the barge ran into them on the starboard side with her head, and sunk them. Was about 100 or 150 yards from

the steamer. Deceased and witness were thrown into the water. Witness could swim, and held deceased up in the water as long as he was able. One of the hands from the barge rowed to them, and picked up witness and deceased. The steamer came alongside. Witness did not see deceased taken out, but saw his body on the steamer afterwards. No one had called out from the barge. It had sails up. Neither witness nor deceased called out. There was no danger from the steamer. Witness would have gone alone in the boat if deceased had not asked him to take him. One was enough to manage it. The collision took place about mid stream. If the barge had put her tiller the reverse way, she would have cleared them.

By Mr Gramshaw : The barge crossed the steamer's bows. She had her main, jib and foresails set. Could not say if the mizzen was set. Saw only one man on her, and he was at the tiller. The mainsail would interfere with his seeing the boat. He could not see underneath it without stooping. The *Alfred* was 21 feet long. Believed the barge was light and would go much faster than the *Alfred*. Deceased was capable of helping witness if required.

William Taylor said he was mate of the barge *James*, 59 tons, belonging to **William Groom** of Harwich. Had left Dover on Saturday afternoon. On Sunday about 3 am, when abreast Thames Haven, witness took the tiller from the captain while he went below to drink some tea. Saw no vessel except the steamer, which was about three quarters of a mile off, coming down ; all sails were set. The wind was about WNW, and the tide about three quarters flood ; never saw the *Alfred*. Witness's attention was directed to keep clear of the steamer. When they crossed the steamer's bows, they hit the *Alfred*. Saw her sails pass the barge just before the collision, and put the helm hard up ; they were going three or four miles an hour. The captain had come up before the collision ; he stood by the tiller. When he came up, he saw the sails of the *Alfred* and told witness to bear up, that is to starboard the helm. Witness did so, but it was too late. If it had been done before, the collision would have been prevented. Expected it was because they were thinking about making some tea that they neglected to look out as they should have done ; saw deceased and White in the water ; did all he could ; picked up White first in a small boat and afterwards deceased. He seemed to be dead, and was put on board the steamer. Came to Gravesend in the steamer, which turned back to land deceased and White. Every effort was made to bring deceased to.

By a Juror : When there are two men on board, it is usual for one to look out.

By Mr Gramshaw : If anyone had been looking out, they could easily have avoided the collision.

By the owner's representative : Was on the starboard tack. It was right to give way to another vessel. When on the starboard tack, considered themselves safe whatever was in the way. If he had put the helm down, the collision could not have been avoided.

Henry Harding of Harwich, master of the barge, corroborated, and said that when he came from below, the steamer was not three quarters but about a quarter of a mile off. They were then crossing her head. Saw the sail of the *Alfred* pass the bowsprit as he came from the cabin. She was under the bowsprit then. Got the boat out at once, and the mate got into it. There was no fog. The master and mate were the usual number on board. Some barges had a boy. Not many belonging to their place had more than two on board. The owner had twelve or thirteen barges. It was mostly the custom for one man to look out and attend to the sails.

By Mr Gramshaw : If they had seen the *Alfred* earlier, the collision could have been avoided. 59 was the registered tonnage ; the gross tonnage was about 100.

By the representative of the barge owner : Had been master of a barge many years. On a starboard tack he would keep on his course. It was the duty of a boat on a port helm to look out.

White, recalled, said that at the time of the collision, deceased was below making the kettle boil. Could not have done more than he did after seeing the barge to avoid the collision. Did not see the barge till a little before the collision took place.

PS Porter said that about 6.30 am on Sunday, he received the body from the Captain of the steamer *Europe*, lying off the Terrace Pier. Had it conveyed to the mortuary. Found on it £2 10s 2 1/2d, a purse, knife, box, spectacles and tobacco. The story told by the Captain agreed with the evidence now given. But he said he did not see the collision.

The Coroner, in summing up, said there was an impression that barges could go where they liked

and everyone must get out of their way. Of course it was not so. He did not think the evidence in this case showed there had been such culpable neglect as could make the parties liable for deceased's death, but he must say that a much better system of looking out was needed. The look out in this case had been scarcely as it should have been.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death", commended the efforts of White to save deceased, and the conduct of the captain of the *Europe* in returning to Gravesend with White and deceased, and expressed the opinion that the barge ought to have had a third hand.

The Coroner said he entirely agreed with them. Illness or many things might occur to render a third hand necessary. If there had been a third hand, the accident would probably not have occurred.

Mr Groom's representative said he would report the recommendation of the jury. It was usually left to the masters of barges to engage what hands they thought needful.

The Coroner said it ought not to be left to them.

30 20 July 1889

FATAL ACCIDENT AT SOUTHCHURCH BEACH

KNOCKED INTO THE SEA BY THE TILLER On Tuesday afternoon an inquest was held at the Watch Tower, Coastguard Station, before Mr J Harrison jun, coroner, and a jury over whom Mr W Page was foreman, touching the death of **Albert Carter**, aged 16, mate of the barge *Four Brothers*, who was found drowned on Monday evening at 6.30 pm by John W Atlass, a coastguard. The latter, having obtained assistance, conveyed the poor fellow to the boathouse, where every possible means of restoring animation was resorted to, but without success.

The following evidence was given :-

Arthur Carter, lad, said that deceased was his brother. He lived at 43 Chester Street, East Greenwich. His father's name was Henry Carter. Witness was third hand on board the *Four Brothers* of Greenwich, which belonged to **Mr Beckett**. Deceased was 16 years of age. Witness had seen deceased's body and identified him. He last saw deceased alive on Monday afternoon on board the barge, and then deceased took a pail and got into the boat to bail her out ; witness never saw him alive again. The waves were very high, and the barge was well out from the jetty. Deceased could swim a little. Witness thought deceased tried to get on the barge and that the tiller knocked him overboard.

By a juror : It was at the time when the squall came on.

John William Atlass (Altass?), a coastguardsman, said he lived at the Coastguard Station, Southchurch. He found deceased at 6.20 pm about 100 yards from the beach, lying on the sands face downwards. He reported it to the chief officer, and the body was then brought into the boathouse.

Thomas John Barnfield said he was captain of the barge *Four Brothers*. Deceased was mate. He saw deceased at 3.30 pm on the barge as deceased's brother put him on shore. Deceased could swim a little, In his opinion, as the deceased was getting on board, the tiller hit him. Witness thought so by the way the tiller and boat were made fast to the barge. Deceased was not subject to fits.

William Jas Thomas, a coastguard living at Southchurch station, said it was about half past six when witness got a ladder and went to fetch deceased ashore. He was not warm for half an hour. He and his officer tried to restore animation, but without success.

Dr C F Jones said he had examined the body ; there were no cuts about it to speak about. The left ear was cut a little and grazed but that might have been done by crabs. The cause of death would be suffocation from drowning.

Henry Carter, father of deceased, said deceased had never had any fits and could swim but very little.

The Foreman : I think the explanation given by deceased's brother and the captain is very clear.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

31 20 July 1889

RAINHAM

BARGE BURGLARY James Hodgson, John Donovan and Henry Adams were severally charged with breaking into the barge *Balmoral* at Rainham on the 16th inst, and stealing therefrom a number of articles to the value of 10s. Prisoners admitted the offence. Evidence was given by Mr Vinton, PC Frederick Unwin, Henry Lock and Henry Pearl. As Donovan and Adams had been convicted before, they were sentenced to two months' hard labour, and Hodgson to one.

32 10 August 1889

It is high time that the County Councils bestirred themselves in the matter of river pollution. Lancashire has led the way, but London as yet is not at all equal to its duties in this respect. The Lea, which is the stream par excellence of North Londoners, and which flows through dense centres of population, is worse in its filth and poison than the Thames was in its worst days. But, on a summer afternoon, the stench that used to steal through the windows of the Houses of Parliament took hold of the legislative nose and roused the members to action. The Lea, spite of complaints that have been persistently made for years, is allowed to reek on. It is so bad this year that a representation has just been made in Parliament that a boy has been killed by typhoid fever, contracted by bathing in that disgusting river. The head of the Local Government Board says he does not know what Corporation is to blame, but he will make inquiries. That is always the answer. What the Government should do is to instruct the Public Prosecutor to proceed against either the West Ham Corporation or Lea Conservancy, or both, for the manslaughter of this boy.

33 17 August 1889

LEIGH

INQUEST ON THE BODY OF A DROWNED COCKLER On Friday an inquest was held at the Smack Inn, before Mr J Harrison jun, coroner, and a jury, on the body of John Brown, a fisherman, who was found floating in the water by Henry Kirby of Leigh.

William Brown, waterman, Southend, said deceased was his brother. He was 38 years of age and lived at Benfleet. He last saw him alive three months ago. He had seen the body and identified it.

Henry Kirby said he lived at Leigh. On Thursday while fishing he saw the body in the water, and he brought it to shore in a boat.

PC Davidson gave evidence as to taking charge of the body.

William Burgess of South Benfleet said he saw deceased about 4 am on the 2nd, going down to the boat. He said he was going to Gravesend. There was a stiff breeze blowing.

A man named Wadden then made a statement, after which the jurors said they were satisfied that deceased met his death accidentally.

The Coroner said the only verdict they could return was one of found drowned.

The jury then returned a verdict to that effect.

34 17 August 1889

DEATH OF MR J H SIMS From Grays has been taken in the person of the above-named one of its oldest, most respected and highly esteemed of its residents. The deceased gentleman was attacked about six weeks ago by typhoid fever, and was attended by Messrs Roworth and Daunt. About a week ago, he became decidedly worse, and a physician was sent for from London. He came and pronounced the opinion that deceased would recover, and this opinion was also held by the local medical advisers to within a few days of death. Notwithstanding all their efforts, he succumbed on Sunday afternoon last. In Mr Sims, Grays has lost one of its best friends. He was a typical "John Bull" type of an Englishman, and was honourably known for his geniality, outspokenness, open-handedness and free-heartedness. Everything that concerned the well-being of those around him he was always willing to help, from the highest to the lowest. General and genuine sorrow was felt in Grays at the lamentable news of his death. On all sides – politically and socially – he was esteemed, and his high integrity won for him the position of almost the best

known man in the town. In politics he was a Conservative, but always enjoyed the respect of the other side. It can be truly said of him that of friends he had many, and enemies none. Mr Sims had lived in Grays nearly all his lifetime, and was 49 years of age at the time of his death – his birthday being 11 days subsequent to the sad occurrence. Previously to taking the Rising Sun, he was captain of a barge for the Grays Chalk Quarries Company ; but although he gave up his vocation as a waterman, he never severed his connections with the friends and mates of early years. He held the Rising Sun for upwards of 26 years, during which time he filled almost every office for almost every conceivable club, and has also occupied many public positions, he being roads' surveyor before the present Local Board was constituted as well as an overseer and an assessor of taxes. He was also at one time president of the Essex Equitable Building Society and of the Licensed Victuallers' Protection Association.

Up to within a year, Mr Sims had been one of the leading cricketers of the place, and his person was a well known figure in the field. Mr Sims was married twice, his second wife surviving him. The first wife died at the same house of the same complaint as deceased ; who was a member of Grays Local Board and Orsett Board of Guardians, and was the returning officer at the first election of the former body.

THE FUNERAL took place on Thursday in the churchyard, in the presence of a very large gathering of friends and relations. The coffin, which was of polished oak with brass furniture, was carried by 12 of the watermen, and was covered all over with beautiful wreaths composed of roses, immortelles, camellias, stephenotis, eucharist lilies, jessamine, with maiden hair fern, and other lovely specimens of horticulture, sent by a host of sympathetic relatives, friends and acquaintances. Some of the inscriptions were as follows :- “The Grays Publicans, with deepest sympathy”. “In loving memory of our dear grandpa, Frankie and Willie “, these are Mr Kimbell's children. “With Mr and Mrs Lacquire's deepest sympathy”. “From Mr and Mrs James Howell, with deepest sympathy”. “A token of respect from the Little Thurrock Cricket Club and East End Sports' Committee”. “Deep and respectful sympathy, Aveley Cricket Club”. “ASOE Grays”. “From members of the Grays Amateur Athletic Club with deep sympathy”. “From members of the Grays Habitation of the Primrose League, No 1,725, as a tribute of affection and respect”. “A tribute of respect from the Rising Sun Slate Club, Grays”. “From the directors of the Essex Equitable Building Society with sincere sympathy”. Wreaths were also sent by Mr and Mrs Cox, Mrs Hughes, Masonic Lodge, Mrs M A Claus, Mr and Mrs J Higgins, Mrs Elphick (Gravesend), Mr G Oakley sen and jun, Mr Pertree and Mrs Wilkerson.

Amongst the large gathering were Inspector Jordan, Messrs J E Potter, Horncastle sen and jun, J G Ker, James Howell, G Bohn, Tuffee, Hopcraft, Clements, Warboys, J Higgins, Kent, C E Cobham (surveyor to the Local Board), J Howell sen, Sackett, Lecquire, Rev H S Haslock, Messrs Aylen, Rowley, Homersham (postmaster), Philcox, a deputation from the Essex Licensed Victuallers' Association consisting of Messrs Chown and Tron (past presidents), President Langman, Mr Councillor Knowler, Mr Henson and Mr Elliott Seabrooke (secretary), Messrs J Golden jun, Pelling and Bristow (church wardens), Cook (Grays), C Westwood, F Wagstaff, T Baldwin, Phillips, Watts, jun Seabrooke, Streeter, Bannister, Philbey, Shadbolt, T Hall, Willmot, C Howe, Garrad, Samson, A W Boatman, E T Bible, Charles Seabrooke, Michell, Beale, E R Parker (chairman of the Grays Local Board), R H Williams JP, Dover (Tilbury Docks), Cook (Aveley) and many others. All the visitors were arranged by Mr James Howell in a double line down the church path, through which the coffin passed, followed by the three sons of the deceased – Henry, William and George – Mr Frank Kimbell, his son-in-law, and several other relatives.

During the time of the funeral, all the shops in Grays were shut, and the blinds of private houses drawn. The coffin was met at the church gate by the Rev Walter Bleasby, who performed the last ceremony in the absence of the Rev R H Brenan. The scene at the graveside was touching ; strong men wept, one of them having to be led away after a farewell look at the last long resting place of his old friend. The coffin bore the inscription, “John Henry Sims, born 22nd August 1839, died 11 August 1889”. Into the grave had already been placed the deceased's mother and father, the former of whom was drowned in London Docks. On all sides, regret is expressed.

The funeral arrangements were admirably carried out by Mr Arthur E C Crouch.

35 17 August 1889

THE THAMES HAVEN EXPLOSION

THE MISSING MAN FOUND – INQUEST AND INQUIRY On Monday afternoon, the adjourned inquest on the body of **Robert Evans**, an able seaman belonging to the schooner *Catarina*, which on the 19th ult, while lying off Thames Haven with a cargo of spirits of naphtha, was blown up. The body was picked up off Southend Pier by George Culham, a fisherman, while fishing on Thursday morning, the 25th July.

The Coroner, in opening the inquiry, said that Superintendent Hawtree had circulated a description of the body, and it had been identified as that of Robert Evans, able seaman on the *Catarina*, which was blown up on the 19th ult, while lying off Thames Haven, having a cargo of petroleum of 375 barrels. The captain, who was on board down in the cabin, was blown through the skylight, and one son, named Ellis, was blown into the water, where he was picked up by a passing boat. He should enquire into the circumstances as far as possible. The Board of Trade would hold an enquiry on Tuesday.

John Evans, father of deceased, said he was captain of the schooner *Catarina* ; he lived at Pwhelli, North Wales. He was the owner of the schooner. On July 17th he was at Thames Haven at the Petroleum Stores Wharf, and took a cargo of petroleum in, of 375 barrels. After the vessel was laden, it was moored in the river. On Friday, the day of the explosion, she was lying in the river, and at about 12 am the explosion occurred. He was lying down on the locker in the cabin, his eldest son being with him. His other two sons, Robert and Ellis Evans, were on deck. Witness and his son John got out through the skylight. John got a boat ready, and witness looked for Robert, but could not find him. He had examined some clothing, and he identified them as belonging to his son Robert. He was quite sure deceased was his son. He could not tell how the explosion occurred ; he could not even give any surmise ; he did not know whether there was any light on board in the morning ; he could swear no one was smoking.

By a Juror : There was no light in the forecabin.

By another Juror : The hatches were on, and the tarpaulin over them.

John Evans said he was on board the *Catarina* at the time of the explosion. He was burnt, and had to go to Gravesend Hospital ; he did not know what caused the explosion. No one was smoking ; there had been a fire in the galley in the early part of the morning. Deceased was on deck.

Ellis Evans said he was on deck at the time of the explosion. Deceased was on the windlass handle ; he was blown overboard into the water ; there was no light ; nobody was smoking ; his father smoked.

James West said he was a waterman at Thames Haven. On the 18th July, while he was at the Petroleum Works, the explosion occurred about three minutes to twelve on the *Catarina*. She burst for'ard first, the wreckage went up into the air, then burnt to the water's edge, when she sank. He saw a boy in the water, and he ran down and got into the boat and picked him up. The vessel was about 100 yards from the shore at the time, and was completely destroyed and sunk. She kept afloat two hours. The cargo was spirits of naphtha, which was very strong.

By Mr Sykes : There is no ventilation on board the vessel ; it might have ignited from the vapour being closed in.

John Evans, recalled, said his vessel was not insured, and he had lost his all.

Verdict, "Accidental death".

QUERY, "DEATH SHIPS"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GRAYS AND TILBURY GAZETTE

Sir – I don't know whether the large number of questions I put to the witnesses at the recent inquest will be reported or not, but I think, for the public good, it is my duty to explain what my aim was in putting those questions, as the report may not be a verbatim one.

The spirit which was stored in the ill-fated *Katarina* (*sic*) is, I understand, of such a nature that it is

impossible to prevent the volatile vapour escaping from even the best of casks which may contain it.

The moment the material is exposed to air, it becomes highly inflammable, and if in an atmosphere where there is, say, only five parts of air to one of the vapour, this is the most highly dangerous condition under which the stuff could be placed.

The witnesses from the naphtha stores admitted that they had two big doors at the works, one at each end, and that these were necessary for ventilating purposes.

To store the spirit in the ordinary hold of a vessel and shut down the hatches (the captain or his son said they were shut) is, it appears to me, the wrong thing to do.

Of course the poor ruined and bereaved captain had no scientific knowledge on the subject, and thought that the proper thing to do. But why did not the harbour master caution and instruct him, as is that official's duty (according to the evidence), and as was not done (also according to the evidence)?

I sought to find out how it could be that this dangerous material should be stowed below without a big ventilating shaft being fitted at each end of the vessel to make a brisk current of air pass through, also to carry the vapours high above the heads of the crew and above the lights, which it was absolutely impossible for them to do without when on a voyage.

I am instructed that it is absolutely impossible to explode the vapour without fire, or metal &c, at a white heat, being somewhere in the vessel. We had no evidence of anything of the latter nature being aboard, and I could see no other way than to agree with the whole of the other jurymen, who declared it "accidental". The actual exploding of the spirit was without doubt "accidental" ; but I shall not rest in comfort on this matter until I find that the Board of Trade enquiry, which the Coroner said would be held, has fully declared its opinion as to the legality of using vessels not properly prepared for the carriage of explosives.

If it was wrong to use such an ordinary vessel as that of Captain Evans, then that unfortunate man should be fully recompensed by those who, knowing the danger, did not guard against it if it existed.

Yours obediently,
JOHN KEITH SYKES

36 24 August 1889

THE THAMES SAILING BARGE MATCH

VICTORY OF A GRAYS BOAT On Thursday this annual event took place over the usual course, from Erith round the Nore and back to the starting point, a distance of about sixty miles, for a cup value £25 and £5 5s to the crew. The weather was rather unpropitious, but despite the drawbacks, no fewer than nine vessels started, among which was the *Gazelle*, belonging to Messrs E J and W Goldsmith. This vessel was second round the Nore Lighthouse, took the lead when about opposite Sheerness, and maintained it to the finish, coming in a winner by 16 mins 30 secs. The vessel showed fine weatherly qualities, and was skilfully handled.

37 24 August 1889

PETTY SESSIONS

ALL THROUGH THE REGATTA **William Wheeler**, a waterman, was charged with assaulting Emily Muriel Redford and PC Watson. Mr G Clinch appeared for defendant. E M Redford said that on Tuesday after 10pm she was in Terrace Gardens, when defendant touched her on the arm. Witness told him to take it away, but he would not. After speaking to him three times, she struck him with an umbrella. He took it from her and dashed her to the ground, and she lay there till the police picked her up. She was not sure that he struck her with the umbrella. Cross-examined : Struck him on the arm ; he took hold of her and slung her round ; supposed he pushed her ; she was not much hurt. PC Walters said he saw defendant push or violently throw complainant to the ground ; she became senseless. On the way to the station, defendant became very violent and refused to go any further. He threw PC Watson against a fence ; witness went to Watson's

assistance. Defendant was drunk and very violent, and they had to handcuff him. PC Watson corroborated, and said that he saw a female fall, and went after defendant and brought him back. He struggled and bit, and two other constables had to be called to get him to the station. Mr Clinch said that defendant had been rowing in the regatta, and on coming ashore several friends asked him to drink with them, and he got a little too much. He remembered nothing of what was stated to have occurred, and wished to apologise for any wrong that he might have done. Fined 42s and costs.

38 31 August 1889

THE GREAT STRIKE AT GRAYS

SATURDAY Numerous meetings were held on Saturday, and the men seemed more determined by their lusty cheering to refuse to give in until they had obtained what they considered their just rights. A notable feature was a large poster displayed by the “boycotted baker” (Mr Johnson) to the effect that he had discontinued supplying “the staff of life” to the Canteen at the Docks. As on previous occasions, the meetings were extremely orderly, and the men in the best of spirits and more hopeful than ever.

SUNDAY Even “the day of rest” was not allowed to pass by without its demonstration. In the morning, a procession was formed in the High Street, headed by a band with a profuse display of bunting, including large banners and numerous “smaller fry”. The procession numbered between 2,000 and 3,000, and was the largest of the kind ever seen here. They marched through the principal streets, making a halt at the old resting place “under the lamp”, where the inevitable speechmaking was gone through, and the same “old story” told over again. Although the police were in good force, their services were not required. It was intended at first by the strikers to go to church, but for some reason this plan was not adhered to, and the men dispersed quietly about one o'clock.

MONDAY

BROOKS'S MEN CLAIM AND GET AN ADVANCE – THEREUPON GREAT CHEERING – THE OTHER CEMENT HANDS TURN OUT Early in the morning, a rumour that Brooks's men had struck was prevalent. But the rumour was, happily, not totally true. As a matter of fact, the employees at this world famed cement factory were met by their employer, Mr R W Brooks, coming out of the works at an early hour in the morning, and were asked the reason of it.

“Oh, we want 10 per cent more on our wages”, was the reply.

“Why did you not ask me on Sunday?” Mr Brooks retorted. “Go back to your work ; you can have it”.

With a ringing cheer for their employers, the men obeyed his behest and returned to their labour. But the lightermen – who were undoubtedly receiving “a fair day's pay for a fair day's work” - struck for still higher wages, and their requests were emphatically refused by Mr Brooks. The demands of the coopers were not acceded to with so much celerity, and were reserved for consideration. Later in the day Mr Brooks gave them what they asked for. The lightermen paraded Grays streets in the morning, and aired their grievances ; which really we are bound to say were fanciful, if not decidedly extravagant. Mr Brooks had, however, given his decision with regard to this contingent of his employees, and there the matter remained.

After the day's work was over, the men on the firm testified their appreciation of their governors' generous dealing with them by getting up a demonstration of thanks. It consisted of a waggon (with the genial Mr Simpson in the foreground) bearing an inscription to the effect that friendship reigned between employer and employed. With this, the men went up to “Duvals”, the home of the senior partner, and formally by resolution thanked him heartily for what he had done.

Mr Brooks, in reply, expressed his great pleasure at the unanimity that prevailed between himself and men ; which he hoped would long continue. But of one thing he was certain, and that was that he would not give in to the unjust demands of the lightermen. [These latter earn between £2 15s and £3 15s a week.]

Messrs Gibbs' men, learning an advance of ten per cent had been given to their confrères, determined to discontinue working until they were similarly treated. They therefore at once joined

the army of strikers. Their demand was undoubtedly a just one, and such a one as should have been granted with but minimum delay. One of their foremen (Mr "Toby" Allison) met Mr Collins, the managing director of the firm, in the afternoon, on his return from London, and laid the case of the men before him, but was informed that no decision could be arrived at that day, and unless the men would go the next morning to work at the old rate, the factory would be closed. The men at their gathering in the evening seemed to think that under the prevailing circumstances that was about the best thing that could be done, and were not at all averse to having what they considered would be a week's holiday for them.

During the day, the men at the Lion Cement and Tunnel Works came out, and, with Gibbs' men, marched in procession, amid much cheering, along the sea wall and through the High Street to the large open space opposite the Police Station, where the leaders of the different gangs addressed the men, and announced that they were determined to hold out until an advance of 10 per cent was conceded. One of the speakers also announced that, as in the majority of their cases the rise would mean 3s per week, they meant to give 2s 6d out of that towards the fund for supporting the "dockers".

As the evening advanced, High Street and New Road became well peopled ; in fact crowded in the neighbourhood of the great lamp. Wherever there was vantage ground, meetings were held, with no lack either of orators or auditors. The enthusiasm was intense and desperately catching. Between eight and nine o'clock, the town was processed by at least 5,000 people, with bands, banners, &c. Traffic for the time being was entirely suspended, and Mr Orbell (the secretary of one of the unions) was almost at his wit's end to decide as to what should be done with the men under his command, but after some little time, it was suggested that two meetings might be held. This was acted upon, one being held under the lamp and the other on the Green in the Grove.

At a small meeting in New Road, Mr "Toby" Allison, who was surrounded by his fellow workmen of Gibbs' factory, said they had come out because their neighbours on Messrs Brooks' factory had been given that which had been promised, but their masters wanted two or three days to consider about it. Mr Collins, the managing director of the firm, had told him that he would consider the proposal, and let them know his decision during the week, but unless all the men went back to their work next morning at the old price, he would have to close the works.

"What will you do?" shouted the speaker.

"Let him close", was the ready and unflinching response. "It will teach him a lesson".

THE CHARACTER OF MR BROOKS CLEARED The speaker, continuing, said three years ago, when the deduction of 10 per cent was taken off their wage, they were told it was the fault of Mr Brooks, but now they found it was not him any more than the rest ; but that it was an amalgamation of the companies. Anyhow, if Mr Brooks was the first to take it off, he was also the first to put it on. (Cheers). The speaker then urged the men to rally round and go with him the next morning to the factory to receive the answer of Mr Collins, and if that gentleman gave the 10 per cent, to go to work and help with their earnings the poor Dock labourers. If they got what they wanted, it was no use their keeping out, as they would have to be kept then ; but they must all pull together and work for those who were standing out. In conclusion, the speaker wished to inform all his hearers that they were not coming out, as some supposed, for 6d an hour, but simply asked their masters to fulfil their promises and put back what they took off three years ago.

Directly after the meeting, the men "spotted" Mr Slater, the chemist on the works, who told them straight out that "you deserve it, and you will get it". After this encouraging but exceedingly concise speech, the men gave three cheers for that gentleman, and dubbed him a "jolly good fellow".

At the meeting at the Grove, numerous speeches were made. Mr Evans presided.

Mr Orbell, the general secretary at Grays, was the first spokesman, and commenced by opining that there was yet a chance for the master and the labourer to shake hands with each other. He trusted all his hearers had obtained sufficient help to keep hunger from them, so that they would feel more determined than ever to stand out for their rights in the morning. Not because they had a lot of people there that night, but because he (the speaker) found that the Docks authorities were getting

frightened. In illustration of their grievance, he instanced the case of some of the men who had to mend a package, for which they obtained 1 1/2d, and they had to find their own materials, which cost 5d ; so that, without taking labour into consideration at all, they lost 3 1/2d over the job. He also told the meeting that the Docks people sweated them. They made them pay 22s per cwt for nails which they bought at 16s, and various other things, which he considered was a disgrace, but could not be denied. He characterized the leading men on the Docks as “nothing more than white slave drivers”. He was speaking to Mr Tillett the night before, who told him to stick to it, and to ask the men of Grays to stick to it as well. [“We will”.] Continuing, the speaker said that he heard Mr Brooks's men had turned out that day. He was given to understand that they got 3 1/2d an hour, and had gone in again because their wages had been raised to 4d. He was rather sorry at hearing that, not out of any disrespect towards Mr Brooks, but because he thought Mr Brooks could manage to pay his men more than 4d an hour - [“So he could”]. Although most of the men were permanent and did not lose much time, still Mr Brooks must know that a man could not support a wife and family on 4d an hour. (Cheers). But speaking of overtime, surely Mr Brooks did not want his men to work day and night in order that they might provide for their families. (“He does, 10 1/2 hours now”). He at one time thought Mr Brooks was a different man altogether ; he really began to think that he had a little feeling and love towards his men – (loud laughter and derisive cheers) – but he could not understand a man who wanted his people to work day and night for 4d an hour. He had been told Mr Brooks was a professing Christian man. (Loud cries of “Only on a Sunday”). He had not seen Mr Brooks to his knowledge, but he could not understand a gentleman being a Christian who shut up his “bowels of compassion”. (The speaker seemed to have forgotten that Mr Brooks had that day made a gift to his men of between £4,000 and £5,000 a year). He (the speaker) did not believe in a religion that compelled a man to work all hours while he who compelled them sat in his easy chair and smoked his pipe, if he liked it. But perhaps they might see Mr Brooks and come to some terms with him. They did not want to make enemies. He was very glad to shake hands with Mr Johnson (the baker who supplied the bread to the Docks). He believed before long Mr Johnson would send bread to support them. Mr King had promised 100 loaves, 80 of which had been sent. (Cheers). Mr Mundy was also going to give 200 loaves a week. (Hear, hear). Mr T Hill had also given 100 loaves, and Mr Potter, the butcher, had been very liberal to them.

Mr Howe was the next speaker. He said he was the representative of the Stevedore's Society. Mr Hugh Webster, the Liberal candidate for Plaistow, had given £25, and had promised to give the same amount each day whilst the strike continued. With regard to Mr Brooks's men, the speaker said if they came out from a firm, and their just demands were granted, they were perfectly justified in going back. But not as Mr Brooks's men had, for some of them had gone in and left their mates outside. (Cries of “Blacklegs”).

Mr T Nicholls then spoke, urging the men to stick together. The latter gentleman said he believed, if he could have taken 40 or 50 cement labourers over to Northfleet, the men over there would have come out, and as it was he thought they would come out tomorrow (Tuesday). He said Mr Brooks's men had gone in again for a “lousy” 10 per cent. If the men were not worth 6d a hour, then they should go to the workhouse. If they were willing to do a fair day's work, they should demand from the masters a fair day's pay. (Cheers).

A man in the crowd here said that what they wanted was for the masters to share the profits with the men.

Mr Simpson, of the Seamen and Firemen Society, told his hearers there was a barge going away that night with the young governor and two “clowns” on board. They (his hearers) knew the rule of the river. They must look out for her, seize her, and get their tide's work done. (Cheers). He hoped they would look after her. In conclusion, he urged the men to stick to it tooth and nail, and if they won this time, in the future the men would not have to go and ask, but the masters would ask them what they would take.

The Chairman then gave a short address, in which he alluded to Mr Brooks. He said a man who gave without charity had better not give at all. What could they think of a man who gave £5 to every society in the place, and paid so badly the men who worked for him? He was glad to see

some of the cement people had come out, and he hoped others would follow their example. Several other speakers followed, and the meeting broke up with cheers for everybody who had helped in the cause.

The Chairman announced that the sum of £8 4s 7d had been collected on Sunday.

TUESDAY The day's work commenced with a meeting "under the lamp" at about 9 am ; Mr E H Nicholls (representing the watermen and lightermen) addressed the men at some length. At the conclusion of the meeting, a monster procession was formed, and marched down High Street and along London Road to the sea wall, in the following order, viz, lightermen and watermen, with their large banner and several flags ; stevedores, with their banner and small flags ; the "scurfer boys" in full working attire, and displaying their tools, consisting of a long flat iron chisel with a short pointed hammer ; and last, but not least, a large number of factory and brickfield hands. They went through Messrs Brooks, Shoobridge and Co's factory (loudly cheering Mr Alfred Brooks, whom they met on the way), also through the Lion Cement Co's and Messrs Gibbs's factories, where they were reinforced and enlivened by the West Thurrock Brass Band, also by about 500 more labourers. The procession then marched back through the factories into Grays, the West Thurrock portion of the men breaking off in London Road. Their band struck up again and, headed by that, they marched to their respective homes. At Messrs Brooks's factory, Mr E H Nicholls made a speech, urging the men to stand out for 6d an hour, but was replied to by the cement men with groans and the answer that they had got what they wanted and would not come out any more. They said they were satisfied with their masters and did not care about anybody else. Mr Nicholls told them that by their hooting they were very likely to cause a riot, and he did not think their masters would thank them for that. From Brooks's, the procession, as stated before, wended its way to the Lion Cement Works, where the manager said he was willing to give the employees 20 per cent rise ; whereat the men gave him three ringing cheers. He said all he wanted was them to come to work, but his labourers said that, although they thanked him very much for his liberal concession, they would not go in until the other cement workmen had received what they asked for. Ringing cheers greeted this statement. They were also determined to stand by the watermen and lightermen until they got their rights. From the Lion Works, the men went to the Tunnel Factory, where the manager would not alter the existing terms of 4 1/2d per hour, and the men turned away (according to one of the Dock strikers) discontented and disgusted. The men wanted there to be no subcontractors, but that the firm would pay them what they now paid the contractor. Messrs Gibbs's manager has promised his decision on Saturday, and therefore until that day the men remain out. The men at the Grays Chalk Quarries Company struck during the morning, but it was reported they would go in on Wednesday, as the Company had conceded a rise of five per cent, which thoroughly satisfied the men. In the evening, the usual monster procession was formed. Enthusiastic meetings were held both "under the lamp" and on the Green, and which were addressed by Mr Orbell and various other speakers. The prevailing idea with respect to Messrs Brooks's men was that they ought to have stood out for 6d an hour, and even when they had got that, to have further stood out on principle until all the other cement labourers' demands were acceded to. One speaker characterised their procedure as "man eat man", and said they ought to be fetched out. One feature of the evening's proceedings was the fireworks displayed by Mr Potter, butcher of High Street. Mr Orbell made an announcement to the effect that he had received a telegram apprising him of the discharge of Mr Norwood, and this intelligence evoked the highest enthusiasm. Mr Orbell mentioned that Mr Banks had promised 200 loaves. The meeting broke up with a cheer for all helpers. During the day, cheers, again and again renewed, were given for the police, for the admirable and unobtrusive manner in which they had acted towards the men on strike.

WEDNESDAY Not much agitation work was done in the early part of the day. The lightermen and watermen paraded the town with their banners, and either cheered or hooted the inhabitants and tradesmen. In the evening, the meeting at the top of High Street was addressed by Messrs Wheeler (chairman) and John Simpson, the latter making the announcement that all the wharf owners on both sides of the river had given in to the men's terms. This announcement was loudly applauded. The usual meeting was held on the green after the procession, and a smaller meeting was held

“under the lamp”.

The “Tunnel” workmen went in during the morning, with the object of helping with their rise their fellow workmen who were on strike. The Chalk Quarry men also went to work on an advance.

THURSDAY The enthusiasm at Grays on this day was somewhat on the wane, as all the strikers except Gibbs's men (and with the exception, of course, of the Dockies) had returned to work, and had humanely decided to help Gibbs's men with the rise in wages they have obtained. In the morning, a small meeting was held opposite the Police Station, when “Toby” Allison, a foreman in Messrs Gibbs's employ, said they were determined to stick out until they got what they asked for (10 per cent), and if the answer could not be given before Monday, the men would not work until then. He thanked all the men who had so nobly stood by them, and those who were going to pecuniarily help them as well. In the evening, a meeting took place “under the lamp”, and the meeting in the Grove was done away with, thus showing that interest was diminishing. Nevertheless, the men showed no sign of giving in. Mr Orbell and several of his co-workers gave addresses.

FRIDAY The “striking” feature of this day's proceedings was the procession of women and children. They met at the Bank corner and paraded the streets. The pickets reported that a lot of men had been “trundled” in the north end gate in North London carriages. This success of the Dock authorities has caused a great amount of dissatisfaction amongst the strikers. Gibbs's men held a meeting in the morning, and again determined to hold out until Monday.

In the evening's processions were carried effigies of “black legs” who had gone into the Docks.

AT TILBURY

From the time of our last issue, the Tilbury men continued their efforts with quiet energy and an increase of numbers. Apparently in good spirits, they presented a very different appearance from the dejected men who congregated outside the Dock gates at the last strike. The strikers believed the number of men at work in the Docks was very small, and their pickets had met several small parties of men going to the Docks under police escort. On being remonstrated with, they refused to go to work. It was also stated that in their efforts to get men in, the Dock Company had dressed labourers up as clerks, providing them with a tweed suit, walking stick and a black bag. We understand that the Italian steamer had to leave the Docks without taking in coal. On

SATURDAY

several addresses were delivered outside the Docks. In the evening, a party went over to Gravesend and held an open air meeting. The Seamen's and Firemen's Union having decided to support the labourers, and sent agents to assist at Tilbury, seamen and firemen refused to sign on for the Orient mail steamer *Liguria*.

MONDAY Meetings were again held at Tilbury, addressed by Mr Orbell and others.

TUESDAY At 11.30 (as well as at other times) a meeting was held outside the Dock gates ; audience over 100. The first speaker was Mr Orbell, who said he once worked in the Docks at London, but through his sympathy with the labourers was a marked man, could get no work, and was obliged to turn to cabinet making. He had got a holiday to come down and help. The directors had said men had not been taken on for one or two hours, and that this was not allowed. Those present knew very well it was done. If not allowed, shame on those who did it.

Mr Simpson, representing the Seamen's and Firemen's Union, said Gravesend wanted stirring up. There were no speakers there. Before they went in, they should stipulate to have the north gate of the Docks opened again for the benefit of those who wanted to walk to Grays. (Hear, hear, and cries of “I'll second that”.)

Mr Orbell said that a friend present, who said that he was a representative of the Liverpool men, informed him that , though not instructed to make any statement, he could tell them that the Liverpool men would not discharge the cargo of any ship coming there instead of to London. Mr Orbell went on to say this was the largest strike ever known ; and it was never known for such a large number of men to conduct themselves in such an orderly manner. At Tilbury, he knew of only one man who had misconducted himself, and he was drunk at the time. The men were winning ;

indeed they had won. The masters were discouraged ; the men confident. The masters had lied ; the men were true. The masters had said they could do what they liked with the men ; that men had not been employed for only one or two hours ; that by Sunday the backbone of the men would be broken. All these statements had been proved untrue.

In the evening, another visit was paid to Gravesend, and a large number followed the banner. The streets were paraded, and addresses delivered.

WEDNESDAY A meeting outside the Docks was addressed by Mr Wilson, general secretary, Seamen's and Firemen's Union, who urged the men to hold together and maintained that they would be sure to win. Mr Simpson of the same society followed. Mr Orbell thanked Mr Wilson for coming among them, and hoped he would pay them another visit. Mr Simpson said he would be pleased to come again, but he had now to go to Southampton to dissuade men from working ships that came from London. A resolution was passed to stand out until successful.

Food tickets were distributed as usual. A working man gave 50 loaves and a quantity of cheese, which was shared among about 150 men at the committee room in Church Road.

In the afternoon, Mr Orbell went over to Gravesend and arranged a meeting there. The room was filled to the door. Mr Orbell explained the objects and rules of the Labourers' Union, and a resolution was passed to adhere to the strike.

In the evening, the Gravesend men with their banner paraded the town.

In the afternoon, the *Liguria*, the Orient Mail steamer for Australia, not due to leave until Friday, left for Plymouth with cargo incomplete, and a short and, as the men say, extemporised crew, formed partly of boilermakers "flunkeys" &c, to carry her round, there to complete her loading, crew and passengers.

THURSDAY At Tilbury, several representatives of the Stevedores' Society addressed the men, and urged them to hold together, telling them the London men showed no sign of giving way. Considerable amusement was caused by one who announced himself as a friend, and asked permission to speak. In the course of his remarks, he said he was a commercial traveller, and hearing that men with black bags and walking sticks were coming down to work at Tilbury, he prepared himself, but his speech betrayed him, and his services were declined.

About 370 loaves were distributed at the committee room – the gifts of Grays tradesmen, 200 from Mr Banks, 100 from Mr Mundy and 70 from Mr Hills.

The Gravesend men again paraded the town.

FRIDAY It was said that 100 to 180 men from Liverpool went into the Docks early in the morning, being carried in by the train. An unusually large number entered the Dock gates from the trains later on, considering that no vessels were leaving, many of whom were thought to be going on as labourers. 40 or 50 went in from the train arriving about 11 o'clock.

An effigy representing the disguised labourers was displayed on a pole outside the Ship, dressed in a genteel suit with the black bag and walking stick, and a newspaper in his hand. A placard was hung round his neck :- "New Dockers, take a truck", and on the bag was chalked, "My old clothes are in this bag".

STRONG LANGUAGE During the speeches, Mr Evans referred to the men who had got into the Docks and to those tradesmen who sent in food for them, and recommended the men on strike to do their best to drive custom from such tradesmen's shops. They had heard that morning that the railway authorities had thought fit to support the dock authorities in their rascality. If such was the case, he would not answer for the consequences. He should not like to see any accident ; but they would have to do more than they had done yet. (Hear, hear, and cries of "Vengeance".) He intended to write to the railway authorities to know what they intended to do. If something were not done shortly, they would be losers. If the Tilbury men went to work, there would be no settlement for 12 months. He urged the men to hold together as hitherto. The men cheered, and separated into angry and excited groups, freely expressing their indignation against the Liverpool men who had got in, and discussing what ought to be done, in anything but a conciliatory spirit. On one of the strikers in Gravesend being told of the Liverpool men coming down, he said, "Now there'll be a ruction".

Further addresses were delivered at Tilbury between 8 and 9 pm to a perfectly orderly audience. Mr Orbell brought down from London about 150 each 6d and 1s food tickets.

GETTING THE LIVERPOOL MEN OUT Between six and seven o'clock, four of the Liverpool men who had gone into the Docks were got out, and received with loud cheers by the crowd outside the Dock gates. Their fares will be paid back to Liverpool by the Strike Committee.

AT GRAVESEND

A meeting was held on Friday afternoon, when Mr Orbell said that those present had perhaps heard rumours as to Tilbury. The night before last, they heard that 500 men were going into the Docks to work. The police also heard that 500 strikers were going to march into the Docks. Both sides sought the 500, but did not find them. This morning at 3.30, a special train ran into the docks from Liverpool. It brought 102 men. But the strikers need not be discouraged ; 102 men could not do the work ; ships could not be loaded, and if loaded, they could not get them away. They got on the bridge and called to these men to come out, but they would not. He had met some men from inside, and they said that three parts of the men there would be glad to come out, but were afraid, as they were told by foremen they would be flattened by the strikers. (A voice : Go in and flatten them). They knew that was false. They had adopted means to get these men out. None could say they had threatened them. When men had proposed to him to stop men who were at work, he had at once said, "No". The Dock Company paid 9d a meal for these men, who were charged with half the cost. As to their beds, they had plenty of company, and some had brought in dogs

To kill the rats,
That worried the men,
That slept in the sheds at Tilbury.

He believed they would be out that night. He hoped the strikers would remember those who did not come out. They should not throw them in the dock, but should refuse when they had got their demands to handle a truck till such fellows were thrown out. They must abstain from violence, otherwise they would lose public sympathy. If they lost that, they were done for. The police of Grays had behaved to them like gentlemen (voices all over the room : "So they have here") - and the Dock police were improving. Some of them had threatened to put some men of a picket away to Grays. If the Dock police started the intimidation, the men would have to follow. After the meeting, the men marched to Northfleet.

UNSUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS Soon after eleven o'clock on Tuesday morning, negotiations were commenced between the strikers on the one hand and the dock company on the other, with the object, if possible, of obtaining a settlement of the strike. Mr Benjamin Tillets, the Secretary of the strikers' organisation, shortly after twelve o'clock waited upon the directors of the London and India Dock Joint Committee at their offices, Leadenhall Street, and inquired whether there was any hope of their agreeing to the men's terms. He was desired to call again, and did so in the course of about an hour. Being shown into a private room, Mr H W Williams, one of the joint managers of the Docks, met him, and learned that the men still insisted that the rate of pay should be increased from fivepence to sixpence an hour ; that they should not be employed for a less time than four hours a day, and that the system of letting out the work to the contractors should be abolished. Mr Williams then proceeded to the room in which the directors were sitting, and laid these demands before them. They were discussed at some length, and the following letter was handed to Mr Tillett as embodying the directors' decision :-

SIR – I am desired to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of today's date, enclosing proposals which on acceptance by any directors will, as you state, put an end to the strike. The Board desire me to say that, whilst much regretting the continuance of the strike, they are unable to agree to the proposals in question.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,
H MORGAN, Secretary.

Mr Tillett, upon the receipt of this communication, was evidently much disappointed, and left the office for the purpose of consulting the other leaders of the agitation. In the course of a short interview with Mr Tillett immediately after the decision, he assured a representative of the Press Association that there was no intention on the part of the men to yield one inch, and that the strike would proceed to the bitter end.

On Thursday, negotiations were renewed, but fruitlessly, although further concessions were made. The leaders thereupon threatened to call out the workers in London.

On Friday morning, Cardinal Manning and Sir A Lusk waited upon the directors of the Dock Company, presumably to urge agreement with the claim for 6d an hour.

THE MONDAY'S RENT A white banner was on Thursday stretched across Hungerford Street, Commercial Road, bearing the following inscription : "As we are on strike, landlords need not call". A similar banner hung at the top of Star Street, Commercial Road, inscribed as follows :-

Our husbands are on strike ; for the wives, it is not honey.

And we all think it is right not to pay the landlord's money.

Everyone is on strike, so landlords do not be offended ;

The rent that's due we'll pay you when the strike is ended.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GRAYS AND TILBURY GAZETTE

SIR – Understanding there is some misapprehension as to the strike at our works, may we ask, in the interests of both the workmen and ourselves, that you will insert in your next edition the following particulars?

On Monday last, in my absence and that of our manager, Mr Wilson, our men suddenly left off work, stating that as our neighbours had given 10 per cent advance, they required the same.

On seeing them on Tuesday morning, I told them the matter was of too great importance to be decided without my consulting others interested in these works, but that if they would resume work, giving seven days' notice of their requirements, I would see how far it was possible to meet their views.

This offer still remains open, and the men can, on this condition, resume work at any moment they like.

I may add that when, several years ago, we were obliged to reduce our rate of wages, we gave our men over two weeks' notice in which to find other employment, and that since that time we have kept our works open for months together against our own interests.

As far as I can ascertain, there has been no rise in wages, either on the other side of the Thames nor on the Medway ; nor have we been able to obtain any commensurate advance in the price of our cement.

Yours faithfully,

D L COLLINS

Managing Director to Gibbs and Co, Limited

The Thames Portland Cement Works,

Whiting, Brick and Loam Wharf, Grays, Essex.

August 28th 1889

39 31 August 1889

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GRAYS AND TILBURY GAZETTE

SIR – Will you allow me, through the pages of your valuable paper, to make a few remarks respecting the recent strike of the watermen and lightermen of Grays and West Thurrock? On Sunday morning last, we held a meeting on Grays town wharf, when it was unanimously decided to come out for an increase in the pay we now receive, and on Monday we went to Gravesend, Northfleet and Greenhithe in a body, to ask the workmen over there to join us in asking for our rights. **Mr James Saville**, captain of the barge *Helvellyn*, being one of the principal spokesmen, and in a very forcible speech at Greenhithe, he urged all the men round him to stand together and they would get their rights. Judge then the surprise and amazement of every waterman when we

heard, and found it to be true, that he had gone to work without consulting one of the very body of men he had only the day before urged to keep out six months. Now I ask you shall we ever get what we ask for when we have a man amongst us who can change as quickly as he has done?

I am, sir, yours truly,

A WATERMAN

40 7 September 1889

THE GREAT STRIKE

AT TILBURY There has been little alteration in the state of things at Tilbury. The numbers of men congregating outside the gates has been as large as ever. On the evening of the 30th ult, Mr S Chandler (ex councillor) delivered an address in Gravesend. Gravesend has been paraded every day. On

SATURDAY several meetings were held at Tilbury, and addresses delivered by Mr Orbell and others. In the afternoon, food tickets, varying from 2s to 3s, were distributed to about 500 Grays and Tilbury men.

MONDAY Good meetings were again held, addressed by Messrs Orbell, Weston, Evans and others, who were loudly cheered.

TUESDAY A meeting was held at 7.30 am to receive Mr McCarthy and another as a deputation from the London Committee.

In the afternoon, Mr Tillett came down, and was received with loud and prolonged cheering. He said the sight of Tilbury reminded him of the fight some months ago on behalf of the fourpenny hands. He was sorry they lost it, but when in an interview with the leading officials at Tilbury Docks, they ridiculed the effort, he told them it would not be long before they would find the same men again demanding their rights. This had come to pass. He was determined to go on, and would call on all who would stand by him to hold up their hands. (All hands held up). As to blacklegs and reports as to maltreatment, he would give them an instance. A man at the Cutter Street Tea Warehouse remained after all the rest had turned out. When he went home, his wife pitched into him, and said if he was going to be a blackleg she would leave him. When this man was asked how he came by his wounds, he said the pickets had waited on him. Inquiries were then made at his house, and his wife revealed the truth. A vote was taken that the men were satisfied with their leaders.

A CONFERENCE PROPOSED In the course of the day, the Rev H Bloomer, secretary of the Thames Church Mission, invited the men to a conference at the Mission Hall. They attended with Mr Orbell, and the hall was well filled. Mr Bloomer proposed a deputation of the Tilbury men should wait on the directors and try to come to a settlement, offering to introduce the deputation. Mr Orbell said they were satisfied with their leaders, and that to take the matter into their own hands and elect a deputation from the comparatively few who had been working at Tilbury would be like throwing dirty water in their leaders' faces. They were quite willing to introduce Mr Bloomer to Messrs Tillett, Burns and Mann, that he might work together with them, if he felt he could do any good.

Up to this time, Mr Orbell and the committee had arranged for a breakfast for each man daily, but it had been felt that more was necessary. Some peas were given last week by Mr Mundy of Grays, but there was no meat. On Sunday, Mr Orbell going up to London fell asleep, and was carried past his station (Stepney) to Fenchurch Street. He there accidentally met a friend who promised to send down six 7lb tins of beef. This arrived, and on Tuesday every man had a dinner of a bowl of soup and about 1 lb of bread. Mr Potter of Grays gave a quantity of meat, which enabled the committee to continue the soup daily.

The pickets of the Gravesend sub committee had been on the watch at various points between the Ship and Lobster and Northfleet to prevent men going to work and vessels from being discharged. On Wednesday, they found cases of eggs being unloaded from T F Wood and Co's barge *Kalulu*, near the Ship and Lobster, by some men belonging to Gravesend, and succeeded in stopping the work. The men said they were to be paid 2s 6d a ton.

ACCIDENT About 9.30 am, Martin Schroder of 116 Pennington Street, Shadwell, seaman on Messrs Norwood and Co's ship *Omega*, had his leg broken by three cases of eggs which fell on him from the slings while being unloaded. These were presumably the goods referred to above. The sufferer was taken to Gravesend Hospital. It may here be stated that there have been many vessels in the river idle through the strike during the past three weeks.

WEDNESDAY A meeting was held at Tilbury at 6.30 am, and further meetings during the day. Messrs Orbell, Evans, Simpson and others spoke, and resolutions were passed to stand out till the demands were granted, and that a vote of thanks be passed to the Home Secretary and the police for the excellent way in which the police had carried out their duties. It was stated that the coolies on the Clive had refused to do the white man's work. Another conference was held between the men and the Rev H Bloomer, when it was arranged that the views of the London committee should be communicated to that gentleman.

THURSDAY Further meetings were held at Tilbury between eleven and twelve. Mr Simpson of the Seamen's Union spoke, and said let them make it known who were supplying the "scurf" in the Docks (or, as they called it, supplying the canteen) and boycott them. Boycott Suggett and the gentleman who kept the Canteen. (Yes, yes.) Never go there, but come outside to the Ship. Let them not listen to those who would interfere between them and their leaders. Mr Bloomer had said they did not want them to live on charity, or to live on 2s a day. Many in work had only had 1s 3d or 1s 6d. They should not insult these gentlemen, but decline their services. Not listen to reports, but wait information from the committee, who would telegraph directly the strike was over. Not mind the few who were in, who could not do all the work.

A train here arrived, and some labourers going over the bridge were received with groans.

Mr Orbell, continuing, said he heard Mr Adams tell Mr Bloomer on the platform that for the last five months at Tilbury, the men had never received so little as 4d an hour. ("Liar".) A man on the platform said, "That's a lie, sir". The speaker told those gentlemen he could give them the names and addresses of men who had received only 4d till the day of the strike. He also reminded them of the directors' statement that men had not been employed for only one or two hours; and told them he could give the names of 50 who had been employed for only one hour, and the name of a man who had employed such. (It was Uncle Joe). He had received a letter from the London committee asking them to use no separate action, but expressing willingness to receive Mr Bloomer and a deputation from Tilbury.

In reply to Mr Orbell, the meeting expressed their concurrence with the tenure of the message.

At a meeting held at Gravesend at 4 pm, Mr Evans said that day Mr Bloomer had been going round talking to the men. It was unfair to try to lead men away from what they thought right. They asked what was reasonable, and sympathy was shown with them throughout the world. The bright specimens in the Docks were expensive – what with food, drink, and the little work they did. On Wednesday he heard that 200 more were coming down. He got a strong picket of 100 resolute men game for anything, and went to the north end of the Docks. They waited and saw the train come along. He thought there was not more than 60 in it. The School Board officer ought to have seen them.

At nine am, the Gravesend men assembled at the bottom of High Street with their banner, to hear addresses delivered from the window of the Museum Coffee Palace. The crowd reached across the road, nearly to the Pier, and some doors up High Street, West Street and East Street.

Mr C W Pratt of the Borough Radical Association was chairman, and said that the Radicals last week showed practical sympathy by a gift of £2, and now again by a further gift – raised to £10 by Mr Chandler.

Mr J G Shipman, Liberal candidate for Gravesend, said he was there to show his sympathy with those who were fighting the battle of labour. It was the glory of the movement that it was raised above party and sect. Their demands were reasonable, as was proved by the sympathy and support received from the country at large – a fair day's wage, and the destruction forever of that most iniquitous contract system, which broke down their lives. The directors said they could not afford what was asked. They could not do without them. Hence they meant to have them at unfair wages.

If they submitted to this they would be less than men. The directors prevented shipowners from making their own arrangements because it would practically stop their little game. They did not want to break down capital, but to teach the capitalist the only safe foundation for capital was the contentment of workers – impossible on a miserable pittance. They opposed the capital of labour to the capital of wealth ; and the former was the more sacred of the two. He congratulated them on the great sympathies they had received – even, as the Quaker said, “from the pocket”. They were on the eve of victory. The evening papers considered the battle won.

Mr S Chandler (ex Town Councillor) said he had had the honour to make up the amount raised by the Radicals to £10, and if more were wanted, he was good for from £2 to £10. He hoped they would maintain their demands for what they had a right to. If they gained it, the tradespeople would be gainers also. Let those who had had even small means contribute what they could, if only a few pence.

After the customary votes of thanks, there was enthusiastic cheering, closing with three cheers for the police. Mr Pratt announced that Mrs Chandler, who was present, had added 10s 6d to the £10.

FRIDAY At a meeting held outside the Docks, Mr Orbell warned the men not to listen to rumours that were being spread about. There was no truth in the report in a London paper that a ship's officer had been injured at Tilbury. He would tell them another thing. About four o'clock that morning, he was woken up by a messenger from Gravesend and went over in a waterman's boat. He was told that the pickets there had found that two men had been talking to the men, and telling him that they came from the Dock Companies' Joint Committee, and that the demands of the men had been conceded. They further said that they wanted 100 men to go to work at Tilbury Docks before there was any rush. He (Mr Orbell) found these men and had a conversation with them. They said they were determined to get men, and he said he would do his best to prevent them doing so, and he did prevent them. He told them his mind as to the deception practised, and after warning the men, returned, leaving them firm in the determination to stand out and to be more on their guard than ever.

At the close of Mr Orbell's speech, the men passed a resolution to hold out still, and to take orders only from their recognised leaders.

In the afternoon, another well attended meeting was held at Gravesend, at which Messrs Orbell, Wells and Ruark spoke.

Up to this time, the men have received 2,600 meals at Flack's Coffee House.

AT GRAYS

SATURDAY The strikers held another meeting “under the lamp”, and were in large force in the procession. When they passed the shop of Mr Potter, butcher, that gentleman displayed some coloured lights. The meeting was addressed by Mr Orbell, Mr Weston and Mr Evans. A young man explained how that he had been locked up for the last 2 1/2 hours, the time then being 10 pm, and all for the crime of defending himself against a party – 150 strong – of “blacklegs”, and how he had challenged any man amongst them, one at a time ; yet they all acted right up to that old saying, “Discretion is the better part of valour”. Shortly afterwards, he was “copped” by the police, who gave him 2 1/2 hours lodging free of charge.

SUNDAY A meeting was held in the morning “under the lamp”, but nothing of importance transpired.

MONDAY The report, which undoubtedly was true, that the Dock Company had imported more men into their docks, put all the strikers on the *qui vive*, ready for action if called upon. It had been arranged that a meeting should be held in Grays, with Mr Tillett to lead it. Processions with band and banners, interspersed with effigies of “blacklegs” and “a docker's child” paraded the town, but owing to the extremely inclement weather, the meeting was perforce abandoned.

TUESDAY No meetings were held in the open air, as the weather was not favourable.

WEDNESDAY The largest meeting held in Grays in connection with the strike was held at the top of High Street. Resolutions in favour of standing out until the men obtained their claims were all carried unanimously.

THURSDAY In the morning, as early as 5 am, a special train was run straight into the Docks with about 120 men, or "blacklegs". The news got "wind" in some unaccountable way the night before, and about 100 strikers were ready at the north junction bridge to receive them. Except for hootings and howlings, nothing happened ; the police were there in force. In the evening at Grays, processions paraded the town with the usual banners and an effigy. A meeting was held "under the lamp" and the speakers included Mr Welch, who will be remembered as taking part in the strike of last October. Mr Evans referred to the special train alluded to above, and said there were not more than 80 "blacklegs" in it. (A voice : Not above 40.) Although the Dock Company were the morning before bragging that they would have 390 by it. They (the Company) also said they could get plenty more if they wanted them. The meeting broke up with cheers for the speakers and the Grays Town Band, who gave their services gratuitously.

FRIDAY Nothing of importance transpired with the exception that one of the stevedores, who said he had plenty of work to do but was out on strike, was before the "beaks" for alleged theft of some potatoes, valued at 4d, to feed his "starving children" with. A full report will be found in another column, as will also the opinions of the "great unpaid" in this district on the question of the strike. The usual procession, effigies and speakers "did" Grays in the evening, and hope was expressed that the whole of the strike would be over early next week.

The lightermen all resumed work at Grays on Monday last, except, of course, Gibbs' men, who had no work to go to until the works started once more, which they were to do yesterday (Friday).

THE WATERMEN OF GRAYS AND THURROCK "A Waterman", writing to the Editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, from Grays, says :-

Sir – Will you permit me, through the valuable columns of your journal, to make a few remarks as concerns the condition of the general watermen of Grays and Thurrock? We are men who are out at all hours ; we never did complain in a body, but we have come to the conclusion that it is near time that we, in common with dock workers, should obtain our just rights. May our rights be properly considered. The following are, amongst others, the complaints to which I refer. We desire that we should be paid in accordance with the time we work ; we are at the beck and call of everyone, and it is only reasonable to suppose that we should come in the general improvement which will eventually transpire if the dock workers obtain their rights. We do not wish to throng the great ranks of the unemployed, but we must have our rights. The dock companies cannot proceed without us. What is the use of a stranger going into a barge and loading her, when the very fact remains that he has had no experience, and thus tends to lend additional expense in receiving the cargo? The watermen have up till now been left out in the cold. I hope that a generous public will consider our condition. We are at all times ready for our duty, but we expect fair remuneration for the labour which we perform, and until we receive it, we shall feel dissatisfied. We are in numbers nearly 3,000 strong, therefore we think our cause is a just and reasonable one.

A SCAB'S ACCOUNT OF ACCOMMODATION FOR SCABS IN THE DOCKS AT TILBURY

When I applied at the Dock for employment about noon on Thursday, I was only too readily accepted, and told to work at a flour boat that was being discharged. I had no opportunity of getting food until tea time. When I went to tea, a Dock Company's spy, of whom there is one in every gang, to try what I really was, commenced to find fault with the food and everything in general, and gave vent to his ideas in language the most disgusting I have ever heard, and said he would go outside if this was the way they were to be treated. At the same time, he kept a strange eye on me, being a stranger, to see how I would take ideas ; but I tried decidedly to keep myself quiet to allay suspicion. After tea, I went outside the shed, when a gentleman called me and accused me of intimidating the others, but I was able to clear myself of that charge and went to work again. After finishing the work, I was shown the place I was to occupy that night. A more disgusting and filthy place I never was in in my life. Being all locked up during the night, it was impossible to get outside at all, and the hard worked and beer besotted scab docker had to accommodate himself inside. The consequence is that all round the walls is one mass of human filth. Sanitary inspectors please take

note. And all night long it is the custom to amuse themselves by fighting, cursing, swearing &c, and the police have often to be called in to quell disturbances.

41 7 September 1889

A GRAYS BARGE WINS THE MEDWAY CHAMPIONSHIP Messrs E J and W Goldsmith's barge *Gazelle* which, it will be remembered, won the Thames Championship flag and prize some two or three weeks back, on Thursday won the championship of the Medway, the course being from Chatham to the Nore and back. As in the former race, she was skilfully handled by **Capt Munns**.

42 14 September 1889

SUMMONS AGAINST A PILOT DISMISSED At Greenwich Police Court on the 6th inst, **George Smith**, pilot of Gravesend, was summoned for navigating the steamer *Cambria* on the 27th July without due care and at such a speed as to endanger the lives of persons and safety of other vessels and moorings on the river. Mr Bunting appeared for the Thames Conservancy and Mr Farnfield for defendant. Evidence was given that the *Cambria*, which came from New Dundee Wharf, passed Keen's wharf, Rotherhithe, at an excessive speed, and that by the swell from it, part of the telescopic chute of the elevator on the wharf was broken ; the moorings of a barge broken, and two watermen's boats damaged, one waterman having his boat forced against a barge to the danger of his life. Mr Farnfield said the *Cambria* had been running 21 years and this was the first complaint. The evidence for the defence was that nothing exceptional was remembered as occurring on the 27th July, and that the speed of the steamer was only five miles an hour. The summons was dismissed, each party to pay his own costs.

43 14 September 1889

SOMETHING LIKE A CUP A source of attraction has been exhibited in Mr A Boatman's window during the past week, and consists of an immense and beautifully engraved solid silver cup, being the champion cup in the Thames barge match, which was won by the barge *Gazelle*, captained by **Mr H Munns** and owned by Messrs E J and W Goldsmith.

44 14 September 1889

BY THE WAY On Tuesday evening, Mr B Tillett rallied the anything but drooping spirits of the Dock strikers by a vigorously worded speech. Under the influence of the all pervading excitement, the speaker made an attack upon an individual and a body of men in language which probably in days to come he himself will be the first to regard as ungenerous and unjust.

The men attacked were Messrs Brooks' workmen. Wherefor? Because they put into the "*Gulf of Venice*" 5,000 (?) tons of cement. If the men who ordinarily do this work were on strike because Messrs Brooks refused to concede their claims for advance and adjustment, there would be point in the attack ; but the fact is that all they have asked for has been conceded, and yet they won't work until the Dock Companies give in. What in common have Messrs Brooks with the Dock Companies? I believe each member of the firm has given public expression to his belief that the Joint Committee should give the docker his tanner, each member has also subscribed to the strike fund, their men asked for and got an advance, and are giving it to help the dockers. Yet both masters and men are selected for a tirade of abuse.

What is Mr Tillett's object – is it to coerce into concession the Dock Companies? Then, the completest way to do that is to get the trade of the country done outside the Docks. If, on the other hand, his object is to paralyse trade, then I fancy he will soon find his head hard against the very compact wall of constituted authority. Surely Mr Tillett does not want all the cement factories along the river to close their gates and lock out their workmen.

The docker must have his tanner or permanent work at a living wage. There his special mission ends.

45 28 September 1889

SAD YACHTING FATALITY OFF HOLE HAVEN

NO ROOM FOR A DYING MAN IN A CANVEY INN On Saturday evening, a party of young gentlemen left Tilbury Docks for a trip down the river in a yacht named the *Foam*. When off Hole Haven, and in intense darkness, the yacht collided with a barge unknown. The result was that one of the party, Mr W Housdon, who had been on the look out forward, had his leg so severely jammed that he shortly after died of injuries received. The captain of the yacht promptly ran into Hole Haven, was refused at the inn, which was full, and considerably taken in by the Chief Officer of Coastguards.

On Tuesday, an inquest was held at the Red Cow Inn, Canvey Island, before Mr C E Lewis and the following jury : Messrs J Turnnidge, W Dalton, T Drawbridge, W H Paul, foreman, C Beckwith, A Bird, W Mott, S Keeling, A Bull, H Mott, J Spells and H Bull.

Robert Simpson Housdon of 30 Oakfield Road, Anerley, Surrey, said deceased was his brother. He was 23 years of age, single, and a mercantile clerk. On Sunday morning, witness received information that deceased had met with an accident and was at Canvey Island.

Edgar Schroder Moore of 32 Derby Road, Croydon, a mercantile clerk, said deceased was his friend. They started from Tilbury Docks on Saturday evening at half past six in the yacht *Foam*. They were all amateurs. The others were named Horace Austin and James Gibb. They were out for a pleasure trip, and intended to stop at the Island for the night, and to return on Sunday evening to Tilbury. They were all taking part in the navigation of the boat. Thames Haven was reached in safety, but when just clear they collided with a barge sailing in the opposite direction ; it was going up the river. It was very dark. They (the yacht) had their proper lights, and so also had the barge ; the yacht struck the barge on the starboard bow. It was their duty to give way to the barge, which they did ; they saw the barge's light five minutes before their vessel struck the barge ; the bargeman did not seem to realise they had altered their course, and put his bow right under their bow. If the barge had held on her course, the *Foam* would have passed him on the starboard hand. They kept on their course until the barge opened up her red light. Witness then ported the helm to give way to him. The barge then showed both lights again, and witness's yacht crashed into her, striking on the starboard bow. The yacht slewed round by the force of the collision, and after the rigging had got clear they caught the barge's boat in their main sheet. Witness cut their halyards to let down the canvas, ran to shore, and dropped anchor. Deceased's right leg was caught between the cabin top and the bowsprit, which was forced back by the collision. They had to saw the bowsprit to extricate the deceased ; they laid him on the cabin top. The barge hove to and came for her boat ; witness did not argue, as deceased was in such a bad state ; they ran into Hole Haven as quickly as possible. Deceased was in great pain. It was about nine o'clock. Witness had had eight or nine years experience in sailing. It was his yacht and was registered in his name. They came to Hole Haven at a quarter to twelve ; deceased was taken off the yacht and placed in charge of the coastguards. Mr Beckwith, innkeeper, said he had no room for wounded men.

The Coroner : He ought to have taken him in if he had room. If he had room, he ought to clear out and let someone else in who would take men in.

Witness, continuing, said he went for a doctor ; deceased died at a quarter to eight on Sunday morning. Witness was at the helm, and deceased was forward on the look out. The barge was heavily laden. Just before the collision, the wind freshened. Witness only saw a boy on board the barge. They could only see the lights and not the canvas.

Richard Herraghty said he was chief officer of the Coastguards stationed at Haven Hole. About ten minutes to twelve, witness was aroused and informed by the watchman that a yacht had come in the creek with a man on board with his leg broken and bleeding to death, and that the landlord of the inn could not take him in, as he had no room. Witness took him in. Witness had to get his boat manned, and then rowed to the yacht ; he found deceased was bleeding to death. He stopped the flow of blood, and advised his friends to send for a doctor, which they did. Deceased was perfectly sensible, and asked for a doctor.

Dr F D Grayson said he resided at Rayleigh. He was called to deceased between two and three

o'clock on Sunday morning. He went at once, and found deceased at the Coastguard Station, Hole Haven ; he was in a state of collapse with a compound fracture of both bones of the right leg. The muscles, blood vessels and nerves were all lacerated and torn. He set the limb, dressed it, and applied restoratives. There was no doubt but that deceased died from those injuries. The greatest praise was due to the chief officer and coastguards for the kind manner in which deceased was treated. They took him in and gave him everything they possibly could.

The Coroner, in summing up, said that he had no doubt that the exact position of the barge was not realised on account of the extreme darkness until too late. Mr Moore had given his evidence in a very minute and praiseworthy manner. He thought that no words could express the credit that was due to Mr Herraghty for the excellent manner in which he acted. This inn was full, but however full a house might be, there was generally a space to be found for an injured person. He thought that deceased ought to have been taken in.

Mr R S Hounsdon, deceased's brother, said he wished to thank Mr Herraghty and his men for the hospitality afforded to his brother.

The foreman said that several of the jurymen thought a vote of censure was due to the captain of the barge for going away, as it looked so inhuman.

Mr Moore said when he took the boat back, the bargeman hulloaed out as to the smash, and witness told him it was not the boat, but that injuries had befallen deceased.

The jury then returned a verdict of "Death from the yacht *Foam* accidentally colliding with a barge unknown".

46 28 September 1889

Let us admit with thankfulness that the dock strike is over, and that the poor labourers (they will always be the bottom layer of the class, not of any use, nevertheless, as foundation) will face the winter with a little more hope. Thinking men are counting the cost, and forecasting the future, moralising upon what is behind, speculating upon what may be before. Meanwhile a manifesto is going the round of the masses calling upon them to combine in the formation of a great federation of labour. The scheme is a plausible one ; it has the rosy flush upon it of recent triumph, and the London societies are eagerly laying hold of it. We shall hear more about it by and by, but for the present it is enough to note that the Trades Unions of the metropolis are very cautious in the matter. An eight hours' labour day is to be one of the points of the federation charter.

47 28 September 1889

THE MURDER OF A WAKERING MAN IN LONDON

TRIAL AND SENTENCE At the Central Criminal Court on Wednesday week, before Mr Justice Charles, James Crickmer, 37, a salesman, was charged with the wilful murder of **George Howard**, a bargeman of Great Woking. The prisoner was also charged with feloniously wounding Margaret Webb, with intent to murder her. Mr C Matthews described the alleged crime as being one of a very extraordinary character. The deceased was the mate of a barge lying off Lambeth Bridge, and about midnight he was seen in a very drunken condition making his way towards Palace Road. At two o'clock in the morning, he was lying on the pavement in this thoroughfare asleep, and at a quarter past it was discovered that his throat had been cut. He was removed from the spot to St Thomas's Hospital, where he was found to be dead. The prisoner was at a coffee stall in the vicinity of the spot an hour before the occurrence. He was ultimately arrested and was found to be still suffering from the effects of drink. Upon him was found a large clasp knife covered with blood. A verdict of not guilty was returned on the charge of murder, but the prisoner was found guilty of attempting to murder the woman Webb, and was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude.

48 19 October 1889

ASHINGDON

WHAT HE COULD GET IN LAMBETH **George Lindsell** of Ashingdon sued W Spicer, a corn dealer of Farnbridge Ferry, for three days' work for loading a barge (9s). Judgement was given for

amount claimed with costs.

Walter Lindsell sued the same defendant for the same amount, less 1s which had been paid him, and which made the claim 8s. Payment ordered.

49 19 October 1889

GRAVESEND PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNKENNESS William Littlemore, a waterman, was charged with being drunk and disorderly, assaulting PC Pagram, and damaging a chair in the Police Station. Mr G Clinch appeared for prisoner. PC Pagram said that shortly before 12 pm on Saturday, he saw prisoner in High Street, at the end of Swan Yard. He asked for a match, and witness said he had none. Prisoner then took out some matches, and went to the alley on the other side of the street. He then asked witness for a light from his lantern, which witness refused. He said he should demand it, and as a ratepayer he had a right to do so. Witness again refused, and prisoner then struck at him, but he warded off the blow with his arm. Witness took him into custody. He was very violent, and both fell. With assistance, witness handcuffed prisoner and got him to the station ; while being searched, prisoner made a rush at witness. PC Dartnell came to his assistance and prisoner pushed them against a chair and broke it. Cross-examined : Did not use offensive language to prisoner or strike him with the handcuffs. Alfred Knight said he held prisoner's legs while PC Pagram handcuffed him after a struggle. There was also a struggle at the station. Mr Clinch admitted that the prisoner was drunk, but submitted there was some mistake as to the assault. Prisoner said his black eye had been caused by the police, though it was not suggested that it had been done intentionally. Fined 19s 6d, 2s damage and 7s 6d costs.

50 26 October 1889

SOUTHEND

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY Geo Giggins, carpenter, and **Geo Murrell**, waterman, both of Southend, were charged with being drunk and disorderly at Southend on the 9th inst. Defendant Giggins pleaded guilty and Murrell not guilty. PS Marden proved the case. In the result Murrell was fined 10s and 8s costs and Giggins 10s and 6s costs, or seven days' hard labour each. Allowed a week.

51 26 October 1889

SOUTHCHURCH

THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT Benjamin Phillips, brickmaker, was charged with stealing 10s and a jug, the properties of Abraham Plumb Robinson, at Southchurch on the 12th inst. Mr Lamb defended. Mary Ann Robinson said she was the wife of prosecutor, who lives at the Halfway House. About 8.30 on the day named, she left the bar for about five minutes. There was about 10s in a little jug, which was standing on a table inside the bar. Witness left the prisoner leaning on the counter, and went into another room where she could see the bar, but did not see anything happen. When she returned the jug was gone ; she "made a row, and shouted to the master to come in". Prisoner was not in the bar when witness returned. Cross-examined : There were six bargemen at another table, besides prisoner and his party. **Frederick Coldham** of 75 Salmon's Lane, Limehouse, captain of a barge, said that on the day named he was in the public house in question, and saw a jug taken out of the house by the prisoner. Witness saw the jug on the counter in the prisoner's hands. Prisoner tried to conceal the jug under his coat. Frederick Peckham of Southchurch, labourer, gave corroborative evidence, and said he heard the jug rattle and saw the prisoner go out with it under his coat. He could not see where the jug came from. PC Daniel, stationed at South Benfleet, proved the apprehension of prisoner. When arrested, prisoner said, "Where's your warrant?" Witness said, "I don't want one ; I want you to come with me to Southend Police Station". Mr Lamb, in his speech for the defence, asked the Bench not to believe the evidence of Peckham, and contended that much of the evidence had been thought of since the day of the alleged theft. Joseph Curtis of Shoeburyness, brickmaker, saw prisoner going out of the

house, but did not see him carrying any jug or anything else. The week before, witness had had £5 between himself and two more, and this week he (prisoner) had had £2. William Goodson, brickmaker, corroborated the evidence of the previous witness, and George Knott also gave evidence. The witness Peckham (recalled by the Bench) said he would swear that the prisoner was the man he saw leave with the jug. The Chairman said the Bench had some doubt as to his guilt, so he (prisoner) would have the benefit of that, and he dismissed. There was a slight attempt to applaud the result, but this was immediately checked.

52 9 November 1889

THE LOCK OUT AT SHOEBURYNESS

THE MEN REMAIN FIRM AND THE FIELD IS STILL CLOSED

ATTENTION TO BE GIVEN TO EASTWOOD AND CO HIGHER UP THE RIVER

GREAT MEETING OF LOCKED OUT MEN – BABIES ALLEGED AS THE CAUSE OF THREE PENNY REDUCTIONS This struggle is getting exciting. At Shoebury, almost the whole of the population is on the side of the locked-out men, and the action of Eastwood and Co in closing their field for the paltry sum of £70, or even less, has aroused general indignation. Of course there are a few landowners and farmers who side with the masters, but with those exceptions the men have all the vote. On Saturday the foreman was discharged ; which action has done not a little to embitter the struggle, as Mr Withers had openly expressed the opinion that the strikers had justice on their side. Early in the week, horses were removed to Halstow and London, and other preparations made for a prolonged fight. This aggressive attitude has not alarmed the men, who are making arrangements to retaliate by operations directed against the general trade of Eastwood and Co, as carried on at the various wharves.

Early on Tuesday evening, affairs at Shoeburyness were rendered lively by a great torchlight procession, with many flags and banners of various sizes. Probably a thousand persons took part in it, and the pervading enthusiasm reached boiling point. The parade ended at the Public Hall, Cambridge Town ; which spacious building, generously placed at the service of the men by Mr W York Ogden, was overcrowded, and numbers stood outside. The proceedings were enthusiastic in the extreme. Shortly before eight, Mr J H Burrows, Councillor for the Division, arrived to take the chair, with Mr W J Heath of Southend, and was greeted with round after round of applause. With him on the platform were Mr Watkinson of Barking (organising secretary of the men's Union), Messrs J Brooks, J Ayling and L Dell (local chairman of the Union). From start to finish, all went merrily, and the organisers of the affair were hugely gratified when the Chairman announced the evening's collection as £2 15s 7 1/2d, and Mr Watkinson "planked down" the Union's contribution of £25. The following is a mere outline report of the speeches :-

The Chairman, on rising to commence the proceedings, was again greeted with loud applause. His first sentences were in recognition of the honour the working men of the Division did him last January by returning him as their Councillor. As their Chairman, he would lay down only two special rules for the conduct of the meeting ; the first was that the different speakers should declare the truth about the strike and lock out, keeping back nothing of counsel which should be spoken, and the other was that they should be moderate in language, using no word which in six months time they would think of with regret. (Cheers). As he understood the business on hand, some weeks ago 15 earth diggers employed by Eastwood and Co asked for a rise in their rate of pay ; in fact, that it should be restored to its old rate before slackened trade and the stress of foreign competition compelled employers to cut down their expenses. They were justified in making that demand, because almost all the firms on the Essex side of the river had put back the wage of unskilled – or, as he should prefer to term it, partially skilled – labour to its old rate. Indeed, when making the reduction there was an implied, if not definitely made, arrangement that wages should be restored to the old rates when trade improved. (Cheers.) But for the sake of the argument, he would assume that the earth diggers had a bad case for an advance – he only assumed it for argument's sake, he did not believe it – then there was good reason for complaint against Eastwood and Co that they met the strike by depriving of their means of livelihood between 60 and 70 men

who had little if any connection with the earth diggers ; between 60 and 70 men with their wives and families. (Loud applause.) He should think there was hardly anything parallel with it in the history of labour movements. (Hear, hear.) He had been informed on what he considered reliable authority that the whole of the amount in dispute was less than £70, spread over three or four months ; a paltry sum, the mention of which showed the whole business to be miserable, petty and totally unworthy of Eastwood and Co – the wealthiest brick firm in the kingdom. (Much cheering.) He asked whether it was not a monstrous thing that South Shoebury and all the Hundred should be disturbed for so small a sum ; whether it was fair to other employers that the relationships existing between themselves and their workpeople should be strained through a wealthy firm taking an extreme course because a baker's dozen men used their legal right, and refused to sell their labour at less price than they considered it was worth. (Applause.) No. Eastwood's were too big a firm to squabble over mere pence. There must be a reason other than appeared on the surface of affairs, and he suspected the lock out at Shoebury was to teach their men in other places the immense power of capital ; in other words, capital proposed to have all the say in regulating the price to be paid for that still more important capital – labour. (Cheers.) He was sorry for their wives and children, sorry for the men – who had during the past day or two to take up their belts a hole or two – but he could not help thinking it would serve a very useful purpose by directing their attention to proposals put forward to secure a better distribution of the wealth of the country. He did not ask that all should share alike, only that every sober, industrious and honest workman should in his old age live at ease and independently of the Workhouse. (Continued applause.)

Mr W Watkinson delivered a vigorous and heartily applauded address. If men acting in Union could beat the great Dock Companies, he fancied they could also beat Eastwood and Co. (Applause.) He did not know much about them, but they had a great many barges going up the river to the wharves and works, and he would make it his business to boycott every vessel belonging to them. (Sustained applause.) Working men had been called ignorant, but they knew sufficient to stop the trade of any man who would not give a fair rate of wage ; no matter whether his name was Eastwood, Westwood, Northwood or Southwood. (Laughter.) He was sorry it was winter time. If it were Spring, they could soon bring the brickmasters to their knees, crying, “Come and work ; we will give you a fair rate”. He had brought £25 from the Union for them. (Terrific applause.) They need not clap him, except for being honest and arriving there safely with it. (Laughter.) They must organise, as it was only by organisation that labour would get its full market value, and they must keep a bright eye on the men who lived on the accumulated labour of working men. (Hear, hear.) Working men had been asleep ; they had clapped, hurraed and voted for men whom they knew nothing about. For the future, they must get to know a great deal about the men who put up for Parliament and local offices before they let them get out of their grasp. (Cheers.) Especially must candidates for Parliament be pledged to definite measures for the welfare of working men ; and if they would not pledge, well, they must not vote for them. He did not believe in the cry about overpopulation in the face of statements – which had not been refuted – that while the population had increased 30 per cent, capital had increased by £394,000,000. That showed there was room for all. The speaker next condemned piecework, and concluded his speech, which was intently listened to and rapturously applauded, by calling upon the men to stand shoulder to shoulder.

The Chairman here mentioned that the name of the chairman of Eastwood and Co was Norwood. If he were the same Norwood who brooded with much blighting effect over the Dock dispute ; they could then understand the lock out.

Mr James Brooks gave a personal turn to the meeting by speaking of Mr J Jackson as the man who had locked the men out ; not for the first time, as once he made the men walk the streets of Shoebury for nine weeks. And when the railway was being made, he tried to starve them by telling all the gangers to sack all the Shoebury brickfield men. It was shameful and disgraceful the way the men at Shoebury brickfield had been treated ; they could stand it no more ; they would have fair play and be fairly dealt with. He would tell them one case. A man now lying in the churchyard, after he had been sick, went to his employer for a light job, and though there were light jobs about,

the answer he got was, "We cannot make a hospital of the brickfield". (Cries of "Shame".) Mr Jackson had said that the firm had never been defeated, but he (the speaker) could tell him who was going to win this time. It was said the firm was going to close the field for fifty weeks, but this would mean a loss to them of £5,000, and they were not so silly as to lose that amount for a paltry £70. After severely censuring Mr Jackson, the speaker jokingly said he had heard a ditty to the effect that "every time Mr Jackson had another child, threepence was to come off the moulding to keep it". (Loud laughter).

Mr W J Heath severely condemned the sweating system, and said he did not think they would close the field for fifty weeks, but if they did he would give them fifty half sovereigns.

A collection was then made on behalf of the strike fund, and it realised £2 15s 7 1/2d.

Mr J Ayling rose amid great cheering to propose a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Messrs Wilkinson, Heath and Brooks, and to Mr Ogden for the use of the hall. Mr Levi Dell seconded, and the vote being carried, Mr Burrows returned thanks.

MORE FROM EASTWOOD AND CO

47 Belvedere Road, Lambeth, SE

5th November 1889

Strike at Shoebury Brickfield

SIR – We have read your remarks on our letter and the men's reply to it. As it is stated that our action is "tyrannical in the extreme", and that we are trying to deceive the public, we must ask the favour of a short space for reply.

In the first place, we should like to remove a misapprehension on your part and also on the part of the men, ie, that we compared the price of labour paid to our men at Shoebury and the price of labour paid to our men in Kent. That is not what we stated, nor what we meant. By Kent brickfields, we did not mean ours in Kent but the brickfields in Kent generally. We need only mention the names of Messrs Smeed, Dean and Co and Messrs Wills and Packham, who pay the prices we stated.

Now, sir, with regard to trying to deceive the public. The men admit that our first statement is correct ; they try to slur it over by stating what we pay our men at West Drayton (the Cowley district). As a matter of fact, the bricks made at West Drayton do not come into competition with Shoebury bricks at all, as they are sold on the canals, while the Shoebury bricks go up the river. Not only so, but the conditions of manufacture are quite distinct ; at Shoebury, the earth is washed into backs or reservoirs, where it settles into a semi solid state ; in Cowley, the bricks are made out of solid earth, which has never been washed at all. The difference will be obvious even to those who know nothing of brick manufacture. Further, the bricks made at West Drayton fetch from 2s to 3s per 1000 more than Shoebury bricks.

We do not think that in this case it is we who are trying to deceive the public, but the men.

We compared the prices paid at Shoebury with those paid in Kent, because the work is in every case similar and the bricks go to the same market. We may state in passing that the reason given why the extra price was paid at West Drayton is absolutely false. We do not think that there is any difference between the work in Kent and Shoebury – even if there is, it is a fact admitted by the men that they are paid 11 per cent more for moulding and 30 per cent more for digging than the men in Kent.

In addition, while the men in Kent lay their own roads, the men at Shoebury have it done for them.

With reference to the men's statement as to their objecting to the pay at the start of the digging, we can only say that the men commenced and were paid at 6 1/2d, the price of last year.

Now, sir, with reference to our action being "tyrannical in the extreme", we deny most absolutely that we have locked the men out. The whole affair began with the earth diggers refusing to continue work. We should have thought it would have been evident to the meanest understanding that if no earth is dug, there can be no work for the engineers and mechanics. Again, if no earth is dug, no bricks can be made next year. It is therefore useless to send down ashes for brick making. With regard to the loading, trade at this time of the year is so slack that very few orders are to be

obtained. It is not we who have locked out the men, but the earth diggers, who have *stopped the working of the field*.

We do not understand your note at the end of the men's reply. If it means anything, it is on our side. We are afraid this is not what you intended. Would it not, however, be better to be quite sure what you are writing about before you attempt to instruct your readers as to brick making?

We can only say that we extremely regret this dispute with the men. We have always endeavoured to meet them fairly. The point in dispute (and to this we would commend your serious attention) is that the men at Shoebury, who are already paid 30 per cent more than the Kent men for the same class of work, should have an increase of double what the other men are to have.

We are, sir,

Your obedient servants,

EASTWOOD AND CO Ltd

THE OTHER SIDE To the above, after enquiry among the men, we reply :-

- (1) That as the greater includes the less, so the Kent fields must of necessity include those of Eastwood and Co situate there, and therefore ours and the men's replies remain unaffected by the Co's explanations.
- (2) The men are just as much entitled to refer to West Drayton as the Company are to Kent ; further, for long years the price at Shoebury for moulding was 9d a thousand above the Kent price, just as the near London price has usually been in advance of the Shoebury rate. What do the Company mean by their next statement? They know full well that Shoebury bricks regularly go up the Surrey Canal, and sometimes – even within the last six months – up Regent's Canal. Their “not only so” does not affect the controversy, except favourably for the men, as washed earth is somewhat heavier to work than unwashed clay. The last statement in the paragraph is somewhat doubtful.

In the light of the above, we leave it to our readers to decide who really is trying to deceive the public.

The moulding work in Kent may be akin to that at Shoebury, but Eastwood and Co forget to mention, in their eagerness to enlighten (?) the public that the price paid for that work is not in dispute, and that the question is the figure for the earth digging. This effort of theirs is a case of slur with a vengeance. As the men have explained, and Eastwood and Co do not attempt to refute it, earth digging at Shoebury is much heavier work than in Kent. Moreover, it is asserted for faces of earth in Kent similar to the Shoebury strata, an even higher price is paid than the Shoebury men have asked for.

Eastwood and Co practically admit that the men did object at the start of the work, and went on at the request of Mr J Jackson.

The only men necessarily deprived of their work by the strike of the earth diggers were two drivers ; two men in all. The number of men locked out is between fifty and sixty – brick sorters, barge loaders, carmen, carpenters and general labourers – with about twenty boys. Even the “meanest understanding” in face of these facts will disbelieve the Co's absurd italicised contention.

We are surprised Eastwood and Co should conclude their letter by again suggesting that the work for which the price is to be paid is in dispute is similar on both sides of the river, when everyone who knows both counties needs no telling that a very different state of affairs is actually the fact.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GRAYS AND TILBURY GAZETTE

SIR – In answer to Eastwood and Co's letter, if I were a doctor I should come to the conclusion that they had Kent on the brain, for that is all we can hear from them. It is all “Kent, Kent”.

Now I have dug earth in Kent 26 or 27 years, and the work is done different, so that a man can keep at work ; the face is deeper, so that a man can work easier and do more. I believe a man could dig a thousand and a half in Kent, where a man at Shoebury could only dig a thousand. The price may be low in Kent, but I have earned more money in Kent than at Shoebury. Eastwood and Co are a large firm, and some time ago the moulders struck work because Jackson and Co sweated then ten feet.

Eastwood and Co came to Kent and persuaded a lot of men to go to Shoebury, for there was good work there, and told them they paid more money there for work. At this the question was asked, "What made all these moulders leave?" "Because they asked for an unfair thing". "What is your fair thing?" was then asked. "We pay at Shoebury the same as anybody else in Essex". At this we came to Shoebury, and when we got here we found that in brick sorting two men had to keep three men, and at earth digging they sweated us ten feet. When we asked for the same as others were paid, all we could hear was what they do in Kent and pay in Kent. All we ask for is to have the extra ten feet taken off, or a penny for the 10 feet put on. I have no fault to find with the foremen ; both have acted upright with me, but I have found two faults in Mr Jackson. The first is, when I asked for my rights he laughed at me and asked me if I wanted a pipe of tobacco. The second is, he makes out that a Kentish man will work for less money than anybody else. But a Kentish man in his own county wants as much as his neighbour, and will not work for less than his neighbour. Now I have told my story, I ask two questions. The first is, have not Eastwood and Co worked in a deceitful way in driving away their own moulders and then coming to Kent with their falsehoods? Again I ask, is it humanity to persuade poor people to leave their homes and then, because they won't work for less than their neighbours, shut up the field and leave those poor people to starve and get away as they can? Again, does the 5th chapter of James's Epistle, the first six verses, have reference to this way of acting?

A SHOEBURY WORKMAN

53 16 November 1889

TILBURY

A MAN DROWNED At about eight o'clock on Thursday morning, **Joseph Appleby**, a bargeman of Sydney Road, fell overboard from a coal barge in the Central Branch Dock. The dock was dragged and the body recovered about four in the evening by Fireman Croft of the Dock Co's police.

54 16 November 1889

THE SHOEBURY LOCK OUT

EVERYBODY AS THEY WERE – MR WRAGGE WOULD NOT BE PERSUADED

GREAT DEMONSTRATION AT SOUTHEND – TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION – MONSTER MEETING – ABUNDANCE OF FUNDS - £25 FROM THE UNION AND £10 FROM MR E W BROOKS

There is no alteration in the situation. The men's hopes rose when they heard Mr Wragge was coming down to Shoebury to investigate the case for himself. We report the interview, and it will be seen that he did not attempt to combat the arguments of the men nor seem to give heed to the solicitations of tradesmen, but remained obdurate to the end, and played with the difficulty instead of considering it as a man should do. The locked out men are indeed grateful to their many friends for their generous aid and solicit its continuance.

On Saturday evening, an united demonstration of the men engaged in the brick industries of the district took place at Southend, in aid of the fund for the support of the locked out men and strikers. The Shoebury Brass Band headed the procession ; which was illuminated by torchlights. In addition to the usual flags and banners, there was conspicuously placed a banner on which was inscribed, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof ; not Bag's, Jackson's or Eastwood's".

Shortly before eight o'clock the men halted at and adjourned into the Victoria Coffee Palace, which was crowded to excess. From first to last, the proceedings were most enthusiastic. Mr J H Burrows CC again presided, supported by Messrs W Watkinson, W J Heath, T M Eastwood, L Dell, &c.

The Chairman set the ball rolling in a vigorous but brief speech, which was cheered to the echo. He was glad their meeting was being held in Southend, as it gave the locked-out men an opportunity to meet face to face with their brethren, the artisans and other workmen of Southend, and directly appeal to them for aid. They ought not to appeal in vain ; for there was only one cause of labour,

and anything which hurt part of it also hurt the whole. The position of affairs appeared at first sight to be unaltered. The earth diggers were still out and determined not to go back to work at the old rate. (Loud applause). Then on the other side Eastwood and Co had continued the lock out ; but that word would not do ; they said they had not locked the men out ; anyway they had shut their Shoebury field up - ("Yes", and cheers) – they had paid off their foreman and sent their horses away. On closer inspection, he thought they might notice signs of a change, and a change in their favour. This wealthy firm had written to the *Southend Standard* in explanation of their position. Why? A wealthy firm like theirs would not care what were the opinions of a small local newspaper if they meant to stand to their guns. They had written and had tried to influence the people against the men. Their last letter he was informed was only a collection of half truths, but which were more mischievous in effect than a collection of lies. ("Yes"). Over such a letter they might write as a label the one word "lie", and that would be a sufficient answer. But they could not do so over the letter he was speaking about ; for here and there were little patches of truth, but all so arranged as to prejudice the men's case and prevent tradesmen and others from subscribing to their support. (A voice : Shame.) It was a shame. In a few hours they would hear the sound of the Sabbath bells. The directors of Eastwood and Co would soon be going to church and chapel, to bend the head or knee in prayer. He asked would they think of the men at Shoebury, whose wives and children they were seeking to deprive of sustenance because their husbands had obeyed the command of the Great Master and given help to 15 earth diggers? (Loud applause). There was another important sign of the times, and it was also in their favour. (Cheers). He would not mention names, but after careful investigation of the men's case, one of the largest employers of labour had subscribed £10. (Loud cheers). With such support, the help of so valuable an opinion, he called upon his hearers to stand shoulder to shoulder. Never mind if Eastwood and Co did put on a bold attitude ; many a man did that who all the while was trembling in his shoes. (Loud applause).

Mr W J Heath and Mr Watkinson having addressed the meeting at length,

Mr T M Eastwood of Southend said he came in to hear the speeches and to show that he had sympathy with the men – (Applause) – in their struggle. They must stick shoulder to shoulder, and not commit any breach of the peace that the police could lay hold of them for, or that anybody else could pick holes in them about. During the Dock Strike, all London feared that there would be great riots and other disturbances, but after a fortnight the conduct of the men commended itself to all well thinking persons. They (the audience) could march about and hold their meetings and do everything in an orderly manner, and if they did that, they would command the respect and support of the inhabitants of Southend and district, and would ultimately win. (Loud applause). Might God prosper the right.

Mr Levi Dell, chairman of the Southend branch of the Union, gave a financial statement. The collection amounted to £3 4s 7d.

REMARKABLE MONEY GETTING At the close of the meeting, the various donations, grants and collections were placed before the Chairman and counted. The total, as cast by Mr T M Eastwood, was £71 14s 4d.

THE INTERVIEW WITH MR WRAGGE On Tuesday afternoon, a deputation of tradesmen and workmen waited upon Mr G Wragge, secretary and manager of Eastwood and Co, at the Institute, Shoeburyness. The deputation consisted of Messrs G J Glasscock, J Ayling and W Smith, three tradesmen, with Messrs W Watkinson, E Jefferies, D McGregor and H Manooch, on behalf of the men. There were also present : Messrs J Jackson, C Spalding and Mr Wragge's private secretary. Having been introduced to several of the deputation, the Manager's glance fell upon Mr Watkinson. "And who is this gentleman?" queried he.

Mr Watkinson : My name is Watkinson.

Mr Wragge (referred to in what follows as the Chairman) : Oh! Then – after a pause during which he curiously eyed his subject up and down – he added : So you're the gentleman that delivered a vigorous speech, which was heartily applauded, and in which you said you would boycott every barge belonging to my firm?

Mr Watkinson : I am.

The Chairman : I am sure I am very much obliged to you and extremely pleased to meet with you.

Mr Watkinson : Thank you.

Mr Wragge then objected to the presence of our reporter, when Mr Watkinson remarked : You have a shorthand clerk present, and it is only fair we should have one on our side.

The Chairman : Mr Hayes wrote me and asked if I would meet three tradesmen and three of the men, but here is Mr Watkinson and Mr A Spalding.

Mr Watkinson : Excuse me. I am down here to represent the men, and I told this Mr Hayes to tell you I was going to be present.

Our representative : I was invited.

The Chairman : Oh, I don't object, if the gentlemen present don't.

Mr Ayling : We don't object. It is as you like.

After several general remarks from Mr Wragge,

Mr Watkinson : With reference to your trying to coerce the men. Fifteen earth diggers struck for a 1d for ten feet, which you wanted them to dig for nothing, or which you wanted to get out of paying for if you could, and they want the penny to pay for it. That is how I take it the dispute began. I have been working on the point, and know nothing about anything else, I can assure you.

Mr W Smith said the shutting up of the brickfield seemed rather a stringent measure. He knew nothing about the working of the field. They knew the men worked very hard and that they did not get paid sufficiently for what they did. It seemed hard that because fifteen men refused to do the firm's work, the whole body of men should be thrown out of employment. It was a stiff measure. With reference to the personalities which had been used, he was sorry they had been spoken. On Sunday, he heard remarks made about their good friend Mr Jackson which were most disgraceful. They were calculated to make the breach wider and would have been better left unsaid.

Mr Watkinson : Excuse me. But you are going away from the question. We are met here to hear the views of the men. Let's hear what they have got to say.

Manooch then made a statement. He said their grievance was over the 10 feet they had to dig for nothing. The men were willing to go back to work at the old rate of pay, viz 3 1/4d per yard. In the other two fields next to theirs, they were being paid 6 1/2d for 54 feet, while they were paid 6 1/2d for 64 feet. They had a gullet to cut, for which they asked (???) per thousand, and 7 1/2d for digging along the face of dirt.

Mr Glasscock : What do they pay at Wakering?

Manooch : There is a great difference in the work. They wheel it in barrows, whereas we have to throw it up into trucks. That takes a lot more strength.

Mr Ayling : Can you earn as much as others at work in other brickfields?

Manooch : No, we cannot, because we have to dig this 10 feet for nothing.

Jefferies : Before we started work this winter, we asked Mr Jackson for an increase of one penny per thousand, and he told us to go to work and he would see Mr Wragge. We worked for a fortnight, and then Mr Jackson told us he could not give any more than 6 1/2d, and if we could not work at that price, we were to square up our work.

McGregor : About a fortnight afterwards, Mr Jackson sent for us and offered us an increase of 1/2d per thousand. This we refused to accept. Your first letter to the paper seems to state we were offered 1/2d before we struck ; whereas it was nothing of the kind.

The Chairman : It is difficult to get anything to come up to the scratch in the *Southend Standard*. We gave an advance on one side of the water and so we immediately offered the same to you, but you would not accept it.

The Chairman : You were paid 6 1/2d in '86, '87 and '88. Is not that right?

Jefferies : That is right, but we have not been satisfied with it. We have come out for it every year.

The Chairman : Yes, I know. At Shoebury you are fond of strikes.

Jefferies : We are not satisfied.

The Chairman : Neither are we satisfied with the prices we get for our bricks. The brick trade is now worse than it was last year.

McGregor : You pay 8d per thousand at Otterham Quay?

The Chairman : And that is the only place, but that is because it is a chalk hole. It is not clean dirt ; it is chalky and flinty, and we have always paid more there.

Jefferies : We work as hard as we can, and then do not earn as much by 5s or 6s per week as other men do, as the work is put out here.

The Chairman : Is it put out badly?

Jefferies : I don't know, but we can't earn any money at it.

The Chairman : What is your average money per week?

Jefferies : I don't know. I have never kept account. But this I know – I have taken home 10s some weeks.

The Chairman : Perhaps you will be surprised when I tell you, you have averaged 25s to 30s per week.

McGregor : I never did, sir. I know.

The Chairman : I don't know how you can reckon up.

McGregor : Nor do I you, sir.

Mr Watkinson : If we settled the dispute about the 10 feet without going into all this, I think it would be better.

The Chairman : If we cannot get the price for bricks, what are we to do? The men are chiefly Kent men and knew when they came here they were to be paid by the thousand.

Jefferies : We had a good job over there.

The Chairman : Times are very bad. We are doing very badly and we want you to accept our offer, which we make although we are not getting as much for bricks this year as we did last year.

Jefferies : Don't you agree, sir, we ought to earn enough money to keep us out of debt?

The Chairman : Don't you think we ought to pay our debts?

Jefferies : Yes, and I hope you always will – and give us money enough to pay our debts with as well.

The Chairman : You have got an advance of 1/2d on 6 1/2d while the brickloaders have got an advance of 1/2d on 10d.

McGregor : But that is different altogether from earth digging.

The Chairman : If you work it out it is just the same. We always try to do our best for you.

Jefferies : And don't we always do our best for you?

The Chairman : We have no fault to find with any one of you. If the bricks were to go up, we would give the 1/2d and another halfpenny too.

Jefferies : We want the penny, sir, before we go to work.

The Chairman : Or bring us to our senses?

Mr Smith mentioned that the house rent was very dear at Shoebury.

The Chairman : I should have thought Shoebury the cheapest place to live in out of all our brickfields.

Jefferies : That doesn't matter if we can't earn money enough to buy food.

Mr Glasscock suggested that the men should go to work at the half-penny advance, and that at the New Year they should be given the other half-penny.

The Chairman : How do we know we can give it?

Mr Watkinson appealed to Mr Wragge to grant the men their demand for the sake of their wives and children. He might have used rash words, but he was obliged to use strong language when dealing with the question of labour. He appealed to him, as a common sense thinking man, to grant the request of the men if possible.

The Chairman : We have offered them a half-penny. We have lost money over Shoebury. We should have been better without Shoebury Brickfield. I think the men ought to meet us in this case.

Jefferies : We should never have gone to work if it had not been for Mr Jackson.

The Chairman : I know there was some misunderstanding.

Jefferies : You never came near us when you came down that day ; you sheared off.

The Chairman : But you knew I was down all day. The men, if they want me, generally come to me

and, in fact, are generally anxious to drink my health. Why did not you come?

Jefferies : Because you are such an austere man, and we did not like to come.

The Chairman : The price has gone down.

Jefferies : It is up now, isn't it, sir.

The Chairman : I am not telling lies.

Mr Watkinson : Your decision is that you cannot give more than a half-penny?

The Chairman : Yes.

Mr Watkinson : We will retire for a few minutes.

The men and the last named gentleman then left the room, but after an absence of five minutes returned, and said the 1/2d would make a difference in their wage of 2s 1d a week, and that they didn't feel inclined to accept the offer. They were still of opinion they were worth the penny.

The Chairman : I am sorry that you refuse to accept my offer.

Mr Ayling : I appeal to you, sir, to give it your serious consideration. It will be a terrible job if the field is shut up.

Mr Watkinson : I can promise you that if you give the men the penny, they will work hard and will do their work thoroughly and not scamp it. It is but a small and paltry sum, and hardly worth creating a dispute over.

The Chairman : That is a matter for argument.

Manooch : I am sorry, because I feel I shall have to leave Shoebury in debt. I always like to be straightforward wherever I go.

The Chairman : Although it is but a small sum, "It's many a little which makes a mickle".

Jefferies : You don't want us to work hard all the week and earn 5s less than other men, do you?

The Chairman : No ; the more money you can get the better.

Jefferies : They get that amount more than we do in other firms.

The Chairman : What is the name of the firm?

Jefferies : At Wakering they get 7s or even 8s more than we do.

McGregor : At Potter's, they always have one penny per thousand for moulding more than we get.

The Chairman : I think you had better take my advice and my offer. Let's be friends and go on again.

McGregor : We can't. We are only the representatives of the men and they will have a penny.

Mr Ayling : Can't you manage a penny?

The Chairman : If I pay a penny here, I shall have to do the same in Kent.

McGregor : They earn more than we do, Ours is not living ; it is lingering. I have not spent a penny in a public house for six years, and I have had as much as I could do to find bread for my wife and children.

Manooch : If I had been over at Kent last summer, I should have made nearly a million bricks, whereas here I only made 724,000.

The Chairman : You shall have a berth over at Kent, and if you make a million bricks I will make you a present of £5.

Jefferies : That is what my old master used to do.

The Chairman : The times are changed now. I can't give the penny. If you burn my effigy, I dare say I shall bear it.

The meeting then dispersed.

55 23 November 1889

THE LOCK OUT AT SHOEBURYNESS

ANOTHER LETTER FROM MR WRAGGE – THE MEN STILL FIRM – THE "STAR" TWINKLES ON THE SUBJECT – A FEW WORDS BY MR WATKINSON Although there has been only one meeting, the week has not been without interesting items of news. Mr Watkinson resumed negotiations with the Secretary and Manager, but without avail. On Friday, the *Star* newspaper prodded Eastwood's people very hard, and brought to light a system of coercion peculiar to the brick trade, and which must be remedied before long. On Monday, Major Rasch MP

appeared on the scene, interviewed several of the men, and it is stated he got pretty plainly spoken to, as he declined to subscribe. On Wednesday morning, the Rev F Thackeray wrote Mr Wragge, pointing out the sum now in dispute only amounted to £30, and offering to make himself responsible for £15 if the firm would give the rise and open the field. The men are very hopeful and more determined than ever ; indeed, they have good cause to be so. Every independent person who has probed the facts to their centre has ascertained that the earth diggers' claim is a good one ; while no one dares venture a word in defence of a firm which has resorted to the "brutal expedient of a lock out" for miserably insufficient reasons. The men working at Eastwood's other fields are rapidly joining the Union, and news is daily to hand of builders who want Shoebury bricks and can only with difficulty be put off with other and inferior makes.

Subscriptions did not come in so freely last week as previously, but still there was sufficient money – and a balance. Mr E W Brooks headed the list with £5. During today and Sunday will come the pinch, and we do earnestly beg of all workmen, tradesmen and other good hearted people to make a big effort in aid of the locked-out men. The Dock strike was won by the shoulder to shoulder attitude of the men, and plentiful subscriptions from outsiders. Shoebury men are equally determined to stand by their just cause, and it is the duty of all people who believe in the ultimate triumph of righteousness to lend them a helping hand,

"Shoebury Excelsior" writes : "It is clear to every common sense right thinking man that the men's cause is a good one. They are perfectly willing to work at the original scale of wage, 3 1/4d per yard, but refuse, and rightly too, to work at the rate of 6 1/2d per thousand, which means, in plain English, they are to dig 64 feet of earth at the price for 54 feet. Eastwood's are practising the sweating system. At the interview held at the Institute last Tuesday week, Mr Wragge, when asked by Jefferies, one of the strikers, whether it was fair they should dig ten feet of earth for nothing, made answer that the men were now paid 30 per cent better than in Kent. A plain answer he would not give, although he was profuse of details concerning everything but the point at issue, viz, the 10 feet of earth the firm want dug for nothing. With regard to the 30 per cent, I should like to ask Mr Wragge whether it has not been the custom during the last twenty years to pay the Shoebury men 9d per thousand more for moulding – and the price of moulding regulates all prices paid for setting, sorting, brick loading, &c – than the moulders of Kent have had? Again, is it not a fact that the Shoebury bricks fetch higher prices, as much as one shilling and eighteen pence per thousand than those made in Kent? And are they not in much greater demand? I have had conversations with moulders who have worked in the brickfield from 1862, and they say it is a well known and acknowledged fact that "DK" bricks are of much better quality, and far superior in soundness than those of Kent manufacture. The men ask for a penny increase ; which means that it will add about £60 increase to the expenditure. The firm have offered a half-penny, or £30 ; thus leaving the matter in dispute a question of simply £30.

In your last week's issue, it was reported that the cost of the bricks from the spade to the market was 14s 3d per thousand, and the average market price per thousand 23s. I am sure Mr Watkinson will forgive me for correcting him. The lowest cost is £1 per thousand, and the average market value of the bricks is 24s to 25s per thousand. The total make at Shoebury is about 21,000,000 per season. With a profit of 4s per thousand, there would be a net gain of £4,200 per annum. Mr Wragge says that the Shoebury field has never paid ; a remark which I cannot swallow. He forgets to mention the immense amount of money that has been added to the exchequer of Eastwood and Co through the Government making a new railway. His memory is also defective concerning an enormous profit that will shortly be got from the same authorities, over a large field that contains splendid earth near Suttons, for compensation and other etceteras.

The price of bricks has gone up. Last summer, why did they offer almost any price to get men to load their barges, and pay them 20s extra per barge, if Shoebury bricks were not in good demand and fetching high prices? These are facts".

The editor of the *Southend Standard* has received the following letter :-

SIR – As reported in your issue of last Thursday, I met the deputation of tradesmen and workmen on Tuesday last, the 13th.

Nothing resulted from the interview, but Mr Watkinson stopped me later at Southend Station and asked me whether, if the men went in at the 1/2d advance, my firm would promise to reconsider on the 1st January whether they could afford to give the other 1/2d, making the 1d now in dispute.

I put it to Mr Watkinson as to who was to decide whether we could give the 1d or not, and he replied that the men would be quite willing to leave the decision to me. We parted in a most friendly manner, mutually regretting that the strike had occurred.

When, however, I saw Mr Watkinson on the following Thursday, he said that the men should only go in at the 1/2d on my promising definitely that the 1d should be paid on the 1st January.

This I declined, but offered to agree to Mr Watkinson's original proposition. Further, I said I should be perfectly willing to discuss with him or a representative of the men whether the advance could be given or not, and if he and I could not agree, I should be willing to refer the difference to some independent person to be chosen by the men.

Mr Watkinson refused, and left me with the intimation that he would stop the whole of our business.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE E WRAGGE

Secretary Eastwood and Co (Limited)

November 19th 1889

MR WATKINSON'S REPLY In respect to the above letter, a representative of this paper interviewed Mr Watkinson at Barking, who said that the report contained in the letter of what took place is perfectly correct, with the important exception that he (Mr Watkinson) did not say that the men would be quite willing to leave the matter in Mr Wragge's hands. On the contrary, he asked if the men were willing, would he (Mr Wragge) come to the terms named. The letter in itself, he added, with that exception is correct, but it only serves to show the unbusinesslike and namby-pamby manner in which Mr Wragge goes to work. He wanted to give verbal agreements, which would have no weight whatever and certainly not suit him (Mr Watkinson). If Mr Wragge would give a written agreement that if the men go in now at 1/2d advance, he would give them the 1d on the 1st January, he would use his utmost endeavour to get the men to accept those terms. If this is not done in legal and proper form the strike must go on, for nothing less will be acceded to.

In conclusion, Mr Watkinson said that whilst the firm hold out he will do all in his power to boycott them, and several of their barges have been already waylaid and delayed.

Mr Watkinson will be pleased to meet Mr Wragge at the Coffee Palace on Saturday night, when he will quote from statistics, signed by Messrs Jackson and Co of Shoeburyness, which show conclusively that they can well afford to give the men what they are asking for.

Mr Wragge has stated that Mr Watkinson's statement with regard to bricks fetching 28s per 1,000 is incorrect. From the above mentioned statistics, our informant states it will be proved that not only do the bricks fetch 28s per 1,000, but some were sold at the enormous price of 65s per 1,000.

MEETING AT WAKERING On Thursday evening, Mr J Oliver's shed at Great Wakering was well filled with an audience of working men, assembled to testify their sympathy with their locked-out Shoebury brethren. Mr J H Burrows CC occupied the chair, and was supported by Messrs J Watkinson, W J Heath, &c.

The Chairman dissected Mr Wragge's speech at Shoebury to the joint deputation of tradesmen and working men, showing it was replete with misrepresentations.

Mr Watkinson said they must dig a grave, and dig it deep, wherein Wragge and Co's tyranny could sleep forever. (Cheers). When he first came into the district, he knew little about brick making, but since then he had visited several fields in Kent and had seen the men digging the pug. From what he saw, he was satisfied that the physical frames of the men could not last many years, as they did not earn wages sufficient to provide necessary nourishment to keep the system in a condition to do their arduous labour. Eastwoods, as the largest and wealthiest brick company, had been the cause of

nearly all the misery and poverty among the men of the brick industry in Kent and Essex. (Applause). Wherever he had been, he was told the men were well paid before Eastwood and Co bought the field, and were quite satisfied. The truth was that Wragge and Co, or Eastwood and Co, he did not care what was their title, held a monopoly. He had asked a surveyor if he had ever heard of thousand work, and he could give him (the speaker) no information. It was apparently originated by Eastwoods that they might sweat ten feet of earth out of the men. (Hear, hear). Wherever the "thousand" work was carried out, there was sweating or legalised robbery carried on. (Cheers). He had said the average price of bricks was 28s per thousand. Mr Wragge contradicted him, and said it was 24s per thousand, and Mr Jackson backed him up. Well, what did they think of Wragge and Jackson now he had secured a list of prices issued in March last, signed by Mr C Spalding on behalf of Jackson and Co, and by adding these prices together, he found they averaged 37s per thousand. Mr Wragge, in his letter, said he (the speaker) would get the men to go to work for the half-penny advance if he (Mr Wragge) would take the other half-penny into consideration. He never said any such thing. What he did say was if the half-penny rise was given at once with a written promise to give the other at Christmas, he would do his best to persuade the men to accept those terms. The speaker dilated at length upon the general question of the organisation of labour.

Amid cheers, the Chairman announced a subscription of 5s from the Rev W Robertson and 10s from Mrs Heath.

Mr W J Heath then addressed the meeting, and advised that, in response to Mr Wragge's challenge, the Chairman, Mr Watkinson and himself should be given the decision of the question of the rise.

The collection amounted to £1 11s 8d.

BRICKFIELD TYRANNY

THE COUNTY COUNCIL SHOULD BOYCOTT EASTWOOD'S BRICKS The *Star*, in its issue of Friday, said Eastwood and Co are the biggest firm in the brick trade. They sell their bricks at Belvedere Wharf, Lambeth, but they make them in many different places. They have brickfields at Shoeburyness, at Sittingbourne, Halstow, Otterham Quay, West Drayton and other places in the home counties. If they treat their workmen everywhere like they treat those at Shoeburyness, it would be worth the whole of the Progressive members of the London County Council, School Board and other public bodies engaging in large building operations to inquire where their contractors get their bricks from. If the contracting builders who put the bricks in place have to pay their men fair wages, the firms who contract for the supply of the bricks

OUGHT TO BE MADE TO DO SO TOO.

It is more than probable that Eastwood and Co will supply the whole or a considerable portion of the bricks for the two big asylum contracts the County Council are giving out. In view of the state of things existing at the field at Shoeburyness, it ought to be considered whether any of the public money ought to be allowed to go to them. The corner stone of their system of dealing with the men is this very ingenious little plan. All through the moulding season in the summer, they retain off their moulders' wages 2d for every 1,000 bricks made. At the end of the season the men get their twopence, which by that time have mounted up to a very considerable sum. So far, so good. But Eastwood and Co's ingenuity lies in the fact that, under the terms of employment, a man who leaves before the end of the season

FORFEITS ALL CLAIM

to the money kept in hand. It is the man's own money, deducted from his hard earnings, but if, owing to any dispute or other cause, he leaves only a fortnight before the end of the season, Eastwood and Co pocket the lot. The injustice of this ingenious little arrangement lies not so much in the barefaced robbery of a proportion of the men's earnings, as in the power which it gives the firm of robbing their men in an indirect manner. It amounts to this, that Eastwood and Co compel their men to submit to their own money being retained as hostage for their unresisting submission to whatever treatment Messrs Eastwood and Co may choose to mete out to them. The effect of the system is that the men are bound to work on through the whole season at the price at which the season opened. A rise in prices caused by improvement in trade never reaches them, and generally

Eastwood's are able to work their men

AT LOWER WAGES

than are paid by other and competing firms. Five weeks ago, 14 of the men employed in earth digging at Shoeburyness asked for an advance of 1d a thousand, or else to go back to the old measurement rate of 3 1/4d per cubic yard. Eastwood's rate is 6 1/2d per 64 cubic feet. The price paid by other firms is 6 1/2d for 54 cubic feet, equal to the 3 1/4d a yard the men demanded. So practically Eastwood's have been getting 10 ft more work done for their 6 1/2d than their rivals – an advantage of nearly 20 per cent. After humbugging the men about for a week or two, the firm refused the men's demands. So they came out on strike. After a fortnight, the manager offered 1/2d advance. This was refused, and Eastwood and Co resolved on the old brutal expedient of a general lock out. Only 14 diggers were on strike. Over 50 were thrown out by the lock out. The field is now closed. Eastwood and Co have their other establishments, and no doubt are maintaining the lock out there in order to intimidate their employees elsewhere from demanding their rights. At Shoeburyness

LOCAL SYMPATHY WITH THE MEN

is so strong that last week £74 was subscribed for them ; £25 came from the gasworkers, and £10, after full enquiry, from Mr Brooks of Grays, the Liberal candidate, himself a large employer of labour. The work of earth digging is the most arduous kind of labour imaginable, and at Eastwood's sweating rate of pay, a man does not get a regular £1 a week at it. The work lasts from October to April, after which the moulding, at which better wages are realised, begins. A brickmaker's life, in consequence of the terribly arduous character of the work, is very short. He is no good after 40. A little while ago, an old employee of Eastwood's, whose body and soul had been worn out in their service, could go on no longer. The work had broken him down, and he went to the firm, told of his long service and the condition to which it had reduced him, and humbly asked that he might be given one of the lighter jobs there are about the field. "We are not going to make the field into a hospital", was Eastwood and Co's brutal answer.

56 23 November 1889

ANOTHER DROWNING FATALITY An inquest was held on Monday last at the Ship Hotel, Tilbury Docks, before Mr C E Lewis (coroner) and a jury, touching the death of **Joseph Beach**, a lighterman of 9 Seymour Road, Tilbury, who was drowned in the Tidal Basin at about 11.30 pm on the 16th instant. **Tom Mason**, brother-in-law of the deceased, of Tilbury, deposed that deceased was on board two barges with him. Whilst he (witness) was in the cabin of one of the barges, deceased fell by some means overboard. Witness, on hearing cries, ran from the cabin and, with the assistance of two German sailors belonging to a ship lying alongside, endeavoured to lift deceased out of the water, but they were unable to do so. He was eventually got out with the drags. Dr Davis was called for, and pronounced life extinct. The above evidence was corroborated by Christian Weiss, one of the German sailors alluded to. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

57 23 November 1889

TILBURY DOCKS

A MAN DROWNED An inquest was held at the Basin Canteen on Saturday morning, before the coroner, Mr C E Lewis, touching the death of **Joseph William Empleton** of 52 Sydney Road, lighterman, who was drowned at the Central Dock on Thursday the 14th inst. Evidence was given to the effect that the defendant was propelling his barge by pushing it with a pole against another barge which was lying in the dock and, overbalancing himself, fell into the water. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

58 30 November 1889

DROWNED On Thursday afternoon an inquest was held at the Red Cow Inn, Canvey, before Mr C E Lewis, coroner, and a jury, over which the Rev H Hayes was the foreman, touching the death of **Richard James Britton**, who was drowned on the 30th October near the West Blyth Buoy, Sea

Reach, through the sinking of the barge *Elizabeth*. PC Spooner proved finding the body on the 26th October near Deadman's Point, Sea Wall, Canvey Island. After hearing the evidence of another witness, the inquiry was adjourned.

59 14 December 1889

BARGEMEN'S PROTECTION SOCIETY A meeting of bargemen and watermen was held at the British Schoolroom, Southend, on Saturday evening, for the purpose of forming a branch lodge of the above society. Mr Riley of Sittingbourne presided, and was supported by Mr C F Ashton, general secretary and Mr W Bowman, acting local secretary. After a short address by the Chairman, Mr Ashton read the rules. Mr Bowman moved, and Mr Ashton seconded, that they be approved. This was carried. The Chairman asked if it were the wish of the meeting that Mr Bowman should be secretary, and that steps should be taken to open a branch of the society in the district. This suggestion was adopted without dissent. The Chairman said they would never live to regret having joined the Union. He and his colleague had come down a good many miles to try and help forward their Union, and they were amply repaid in the knowledge that they had done something to help forward a movement that would be for the benefit of fellow working men. (Applause) A society was started in Sittingbourne some 17 years ago, but the reason it fell through was because the right man was not at the helm. They had a man who was a master's man, and consequently he could not serve both the interests of man and master. Mr Smeed had said to him at Rochester that if they (the bargemen) could get combined and all working in unity, and stick to it, they were their (the masters') master. He only wished old Mr Smeed was alive to see it. (Applause) They meant to stick together and, he said without egotism, that they were masters of the situation any minute they liked. He did not wish to coerce the masters nor wish them to pay 20s if they could only afford to pay 10s (Applause) ; they only wanted what was fair. Mr Ashton urged upon all present if not members of the Union to join it. Their branch would be No 6. The meeting then broke up.

60 21 December 1889

ALLEGED INHUMAN CONDUCT ON THE PART OF THE CAPTAIN OF A STEAMER On Saturday afternoon, the adjourned inquest was held at the Hoy Inn, South Benfleet, before Mr C E Lewis, coroner, and a jury, over whom the Rev H Hayes was the foreman, touching the death of **Richard James Britton**, who was drowned on the 30th October near the West Blyth Buoy, Sea Reach, through the sinking of the barge *Elizabeth*.

Superintendent Hawtree watched the proceedings on behalf of the police ; Mr Andrews represented Messrs Smeed, Dean and Co ; and Mr H Aspinall was on behalf of Captain Neddton of the steamship *Madeline*.

Mr Aspinall said Mr Neddton was unable to be present, and he represented him.

Jacob Beichteller of 55 Queen Street, Gravesend, said he was a fisherman. On Wednesday morning, 30th October, about two am, he was lying in the upper part of Sea Reach in the fishing boat *Fiddle* ; he was fishing. He was over on the north side of mid channel, lying in the Red Rays of the Mucking Lightship. He saw a steamboat coming up the river ; she was about abreast of Mucking Lightship when witness first took notice of her ; he saw the vessel's port and masthead lights. When half way between Mucking Lighthouse and where witness's vessel was lying, she starboarded her helm ; witness had all her lights in view. This would mean that her head would be edged up and pointing to the south shore. Witness saw the green light of a barge over on the south shore ; the barge was coming along very slowly. Witness saw a white light flash, and then heard a great noise, which witness took to be the letting go of the steamboat's anchor. There was no noise from the steamboat as if she had run anything down, or that a collision had taken place.

A Juror : Did she blow her whistle?

Witness : No. The same morning, at daylight, he saw a barge's spars where he had heard this noise. At half past ten am, the Harbour Master of Gravesend came to witness to ask him if he had seen anything of a barge, and witness pointed out to him the spot where he had heard the noise.

A Juror : The spars would have drifted up and drifted back again by then.

Witness : It was two o'clock when I heard the noise. It was only a matter of a few minutes after the steamer had starboarded her helm before I heard the noise.

The Foreman : How do you fix the time?

Witness said he went down below and looked at the clock. Directly the steamer starboarded her helm, he saw the white light of the barge ; according to the way in which the white light was being held, he judged it was in some man's hand. The width of the river is about one mile and a quarter. It was a starlight morning, but dark, and in no wise hazy.

Richard Harvey of 3 Clarendon Place, Leigh, said he was a fisherman. He remembered the 30th of October ; he was in the upper part of Sea Reach, about half a mile above the last witness, and heard a noise and a loud call out for help ; it was about two am. It attracted his attention to where the steamer was. She had her head away to the south shore when witness first saw her, and witness heard no more noise. Witness did not know the barge had been run down until daylight, and witness said to his mate, "It was about what that call was about". It was a dark starlight night. Witness did not see the steamer till he heard the noise. The steamer was out of her course, and if she had gone on straight she would have gone on the mud. There was nothing else in the river but the fishing boats.

George Anderson of Merston, manager of barges belonging to Smeed, Dean and Co, London, of Sittingbourne, said on October 30th, in consequence of information received, he went to Gravesend and arrived there at eleven o'clock. He went on board the steamer *Madeline*, lying off Gravesend Pier, and asked to see the captain. Captain Neddon came out of the cabin. Witness told him he represented the owners of the barge *Elizabeth*, and asked for the names of the owners of the *Madeline*, which the Captain gave him, together with those of the brokers. The Captain said, "It is a bad job. I could not help it. My wheel chains were foul. You see my deck load", which was full of timber and deals. Witness had with him two other barge captains, and they went down the ship's ladder. Witness called out to them, and asked them whether they had heard what the captain had said. The captain then repeated "that his wheel chains were foul". Witness then left.

The jury, after a short deliberation, returned a verdict to the effect that deceased came to his death through the culpable negligence of Captain Neddon.

The Coroner said Captain Neddon would be charged with that he did feloniously kill and slay Richard Britton, and he will be tried at the next Essex Assizes.

THE CAPTAIN BEFORE THE MAGISTRATES At Southend Petty Sessions on Wednesday, Captain H F Neddon was charged with the manslaughter of Richard James Britton at Canvey Island Reach on the 30th October. Mr F Laing, a barrister (instructed by Messrs Bottle and Roche, solicitors of London) appeared for the defence.

William Britton of Sittingbourne, bargeman, Jacob Beichteller and Richard Harvey, Leigh, fisherman, repeated the evidence given at the inquest.

After George Anderson had given evidence,

Mr Laing said there was not a shred of evidence that the captain was in charge, and therefore he was not criminally liable to be prosecuted. It was like prosecuting a railway director for an accident happening through the negligence of the engine driver, because he (the director) was in the train at the time.

The Bench held the captain was *prima facie* in charge.

The learned counsel then submitted there was no evidence whatever that any negligence had taken place. The man Britton's tale was absolutely impossible and incredible.

Prisoner, in reply to the charge, said, "I have only to say that I am not guilty".

Robert Nelson, chief officer of the *Madeline*, was in charge of the watch at the time of the accident ; a man was on the look out on the forecastle head and a man at the wheel ; the captain was on the bridge up to the time of the collision ; lights were burning brightly. Witness accounted for the collision by stating the wheelman could not get the helm hard over. The master asked the man at the wheel what was the matter ; the man replied he could do no more. Witness jumped down immediately to assist the wheelman, but could not get it over further. The barge showed no white

light on her quarter, or they would have had no difficulty in avoiding a collision. Witness would have done what was done had he been in command. The master gave orders for all hands to put the boat out, and would have done so had the barge's boat not come on our side. After the collision, the vessel stayed there twenty minutes.

Various other evidence having been given, counsel addressed the Bench at long length, and the case was dismissed.

61 21 December 1889

COLLISION CASE – J Morris v R Seton – Claim £31 7s for damage done to a barge run into by a steamer in charge of defendant. Mr B Aspinall, instructed by Messrs Lee and Holmes, appeared for plaintiff ; and Mr C E Seth-Smith, instructed by Mr Oswald Clarke, for defendant.

62 7 January 1899

BARGE ADRIFT During the rough weather on Tuesday night, the *Stromboli*, a steam barge, the property of Messrs Hilton, Anderson, Brooks and Co, broke away from her moorings at the firm's wharf and drifted across the river to the opposite shore, near Greenhithe. There she was beached, but did not sustain damage sufficient to prevent her being got off safely with next morning's tide.

63 7 January 1899

SOUTHEND POLICE COURT – BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

ANOTHER CASE FROM THE FALCON **Joseph Kingsbury**, waterman, was charged with being drunk and refusing to quit the Falcon Hotel, Marine Parade, on December 17th. Mr J J Cummins prosecuted, and said on the day in question defendant went into the Falcon the worse for drink. He was well known for his disorderly behaviour, and was not served. He was put out twice, when he simply wilfully took his fist and struck the window, smashing the glass. There was no charge for the damage. He asked that the man might be punished by imprisonment, if it was possible. John Izod, barman, said between two and half past, defendant went in the house, and witness refused to serve him. He would not leave ; witness got him outside, and he came back the second time, requiring the assistance of another man with himself to put him out. After raving at witness through the window, he dashed his fist through the glass, smashing it. Defendant was a well known character, and was never allowed to have drink in the house. John Butler gave corroborative evidence. He said he was in the bar at the time, and a piece of glass from the shattered window cut witness on the eye. Herbert William Richardson, landlord of the Falcon, said he went outside to defendant, but before he could get to him, the damage to the window had been done. A previous conviction was proved, and defendant was now fined £1 and 14s costs, or 14 days' imprisonment, Police-sergeant Say said during the 2 1/2 years he had known Kingsbury, defendant had lain rough and had no home. He was therefore detained.

64 4 February 1899

TILBURY

TIMELY RESCUE On Wednesday morning, whilst some men were engaged loading some barges, **Mr D King**, foreman for Messrs Scrutton Limited, fell overboard, when Mr E Prisley, seeing that his life was in great peril, immediately jumped to his rescue, and undoubtedly his timely assistance saved Mr King from drowning.

65 4 February 1899

SOUTHEND DISTRICT POLICE COURT

WITHDRAWN There was a case in the list against **F White**, barge owner, for dredging sand in Hadleigh Ray. The summons was issued at the instance of the Thames Conservancy, but was now withdrawn.

66 18 February 1899

GRAYS

LADY FRIEND PLEADED GUILTY **Edward Hawks** was again summoned for being drunk and disorderly on February 4th. A “lady” friend said she represented him and that he was guilty. He was on his barge in the river. Police-sergeant Pratley said he saw defendant outside the Theobald Arms with other young men. He was drunk, singing and using very bad language. He refused to give his name and caused a large crowd to assemble. Fined 2s 6d and 10s costs.

67 4 March 1899

A LIGHTERMAN'S FATE The first inquiry was held at the Crown and Anchor Inn on the body of a lighterman named **George Gibbons**. On January 18th, a barge named the *Madge* was taken from London to Messrs Basey and Wood's wharf, Swanscombe, by Gibbons, who resided at 5 Dorrington Grove, Battersea. It is supposed that on January 20th the barge broke adrift and was driven over to the Grays side of the river, where it was found by Charles Wilshire of 36 Charles Street, Grays. The body of the deceased man was found on the 14th February at Aveley, and the night before he borrowed a boat hook as he was going on board the barge. This was the last seen of him, according to the evidence forthcoming, and the Jury returned a verdict of “Found drowned”.

68 11 March 1899

“AT HOME” ON THE I J T D “*IKADSUCHI*” On Tuesday week, when bright Phoebus had dispelled the thick fog which had all the morning wrapped Tilbury Docks and its environs as a pall, making things generally uncomfortable and rendering navigation inconvenient, uncertain and dangerous, we arrived at the Dock and found our way along quays, whose lines of rails, travelling cranes and the immense sheds all tell tales of how large steamers and barges are cheaply and expeditiously shifted. At the end or knuckle lay the Japanese torpedo boat destroyer “*Ikadsuchi*”, lying off a pontoon or “dummy”. She is built by the well known firm of Yarrow, Poplar, and strikes one at first sight as being very long in proportion to her beam, whilst a peep at her engine with four tunnels indicate even to a non nautical eye that she is a “goer”, as one of the naval looking men on the quay dubbed her. A crowd of lightermen, clerks, lumpers, a few females and a baby or two, and a policeman, which a London contemporary obnoxiously describes as a “loafer”, lined the quay. On crossing the pontoon we gained the deck, beneath the crossed flags, the Jap ensign and the Union Jack of Old England. The decks are noiseless to walk upon, being covered with a kind of rubber. At the aft (...) of the deck, the limited space had been well utilised, and tables temporarily erected that eighty might lunch were effectively spread and furnished by Mr Salter and his staff of the Station Restaurant, Tilbury Docks. The Grays “Sons of Temperance” Band, under the direction of the well known bandmaster, Mr W (Layton?) played suitably. The gallant commander (Capt Ishida), who showed his pluck in leading an attack with his torpedo boat on Wei Hai Wei in the late war with China, was very busy in giving us all a hearty welcome. We tasted the national drink, saki, which appears to be to the Jap what beer is supposed to be to the Englishman. It is made from rice with a not unpleasant flavour but bad for the head if indulged in too freely. There was an array of roast beef, tongue pies, custard jellies, &c, bottles of beer, port, sherry, claret and champagne. The crew were drawn up on both sides of one of the long narrow tables, and their glasses charged, when their commander broke out into a stirring exhortation, but as it was in the Jap tongue, we failed to get the gist of it. This was followed by singing in chorus the ballad of the Talu fight “September” naval song, which is spirited in parts, though their singing sounds very chant like. The National Anthem, composed about 500 years ago, was sung with the crew at the “Salute”, and visitors upstanding and uncovered, accompanied by the band. Not being engaged until late in the evening of the previous day, the bandmaster had to take down the air (the Japanese paymaster whistling it) and afterwards arrange band parts. At the invitation of the commander, who was decorated with several medals and the order of the Golden Kite for bravery, they partook of the viands ad lib but refused the oft drunk saki, drinking his health in lemonade and winding up with “He's a jolly good fellow”, and giving him of British cheers three times three “Hip, hip, &c”.

69 18 March 1899

GRAYS The Royal National Lifeboat Institution have granted testimonials to **Mr Thomas Ambrose** and **Mr Edgar Dines**, master and mate of the barge *Briton*, for the gallant rescue of **Edward Gilliard**, master of the barge *Esther*, off Erith in Sea Reach, on the night of the 14th October last. The presentation will be made at the Congregational Men's PSA.

70 1 April 1899

BARGE COOK DROWNED OFF GLOBE JETTY **John Hustwart**, a cook on the barge *Llama* of Woolwich, was drowned on Sunday afternoon in the river off Globe Jetty, and the body is not yet recovered. The deceased man was going ashore in a dinghy with another member of the crew. He was getting into the boat from the barge, when he slipped and fell overboard and, not being able to swim, was drowned before help could reach him.

71 1 April 1899

PRESENTATIONS AT THE PSA

[Note : PSA stands for Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, a movement started by John Blackham of West Bromwich in 1875 to encourage working class men to attend church services. The Sunday afternoon meetings were described as "bright, brief and brotherly". Although the movement started in the Midlands, the PSA soon spread to other areas, and became a national movement in 1905.]

Sunday last was a big day at the Congregational Men's PSA, Grays. There was a large audience to hear Dr W Evans Darby of London, a member of the Grays PSA, who took for his subject, "The PSA and the Progress of the World". The address was an excellent one, and listened to with rapt attention. The applause at the close was evidence of the appreciation of the speaker's contention that if the churches wished to be in the van of progress, they would have to step into line with the PSA movement, which he regarded as one of the most hopeful organisations of Christian work and life.

At the close of the address, Mr H F Brooks, who was present for the purpose, presented testimonials granted by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution to **Mr Thomas Ambrose** and **Mr Edgar Dines** – both members of the PSA – for their gallantry in saving life from shipwreck in Sea Reach on October 14th last, under circumstances detailed by the Secretary (Mr Threadgill) who read the statement made by the rescued man in the presence of himself and Mr Brooks, and forwarded with other evidence to the Institution, as follows :-

"I, **Edward Gilliard**, aged 44, freeman of the Medway, for about 24 years a master of barges, and for about six months master of the barge *Esther*, 44 tons register, declare that on the 12th October last my barge was loaded with tarpaving at Maidstone, bound for London. We sailed on the 13th, and about 6.30 on the 14th we were making up river in Sea Reach, inside Middle Blyth Buoy, wind strong from east south east, tide dead low water, water exceptionally rough. A sea struck the barge and burst in two of the hatches, covering the main hatch, swamping her so that she sunk five minutes later.

My mate and I took to the boat as the barge went down, but the boat capsized owing to the painter not having been let go, and we were thrown into the water. My mate was carried away and drowned. After half an hour in the water, I succeeded in reaching the wreck and getting on to the main mast, which was about six feet out of the water. I shouted for help but got none, although two schooners were anchored about a quarter of a mile distant, windbound.

It was very dark and raining at the time. After four barges had passed without attempting to rescue me, I saw the light of a vessel to the northward, which proved to be the barge *Briton* – Thomas Ambrose, master – coming up river towards me, the tide having by this time commenced to flow. He altered his course and put her head round to approach me, sailing in a southerly direction as close to the wind as possible. He got within hailing distance, when he let go his anchor and stowed the sails, but the anchor wouldn't hold, and the barge drifted up river.

As soon as she had brought up, at a considerable distance from me, he and the mate got into their

boat and pulled towards me in the teeth of the wind and tide, and in face of the heavy sea. After what appeared a long time they reached me, and I dropped into the boat in a miserable condition – lying on the bottom of it whilst with great difficulty they regained the barge and put me aboard.

They then got her underweigh again, and brought her to Grays. They found me some dry clothes, gave me some hot tea, and on the following morning landed me at Grays.

I testify that they both incurred great risk in rescuing me, and that there was great danger of the boat being swamped.

Had this occurred, there would have been no chance of rescue for any of us, owing to the weather and the darkness of the night.

Signed : Edward Gilliard”.

As may be imagined, the two men, on coming forward to receive the testimonials, had quite an ovation.

Mr Brooks, in a few well chosen appropriate words, made the presentations, which were to Mr Thomas Ambrose, the Lifeboat Institution's thanks on vellum, framed, and an aneroid barometer ; and to Mr Edgar Dines, thanks on vellum, framed. The gifts were acknowledged by Mr Ambrose in a neat speech, in which he said he had only done what he hoped others would do for him in similar circumstances. When he heard the man's cries, he pictured himself in his position, and determined he would, in spite of the difficulties in the way, attempt to reach the man and save him. He was glad that by God's help he was enabled to do so. (Loud applause).

Rev H Davis Bull presided. A collection was taken in aid of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

72 27 May 1899

FOWL STEALING AT GRAYS

POLICE INSPECTOR'S PROMPT CAPTURE – NOT TO BE BRIBED At Grays Police Court on Thursday, before A Sturgeon Esq, Thomas Collins, a seaman, was charged with fowl stealing at Grays on the night of the 24th inst.

William Barrell, a bargeman of Bedford Row, Grays, said he kept fowls, and on the previous day had five fastened up in his fowlhouse. That (Thursday) morning at six o'clock, he went to the fowlhouse and found two of the birds were missing – one black and the other white – the two produced. He examined the door of the fowlhouse, which was as he had left it, but a piece of string fastening the door of the run had been cut, and the door leading from the run to the fowlhouse was open. The night before, he had left it shut. He saw footprints in the garden where the ground had been newly dug. The value of the fowls was 5s.

Inspector Gardiner said he was on duty at 3.20 am that morning in High Street, when he saw prisoner walking along Orsett Road. He met witness and said, “Which is the way to the railway station?” Witness saw he was carrying a parcel under his arm, and asked what he had got in it. He replied, “It is a fowl a mate on my ship gave me before he left Seabrooke's wharf”. Witness said, “When did it leave the wharf?” Prisoner said, “It left with the tide about two hours ago, and I am going to London by train”. Witness took the parcel from under his arm and found therein the white fowl (produced) wrapped in a cloth. He said, “I shall take you into custody on a charge of stealing this fowl”, and the prisoner replied, “Don't lag a fellow for stealing an old fowl. I'll tell the truth about it. I gave a chap a shilling for it. I shall lose my ship if you lock me up”. He then took from his pocket a florin, and said, “I'll give you that if you will let me go”. Witness took him into custody. Afterwards, with Police-constables Reeve and Througood, witness searched along the back of Bedford Row and found some feathers leading from near the prosecutor's premises to a house in course of erection in Clarence Road, at the back of which he found the two wings produced, a large quantity of feathers, and some blood. At the back of the house in Clarence Road he saw Police-constable Reeve find the black fowl (produced). When he searched prisoner at the police station, he found stains of blood on his trousers, and also a white feather adhering to a knife

in a sheath which he was wearing. Witness afterwards charged him with stealing the fowl, and he made no reply. Remanded.

Prisoner was brought up again at the Petty Session and pleaded guilty, but said he had been drinking. Fined 10s and 14s costs or 10 days' imprisonment. Prisoner went to gaol.

73 27 May 1899

INQUEST AT PURFLEET

WALKED INTO THE RIVER IN THE DARK An inquest was held at the Royal Hotel, Purfleet, on Wednesday by the Coroner (Mr C Lewis) and a jury, concerning the death of Albert Edward Oxman, whose body was found floating in the river off Purfleet on Sunday last.

James Clark, of No 1 Montgomery Cottages, West Thurrock, said on Sunday morning about 9.30 am he was walking along the river wall near the oil works when he saw the body of deceased floating in the water face downward. The tide was then running up. Witness obtained assistance, made the body fast, and gave information to the police. Deceased was fully dressed with the exception of his cap.

William White, 6 Bennett Street, Gravesend, a pilot, said on Monday May 8th at about 20 minutes to 12 at night, he was sitting upon a "dummy" at the pier end at Erith waiting to be taken by a tug to the new steamer (P...ton). It was a very dark night. Witness saw a man walk down the (?stage?) way leading to a barge at the end of the pier. He walked on to the barge and fell from it into the water. There were no (...) there on that night, but one had since been placed there. At high tide the space between the end of the causeway and the outer edge of the barge would be about 18 inches, and at low water about three times that distance. The man was alone, and when he fell into the water he called out, "Man overboard". There was no one about to go to his rescue, and there were no ropes there. The pier belonged to Messrs Cory and Sons. Witness afterwards ascertained that the steamship *Prudhoe Castle* was lying close by at (...) derrick. Witness was on the barge from which the man fell. The gangway was always resting on the barge.

Ellen Oxman, of 10 (C...) Buildings, Poplar, said she had seen the body of deceased, which she identified as that of her husband. She last saw him alive on the 8th May about 10.50 pm at the end of Church Lane, Charlton. She had been to see him off. He was 46 years of age and was a steward on the *Prudhoe Castle* of Sunderland. He said the *Prudhoe Castle* was lying alongside the floating derrick at Erith. He said he should have to be taken in Messrs Cory's tug to the side of the ship, and would have to go down the jetty. He said he should have to blow for them, and took a whistle for that purpose. He was perfectly sober when witness left him. The *Prudhoe Castle* was a collier, and had brought coal for the derricks for Messrs Cory and Company. On May 9th, witness received a telegram from the captain of the *Prudhoe Castle* that deceased had not come aboard.

Police-constable Danes said about ten am on Sunday the 21st May, from information received, he removed the body to the mortuary at Purfleet. Witness searched the clothes and found 2s 1d in money, two rings and several other articles.

A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned, and the Jury expressed the opinion that had there been a light upon the "dummy" on the night of the occurrence, deceased would not have lost his life.

74 27 May 1899

GRAYS

DUNG PROSECUTION **Henry Covington**, Railway Wharf, Battersea, was summoned for carrying in the barge *Faith* dustbin refuse and sweepings, without having them properly covered, in the Thames off Grays on May 13th and 15th. Defendant was represented by his foreman, **James Bowen** of 2 College Villas, Grays. Arthur Garland, sanitary inspector of the Port of London sanitary authority, said he inspected the dung barge *Faith*, which had a steaming and uncovered cargo of offensive matter. There was nobody in charge at the time. Later in the day he again inspected the barge with Inspector Bailie, when two covers had been placed loosely over the cargo, but they did not cover the whole of the cargo and were of such thin material that the steam was

coming through. He again visited the barge on the 15th, and it was then in the same condition. Inspector Bailie corroborated.

A second summons was in respect to the barge *Shamrock* on the same dates, and the evidence was similar. Bowen said he was instructed to plead guilty. A fine of £3 was inflicted in each case, with costs 6s.

75 3 June 1899

SOUTH BENFLEET

THEFT OF A SAIL **Edward Barthrop**, Erith, and **Frederick Rainsbury**, South Benfleet, were charged on remand with stealing a sail, of the value of 7s 6d, the property of Barnard Tabor, on May 28th. Police-constable Chapman spoke to having made enquiries respecting the case, and proceeding to the Lobster Smack, Canvey Island, there found Barthrop and spoke to him about the sail. He said he did not take the sail, but he was in the company of others who did take it, and he supposed he was as bad as they were. Witness went with him on board the *Nancy*, and there saw the prisoner Rainsbury, and in the forecastle found the sail produced. Rainsbury said, "Have you come about that sail? It's one I gave a man three shillings for". Witness arrested them, and on the way to Southend, Rainsbury said, "I may as well tell the truth about it ; I nicked it". Charles Edward Valentine, labourer, said on the day in question he went with several others to Hole Haven, and they walked back to the Red Cow, where he saw the sail produced standing outside. On going inside, he saw the two prisoners there. He got into conversation with them, and they offered to sell him the sail, but he told them he was not in want of one. They did not say where they got the sail from. Barthrop said he was in company with Rainsbury and another fellow, and they stopped at the (? boat) and he walked on. They took the sail and came away with it. He left the sail with Rainsbury that night. Rainsbury stated that they were going to Benfleet, and the other fellow, whose name he did not know, said, "If we see a sail, we'll pinch it", and they all three said, "Yes". The other two, on going across the Creek, went to the boat and called him (Rainsbury) back, and put the sail on his shoulder. He afterwards took it off and (... ..) in his barge. When he went into his cabin, he (Rainsbury) took it out again and put it in his (...). He then rowed Barthrop to his barge, and he put the sail in the boat with him, and he took it out of his boat and put it into his (Rainsbury's) cabin. The prisoners were committed for trial, each being admitted to bail, themselves in £5 each, and a surety each of (...).

76 17 June 1899

RAINHAM

SUNDAY "TRAVELLERS" FINED **George Smith** and **Walter Henry Legon** were charged with obtaining liquors by falsely representing themselves to be travellers during prohibited hours, on May 28th at the Three Crowns Inn. Defendants pleaded not guilty. Henry Boys, barman at the Three Crowns Inn, said on the day in question, about 11.30 in the morning, a knock came at the door and he asked who was there, and the answer came "travellers". They said they came from London and asked for a glass of ale each. He asked them if they were sure they came from London, and they said, "Yes". He then served them. Smith : Didn't I come to you earlier in the morning and ask for some breakfast? - Yes. Which you gave to me? - Yes. Police-constable Brown spoke to going to the Inn and asking if defendants were travellers, and the last witness told him that they had told him they were. On the previous evening, he saw the two defendants at Rainham and spoke to them. There were no trains that night after witness saw them to London from Rainham. They told witness they had got a barge in the Creek. The following morning, they told him they had come with a barge of timber in the night. Witness told them he did not believe them, as he had directed them to the barge only last night. They then said they had been away since then, and had come back with another barge. He saw them later, and Smith admitted that they had falsely represented themselves to the barman, but they did it to clear the publican. Defendants said, between the time they spoke to the constable and the time they were at the Three Crowns Inn, they had been to Woolwich and back by their boat. They were at work all night. They would not be allowed to sleep

at Rainham. If they were convicted, the case would have to go further. It was a matter that affected every boatman from the top of the river to the bottom. The Bench said they were of opinion that they did not call for the beer as *bona fide* travellers, and that they slept in their barge. They would have to pay 1s each, and 7s 6d costs each.

77 17 June 1899

PETTY SESSIONS – PURFLEET

A NUISANCE A H Keep and Company, bargers, were charged with allowing a barge containing dustbin refuse not properly covered to remain off Purfleet, and thereby cause a nuisance, from the 25th to 29th May. Mr Tolhurst appeared for defendants. Mr Vickery appeared to prosecute, and said the case was taken under Section 16 of the Public Health Act of 1891, for unlawfully carrying an offensive cargo that was exposed and not properly covered up. He wished to say the defendants ought to have pressed upon them the necessity of having someone to see that the regulations were carried out. They ought to take some effectual means to prevent the recurrence of the nuisance. Arthur Garland, Sanitary Inspector, said on the 25th May he saw a barge, the property of Messrs Keep and Company, lying off Purfleet. It contained dustbin refuse and was offensive and steaming. It was not properly and securely covered, the covers being old and torn, and the cargo was exposed along the sides two feet. It remained there until the 29th in the same state. Mr Tolhurst : There were three cloths on it, and the refuse was covered except as you state at the sides? - Yes. The Chairman : In your opinion, there was a nuisance? - Yes, there was. Mr Tolhurst said Mr Keep did not get the notice until the 29th May, and he then at once had the barge removed. The covers were six weeks old, and no doubt had shrunk. Fined £2 and costs 9s 6d.

78 24 June 1899

BARGE CAPTAIN'S DEATH An inquest was held at the Basin Canteen, Tilbury Docks, on Thursday by the Coroner (Mr C E Lewis) and a jury, concerning the death of **George Sanders**, captain of the barge *Thursday*, whose body was recovered from the river on the previous day.

Frederick Sanders, 1 May Street, Snodland, Kent, son of deceased, said his father was 60 years of age and was captain of the barge *Thursday*, belonging to the Burham Brick, Lime and Cement Company Limited, of 1 Nicholas Lane, Lombard Street, London EC. Witness was employed on the barge as mate, and last saw his father alive on Friday June 16th at 12.15 am, when he was on deck coiling a piece of rope. They had just brought up in Long Reach, and witness was down in the cabin getting supper ready, when he heard deceased call out, "Fred, Fred". Witness went up on deck but could not see him anywhere. Deceased could not swim. There was a man in a small boat who rowed to another barge, evidently thinking it was from that barge that deceased had fallen. It was a calm but dark night. Witness had fixed the riding light himself, but afterwards he found it had been shifted higher up. Barges had usually two men on board, but some had three.

Samuel Hoare, 29 Balfour Street, Nine Elms Lane, said on the morning of the 16th June, they had just brought their barge up astern of the barge *Thursday* when he heard someone call out. He got into a boat and rowed to another barge, but it happened not to be the one from which the deceased fell. There were three hands on the witness's barge. It was a similar barge to the *Thursday*. Some had two hands on board and some had three.

John Spiers, 13 Parrock Street, Gravesend, waterman, deposed to seeing the body of deceased driving down in mid channel. He rowed to the body, secured it, and brought it to shore.

Police-constable Davey said he received the body of deceased and conveyed it to the mortuary. He searched it, and found £3 in gold, a half crown, 6 1/2d in coppers, and a knife among other things. Deceased was fully dressed with the exception of a hat.

A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned, and a representative of the Burham Brick Company expressed the deepest sympathy of the firm with the widow and family of the deceased, who had been in their employ as captain for 20 years.

79 1 July 1899

PETTY SESSIONS – RAINHAM

ANOTHER ADJOURNMENT Messrs Salomon and Company Limited of Ferry Road, Rainham, appeared on an adjourned summons for allowing the flow of offensive matter into the River on August 9th and October 28th 1897. Mr Bunting, prosecuting for the Thames Conservancy, and the defendants had met to consider by what means the pollution could best be got over and the nuisance eliminated. For that purpose, he suggested an adjournment for six months to carry out the arrangements. Agreed.

UNUSUAL CASES **John Sims** was summoned for navigating the barge *Jesse* in Erith Reach with less than a reasonable freeboard, the deck being less than three inches above the surface of the water. Mr Hunting prosecuted for the Thames Conservancy, and Mr Farnfield, for defendant, pleaded guilty, remarking in extenuation that the barge had a chance load of ballast, and the weight of water drained in to the bottom of the barge caused the offence. Fined £1 and 10s costs.

Robert Pearce was charged with a similar offence on June 10th. George Lamerton, inspector, gave evidence, and the defendant was fined £5 and 8s 6d costs.

George Trowell was similarly summoned, and Arthur Wilson, deputy harbour-master at Gravesend, said he saw the barge *James and Julia* of Rochester in Erith Reach overloaded to the extent of two inches. Fined £2 and costs 10s.

80 8 July 1899

EASTWOOD AND COMPANY'S PRIVATE BARGE RACE

A DELIGHTFUL EVENT

(Specially reported for this newspaper)

On Tuesday was decided, in glorious weather, the race by barges owned by Messrs Eastwood and Company of the great brickfields at Shoebury and elsewhere in the London district and Kent. This is the second year of what it is devoutly hoped by the large crowd of gentlemen who were on board the steamship *Laverock* – the accompanying vessel – will crystallise into an annual feature among the many pleasurable occurrences of the Lower Thames ; to none of which it would yield first place in point of keen sport or pure pleasure derived, especially if and when accentuated by the very perfection of consideration which their visitors experienced at the hands of the firm on Tuesday.

A preliminary word as to the originators of the race may not be out of place. The firm was founded in 1815, with two wharves, which have now increased to eighteen. In 1872 it was formed into a limited liability company. At that time, it had two barges of its own, but now owns a fleet of 44, and employs upwards of 50 others ; it works nine brickfields, from which over one hundred million bricks were last year's output ; deals in cement and lime ; has a shipwright's yard ; and won no less than 25 prizes at last Whit Monday's parade of cart horses at Regent's Park.

As to the motives inspiring the races, one of course is to encourage the captains ; the second, they boldly proclaim, is to improve the design of profitable seagoing barges “as opposed to mere racing machines”. The present rules of the Thames and Medway Barge Matches are, in Messrs Eastwood's opinion, most unfair to the genuine working barge, and as in spite of repeated protests they have been unable to get them modified, they arranged these matches. Their visitors include their directors and chief officials, and friends and customers in London and Kent and Essex. Of course, this means a strong contingent from Southend and Shoebury, and the party, piloted to Tilbury by Mr Hurt, the Company's Secretary for this district, on this occasion comprised :- Messrs G J Glascock, C Breton, F F Woodhams, W Cox, F England, Freakley (2), Frank Woodhams, W G Leoney, A Harris, C Rose, Rowe and Moore. A tug was waiting at the Town Pier, Gravesend, and the party, reinforced by arrivals from Sittingbourne, Rochester, Faversham and Halstow, boarded, being now placed in charge of Messrs Craig and Mead. The early morning had threatened rain, but this passed off to some extent by the time of the preliminary cruise round the dozen barges which were to compete, and which lay at anchor some distance down the Reach. The wind was fast freshening, and its continuance held out bright hopes for a successful race, but meanwhile the placing of the craft in line on the strong flowing tide took up the greater portion of the time at our disposal while

awaiting the arrival of the *Laverock* from London Bridge. This done, and light refreshments consumed, the distribution of race cards was effected, the latter being accompanied by dainty brochures containing interesting information as to the Company's development as well as a chart of the course.

On the arrival of the *Laverock*, the tug was emptied of its complement ; Mr G F Wragge greeting each visitor on the deck, with Mr A F Byrne, who vied with his superior in attending to the comfort of 250 passengers then and afterwards.

The racing barges, having drawn lots for their positions, were moored as follows :- *Alpha* (**H Epps**), *Dipper* (**A Wheatley**), *Durham* (**T Hart**), *Grebe* (**C Wheatley junr**), *Iota* (**J Summerhayes**), *Kappa* (**J Dray**), *Kestrel* (**J Monk**), *Northumberland* (**F Beadle**), *OLS* (**W King**), *Scud* (**William Head**), *Sigma* (**G Giles**) and *Theta* (**C Sherwood**).



Stangate Creek on the River Medway by J M W Turner c 1823

On the signal at noon, the vessels rounded very smartly. *Durham* got the best of the opening and led the way from the start. Down the river she sped at a great pace, the wind blowing a stiffish breeze from the north west, and *Dipper* and *Northumberland* being next to follow her over the mark. *Scud*, *Sigma*, *Theta*, *Kestrel* and *Grebe* were all in a bunch, *Kappa* left hopelessly behind as the result of a mishap with the *Scud*, which collided with her at the start, and to all intents and purposes put her out of the race, being out of sight for a long time. *Durham* was increasing her lead at Coalhouse Point, with *Iota* second and *Dipper* third. The wind was behind the barges for the whole of the distance, rendering tacking or beating unnecessary, and all bowled along at great speed down the River with something less than the full suit of sail up. Off Southend, *Northumberland* was challenging *Dipper* for the third place, and soon made her position, though the wind was not quite so fresh as before. Meanwhile *Kappa* had crept closer and closer to the rear of the last bunch, passed *Theta*, and was making good way, but when the Nore was reached had again been beaten off by the *Theta*. By the time *Durham* rounded for the Medway at 1.56, five minutes after which the other boats passed in this order :- *Iota*, *Northumberland*, *Dipper*, *Sigma*, *Kestrel*, *Scud*, *Grebe*, *OLS*,

Alpha, Theta, Kappa. The destination was an imaginary line drawn from the entrance to Stangate Creek to the signal post at Port Victoria. Past the Nore and the breeze picked up again, but little difference was made in the positions of the barges. *Durham* kept up her lead. *Alpha* broke her topmast just after rounding the Nore, but although only able to set a portion of the sail, she managed to retain her place. The *Kestrel* improved her position, and the *Grebe* ran past the *Scud*, but there was little other change to note, the official times for the finish being :-

<i>Durham</i>	2	45	05
<i>Iota</i>	2	49	42
<i>Northumberland</i>	2	51	50
<i>Kestrel</i>	2	52	07
<i>Dipper</i>	2	52	20
<i>Grebe</i>	2	53	45
<i>Scud</i>	2	54	40

The order of the other barges was *Theta, Alpha, Sigma, Kappa* and *OLS*. Of the winners, the *Durham* and *Northumberland* are new barges, and the captain of the latter has got no fewer than 36 years service under the firm. Last year's winner was the *Iota*, and *Dipper* then obtained second place, *Iota* being a last year's boat. Each of the first three boats was built by A M White, and the prizes were £10, £6 and 3s 10d, divided among the respective crews.

The race over, a short trip in the *Laverock* up the Medway preceded the return up the Thames to Gravesend, where a portion of the party left the steamer, which carried the rest to London Bridge, tea having previously been dispensed, and the exhibition in the saloon of pictures of the Company's horses and barges inspected. The cruise was an interesting one in every way to the *Laverock's* passengers, and was heightened by the objects of interest passed on the way out and home. When skirting Sheerness and the Dockyard, we had an opportunity of seeing quite a number of our battleships and cruisers at anchor until the imaginary line was crossed, and we had a similar pleasure awaiting us at Gravesend, where a couple of war vessels were in (?leash?). On the return journey, too, and off Southend, we (.....) a small boat in the middle of the River making frantic signals. The *Laverock* was stopped, and all kinds of wild stories were current by the time the stranger had rowed to the ship and disclosed his identity and business as a London builder, who had missed the boat in the morning and had determined to waylay us for the return journey with the ship. Altogether a most delightful day was spent, and the Southend and Shoeburyness party returned animated with pleasure at an early hour of the evening.

81 15 July 1899

GRAYS BARGE CAPTAIN SAVES A BOY IN THE RIVER A boy 13 years of age named William Paradine, of Parrock Stoke, had a very narrow escape from death in the river on Tuesday. It appears that **Mr Alfred Cappen** of Aston Villa, Orsett Road, Grays, captain of the barge *Cader Idris*, the owners of which are Messrs Hilton Anderson, Brooks and Co, was sailing up the river, when near Chapman Light he saw the boy in mid river on a plank. According to the boy's story, he undressed for a bath two hours before from the Kent side of the river, and got on to the plank. The tide was receding, carried him with it, and before he could be reached by the boy he was with, had gone out into the river some distance. He was exhausted when picked up, was clothed and fed, and landed at Grays the same night. Superintendent Jordan apprised his father of his whereabouts, and he was fetched home next day. When rescued he was exhausted, and cried out, "Save me sir, I have only got a father".

82 15 July 1899

GREAT WAKERING

BARGEMAN IN TROUBLE **Albert Hingwood**, bargeman, Great Wakering, was charged with being drunk and disorderly on the 3rd July. Defendant did not appear. Police-sergeant Joyce said on the day in question he heard "hollering" and swearing in the Broadway. He went there and saw the defendant surrounded by several other fellows. He wanted to fight, but none of them seemed

anxious to, and advised him to go home, but he refused. On Tuesday night, the defendant came to witness and said he wished to plead guilty and was very sorry, but he would not be able to attend the court as his barge was going away and he would not be back. Fined 15s inclusive, or seven days.

83 26 August 1899

REMOVAL OF TOWN REFUSE

TO BARGE OWNERS, BRICK MAKERS, CONTRACTORS AND OTHERS

The St Luke, Middlesex, Vestry, invite offers for the removal from the Vestry's Wharfs, situate in the City Road Basin of the Regent's Canal, for a period of one year or longer, the price to be stated as per ton of the house and trade refuse, road sweepings, hardcore (consisting of good clean hard destructor clinker tins &c, suitable for concrete work and road making purposes) and other materials collected in the parish.

Full particulars may be obtained on application, either personally or by letter, of the Wharf Superintendent at the Vestry's Depot, 26 Wharf Road, City Road, N.

Offers endorsed "Refuse" should be delivered by 12 o'clock on 6th September next.

By order

G W PRESTON

Clerk of the Vestry

Vestry Clerk's Office
St Luke's Vestry Hall
City Road EC
21st August 1899

84 26 August 1899

RECOVERY OF THE BODY OF MR JAMES WALSH The body of the unfortunate Training Ship *Exmouth* officer, **Mr James Walsh**, who was drowned on August 17th from a boat in the Thames, in collision with the steamship *Forth*, was found on Monday morning at 11.30 am off Cross Ness Point in the river Thames.

The deceased officer, it will be remembered, was rowing on the Kent side of the river with his wife, child and others, when he was drowned by the capsizing of the boat. Bargemen were successful in rescuing the ladies of the party, Mr Walsh being the only one who was lost.

William Baxter, lighterman, 49 Burgess Street, Limehouse, found the body floating in mid stream ; he secured it and, with the help of the police, removed it to the Erith mortuary.

85 2 September 1899

TILBURY DOCKS

STEALING TEA **Joseph White** of Gravesend was charged on remand with stealing tea, value 1s 6d, the property of Messrs Scrutton and Company, on August 25th. Prisoner was stopped at the dock gates by Police-constable Shipman with the tea secreted in his waistbelt, and it was alleged that it was taken from a broken tea chest on the Steamship *Politician* where defendant had been working. His defence was that the tea he took was part of what remained on the floor of the hold after a spill from cases accidentally broken and when the tea had been swept up. He asked for leniency, having already been in prison a week, and also having a widowed mother to support in London. Fined 5s and costs 14s. The money was handed to prisoner by a friend in court.

86 2 September 1899

THE "EXMOUTH" FATALITY The body of the late assistant schoolmaster of the "*Exmouth*", **Mr Walsh**, was laid to rest in Denton Churchyard, Lancashire, on Monday.

The inquest had been held following the recovery of the body, on Thursday at the West Street (S???) at Erith, when Edward McDonald of 2 Terry Street, Denton, identified the body of his brother-in-law Mr Walsh.

Augusta McDonald said that on Thursday the 17th August, Mr and Mrs Walsh, witness, a little girl named Holden and another person went out in a rowing boat on the river. They started from Grays shortly after seven o'clock in the evening, and were going for a pull up the river. They turned to go back to Grays, and rowed back on the Kent side, and when at Broadness Point they saw a steamer bearing down on them. Deceased stood up and shouted, waved his handkerchief, and told the others to scream, but there was no reply. He then sat down again and did his best to row out of the way, but without success, and the bow of the steamer struck the boat and capsized it, throwing them off into the water. They clung to the boat, deceased calling out, "Stick to the boat, girls, and scream". They were picked up afterwards ; the steamship *Forth* lowering a boat, which came to the spot, and witness said to the men, "You are out of your proper course", and he said, "Yes".

William Welman, chief officer of the *Exmouth*, said he gave permission to Mr Walsh to use the boat ; the deceased was quite competent to manage it. He thought all boats crossing the river should have a light attached.

James Cavell, 194 New Cross Road, pilot, said he was in charge of the steamship *Forth* on the 17th August. He was outward bound and down the river. The first they heard was screaming right in the bows. A man for'ard saw the boat and hailed it almost at the time they heard the screaming, but the vessel could not starboard on account of the number of barges. The captain threw over a life belt.

John Blower, lighterman, said he was on board the barge *Success* off Broadness Point, when he saw the *Forth* come down the river, and also saw the boat which was pointing towards the lighthouse, and the steamer was coming direct into it.

The jury returned a verdict of death from drowning in the River Thames, through the accidental collision with the steamer *Forth*.

87 2 September 1899

YACHTING ACCIDENT IN GRAVESEND REACH An inquest was held at the Ship and Lobster public house near Gravesend on Thursday afternoon, on the body of Mrs Kate Kattle, who was drowned, together with a waterman's apprentice named **Tadhunter**, through the capsizing of a yacht in Gravesend Reach on Wednesday, the day of the Gravesend Regatta. **James Richard Holland**, Trinity House pilot of Gravesend, stated deceased, who was the wife of a captain in the mercantile marine, living in East Ham, came to visit his house on Monday. On Wednesday noon, she and witness, with his wife and son, went out for a sail in a small yacht, *La Cigale*, taking young Tadhunter to assist. They went down Gravesend Reach to Higham Bight, and tacked back towards Gravesend. When standing from the south shore a heavy squall suddenly came down. Witness let go the halyards, but not quickly enough to prevent the boat from capsizing. He supported his wife and child in the water until a barge's boat came and took them on to a London County Council steamer for Gravesend Hospital. Witness then got into another boat, and pulled deceased out of the water. She was taken to the Dunton Sanitary Hospital, but artificial respiration was unavailing. The Coroner said it was a very sad accident and nobody was to blame. Mr Holland was to be congratulated on the lucky escape of his wife and child. The bargemen were also to be complimented. The Jury returned a verdict of "Death from misadventure".

88 9 September 1899

PETTY SESSIONS – TILBURY

OFFENCES IN THE RIVER **John Hooker**, master of the barge *Mystery*, was summoned for illegally exhibiting an advertisement on his vessel, the same not being an advertisement or notice by the owner of the said vessel for the purpose of or in reference to his trade or business, on the Thames in Long Reach on August 3rd. Mr Bunting prosecuted and Mr C Asplin defended. Mr Bunting said he had read a letter from defendant's solicitor, who said the vessel would not be again navigated with the advertisement. Mr Asplin said defendant was very sorry for what had happened, and the Chairman said under the circumstances the fine would only be 2s 6d and costs.

James Gilbert, Robert Fuller, Henry Hoadley, John Butcher and James Bull were summoned for navigating barges with decks less than three inches above the top of the water of the Thames, on

August 5th. Mr Bunting prosecuted for the Thames Conservancy and Mr Clinch appeared for defendants, who pleaded guilty. Fined 10s and 8s costs each.

89 16 September 1899

A singular charge was preferred against a lighterman named **Elliott** on Monday at the Guildhall. Elliott, it is alleged, collected subscriptions for regattas which are stated not to have come off. Collections in some cases amounted to over £70.

90 7 October 1899

COLLISION IN THE RIVER

BARGE'S MATE DROWNED On Monday night a collision occurred on the River off Grays, resulting in death by drowning of **Robert Boylin** of 16 Pedworth Street, Rotherhithe, mate of the barge *Henrietta*. The barge was proceeding down the river at 8.55 pm laden with sand, when the steamship *Martin* of Hull, which was coming in the opposite direction, cut her down in midstream. The captain of the barge (**James Ball**) was only saved by clinging to a spar, and was in the water fully an hour before he was rescued by a boat which put off from Grays Wharf. The body of the mate was not recovered ; Ball was put on board the *Martin* and conveyed to London. The *Martin* is a fish carrier. The barge was the property of **Thomas Scholey**, 13 Devereux Road, Greenwich.

91 21 October 1899

BARGE MATE FOUND DROWNED AT TILBURY On Tuesday afternoon, **Thomas Stevens**, a waterman of 65 Bath Street, Gravesend, found floating in the river off Tilbury, opposite the World's End Inn, the body of a man named **Robert Boylin** of Rotherhithe, who was drowned off the barge *Henrietta* in the river on October 2nd, under circumstances detailed below.

THE INQUEST was held on Friday afternoon at the Basin Canteen by the Coroner and a jury.

Mr C R Bowles represented the barge owners ; Mr Harvey the pilot of the steamship *Martin* ; and Mr Glover the Steamship Company.

James Ball, of 9 Sayscourt Street, Deptford, captain of the barge *Henrietta*, said deceased was his mate. They were proceeding up the river, and at the bottom of Northfleet Hope, witness saw steamer light astern. They were coming upon their port tack. Next time he looked, he saw the green light of the steamer coming up. He looked a third time and saw the steamer close astern. He raised his light and witness shouted, "Starboard your helm ; where are you going?" Before they could do anything, the steamer was on to them and they were gone. They had no time to get a boat, and he had to thank the Almighty that he grabbed the foresail. The *Henrietta* was carrying a stern light.

Thomas Stevens, waterman, spoke to recovering the body.

John Robert Lilley junior, of 1 Park Place, Gravesend, licensed pilot, said he boarded the *Martin* about eight o'clock just below Tilbury pier, when she was just to the southward of mid channel. He first saw the barge *Henrietta* just before he struck her. This was at 8.15 and witness was on the bridge. He suddenly saw the glimmer of the light on the starboard bow of the steamer. He immediately gave the order, "Stop her ; full speed astern", and almost at once they struck the barge with their starboard bow. She swung round and witness sang out to throw some ropes into the barge, and the ship's boat lowered. Witness threw a lifebuoy to the captain of the barge, whom he saw struggling in the water.

The inquest was then adjourned for the attendance of the captain of the ship and the look-out man.

92 28 October 1899

A BARGE MATE DROWNED – THE ADJOURNED INQUEST On Tuesday afternoon the jury engaged in investigating the cause of death of **Robert Boylin**, who was drowned on October 2nd from the barge *Henrietta* in collision with the steamship *Martin*, attended at the Basin Canteen with the Coroner (Mr C E Lewis). The inquiry was opened on the previous Friday, when it was adjourned for the attendance of the captain of the steamship and the look-out man. The jury were

informed that the steamship company had been unable to procure the attendance of these witnesses, and the inquest was again adjourned.

93 4 November 1899

PAINTER'S FATAL FALL AT TILBURY DOCKS An inquest was held at the Basin Canteen, Tilbury Docks, on Monday by the Coroner (Mr C E Lewis) and a jury, concerning the death of James Gallagher at Tilbury Docks on the 29th ult.

Mr G Sharland appeared for Rowland and Son, lighterage contractors.

Robert George Collins of No 1 Romany Place, Toxteth Park, Liverpool, painter, said he was employed by Mr Hughes of Coltars Road, Liverpool, on the 29th ult to paint on board the steamship *Manchester Port*. Witness was at work with deceased painting the davits of the ship. They were both standing on the ship's deck and turning one of the davits round. They were using a piece of timber as a lever, and there was a wire rope fixed from the ship on to a barge below. The rope was slack and was riding on the davit. Presently witness saw the barge was moving and shouted out to people who were watching the operation on the deck to stop leaning on the wire until they got the davit round. They did not, however, stop leaning, and the wire rope caught the davit, causing it to twist round and deceased to fall on the barge below. There were no bulwarks. The wire was attached to a steam winch and caught under the head of the davit.

By Mr G Sharland : We were not told by the men on the bridge to clear out of it.

By the Coroner : Deceased was a native of Liverpool, about 26 years old, and was also a painter.

William Nix, (.....) Street, Bermondsey, waterman, (.....) said he was employed moving the barges alongside the *Manchester Port*. The barge was laden with 40 tons of bran, which was (.....) board the *Manchester Port*. There was a rope attached to the barge from the steamship *Manchester Port*. Witness saw deceased and witness Collins standing upon the raised (.....) three feet from the davit and about eight feet above the deck. He did not hear anyone call out. He saw that the wire rope would (.....) go outside the davit as it was (....) round (.....) as he was hauling on another rope. He saw something fall and found that the deceased had fallen on the iron deck of the barge. There was considerable noise on board the vessel.

Hugh Hughes of Liverpool said he was on board the steamship *Manchester Port* and was coming aft at the time the deceased fell. Somebody called out that one of their fellows had fallen down. He saw that the stern of the barge was immediately under the forepart of the after hatch and under the davits, and there was a wire hawser attached to the derrick on the ship from the fore part of the barge. The wire was slack. He had never seen a barge hauled along in that way before.

Albert Rugs, 19 Morant Street, Poplar, said he was gangway man on board the steamship *Manchester Port*. The barge had been heaved in by the wire hawser, and she was hove as near as she could be to the after hatch, when the wire was let go. At the time the deceased fell, the wire was slack, the winch had stopped, and witness and others were looking over the side of the vessel. Before the deceased fell, the winch had stopped about two minutes. Deceased and Collins were working about eight feet above witness on a platform. Witness did not hear either of them call out to have the winch stopped. Witness was watching the rope all the time they were heaving it, and was certain it did not touch the davit.

Patrick Callagher of 1 Charles Street, Crisp Street, Poplar, stevedore, said he was driving the steam winch. They were heaving a barge alongside, and that was the usual way when there was not much room. He also was certain the winch did not touch the davit.

John James (?Paimny), 66 Grundy Street, Poplar, stevedore, said he was employed getting the barge *Shark* into position. He had seen previous to the accident that the barge was being hauled by a wire rope. At the time deceased fell, the wire was slack, and as near as witness could say had been so about five minutes. He did not see the wire hawser touch the davit, and did not think it could have done so.

Dr Alfred H Fowler said he was called to deceased, whom he found to be dead. He had a scalp wound over the left ear and the skull was fractured. He had apparently pitched on to the side of his head.

Police-sergeant Say said he removed the body to the mortuary after the doctor had seen it. The distance of the fall was nineteen feet ten inches.

A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned, the cause being by the swing of the davit from some cause unknown, and the jury did not consider that blame attached to anybody.

94 11 November 1899

THE BARGE CALAMITY OFF GRAYS

A PILOT COMMITTED FOR MANSLAUGHTER The adjourned inquest was held at the Basin Canteen, Tilbury Docks, on Thursday, by the Coroner (Mr C E Lewis) and a jury, concerning the death of **Robert Boylin**, mate of the barge *Henrietta*, who was drowned off Grays on October 2nd. It will be remembered that at the opening of the inquest, evidence was given to the effect the barge was proceeding up the river at night when the *SS Martin*, a fish carrier bound for London, steamed into it. The barge was capsized, but the captain was saved, and he, when questioned, was positive that the stern light of the barge could have been seen from the steamer. The inquest had been adjourned for the attendance of the captain and look-out on the steamer. When their evidence had been heard, the jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against the pilot, **John R Lilley** the younger of Gravesend, and he was committed for trial ; bail being allowed him of £100 and also a surety of £100. Further proceedings will be by way of summons, and the case will probably come up at Grays Petty Session on Friday next.

95 18 November 1899

COLCHESTER

ANOTHER SAD CASE **George Sadler**, on bail, a young bargeman, was indicted for criminally assaulting Alice Lucy Caney, under the age of 16, at Colchester on July 24th. Mr J H Murphy prosecuted and Mr W Duffield defended. Mr Murphy said that when the offence was committed, the girl was only fourteen and a half years old. Prosecutrix having given evidence, in cross-examination stated that she told prisoner her age was 15. The constable who arrested the prisoner said the latter remarked, "I should not have gone out with the girl, but she told me she was sixteen". The witness added that the prosecutrix was a very "bold" girl. He had often seen her about the quay with other girls, who associated with young fellows. They had thrown stones upon barges to attract the attention of those on board. Dr Maybury gave evidence ; and, in reply to his Lordship, said that his depositions were not read over to him at the Colchester Borough Police Court in the presence of the prisoner. They were taken to him by a constable about two months afterwards to be signed. The Judge : Do you mean to say that you did not sign them until about two months afterwards? Witness : Well, two months or six weeks, my Lord. The Judge : Is the Clerk of the Magistrates here? Such conduct as this is most disgraceful. I must have him sent for. It is scandalous conduct. If such things are done in a Magistrates Court, I don't know how justice is to be administered in this Court. The witness said he believed the depositions were taken down in shorthand. When they were brought to him by the constable, he was engaged in attending patients. Witness glanced through them hurriedly and then signed them. The Judge : The depositions should have been read over and signed in the presence of the prisoner, It is a most scandalous thing, and if anything like this is done, it must be put a stop to. I must have the Clerk to the Magistrates here. The jury returned a verdict of "Not Guilty", and prisoner was discharged.

96 25 November 1899

BARGE MATE DROWNED OFF RAINHAM An inquest was held at the Phoenix Hotel, Rainham, on Monday, by the Coroner (Mr C E Lewis) and a jury, concerning the death of **George Lawrence**, who was drowned on November 5th.

Henry Thomas Lawrence of 79, The Common, Rochester, said deceased was 16 years of age and witness's son. He was mate of the barge *George and William*. He could swim a little.

Alexander Borthwick, 22 Tucker Street, Canning Town, mate of the barge *Challenge*, said he saw deceased on board the *Challenge* on Sunday the 5th inst. Witness went to the Ferry Inn, Rainham.

When he returned in about half an hour, the barge was adrift and no one on board. Deceased had been assisting to get the *Challenge* into the stream. The captain was in Rainham at the time, and there were no other barges about. There was an oar in the rowlock on the port side ; there was none when witness went away, and he came to the conclusion that deceased was using the oar when he slipped into the water. The day was wet and the barge was slippery. Deceased's barge and another were tied up to the wharf at the Rainham Portland Cement Works.

Peter Peacock of Rainham said on Saturday last he was standing close to the water at Rainham Ferry, when he saw the body floating down the river. He secured it and gave information to the police.

Acting Police-sergeant Freeman deposed to receiving the body and searching it. Deceased was fully dressed.

George Harrison of Little Stambridge, captain of the barge *George and William*, said at the time he was in the company of the captain of the barge *Challenge*. His mate had general instructions not to shift the barge in his absence.

A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

97 9 December 1899

SERIOUS STEAM CRANE ACCIDENT On Monday a steam crane, the property of the Chalk Quarries Company, was being operated near the edge of the Company's Wharf, when it fell over by some means into a coal barge in the unloading of which it had been at work. The driver, **John Berry**, fell with the machine, and was pinned underneath it for about an hour and a half before he could be extricated. Medical attention was procured for him, when it was found that he had sustained a broken leg and other injuries, his condition being serious.

98 16 December 1899

THE STANFORD MYSTERY

AN OPEN VERDICT RETURNED

THE CORONER LAYS ABOUT HIM The adjourned inquest into the peculiar circumstances surrounding the death of Fountain Hope, the young man whose naked body was found in a ditch on November 28th, was continued on Thursday at the King's Head Inn, Stanford-le-Hope, by the coroner (Mr C E Lewis) and a jury, of which Mr T Boorman was foreman.

Alfred Thorpe was the first witness called. He lives at Hope Villas, Stanford-le-Hope, and is captain of the barge *Caroline*.

Do you remember Tuesday evening of 28th November? - I do ; we were outside Stanford Creek, waiting to come in. At about 7.30 pm, I was in the barge, and I heard the report of a gun. (Sensation).

From what direction? - Just below the creek, inland, as near as I could tell. I made this remark to my mate ; I said, "Somebody has just fired a gun". I did not know what at, because it was so dark.

You saw a light afterwards? - Yes. When I was going home, I saw a light coming along the line.

That would be the same time as those men were going along. Have you ever heard guns going off before? - Oh yes, plenty of times, and we take no notice of it.

The Foreman : What time was it high tide? - About nine o'clock that night.

The Father : Have you often heard a gun fire off dark at night? - Oh yes ; plenty of times.

What do you assume they fired at? - I can't say.

James Carder, Wharf Cottage, Stanford-le-Hope, a carman, said on Tuesday 28th November, he heard somebody go through the gate at 6.40 that evening. He knew where deceased kept his sculls, and he would have to go in that direction to get them. Witness had seen him come down there. It was in the summer when he saw him.

Had he anything else down there besides the sculls, do you know? - Not that I know of.

Dr Basden was recalled, and the Coroner asked him : Could you say if the bruise you found on his forehead could not have been caused by his falling? - I could not say that.

Falling on some hard substance? - No.

Or a flat substance? - No.

Supposing he had fallen on the railway metal. No trace of blood from there to the ditch. Could a person receiving a blow on the forehead stagger away over into the ditch? - I think it unlikely, but I don't think it impossible.

A person could be partially stunned and then walk away. It was not a very great distance from the railway to that place? - He might do so.

Slight haemorrhage might have been going on? Imagine that he had received his blow on the railway. Slight haemorrhage might have been going on from the time he received the blow on the railway to the time when we may imagine he walked into the ditch, then suddenly collapsed, and death taken place. He might have been standing in the water and death taken place, when by his falling into the water you would find no signs of suffocation? - No.

Do you think if deceased had been partially stunned at the railway he could have walked as far as that dyke? - Yes, I think he might have done.

You have told us previously that the marks of scratches found upon the body were caused before death? - Yes.

Mr Hope : You had attended him from time to time, Doctor? - Yes.

I don't know whether you are aware that his nose bled freely? - I should have expected the bleeding to start from the nose.

The Coroner : Have you attended him from time to time? - Oh, yes.

Recently? - During this year ; for an influenza cold on the last occasion.

A Juryman : The gap in the hedge was a very slight one. Would deceased have had strength to have pushed himself through it, supposing he was half stunned? - That is an extremely difficult thing to say.

Another Juryman : Supposing he was partly stunned when he fell, if he laid on the railway he would leave marks of blood, but if he got up directly the blood would run down his body, and unless he had some distance to go, it would not shew itself on the grass.

The Coroner : There were no marks of blood on the clothing, I think. Presuming he was exposed to the cold for some time, Doctor, would he bleed all the more freely? - I don't think that would have any effect.

He was considered a healthy man? - Oh, yes ; he seemed a healthy lad.

There was nothing striking about him? - No. He was a quiet and rather reserved sort of lad.

A Juryman said deceased used to walk about in a "skew ways" direction, with his hands behind him, something similar to one who had had a stroke or had fits.

Dr Basden said he did not think deceased was subject to fits.

Mr Fountain Weir Hope was recalled.

The Coroner : Do you know if deceased had ever taken that same walk under the same conditions before that night? - I can't swear, but he used frequently to go down to the wharf in the evening, in the summer and in the winter time too.

Did you see him before he left home on that Tuesday evening? - Oh, yes. I asked him where his mother was, and he said she had just gone to bed with a bad bilious headache, and he was waiting until I came in - or words to that effect. This would be about seven or eight minutes past six o'clock.

The Coroner : I presume he was on good terms with everybody at home? - Oh, yes.

You had had no occasion to reprimand him? - Oh, dear, no.

And he was able to do as he pleased? - Oh, yes.

Had you noticed that deformity? - No ; I never had, but, strangely enough, people used to tell me I walked in that way myself.

Was there any reason for his fetching the sculls home? - I don't know. He had lost his canoe a fortnight before over on the Kent side shore. It was much damaged, and as it was pretty old, he asked me whether I thought it worthwhile bringing her home. I did not think it worthwhile, and told him I would get him another canoe in the spring.

What sort of boat was it? - It was a canoe yawl and was unsinkable, 14 or 15 feet long.

You were not annoyed with him for losing the boat? - I told him at the time he ought to have asked me before he went out in that sort of way. It was blowing off the shore rather hard ; the water was perfectly smooth in our creek ; but outside he found that the strength of the wind was more than he could paddle against, and he, wisely I think, ran before the wind and went over to the Kent side. The canoe was damaged, but he saved himself.

A Juryman : Was he in the habit of bathing there? - No. He had a cold bath every morning, but he never bathed out in the river, or very seldom.

The Coroner said one of the reasons he adjourned the inquiry last time was because the police received an anonymous letter. He had had most careful inquiries made into the matter, and was perfectly satisfied the statements in that letter were absolutely unfounded. There was a name mentioned in that letter, and it was not right that the name mentioned in the letter should be read, and the name given broadcast to the world. He was perfectly satisfied from inquiries he had made that there was absolutely no foundation for the statements made.

The Foreman : Do you know the writer? Because I think some pains ought to be taken to find who it is and have him punished.

The Coroner : If the Jury would like the letter read, I will have it read. The person is not here, I believe, who it refers to, but there are witnesses present who can prove as to his whereabouts on that evening.

The Foreman : I don't think it necessary if you are satisfied.

The Coroner : I am perfectly satisfied myself.

The Foreman : I think the one who wrote it should be found and made an example of.

Superintendent Jordan said the communication was anonymous and unstamped.

The Foreman asked how the letter came to be discovered when there was only one delivery a day.

Superintendent Jordan : I believe it was found when the box was opened for the dispatch.

Mr Green, postmaster, said the dispatch was at 11.45. The box had been cleared previously at 7.45.

The Coroner : Then it was between 7.45 and 11.45.

Mr Green : It is always cleared an hour before the time, in order to forward the work.

Police-constable Bigg gave evidence as to finding the body in the ditch.

The Coroner : Was there a gap in the hedge as you saw it? - Yes. There was one track from the railway to the hedge. I saw no signs of blood about. I saw on the side of the line where apparently someone had slipped down when coming off the line, the gravel had shifted. I am quite sure there was but one track from the railway to the gap in the hedge. The track was as near straight as possible.

The Coroner : Did it appear to you to be the track of more than one person? - No.

Mrs Frances Ellen Hope, mother of deceased, said on Tuesday evening deceased told her he was going to fetch the skulls from the Wharf. He appeared to be in good spirits. He was always quiet and was on good terms with everybody at home. He had come home from his work at about quarter to six.

A Juryman : You had not heard of anybody asking him to fetch those skulls? - No.

The Coroner : You think he went of his own accord to fetch them? - Yes.

At the request of Mr Hope, the next witness called was,

John George Hinnell of Squier and Hinnell, under whom deceased was employed as a clerk. He said he last saw deceased on Tuesday evening the 28th November, at twenty minutes to six, when he called at witness's house and gave him the key of the safe and a message concerning which witness had some conversation with him. He then seemed in his usual spirits.

The Coroner : Had you noticed anything peculiar about his walk? - No.

Had you noticed that he carried one shoulder higher than the other? Carried his head on one side? - No, I never noticed it.

The Coroner (to Dr Basden) : Supposing the deceased had one of these attacks of nose bleeding, would that in any way affect his mind? - No, I do not think so.

Was he frightened at all when this came on?

Mr Hope did not think so.

The Coroner said he thought they had exhausted all material evidence so far as they knew. Deceased left Stanford on the 28th November between seven and eight o'clock in the evening, stating it was his intention to go to Stanford Wharf for the purpose of fetching a pair of sculls. He went there no doubt, because they were found on the marshes, and there was no disputing that fact. In the ordinary way, he would have returned by the road which the jury took to the marshes on a previous hearing, or along the railway.

A Juryman : But instead of that, he went in the opposite direction.

The Coroner : Please don't interrupt. Then nothing more whatever was seen of him until his body was found next morning in a condition of nudity – without a stitch of clothing upon him. An examination of the district just round was made, and it was seen by the jury – he thought it was a very good thing they did see it. The witness Mayes was called by the person who saw the body, and he went that dinner time for a walk on the marshes. He came across the sculls lying side by side. Further on, round by a mound close to the river, he discovered a coat and vest, boots and socks and, in answer, said the coat and vest were arranged as if anybody had stripped, taken them off, and laid the things together. There were also marks as if someone had stood up there to take off their boots and stockings, and he also said there were marks in the mud as if deceased had stuck the oars in there, thought whether he did or not it was impossible to say. There were naked footmarks there, it was perfectly certain, but the question now came - how deceased came to that spot – for what purpose did he go there? It was an unfortunate thing that there was no evidence to show how he got there or for what purpose he went. That he went there, somehow or other, was a certainty. As to how his clothes came off his body there was no evidence – there was no evidence whatever of any struggle having taken place, none whatever. His clothes were in such a condition that they did not appear as if they had been dragged off his body by anybody – and the only conclusion one could come to was that he took them off himself, but for what purpose there was no evidence whatever to prove. Just about that time, or the time this is supposed to have happened, certain noises were heard. There was the witness Allen, who heard a noise which attracted his attention somewhat. He thought it was a curious noise, and sounded something like a heron, or a bullock blowing. Another man with him heard the noise, and thought it was the noise of a man. Another witness named Ockendon was standing outside in the yard close to her uncle's house, when she heard a noise, which she thought was somebody calling, “Joe, Joe”, or, “Oh, Oh”, and it came from the direction of that mound. She also saw a light going along, and she did not know whether it might not have emanated from those people who appeared to be walking along. She drew the attention of her uncle to it, but did not hear it again, and nothing more was heard. To go back to the mound. The jury went there themselves and saw the footmarks, and they traced them in the way which they thought the footmarks went – that was towards the railway. The footmarks went through several of the dykes – the principal of these dykes was about four feet wide. The deceased had gone through there apparently, then turned back again to cross to the left, and then over again to the railway. The policeman had told them that he saw a distinct track from the south side of the railway, apparently over the wall, and across the railway, and then he saw a distinct track from the railway to the gap in the hedge close by the dyke where the body was found. He (the Coroner) particularly asked that witness the question as to whether it appeared to him to be the track of more than one person, because if there was that, it would have been necessary to adjourn the inquiry until a considerably later date, in the hope that some evidence might be forthcoming as to whom the second person might be. But there was no evidence of anybody else being there. The body was found in a state of nudity, and a *post mortem* examination made by Dr Basden, who told the injuries. There was a bruise on the forehead and the body was scratched considerably – scratches which might have been caused by a person in a state of nudity getting through a hedge. But the scratches were in a most extraordinary place, all in the middle of the body, whereas the face and the feet were absolutely free. It was a most extraordinary thing – a very extraordinary thing indeed – how the hands, feet and face escaped scratches and bruises he could not imagine, and he did not think the jury would be able to say. But certainly they were on the body, and according to the evidence, were such as were received before death. They must, therefore, have been received no doubt going to the ditch in

which he was found. There was evidence that someone had stumbled, or anyhow had disturbed, the gravel on the railway, and he put questions to Dr Basden as to whether he could say that the bruise upon deceased's forehead could not have been caused by his falling. He said he could not possibly say so. There was no evidence to suggest that he received this bruise upon the forehead in any other way. If that was so, and a person in a partial state of being stunned could walk, it was possible that deceased, after falling on the railway, stumbled on and struck his head on one of the metals, and may possibly have walked from there into the ditch. After getting into the ditch, he might have walked along a little further up the ditch, for what they knew – and so account for his body being found more to the left hand side of the gap in the hedge, and instantly succumbed. There was no trace of blood anywhere, and he (the Coroner) said again emphatically that there was no evidence of any struggle whatever, and he thought the Jury could corroborate what he had said. In the opinion of Dr Basden, death was due to syncope consequent upon exposure, and accelerated by the blow upon the head. He did not think there was any need for him to say anything further to them. It was a most extraordinary case – it was a case in which the evidence was not clear at all. There was no evidence to prove deceased's whereabouts from the time he left home until the time he was found. There were all sorts of rumours about. It was, first of all, suggested that deceased had committed suicide, but there was certainly no evidence given there that would in any way justify them in returning a verdict of that description. It had also been freely stated that this was a murder mystery. He really could not see where there was any evidence to go to prove that the deceased was murdered. That he was found dead they did know. As to how he came by his death beyond the evidence of the doctor, there was certainly no evidence to show. He really thought that the only verdict the Jury could return was an open verdict. It could not be said that thorough inquiry had not been made into the case. As to the anonymous letter, they would agree that it was as well the name of the person referred to therein should not be divulged, and he thought they would be satisfied from the inquiries made, that the statement contained in it was absolutely false and without foundation. He had told them that as a rule he did not take notice of anonymous letters ; the way he usually treated them was putting them in the waste paper basket – the proper place – or on the fire – for a person who had not the pluck to stick his name on the bottom of the letter he sent was not worth living. (Hear, hear.) There was one other matter. That was with regard to certain remarks that had appeared in the newspapers with regard to this. It had been handed and bandied about as being a murder mystery, and it had also been stated – his attention was drawn to it in a London paper – that there were evidences of a struggle. Well, he went over the ground with the Jury, and he could see no evidence of any struggle, and he should ask the Jury to say whether there was.

The Foreman : We could not see any.

The Coroner : I do most strongly object to important witnesses being interviewed, and the subject of their conversations being used and made the subject of newspaper report before they, as a jury, had had an opportunity of enquiring into the case. The Coroner then “ran down” on the subject of newspapers until

The Foreman said : I don't think that would make any difference to us.

The Coroner : I only hope your minds have not been misled by statements in the newspapers. I hope you will return your verdict upon the evidence before you and nothing else.

The Foreman (decidedly) : I think we can do that.

The Coroner further developed his favourite mortuary theory.

The Jury retired for a short time, and on their return,

The Foreman said : We think an open verdict is the only one we can return. At the same time, we wish to convey our sympathy with Mr and Mrs Hope in their sad bereavement. We are very sorry to think that we cannot get to the bottom of it. We have done our best in every way.

Mr Hope thanked the Jury most sincerely for their sympathy. He should like to thank the whole parish, for the sympathy had been universal. He never expected such kind expressions as they had received from everybody.

99 16 December 1899

TILBURY DOCKS

FATALITY Another inquest was held at the Canteen on Friday, with reference to the death of **Herbert Rogers**, a labourer. Deceased lived at Brunswick Road, Poplar, and had been engaged lately on the steamship *Tamba Maru*. On Sunday morning, after working all night, he left the orlop deck to go to breakfast ; but afterwards was found in a lower hold with fractured ribs and collar bone, and concussion of the brain. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned, and the jury added a rider : in their opinion, the hatchway should have been protected and the deck better lit.

100 23 December 1899

BURGLARY AT TILBURY DOCK SUPERINTENDENT'S HOUSE

THREE MEN CHARGED AND COMMITTED FOR TRIAL James Cochrane, Alfred Williams and Ernest Alfred Thurkettle were charged at Grays Petty Session on Friday, Mr D H Russell in the chair, with burglary at the house of Mr R C Norris at Tilbury on November 4th.

Mr Robert Charles Norris, 1 The Gardens, repeated the evidence already given, to the effect that the next morning he found the window broken, the catch slipped back, and the contents of the dining room in disorder. A number of articles (produced) valued at £4, including pipes, sugar tongs, sifter and cigar cutter were missing. Witness also identified the five other pipes now produced, and the cigar holder and the case as his. He last saw them safe on the night of the 4th of November. A cake basket and fork, similar to the illustration handed in, disappeared at the same time.

PS Edwards deposed to receiving Cochrane in custody from the Leith police. The articles witness then received from the Scotch police included part of a metal gong, silver sugar sifter, cigar cutter, &c. On November 6th, witness was at Gravesend and visited Russell's brewery, where he saw the barge *Ocean Queen*. He asked defendant about a boat which had been close to the barge on the Sunday, but he denied all knowledge of it, saying that he had found the barge's own boat sunk under the Chatham and Dover Pier after the tide had gone out. He stated that on the night of the 4th, he was on board the ketch *Emily Florence* with two of the crew. After prisoners were placed in the cells, witness heard a conversation between Cochrane and Thurkettle from the separate cells. Cochrane asked Thurkettle where he was pinched. (Prisoners loudly laughed at this). Thurkettle said, "At Yarmouth for another job". Cochrane said, "What did you do with the plate?" and Thurkettle replied, "I kept it a week and then threw it away. Have they got all the things?" Cochrane said, "I gave some to the police at Leith". Thurkettle said, "I threw the plate away on the sands off Southend".

William Miller, 5 Mason Road, Greenhithe, labourer, said on Friday 18th November he was in the White Hart public house at Greenhithe about seven or eight o'clock in the evening. He saw three sailors of a ship lying at the Globe Wharf. In the course of conversation, Cochrane gave witness a pipe which he afterwards handed to the Kent police. Williams was there at the same time. Cross-examined by Williams : The next day you came in and asked me to buy a pipe. I said I had no money, and that your mate had given me a pipe before. Williams : The pipe was given him by Cochrane when I was aboard, and on the Saturday I had plenty of money, because I had broken into another place.

William Alliston, 1 Providence Place, Greenhithe, labourer, said on Friday November 18th he was in the White Hart public house at Greenhithe with the mate of the ship *Emily Florence*. He saw Cochrane and Williams there. When they went out of the place that night, Williams gave witness a pipe (produced). On the next day witness was on a wharf at Greenhithe at work, when Williams gave witness the sugar holder and case (produced), remarking, "That's a present from both of us". On the 13th witness was again on the wharf and Williams came ashore. Witness treated him to a drink, and Cochrane afterwards gave witness the cigar case (produced). On two occasions, witness gave them 6d to get a drink ; what he gave them was not for the articles they gave to him. Witness afterwards handed the articles over to the Kent police.

Frederick Lewis, 33 Ellen's Place, Great Queen Street, Dartford, labourer, said on Saturday November 11th he was at work on a crane on the Globe Wharf, Greenhithe, and the ketch *Emily*

Florence was lying alongside. He saw one of the men off the ship, which he believed to be Cochrane. Witness asked him if he had a pipe to spare. He at once went on board and gave witness the pipe and cigar holder produced, the latter being really a pipe. The prisoners were not friends of witness.

Bertie Wright, barge mate, said in the early part of November he was on board the *John Hands*, and several times went on board the *Ocean Queen*. On one occasion he saw a silver plate in Thurkettle's possession, similar to that in the printed illustration. Thurkettle said he had got it through boxing. (Laughter).

Corporal Poole of the Kent Constabulary, deposed to recovering the articles mentioned from the previous witnesses, and

Detective McKay of the Leith Police said on November 20th he received information from Superintendent Jordan and met the ketch *Emily Florence* on her arrival at Leith harbour on the 25th. He saw Cochrane on board and found, down in the prisoner's hammock, the silver gong and sugar sifter, besides a pipe out of his pocket. Witness asked him then about the silver cigar cutter which he had given to the captain on the previous day, and he replied that he forgot about it. Witness apprehended him, and at the police station he made a statement that on Saturday 4th November, while he was in the forecastle of the *Emily Florence*, Williams told him he was going to break into a place that night and that he wanted him to go along with him. He refused to go, but he forced him to go along with him. The mate of the *Ocean Queen*, which was lying alongside, got their small boat. The three of them went into it, and the mate of the *Ocean Queen* rowed the boat across to Tilbury. Williams and the mate then went ashore, and he (Cochrane) remained in the small boat. Soon afterwards they returned, carrying the articles which they had stolen – pipes, cigars, a silver tray, the sugar sifter, gong and cigar cutter. They then rowed away as hard as they could, but the tide carried them down, and they did not get back to their vessels until eight o'clock the following morning. All that he (Cochrane) got was 16 cigars and the pipe (produced).

Williams went into the box and said on September 25th he was discharged from St Albans gaol, and by the aid of the Royal Society he was enabled to join the ketch *Emily Florence*. He had already been convicted twice for burglary, but he had no intention that that should stop him from trying again. (Sensation, and loud laughter by the other two prisoners). He broke into some premises and got away with several pounds in money. The Clerk : Do you want to say the date? Prisoner : No, or I should get more. He said he lost the money gambling. After getting to Middlesbrough, he was surprised by the police, and if he had not had a tale ready for them he should have been arrested then. (Laughter). He determined that the next time he went, he would take Cochrane with him. He suggested it, but Cochrane refused to go ; whereupon he (Williams) told him if he didn't go, he would fall overboard some day at sea. (At this, the other prisoners were shaking with laughter). Cochrane then said he would consider it. His intention, witness believed, was to inform the skipper. When he came aboard on the night of the 4th November with the prisoner Thurkettle refused to go, and said he had seen as much of prison as he wanted to see. At last, witness persuaded him to go. Cochrane had gone to sleep, and witness took the forecastle lamp and overturned it on him – Hin (laughter) – setting fire to his clothing and the locker that he was lying on. He told him if he did not get up and go at once, he would not go out of the forecastle alive. Witness made him get into the boat and go across the river. When they got across to the house, he would not leave the boat, and again said he would have nothing to do with it. Witness went up to one of the windows, broke the glass, forced part of the catch in, and got through. He turned on the electric light and then started searching the room. The Clerk : I suppose you know that you are incriminating yourself. Prisoner : It does not make much difference. (Laughter). Williams said he further found Cochrane asleep in the boat. In conclusion he said if Thurkettle had not been drunk he would not have gone, nor would Cochrane if he had not been forced.

Prisoners were then committed for trial and laughed heartily at the prospect.