

CHATHAM NEWS 1891

1 3 January 1891

SAD TERMINATION TO A HOLIDAY On Christmas Eve, a woman was found in a state of insensibility in a railway carriage at Faversham, and she was conveyed to the workhouse infirmary. Her identity was not discovered until Christmas Day, when her husband, Charles Dunlop of 88 Blackwell Lane, East Greenwich, arrived, and explained the circumstances as to how the woman was lost, and why she had no money or railway ticket in her possession. On Wednesday, Mrs Dunlop and a little girl travelled by the North Kent line to Strood, where she was met by a friend from Rainham, to which place the party were proceeding. In walking from Strood to Rochester Bridge, Mrs Dunlop dropped her purse containing her money, and the young woman who had met her picked it up. At Rochester Bridge station, the train was so crowded that Mrs Dunlop was separated from her friends, and when the train stopped at Rainham she was missed, but it was supposed that she would come on by a later train. The husband followed by a subsequent train on the North Kent Line, and when he arrived at Rainham and found his wife missing, he on Thursday hired a cart and drove to Sittingbourne, and gave information to Police Superintendent Mayne. Later in the day, the station master at Faversham telegraphed to all stations up and down the line the fact of a woman having been found insensible at Faversham, as already described, with the result that the woman's friends at Rainham were made acquainted with her whereabouts. The husband eventually arrived at Faversham and saw his wife, who had not then recovered consciousness. It is said that she on two former occasions had been prostrated with an attack of apoplexy or paralysis. The unfortunate woman died on Sunday morning in the workhouse infirmary. Since the wide publicity that has been given to the case, a bargeman named **Norris**, of Tanner Street, Faversham, has stated that he travelled in the same compartment as Mrs Dunlop to Faversham. She was apparently seized with a fit, and became unconscious before the train stopped at Rainham, to which station she was travelling. Her fellow passengers sat her up several times, but she was quite helpless. At Sittingbourne, it is said the attention of a porter was called to the woman, and he replied, "Let her go on to Faversham", with the result that when the train arrived at the junction, Norris spoke to the ticket collector, Edwards, who had her removed to the waiting room, where she was allowed to remain for a couple of hours, under the belief that she was suffering from the effects of drink. When it was at first discovered that the woman had neither money nor railway ticket, it was believed that she had been robbed, but the matter has now been satisfactorily explained.

2 3 January 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY POLICE COURT

DRUNKENNESS **Timothy Lane**, bargeman of Northfleet, admitted being drunk in Northfleet High Street on the 6th instant. Police-constable Baker proved the case, and he was fined 14/0 including costs. The default was seven days' hard labour.

3 10 January 1891

Our towns are threatened with something akin to a coal famine. Many of the merchants' stocks are at a very low ebb, and urgent enquiries sent to the North have only elicited the reply that it is impossible for the ships to leave owing to an accumulation of ice and the prevalence of dense fogs. The price of house coal is now 40s per ton in Tonbridge, which receives all its supply by barges from Rochester ; but even if black diamonds were plentiful in Rochester, it would not help people higher up the river to any great extent, as ice is forming rapidly in the upper reaches of the Medway. As a matter of fact, steam power was invoked on Wednesday in order to get a barge out from Wouldham, and beyond that place a passage is kept clear by great exertions only. Scores of barges are now lying idle in tiers at Rochester, with the prospect of the number being largely added to.

4 10 January 1891

A ROCHESTER BARGE SUNK As the steamer *Solingen* was proceeding down the Thames in tow of the tug *Vigilance* early in the morning of January 5th, when off the Lavender Dock, she collided with the sailing barge *Hope* of Rochester, laden with bags of cement, also proceeding up the river, causing her to make water. They succeeded in getting the *Hope* to shore at the David's Harp Stairs, Limehouse, where she sank. The *Hope* is owned by Messrs Hilton and Anderson, Upnor.

5 24 January 1891

SERIOUS COLLISION IN THE RIVER

TWO BARGES BADLY DAMAGED

ACTION FOR DAMAGES IN THE HIGH COURT A case of considerable importance to the Rochester and District Barge Insurance Association, and of interest to bargemen and barge-owners generally, came before Mr Justice Batt, sitting with the Trinity Masters in the Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice on Thursday and Friday last week. It was an action brought by the Rochester and District Association to recover damages against the Fatfield Shipping Company, with respect to the alleged running down by the *ss Fatfield* of a topsail barge named the *Bessie Taylor*, belonging to Messrs Leycester and Co, Alliance Wharf, Maidstone, which was insured in the Rochester Barge Insurance Association. The barge was carrying a valuable cargo of hops from Maidstone to London. There was a similar action in the case of a topsail barge named the *HC*, belonging to Mr Henry Covington of London. This barge was uninsured. By the agreement of counsel and the consent of the Court, the cases were heard together.

Mr Gorral Barnes QC and Mr Lionel B Pike (instructed by Messrs Basset and Boucher) appeared for the Rochester Barge Insurance Association. Sir Walter Phillimore QC and Mr Nelson represented the owner of the *HC*, and Sir Charles Hall QC MP with Mr Aspinall appeared for the Fatfield Shipping Company.

THURSDAY'S PROCEEDINGS The case (which followed the celebrated Convent Will Suit) was just reached on Thursday afternoon, and only two witnesses were examined. The first was

Thomas Hall, residing in Rochester, master of the topsail barge *HC* of 44 tons register, who stated that on the 29th October last he was sailing from Milton-next-Sittingbourne to Chiswick with a cargo of flints. About eleven o'clock at night, when the tide was about half flood, the barge was run into by the steamer *Fatfield* in Lower Hope Reach. The wind was south west and the weather fine and moonlight. Witness was steering at the time, and the mate, the only other person on the barge, was at the head. He first saw the *Fatfield* about a quarter of a mile off. The *Fatfield* struck the barge on the port side with her stern, nearly cutting the head of the barge in two. The barge sank within a minute, and witness and his mate escaped in a boat. He afterwards saw the steamer strike the barge *Bessie Taylor*. The steamer came across the river just before the collision.

Witness was cross-examined by Sir Charles Hall, but his evidence was not shaken, and it was corroborated by the statement of **John Dodds**, the mate. No other evidence was adduced on Thursday.

FRIDAY'S PROCEEDINGS Upon the resumption of the case on Friday morning, the first witness called was

Joseph Nicholls, master of the topsail barge *United* of Faversham. On the night in question, he was sailing up the Thames with a cargo of bricks, and saw the collision while he was beating up Lower Hope Reach. He first saw two steamers coming down, one behind the other. He was then on the starboard tack, standing over to the south, and the barge *HC* was a trifle higher up the river than he was. The *HC* and the *Bessie Taylor* winded about three lengths before him, and they all three stood away to the north. The steamer *Fatfield* first showed the red and then the green light. Just before the collision, the *Fatfield*, which was in the slack of the tide, came athwart the river, ran into the *HC*, and then struck the *Bessie Taylor*. There was a nice smart breeze at the time, and all the sails were set. He had to go back on the starboard tack to avoid the steamer.

Cross-examined by Sir Charles Hall, witness stated that there were four barges sailing together, the

fourth being the *Providence*. There were other barges higher up and lower down the river. The collision occurred in mid stream. The *Fatfield* was within 200 yards of the south shore, and the other steamer was nearer and about half a mile head of the *Fatfield*. The *Fatfield* was just inside the stream, and was really heading almost across the river at the time of the collision.

By Justice Butt : Witness was about a barge's length below the *HC*. The *Bessie Taylor* was in the stream and abreast of the *HC*.

THE STEAMER WAS GOING MIDDLING FAST **William Gregory**, master of the barge *Providence*, said he witnessed the collision. The steamer was going middling fast. The *HC* and the *Bessie Taylor* were on the same tack. He believed the steamer was going down in the slack tide, and she then swung round just before the collision.

By Sir Charles Hall : The *Fatfield* was about in mid channel. Witness stood from slack to slack while going up the river. The *HC* had been on the port tack about three minutes before the collision.

To Sir Walter Phillimore : The *Fatfield* starboarded about three minutes after the barges had winded. **A CARGO OF HOPS** **Robert Millgate**, master of the *Bessie Taylor*, 46 tons, three hands, deposed that on the night in question he was going from Maidstone to London with a cargo of hops and bundles of sacks, about eighteen inches below the deck. When he first saw the lights of the *Fatfield*, he was standing from the south shore over to the north shore. He saw the masthead lights and two port red lights. When he put about for the south shore, he could not see the lights owing to the sails of the *HC*. He saw the green light of the steamer a little time before the collision, which occurred about half way up the Hope, above Cliffe Creek. When he put about the last time, he thought he was in the middle of the stream. The tide was running about three or four knots an hour. The *HC* sank, and his barge was pushed ashore by the *Fatfield* to prevent her sinking. It took about three or four minutes to reach the shore. He found himself abreast of Coalhouse battery, below the Ovens buoy. His opinion was that the cause of the collision was owing to the steamer coming across with the starboard helm.

By Sir Charles Hall : The *HC* and the *Bessie Taylor* went about at the same time.

George Mercer, third hand of the *Bessie Taylor*, recollected the occurrence. He saw the green light of the steamer at the time of the collision. The *HC* and the *Bessie Taylor* were on the port tack. The steamer ran right into them. The *Bessie Taylor* was three quarters across the river to the south when the steamer struck her.

By Sir Charles Hall : The *Bessie Taylor* winded before the *HC* on the port tack. They were in the red of the Mucking Light.

This was the case for the plaintiffs.

THE FATFIELD CAPTAIN'S STORY Augustus Alexander Moore, master of the *ss Fatfield*, with a crew of fourteen hands, was the first witness called for the defence. He deposed that in the evening of the 28th October, the steamer left London in water ballast for Penarth, near Cardiff. The pilot who accompanied them from London had landed at Gravesend. The steamer was about her own length from mid channel, on the south shore, and was going at the rate of about six or seven knots an hour. A strong tide was running. The steamer was making no particular course. They had the Mucking Light in sight. A number of barges were coming up the river ; they were reported by the look out, and he saw them himself. There was another steamer straight ahead of the *Fatfield*. Just before they came to the Ovens Buoy, he saw a barge standing across the river on the starboard tack, about two cables away from him, with a green light open. There was another barge on the same tack, at the stern of the first one. There was plenty of room to pass the barges, on the stern of one and the bow of the other. He starboarded his helm just a little to pass between them. Just when he thought everything was right, the first barge went about when she was about her own length ahead of the steamer. He immediately stopped, reversed the engines, and starboarded the helm. The barge opened her red light, and came right into the steamer. He did not notice what the other barge did, but when he first saw her she was perfectly safe. He was looking round to see about going ahead again, when the second barge came into collision with the steamer, striking the stern.

Mr Justice Butt : How did you come into collision?

Witness : I don't know, because I didn't see her.

By Sir Walter Phillimore : He left London at eight o'clock, and reached Gravesend about ten. The steamer was travelling in the slack, a little to the south side. He thought he was gaining on the other steamer, and he prepared to pass on the north side of her by starboarding his helm a little. He did that before he saw the two barges. He did not know whether the head of the steamer was in the tide and the stern in the slack. He starboarded again to pass the barges. The first barge was about two points on his port bow, and from one and a half to two cables off. He trusted to the barge standing across until he passed her. She had plenty of room. He never enquired the names of the barges or anything about them. The first barge was only her length ahead of the steamer when she winded.

Mr Justice Butt : How could she come round if she was only a length ahead?

Witness : She didn't wait for anything. I shouted out not to put her in stays, unless they were mad.

Models were given to the witness, and drawings made, and he placed the vessels precisely in the way that he had described.

Mr Havers remarked that he had no questions to ask. His friend Sir Walter had been such an excellent poacher upon his preserves that he had nothing to add. (Laughter).

Re-examined by Sir Charles Day, witness stated that his vessel sustained no damage. He hailed the men in the barges, and they told him that no one was hurt.

By Mr Justice Butt : He starboarded first to pass the (.....) steamer and starboarded a second time for the barge. He thought the barge was (.....) her starboard light. He had the starboard light of the barge within her own (.....) steamer and struck her on the port side through her coming about.

The statements of Charles Watson, formerly a mate on the *Fatfield*, were produced and read. They (.....) at Cardiff, and Watson had left the ship. He believed the cause of the collision was (.....) in taking the first barge (.....) steamer's bow.

THE BARGES CAME ACROSS THE STEAMER'S BOW Alfred Chesworth, able seaman on the *Fatfield*, deposed that he was the look out on the night of the collision. The steamer was a little on the south side, if anything, at the time he saw the first barge. Both barges cleared the steamer, and then winded and came across her bow.

By Sir Walter Phillimore : His idea was that the steamer could have passed not between the barges, but under the stern of them both.

Mr Justice Butt : How was it the barge came right round again after she got clear of you?

Witness : I don't know why she did it.

Evidence was also given by Stephen Philip Cork, chief mate of the *Fatfield*, and William Robson, the chief engineer. The latter stated that the engines were reversed, by order, from full speed ahead to full speed astern. He felt a slight shock while they were going astern.

THE REAL QUESTION Mr Justice Butt, after a consultation with the Trinity Masters, said the real question was whether at the time the barges went about, the steamer was in such a position as to justify their doing so. He would like to hear the defence upon that.

Sir Charles Hall said if the barges went about at an improper place, no blame could be attached to the officers of the steamer. The witnesses for the barges wanted the Court to believe that the *Fatfield*, while going down the river within 200 or 300 yards of the south shore, suddenly steered right across the river, apparently for no other purpose than a wanton desire to sink the two barges. It was not a case of a steamer coming upon a vessel which she had not previously seen. He contended that the barges were not justified in going about nearly in midchannel when there was ample room to continue to the end of their tack. By the very act of the *HC*, she negatived the attempt of the steamer to get out of the way. The *Bessie Taylor* simply followed what the *HC* did. He submitted that the evidence proved overwhelmingly that the barges went about practically in mid stream, and that being so, were they not guilty of negligence? A steamer always expected that a sailing vessel would hold out her tack if there were sufficient water. He mentioned that there was no counter claim.

Counsel for the plaintiffs were not called upon to address the Court.

THE JUDGE'S DECISION Mr Justice Butt, in giving his decision (after a further consultation

with the Trinity Masters) said that though to all of them doubts had occurred in the course of the evidence and the discussion of the case, they were practically at one upon the real point in dispute between the parties, as to the relative position of the vessels when the barges went about from the starboard to the port tack. The case for the barges was that they put their helms down and came about on the port track, and had been sailing for an appreciable time upon that tack before the collision occurred. The case for the steamer, on the other hand, was that the barges, first the *HC* and then the *Bessie Taylor*, came across the steamer's course on the starboard tack, and instead of continuing a little way on nearer to the south shore, winded right under the steamer's bow, and so caused the collision. What was the truth? Unless the barges had failed to see the steamer at all before they put about, it was incredible they should have put about, because it was running themselves almost into the jaws of death. It did not seem to him that the barges put about in utter ignorance of the presence of the steamer. Of the two stories, he was inclined to think the more credible was that told by the witnesses for the barges. It was less unlikely than the statement put forth by the other side. There was nothing in the demeanour of the witnesses for the barges to indicate that they were trying to deceive the Court. The story for the steamer was so incredible as to amount to almost an impossibility. They were asked to believe that the *HC* passed across the steamer on the starboard bow in her one length with her green light showing, and then, for no earthly reason that could be assigned, winded and ran into the steamer. It was said of the *Bessie Taylor* that she did the same silly thing as the *HC*. It was very nearly, if not impossible, for the *HC* to have done what the captain of the steamer said she did. The captain said he had made up his mind to pass between the barges, while one of the other witnesses for the steamer said there was not room to pass between them. The Court thought that the steamer really failed to see what the barges were about, and ought to have seen that they were sailing on the port tack. He pronounced against the steamer.

It is stated that the total loss to the Shipping Company is upwards of £3,000.

6 24 January 1891

A BARGE RUN DOWN IN THE MEDWAY On Friday morning at 5.30, the barge *Frindsbury*, one of the Fleet of the Formby Cement Co, was run down in Chatham Reach by the screw steamer *Kron Princess Victoria*. The barge was at the time lying at anchor, and the master (**John Lake**) and mate escaped a watery grave by climbing into the rigging.

7 31 January 1891

ROCHESTER AND DISTRICT BARGE OWNERS' ASSOCIATION (LIMITED) The second annual general meeting of this association was held at the Registered Offices of the Association, 141 Eastgate, Rochester, on Tuesday the 20th instant. There were present Messrs A J Knight (Chairman), W R Craske, S J Brice, W Castle, C P E Cheffins, J E Gill, T Watson, F Sollitt, G H Curel, W Higham, J Peters, H A Gill, C W Outram, W T Tranah and F C Boucher (Secretary). The directors' report was read by the secretary, and by this it appears that there are now no less than 100 barges insured in the association, and that barges and cargoes have been insured during the past year at the low rate of (?6.0) per cent, and that the expenses of and claims on the association had been met without a call being made. Mr A J Knight, in moving the adoption of the report, called attention to the extraordinarily low rate of insurance, and said that it was almost too much to hope that the rate could continue at that figure, although the Directors endeavoured as far as possible to curtail expenses and to exclude inferior barges from being entered. The Chairman went on to point out that several barges proposed for insurance had been refused, and that others which had formerly been insured had been sold, and so left the association, so that altogether the number of proposals had been considerably in excess of one hundred. Mr G H Curel seconded the adoption of the report, which was thereupon unanimously adopted. The secretary read the statement of accounts for the past year. The principal receipts were £108/3/0 for entrance fees and £80/12/0 amount paid by owners of vessels causing damage to barges insured in the association. The principal items of expenditure were :- Secretary's salary, £30 ; surveyor's fees, £43/8/6 ; formation expenses, £22/4/9 ;

amount paid in settlement of claims, £74. Mr W R Craske, in moving that the accounts be passed, remarked that the association had been carried on in a very favourable manner with the strictest economy, and he hoped that the ensuing year would be as prosperous as the last. Mr T Watson seconded, and the accounts were passed, and the report and balance sheet ordered to be printed and distributed amongst the members. Mr T Watson, the retiring director, was re-elected on the proposition of Mr Knight seconded by Mr Brice, and on the proposition of Mr Knight, seconded by Mr Sollitt, Mr A W Bennett of Gillingham was also elected a director. The continuing directors are Messrs S J Brice, W Castle, C P E Cheffins, W H Craske, G W Gill and A J Knight. Mr F C Boucher, on the proposition of the Chairman, seconded by Mr G H Curel, was re-elected Secretary. G H Curel, W Higham and F Sollitt were re-elected surveyors, Mr W J Upton treasurer, and the London and County Banking Company Limited bankers to the Association. Mr C P E Cheffins was, on the proposition of Mr W H Craske, seconded by Mr F Sollitt, elected directors' auditor, and Mr E A Gill, on the proposition of the Chairman, seconded by Mr J Peters, was elected members' auditor. Mr A J Knight proposed an alteration in Article 10 of the Association, changing the date of the annual general meeting to the first Tuesday in February instead of the third Thursday in January. Mr E A Gill seconded, and the resolution was passed. Mr Craske proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman, remarking that he had devoted much valuable time to the Association, and that its present flourishing condition was due to a great extent to his exertions. Mr Sollitt seconded and the proposition was carried unanimously. The Chairman responded in suitable terms, and the meeting terminated.

8 7 February 1891

THE THAMES CONSERVATORS AND THE GOVERNMENT

A TEST CASE Superintending the shipment of explosives in the Thames are two sets of inspectors, so to speak, one under the Government and the other appointed by the Thames Conservancy Board. Between the two, occasionally there occurs a question as to the precedence of one or the other, and the case heard at the Rochester County Police Court last Tuesday was important in this bearing. General Bingham was in the chair, and General H Edmeades and Dr Weekes were also on the Bench.

James Rockliffe, in the employ of Messrs A R and S Sales, contractors for the conveyance of government explosives, was summoned for carrying five tons of gunpowder, seven cases of percussion caps and one case of primers, without the separation required by the bye laws of 1875, on the barge *Darenth* in the river Thames off Higham on the 8th November last.

Mr Bunting presented for the Thames Conservators, and Mr Morton Smith, barrister at law (instructed by Messrs Farlow and Jackson, solicitors, Ingram Court, Fenchurch Street, London) defended.

James May, the inspector of explosives at Gravesend, deposed to inspecting the *Darenth*, on which the various explosives were promiscuously loaded.

By Mr Smith : The explosives were marked with the Government mark. Mr Oliver (who was the Government Superintendent of Shipping of explosives) was superintending the shipment of Government explosives on the *Wordsworth*, about a mile from the *Darenth*. He did not remember Mr Oliver telling him that the explosives he saw were only placed there temporarily.

Captain Marsden, the harbour master at Gravesend, gave evidence.

Mr Smith contended that inasmuch as the *Darenth* was at anchor, the explosives were not being "conveyed" at the time of the inspector's visit.

The Magistrates retired to consider this point, and decided against Mr Smith.

Mr Smith said he should ask for a case, as to point as to whether mere unloading was conveyance within the meaning of the Act, was important. He called

Edward Langley, mate of the barge *Darenth*, who said that the barge was loaded by men employed at Woolwich Arsenal at Woolwich. After the loading, the captain separated the explosives, and placed them in different compartments.

By Mr Bunting : He thought the mixing of the explosives was by the direction of Mr Oliver.

John Oliver, assistant inspector of shipping in the Ordnance Store Department, said he had to attend to the shipping of all Government explosives.

Mr A Sales said his firm had had the contract for the conveyance of Government explosives for about 60 years. The stores in question were conveyed in a proper and safe manner.

Mr Smith, in addressing the Bench for the defence, submitted that the explosives were separated properly during the conveyance. He also contended that the 97th Section of the Explosives Act prevented the Conservancy bye laws from applying to Government explosives.

Mr Bunting said that the bye laws applied when the Government Inspector was not present, and Mr Oliver was not present on the occasion in question. If the Magistrates decided against him as to the application of the bye laws, he should ask for an adjournment to bring witnesses from London to prove that they did apply.

The Magistrates retired, and decided that a breach of the bye law had been committed. As to whether the 97th section of the Explosives Act overruled the bye law, Mr Bunting could have his adjournment to bring evidence on this point. The case was adjourned for a month.

9 7 February 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

WILLIE THEY HAVE MISSED YOU **William Cooper**, a bargeman, was fined 10/0 including costs for being drunk and disorderly in Meeting Alley, Strood, on the 26th January. Police-constable Coast proved the case.

10 28 February 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY POLICE COURT

OWNER'S LIABILITY **Henry Covington**, contractor, admitted throwing rubbish from the barge *Kingfisher*, of which he is the owner, into the river Thames off Cliffe on the 7th inst. Mr W S Bunting prosecuted for the conservators, but did not press the case, as the offence was the result of the disobedience of the defendant's employees. Fined £2/10/0 and £2/15/0 costs.

11 28 February 1891

THE HALLING FERRYMAN'S ADVENTURES IN ROCHESTER

"A NICE WATCH FOR A PRESENT" Frances Jennett, a young married woman, was again brought up at the City Police Court on Saturday, on the charge of stealing a gold watch and chain, value £4, the property of **Ambrose Gash**, on the 11th instant. Mr F F Smith (Messrs Hayward and Smith) again appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Greathead for the defence.

THE PROSECUTOR'S STORY Ambrose Edward Gash, a middle aged man, a waterman of Halling, said that on the night of the 11th instant he was going down Star Hill at about half past nine. Prisoner came up to him, and said, "Good evening", and he returned the salute. She then asked whether he was going to "treat" her. He said, "Yes", and at the prisoner's suggestion they went into the City Arms and had two "threes" of whisky – one each. They stayed in front of the bar for about ten minutes, during which time he pulled his watch out to look at the time. It was then ten minutes to ten o'clock. The watch was on the chain, and he placed it back in his pocket. There was no conversation about the watch. Prisoner asked the barmaid whether there was any place to sit down, and was referred to the bar parlour. They were in there a few minutes. Prisoner left suddenly, and he did not exactly see her go. He was drinking his whisky when she went out of the room.

VERY COSY She sat within 15 inches of him. As he was going from the City Arms, he went to pull out his watch to look at the time, under the first lamp, and found that his watch was gone and the chain was left hanging down. He went back to the City Arms, and found out that the prisoner was in service at Mr Crockford's, almost opposite. Mr Crockford opened the door, and after a communication had been made to him, the prisoner was called upstairs. He asked her whether she had got his watch, and she answered, "No", and, turning to Mr Crockford, she said, "Oh, sir, I have never seen that man". He told her employer where they had been together, and they afterwards went across to the City Arms, and found the prisoner's red wrap which she had left behind. He went

back to the house, and asked the prisoner to give the watch back to him, or she would get herself into trouble. His name was on the watch, and he also knew the number. Prisoner still denied having the watch, and he then fetched a constable, but upon returning, Mr Crockford informed him that his watch had been found. Witness's wife's and his initials were on the watch.

By Mr Stedman : He had been drinking before he went to the City Arms.

LOST THE TRAIN By Mr Greathead : He came into town with the intention of returning to Halling by the 8.30 train. He lost that and also the 10.30, and had to "cab it" home. He was not drunk, but was about "half and half". Prisoner spoke to him first ; he did not say to her, "Good evening, Miss", when he first saw her. He did not tell her he was a widower. (Laughter). It was at her suggestion that they went to the City Arms. When they got into the room at the back of the bar, he sat on the corner of the table, and the prisoner sat on a chair. He did not take his watch out and put it into the hand of the prisoner, neither did he show it her and ask her whether it was not "a nice watch for a present". He did not attempt to take liberties with her, and he could only account for her leaving so suddenly through having stolen his watch. If prisoner had given the watch back, he would not have prosecuted her. He was anxious to get it back because it was his wife's watch.

"HER LITTLE BOY HAD DIED" Mr Thomas Crockford, steward of St Bartholomew's Hospital, residing in Victoria Street, said that the prisoner was in his service on the 11th February. She was under notice to leave, and would have gone on the following Tuesday. On the day in question, she left about two o'clock in the afternoon to go to Faversham. She did not return until half past ten. He asked her why she was so late, when she said she had been to Strood to tell her friends that her little boy had died. (Sensation). The prosecutor came to the door just after, and accused the prisoner of having stolen his watch. When the prosecutor had gone for the police, prisoner was about to go downstairs, when he advised her not to do so, as if she was innocent people would not then be able to charge her with having concealed the watch. He afterwards found the watch in a box, covered over with a quantity of dress cuttings. The policeman did not arrest the prisoner in his house, but he told her that she would have to leave his house at once.

By Mr Greathead : The girl came to him with a fair character, and he had always found her honest.

By the Mayor : The prisoner was under notice to leave because she did not suit, and because she was untruthful. Prosecutor was the worse for drink when he came to the house. After the watch had been handed over to the constable, the prisoner, in reply to a remark of his wife, said, "Then he shouldn't have led me astray".

By Mr Greathead : He did not remember her saying anything about her not having the watch if he had not led her astray.

WHO WAS THE COOK? Police-constable Court deposed to receiving a communication from the prosecutor. He went to Mr Crockford's residence, where prisoner told him that the prosecutor had informed her that he had been with a cook earlier in the evening, she thought that this cook might very likely have had the watch. She denied that she had stolen the watch until Mr Crockford found it, when she hung her head. When prisoner came out of the house, he took her into custody. Both prosecutor and prisoner were the worse for drink. Prisoner did not go voluntarily to the police station.

After Martha Topley, barmaid at the City Arms, had given evidence as to the visit of the prosecutor and prisoner

The Magistrates decided to commit the prisoner for trial at the next Quarter Sessions, and in consequence of this, Mr Greathead said he did not think it was necessary to take up the time of the Court by addressing their Worships for the defence.

Prisoner, who pleaded not guilty and reserved her defence, was admitted to bail in two sureties of £20 each.

12 7 March 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY COURT

A QUESTION OF DEMURRAGE Messrs J and C Harrison, coal merchants, Rochester and London v Arthur Gammon, coal merchant, Chatham.

This case was before the Court last week, and partly heard, his Honour adjourning the case for the assistance of mercantile assessors, and today Messrs W P Haymen and C Arkcoll sat beside his Honour. The plaintiffs claimed the sum of £4/3/0 for the alleged detention of three barges by the defendant. Plaintiffs had paid the amount of the claims for demurrage. The question at issue was whether the plaintiffs were liable for the demurrage, or the defendant. Mr Greathead appeared for the plaintiffs and Mr W J McLellan for the defendant. George Robert Thornhill, manager at the plaintiffs' Rochester establishment, gave evidence as to the defendant agreeing to buy a quantity of coals. The coals were sent round in the steamer *Monica* in August last, and transferred to four barges. Defendant first bought one barge load, and agreed to purchase the remainder upon the arrival of the vessel. The defendant's wharf was occupied at the time, and the barges were unable to get in. Demurrage was claimed for three barges – the *Friends*, for three days at 13/4 a day ; the *Alice* for two days at 15/0 ; and the *Henry*, for two days at 7/6. By Mr McLellan : Demurrage had frequently been claimed by firms, and paid, without going into Court. The price agreed with defendant was 18/0 a ton, delivered alongside the defendant's wharf. He had sold coals from the ship's side, and the price was 6d a ton less. The firm had no barges in Rochester, but hired them. The demurrage had been paid. The names of the vessel or the barges were never mentioned in the contract with the defendant. William Chambers, the plaintiffs' foreman, proved the hire of the barges for the removal of the coals from the vessel to the defendant's wharf. Mr William Haymen, coal factor, Rochester, said the custom of the port was that if a merchant ordered coals to be delivered at his wharf, and demurrage occurred, the merchant who ordered the coals was liable for the demurrage. On the other hand, if a coal factor sold coals to a merchant to suit his convenience, and demurrage occurred, the factor was liable for the demurrage. Defendant said his agreement was for the coals to be delivered alongside his wharf, and the price agreed upon included lighterage. He sent to the firm when the first barge came, and told them he could not unload any barges that week, as he had other barges there. The message was sent by the barge captain named **Higgins**. Thornhill subsequently told him he had never received any message. He had several contracts for the supply of coal from factors, and he had never before been asked for demurrage. His Honour gave judgement for the defendant, with the consent of the assessors. They were of opinion that the plaintiffs forced the coals upon the defendant.

13 21 March 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY COURT

ADMINISTRATION ORDERS **Abraham Berry** of 8 Pagitt Street, Ordnance Place, Chatham, boatman, made an application, his debts amounting to £35/10/7, and an order was granted at £1 a month.

A QUESTION OF ACCOUNTS Charles Lake, farmer, Higham v John Simmonds, coal and corn merchant, Strood

Claim £7/10/0 for goods sold and delivered. There was a counter claim for £15.

Mr Greathead appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr Norman for the defendant.

Mr Greathead stated that in November 1889, a man named **Summers**, then employed by the plaintiff, arranged on behalf of the plaintiff to sell a quantity of mangold wurtzel to Mr Sheepwash, cow keeper and dairyman, Gillingham, and agreed with defendant to take the wurtzel from Higham to Gillingham in his barge. Defendant, he contended, delayed carrying out this agreement, and Mr Sheepwash subsequently declined to take the wurtzel. Summers then saw defendant, and defendant said he would take the wurtzel himself. There were other transactions between the plaintiff and defendant for the purchase of manure, pigs and haystacks. Mr Norman was prepared to admit that the defendant agreed to purchase a freight of wurtzel from Summers at 13s a ton, to be delivered on his barge at Higham. Summers gave evidence, and stated that it was agreed to deliver the wurtzel on the defendant's barge, but defendant delayed sending his barge there, and ultimately the frost affected and damaged the wurtzel. His Honour suggested a settlement between the parties. They consulted together, but could not agree, and his Honour then adjourned the further hearing of the case until the 14th of April for the plaintiff to furnish more particulars.

14 21 March 1891

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BARGE BUILDERS' UNION At the beginning of March 1890, a dispute arose between the shipwrights of this district and their employers. The men petitioned for a rise of 6d per day, and an alteration in the hours, they desiring to leave at one o'clock on Saturdays instead of four, which would make the hours 56 1/2 per week instead of 58 1/2. The demand for the increase of pay was afterwards dropped, but that for the alteration in the time was persisted in. The employers held a meeting, and decided to make the concession asked for, subject to the condition that they would in future pay by the hour instead of by the day. This did not suit the men, and all the bargebuilders, except those employed by Mr F Sollitt, who continued at their work, declined to accept the terms, and the men employed by Messrs Gill and Son, Mr G Curel and Mr Higham "came out", nearly 100 hands striking. This difficulty was the cause of the men in this district combining, and a Bargebuilders' Union was formed for the purpose of protecting men employed in the trade. The Association has been steadily progressing during the whole of the twelve months, and on Saturday evening last it scored a success with its first anniversary, which was held in the form of a meat tea, followed by a meeting in the hall at the back of the St Margaret's banks Cafe. About 60 of the members sat down to the tea, and the gathering was afterwards presided over by Mr Packer, the president of the Union, who was supported by Councillor Robert Powell, Mr W J Lewington (secretary to the Dockyard Labourers' Protection League), Mr W Rockingham (secretary to the No 1 Strood Branch of the D W R and G Labourers' Union), Mr Stedman (General Secretary of the Union) and Mr Germany (secretary to the Rochester Branch).

In his opening address, the Chairman said that their society was brought into existence last March (1890). A few workmen met together, and came to the conclusion that it was very desirable that they should obtain the one o'clock movement on Saturdays, and also an increase in wage at the rate of 6d per day. A petition was drawn up and presented to the employers, signed by all the employees in the bargebuilding yards, and it was demanded that the alteration should be made on the 1st March. The employers met and offered to give them (...) per hour, but this the workmen rejected a man, and the whole of them ceased work when this was known. (Applause). Mr Curel's and Mr Higham's came out on the Monday, and Mr Gill's on the Wednesday. A meeting was then held at the Bull Hotel. Mr Sollitt was present, and in consequence of this, the meeting was adjourned by the workmen refusing to allow Mr Sollitt to deliberate upon the question, as his men did not apply for an alteration. Another meeting was afterwards held, with a more fruitful result. Mr Gill offered them 5/10 per day for the first five days in the week, and 3/10 for the Saturday. This made a difference to their wages of about 3/0 per week, bringing it up to 23/0. The consequence was the men returned to their work, but they decided to form a union, and they must congratulate themselves that the interest in the Society had never flagged. Most of the employees had been "rolled up" in the union. The object of the Society was for its members to help one another socially, morally, intellectually and materially. (Applause). Mr Packer then went on to urge the men to remain true to their union, and the employers would take a fair and just view of their position as workers. As constructors of vessels, they materially helped the commerce of the district, and as a body, he thought they ought to have a voice as to what hours they should work, and as to what their rate of pay should be. (Applause). In conclusion, he announced that their Trades Council was formulating a programme, which he hoped would receive the entire appreciation of the members. They recognised no party, and what affected their interests demanded their united cooperation. (Hear, hear).

Mr Lewington next delivered a vigorous speech, and referred to the meeting of the bricklayers held at Brompton on the previous Saturday evening. He hoped that if there were any non society men in the room, they would follow the example of the seven bricklayers who came forward and joined the union at that meeting. At the beginning of last March they formed their union ; what brought about the formation of that union? They wanted to get time, and in order to do this they had to combine. Nothing was gained without unity. (Applause). He was there that night as the representative of the Trades Council, and he would urge that branch to support that body. He supposed that the company in the room was composed of blacksmiths, fitters, sailmakers and mast makers, and in order that a

barge might be constructed, they must have the help of the respective trades. So it was with the Trades Council. They must have the support of the societies. Mr Packer in his speech had said that the union would benefit its members socially, morally, intellectually and materially. Did it accomplish its work? Yes, it had helped them socially that night. (Applause). They were endeavouring to solve those problems of labour which so affect them as working men, and in this the union would give them intellectual assistance. They were then in the thick of an election at Chatham, and the majority of the candidates had been working men, but had risen in life. The representation on their public boards ought to be altered. There should be more working men members. (Hear, hear). Unfortunately, there was sure to be jealousy among the men, so that they wanted to educate them to trust their fellow workers. He was at working men's meetings night after night, and he could say that they were conducted much better than many of the municipal committees. (Applause). Many of the men serving on those bodies very likely never handled a pen, except to add up the pounds, shillings and pence. (Laughter). Mr Lewington went on to condemn the present representatives on the magisterial bench in this district. They had magistrates in Rochester who were not capable of administering judgement to them. If working men were placed on the list, they would be better able to mete out justice to their fellow toilers. (Applause). The union would improve their morality by assisting to raise the position of their brothers who were trying to lift themselves up. It would benefit them materially. It had done so already. They had got more money (a voice, "No"). They had got their time reduced, and that was an increase of wage. By the lessening of the hours of labour, more men would be employed, and they would be able to get more money for the labour they put in. (Applause). He just touched on these points simply to open their eyes, and show them the position they stood in that night. They, as working men, held the power, and it was in their hands to make the hours of labour better and improve themselves both morally and physically. Before resuming his seat, Mr Lewington took the opportunity to urge all to walk shoulder to shoulder, and show the capitalists that working men were now better able to stand together. They would not then say to them, "If you don't take what we like to give you, you can go". It would make them establish a better and a fairer system of giving the workmen a hearing.

Councillor R Powell was introduced to the meeting as the "labour candidate (councillor)" for Strood. He was accorded a hearty reception, and spoke at considerable length upon the labour question. He had often heard it said that "bad beginnings make good endings"; that might be, but a bad foundation means the collapse of the building. He then proceeded to point out that unionism was not so modern as some people thought, and recounted the various Acts of Parliament and other reforms made for the benefit of the labouring classes since the time of Queen Elizabeth, when an Act was passed for the protection of apprentices. He was glad to see that the shipwrights at Rochester had formed a branch of the union, and were following in the footsteps of men who had gone before, and in footsteps which they would do well to follow. It was sometimes said that between capital and labour, there was an identity of interest. So there was, but not when each party were "daggers drawn" at each other. It was all very well for people to say "treat with the employers", as in many cases they could only do that with the union at the back of them. Some of the employers would meet their men honestly. No man who was an employer of labour ought to be allowed to pay a less wage than his co-employers paid. In the age in which they lived, they saw the combinations of capital and labour fighting against each other. He, for one, should not rest until capital and labour were owned by one; until he saw the working man owning the machine he worked; until he saw him owning the craft which he sailed; and until he saw him reaping the profits he earned. (Applause). This might not be far distant, although it would take time.

Continuing, Mr Powell said that those who had the brain power were the men who carried out the work, and explained how they could employ themselves and not be employed by others. "Destroy the wealth producers of the country," said he, "and you destroy the life of the nation". The men should have an interest in the barges they built, and the bargemen in the vessels they sailed. Let them get one barge owned by the society in one year, and then by the accumulation of profits, they would own two, and so on, until at the end of six years they would be the owners of ten. Concluding, he said that there were more difficulties in the way of a working man seeking for a

public office than one might realise. Beyond the petty jealousy of his fellow toilers, if the employer was opposed to him holding office, he could make it very hard for the man. He would like to see more working men representatives on the various Boards of Guardians and other municipal bodies. But the unions as a body must be prepared to see that anyone sent to represent them should not suffer through it, and also that his family should not lose by his going there. (Applause).

Mr Rockingham briefly addressed the meeting and spoke upon the advantages of unionism. He was one of those workers who was called a mechanic, viz a mill stone maker. Three times had they tried to form a union in that particular branch of trade, and three times had they failed. When they struck, labourers were taken on to do their work, and in two or three years could do it as well as they could. What they wanted to do was to make unionists of their labourers. Seeing that the Dockers' Union was open to receive other than labourers as members, he had joined, and he could now say that since the Union was started, a better condition of labour had prevailed on the Medway than had ever been known before. (Applause).

Mr Norton, the late Secretary, gave a very satisfactory report of the progress of the Society. They commenced with 50 members, and they had now got about 70, fully paid up. The income for the year had been (£195/2/7 1/2?). £51 was paid in levies to support their fellow workmen at the time they were on strike in London, and the working expenses had only been £6/3/7 1/2. (Hear, hear).

The Chairman moved a vote of thanks to Mr Norton for having so ably filled the office of secretary for the first twelve months, and expressed his regret that he was about to leave the district. This was seconded, and carried unanimously.

After Mr Stedman had addressed the gathering, the proceedings were brought to a close.

15 21 March 1891

“A LITTLE SQUABBLE BETWEEN TWO MEN” On Saturday morning, at the usual sitting of the City Bench, Edmund Smith was summoned for assaulting and beating William Henry Goodwin, on the river, on the 10th inst.

Mr J Basset appeared for the complainant, who is a foreman in the employ of Messrs Parker and Co, coal factors, and said that when their Worships had heard the evidence, they would say it was a most serious assault, and merited severe punishment.

William Henry Goodwin of 1 Bath Hard, Rochester, said that on the day in question he was acting as foreman for Messrs Parker and Co, on board the *Nina*. There was a gear barge moored alongside. He brought a boat to the ship with the coal whippers' dinners, and afterwards told a man named Glover to go and get a boat off the shore. Complainant held a rope to be attached to the boat on shore, and slackened to Glover. Defendant had got into the boat for his dinner, when the rope got under the stern of the boat and pulled it round. Defendant then said, “If you do not knock off pulling the rope, I shall punch you in the eye”. He then got on to the barge, and when complainant's back was turned on him, he struck him a violent blow in the side and knocked him down, causing him to call out, “Oh, my God, my ribs are broken”. He was taken to the Hospital and strapped up by the house surgeon at that institution. He had since, and was then, suffering much pain, and was still under his club doctor, who told him he would not be able to go to his work for four or five weeks. Defendant complained that the dinners were not brought close enough to the ship, when complainant asked him if he would like him to eat the dinner for him.

By the Defendant : He did not hit him in the face with a rope, which he was taking from another man, neither did he say that he would punch him in the eye.

By the Mayor : He did not damage the dinners with the rope. He and the defendant were not good friends – they frequently had quarrels.

Charles Duffy, a meter in the employ of Messrs Parker and Co, gave corroborative evidence, and added that the defendant struck with his left hand, and complainant received the blow on the left side, and fell onto the hatchway, half overboard.

By the Bench : Goodwin did not attempt to strike Smith. He was hauling the rope in. He heard a “growl” from some of the men about wetting the dinners while hauling the rope in. Complainant

could not have struck defendant at the time without witness seeing it.

Thomas Glover, a lighterman, also corroborated. He saw Goodwin taken to the Hospital.

By the Bench : He did not hear any grumbling about the dinners being wet.

Defendant pleaded guilty to the assault under great provocation, and said that as the rope came into the complainant's hand, the water ran on the dinners. The boat was jerked aside while he was standing on the thwarts, and he was thrown into the bottom of the boat. He did not take any notice of that, but soon after the complainant was taking a rope from another man, when the end of the painter struck him in the face. He asked the complainant what he was doing, when he used a filthy expression towards him. This caused defendant to get into a passion, and he got on to the barge and struck the complainant. Had Goodwin apologised, he should not have touched him.

Joseph Boreman bore out this statement, but said that he did not see the blow struck.

In answer to Mr Basset, he said that he heard the complainant groaning, but he did not know why he did that.

By the Bench : His dinner was wet. Mr Goodwin was aggravating in everything he did.

In answer to the Bench, complainant said that his ribs had been broken once before. The doctor said that he had received a severe bruise to his ribs.

The Magistrates retired to consider their verdict, and upon returning into Court, dismissed the case.

Mr Basset : Dismissed! I don't like to say anything upon the decision of the Bench, but the evidence is all on one side.

The Mayor said the Bench looked upon the matter as a little squabble between two men, and the complainant had admitted that his ribs had been broken before.

Mr Basset applied to have Smith bound over to keep the peace, and Smith expressing his willingness to be bound, he was ordered to keep the peace for three calendar months, the Magistrates accepting his own surety of £5.

16 28 March 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY POLICE COURT

GETTING IN THE FIRST SMACK **John Wills**, waterman, was summoned for assaulting and beating Walter John Waterhouse at Frindsbury on the 16th inst. Defendant pleaded not guilty, and raised an objection to the jurisdiction of the Court. He contended that the Magistrates had no power to deal with the case as it was in the City Boundary. Their Worships ruled that as the assault was committed within 500 yards of their boundary, they had power to deal with the case, and as the summons had been granted from this court, they were compelled to do so. Complainant said that on the afternoon of the day in question, he was standing on the beach at Upper Upnor. Defendant was assisting a man to shift a boat, when he fell into the mud. Some boys who were there laughed, and defendant went straight up to complainant and with a foul expression hit him on the nose, causing it to bleed freely. Defendant said that he was 17 yards below high water mark, when complainant went up to him and said that he would serve him worse than he did his son, and as the defendant thought he was going to strike him (defendant), he got in the "first smack".

Henry Chowne corroborated the complainant's evidence, and the defendant was fined 7/6 and 12/6 costs.

17 28 March 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT, SATURDAY

REPAYING KINDNESS **Robert Daniels**, 77, of the barge *Ranger*, and James Simpcock, cook on board the schooner *James and Agnes* of Chester, were placed in the dock, charged with stealing a quantity of coals, value 3/0, the property of Messrs Lambert Bros, Rochester, on the 20th instant. Superintendent Broadbridge applied to have Simpcock discharged, in order that he might call him as a witness. He had come to the conclusion that Daniels gave him the coals, and Simpcock being but a youth did not know that he was doing wrong in taking them. This was his first sea voyage, he being a brass moulder by trade. River Constable Smith deposed to being on duty in company with Police-constable Jennings at quarter to one on the morning of the 20th instant, when he saw a boat

lying alongside the Ship Pier, containing a quantity of coals. There was about 3 cwt, which would be worth about 3/0. Thinking that it looked rather strange, he waited on the Pier until Simpcock came along, and having ascertained that he was in charge of the boat, they went on board the lighter where they found Daniels who, in answer to Police-constable Jennings, said that he gave Simpcock the coals for putting him on board the lighter. Both prisoners and the coals were then brought to the police station. James Simpcock, a brass moulder, but recently employed upon the schooner *James and Agnes*, said that he was standing on the pier on the early morning of the 20th instant ; when they arrived at the lighter, he asked Daniels whether he might have a lump or two of coal. He replied that he could for his kindness in putting him on board. Witness then took the coals in the boat. **Thomas Burford**, master of the barge *George Ranger*; said that the prisoner was in his employ, and the coals belonged to Messrs Lambert Bros. Prisoner had no authority to give any away. He had known Daniels for many years, and had always found him perfectly reliable. Prisoner pleaded guilty, and said that he gave Simpcock leave to take a “nubble” or two. The Mayor said that the Bench had decided to deal very mercifully with the prisoner on account of his great age. There had never been anything against him before, and he would now be sentenced to one day's imprisonment. Simpcock was called forward and censured, the Mayor telling him that he ought to have known that he was doing wrong in taking the coal. Prisoner had given him permission to take a “nubble” or two, and he took advantage of it to take this large quantity. If he was again brought before them, he would be severely dealt with.

18 **4 April 1891**

THE RUNNING DOWN OF A BARGE The award of the assessors has just been made in the case of the *Bessie Taylor* v Fatfield Steamship Company, which was recently heard in the High Court of Justice. The action was instituted by Messrs Basset and Boucher, solicitors, on behalf of the Rochester and District Barge Insurance Company, the barge *Bessie Taylor*, which was run down in the Thames by the *SS Fatfield*, being insured in that Company, with her cargo of hops. Judgement was given in favour of the Company. The original claim was £2175, and the amount of the award is £2046.

19 **11 April 1891**

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT, SATURDAY

A QUEER JOKE Arannah Pankhurst and George Edward Froud, two lads belonging to Chatham, were charged with stealing a quantity of food, value 2s, the property of **Edward Harris**, from the barge *Sun* at Chatham on the 31st ult. **Alfred Clout**, mate of the barge, said that on the night of the day in question, he went on the barge and found the prisoners in the cabin. The hatch had been broken and the cabin ransacked, but nothing beyond the food had been taken. He got the prisoners out of the cabin, when they threw some biscuits and cheese on the deck and also overboard. The food belonged to the Captain and himself. As he knew Froud, he allowed the prisoners to go away in their boat. He afterwards gave information to the police. Police-constable Jennings of the river police deposed to arresting the prisoner Pankhurst on board a fishing smack. He admitted going on board the barge but denied stealing the food. Police-constable Osborne arrested Froud after he had given evidence in a cruelty case at Chatham Police Court on Monday ; and the Master of the barge having given evidence, the mate was recalled, and said that he locked the cabin up when he left the barge at half past five, and when he returned at half past eight he found that it had been broken into. Both prisoners pleaded guilty. Mr Prall (the Justices' Clerk) said that he was afraid that the dispositions on the part of the boys was to treat such acts as these as jokes. The Bench adjourned the case until Tuesday for the Superintendent to make inquiries as to the boys' character.

TUESDAY The two boys named Arannah Pankhurst and George Edward Froud, who were before the Bench on Saturday charged with stealing food from the barge *Sun*, lying in the Medway, on the 31st March, were again brought up. The evidence was taken on Saturday, and Superintendent Broadbridge stated that he had made enquiries and heard nothing against the lads. Mrs Pankhurst informed the Bench that she was deserted by her husband, and she had to go to the Union. The boy

was left to the mercy of the world. The Bench taking into consideration the good characters of the prisoners, ordered them to be discharged.

20 11 April 1891

The *Eliza Ann*, a fine barge, has been successfully launched from Mr Curel's building yard at Frindsbury. The christening ceremony was performed by Miss Mary Johnson, daughter of the owner, Mr G E Johnson of Hooper's Place, Maidstone Road, Rochester.

21 18 April 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY COURT

A FREIGHT OF MANURE Charles Lake, farmer, Higham v Henry John Simmonds, corn factor of Strood. This was an adjourned case in which the plaintiff sued for £1/10/0 for breach of contract, and defendant made a counter claim for £15 for demurrage. Mr Greathead appeared for plaintiff and Mr Norman for defendant. A legal argument occurred between the solicitors as to whether the particulars which had been (.....) by Mr Greathead agreed with the original claim by the plaintiff. Mr Norman contended that as the amended particulars referred to the non delivery of the goods, they constituted a fresh action altogether, and he ought to have a non suit upon the original claim. Mr Greathead pointed out that his Honour had power to extend any claim. Mr Norman further offered to agree to the withdrawal of his counter claim if Mr Greathead withdrew the original claim. Mr Greathead objected.

His Honour decided to amend the claim and take additional evidence. The plaintiff then stated that defendant forwarded him a freight of manure weighing (???) tons instead of 70 tons. By Mr Norman : The agreement was for a freight at £14, not for any specific quantity, but a freight meant a barge full. Mr Norman might take his oath that when he (plaintiff) dealt with a man like the defendant, he made the agreement as hard and fast as possible. (Laughter). Freights varied in quantity, according to the capacity of the barge. To Mr Greathead : He called (???) tons the freight of a dinghy. Further questioned by Mr Norman, plaintiff said that he first refused to unload the barge, in consequence of the small freight, and he subsequently unloaded the barge at the request of the defendant, through plaintiff's own bailiff. Samuel Blackman, the bailiff, gave evidence as to the quantity of manure in the barge. He received a message from a man named Summers that defendant would allow plaintiff something for the short weight if plaintiff had the barge unloaded. Henry Summers recollected defendant making that offer, but stated that he never took the message to the witness Blackman. Blackman was in defendant's shop at the time. Witness was heavily indebted to the plaintiff. Mr Greathead (to Mr Norman) : So is your client. Plaintiff protested. Mr Norman submitted that the manure was sent by freight, just as the defendant purchased it at London. His Honour pointed out that the defendant had offered by letter to make some allowance for the small freight. Mr Norman said that was so. Defendant admitted that the freight was a small one, and he offered the allowance to settle any dispute. Defendant stated that he sold the manure as he bought it – by the freight – no special quantity being mentioned. His Honour gave judgement for the plaintiff for £3 on the claim, without costs, and the counter claim was withdrawn.

22 18 April 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT, SATURDAY

HE STOLE THE GRUB BUT NOT THE CLOTHES **John Patrick Haggett**, aged 17, mate of the barge *New John*, Rochester, was charged with stealing one coat, vest and trousers, value 12/0, the property of **John James Turner** on the 17th inst. Superintendent Broadbridge having outlined the case, the prosecutor said he was master of the barge *Alert*, which was lying at Hoo Creek on the day in question, and identified the articles of clothing produced by Police-constable Kipley K C C as his property, which he had left on his barge at midday on Monday. On Tuesday, on going aboard again, he noticed that some food and clothing was gone. He afterwards saw them in the forecastle of the barge on which the prisoner was, which was lying in the same creek. Prisoner said he had eaten part of the food, and first that he bought, and then he was going to pay for the clothes.

Prisoner said that he gave 4/6 as an instalment to a young man who sold the clothes to him. He should not recognise him again, as the transaction occurred in the dark. Police-constable Kipley, stationed at Hoo, gave evidence. The prisoner elected to be dealt with summarily, and pleaded guilty to stealing the “grub” but not the clothes (which he bought). **James Wells**, the captain of the *New John*, said prisoner had worked on this barge for a fortnight. Superintendent Broadbridge said that prisoner was five years at an industrial school, where he bore a very good character. The Bench convicted the prisoner, and adjourned the case till Tuesday for further inquiries. Prisoner has only a step-mother in London, and she will be communicated with in the meantime.

TUESDAY

GIVING HIM A CHANCE The lad, **John Patrick Hacket**, mate of a barge, was again brought up on the charge of stealing a coat and vest, and one pair of trousers, the property of **J J Turner**. Hacket was remanded from Saturday in order that the Superintendent might make enquiries as to his character. Nothing had been found against him, and he was now sentenced to one days' imprisonment.

[Note : Name shown as Haggett in previous article]

23 18 April 1891

FIRE AT STROOD A fire broke out in the reed shed on the works of Mr G Curel, barge builder, Strood, during the dinner hour on Tuesday. The City Fire Brigade received a call, and with the employees, prevented the flames from spreading to the adjoining property, but owing to the inflammable nature of the material, they were quite unable to save either the shed or any of its contents. The damage is estimated at £50.

24 2 May 1891

GILLINGHAM LOCAL BOARD Mr W Tozer presided at a meeting of this Board on Thursday. There were present Messrs G Featherby CC, W J Mackey, H Gibbs, H R Bines, S Fuller, E J Watchurst, C J Beveridge, R Sheepwash (High Constable of Gillingham), T Hill, W P Hammond, W Croneen, W King and A W Porter.

THE PROPOSED ALTERATION AT GILLINGHAM PIER There was a matter on the agenda “to receive and consider tenders for work of removing and erecting steamboat landing stage at Gillingham Pier”.

The Clerk (Mr J Basset) wished to inform the Board before any tenders were opened that he waited upon Mr Foord to ascertain whether the Medway Company's steamboats would call at the pier. Mr Foord said he required time to consider the matter. The Clerk left a plan with Mr Foord and he promised to reply. In the meantime, the Clerk had seen the harbour master, **Captain Wildash**, who stated that he had been down to the pier at the request of Mr Foord, with Mr Foord's captain. Captain Wildash said he had taken careful soundings to ascertain the depth of water if the proposed alterations were carried out, and he found that at low water the present pier was dry, and at the spot where the proposed new pier was to be placed, there was just one foot of water.

Mr Hammond thought they had better get another Company for Gillingham.

The Chairman remarked that the testimony was the harbour master's and quite independent.

Mr Hammond pointed out that the harbour master was accompanied by Mr Foord's captain.

Mr Sheepwash thought there would be no difficulty in dredging the mud out at the spot.

The Chairman said he was informed by the Government authorities that the mud silted up one foot a year at that place.

Mr Croneen thought it would be unfair to open the tenders unless the Board intended to have the work carried out.

Mr Hammond was of opinion that if the steamboats called at the pier it would prevent the mud from accumulating.

Mr Sheepwash acquiesced.

Mr Featherby pointed out that the hiring of a dredging machine would entail a great expense. There

were no dredging machines about the place with the exception of those belonging to the Government. He would like to see the work done as much as anyone.

Mr Sheepwash said he did not suppose they would go to the north of England for a machine.

Mr Hammond thought that all they could do was to encourage the people of Gillingham to have a Company of their own.

The Clerk said he had not yet received an answer from Mr Foord.

The Board decided to adjourn the consideration of the matter, and for all the members to visit the spot, Mr Mackey jocularly remarking that they might indulge in a little diving.

PROPOSED HOY TRAFFIC AT GILLINGHAM Messrs W C Snow and Barnes had an interview with the Board respecting the hire of a portion of the wharf belonging to the Board. They explained that Messrs Woodhams and Levy were giving up the hoy business at Rochester, and the applicants intended starting a similar business at Gillingham. They were prepared to offer the Board a price for the wharf and the amount to be paid for each barge.

Mr Croneen pointed out that if the proposal were carried out, it would tend to increase the trade of the locality.

Mr Watchurst : It would be a very great boon.

Mr Mackey said the advantage would be so great that the Board might make some concessions.

In reply to the Chairman, the applicants said they had not made their offer in writing.

Mr Croneen remarked that it would be better for the Board to let the applicants have the wharf rent free under the circumstances, so great would be the advantage.

The applicants (who had previously retired to reduce their offer to writing) offered to pay £17 a year for the wharf as rent, and 8d per ton upon the goods they discharged, or 10s per barge, provided that the Board guaranteed them a berth for discharging their barges immediately upon their arrival.

Mr Featherby was afraid the Board could not guarantee that. It was customary for barges to take their turn.

Some of the members pointed out that there would be no difficulty in giving the guarantee, as there was ample accommodation for four barges at the wharf at one time.

Ultimately the Board decided, on the motion of Mr Croneen, seconded by Mr Mackey, to accept the offer of £17 rent and 10s each barge, and guarantee the berth.

Mr Mackey remarked that it was the most valuable property belonging to the Board.

25 16 May 1891

ACCIDENT TO A BARGE BUILDER'S APPRENTICE On Tuesday, **Edward Nicholson**, the senior apprentice at Messrs Gill and Son's lower barge building yard, met with a somewhat serious accident. He was at work with an adze, and making a false blow, the keen edge of the instrument came into contact with his left ankle, causing a deep gash and entirely severing the leaders. He was at once conveyed to St Bartholomew's Hospital.

26 16 May 1891

LAUNCH OF THE BLACKFRIARS On Saturday afternoon, the topsail barge *Blackfriars* was successfully launched from the lower shipbuilding yard of Messrs Gill and Son, Rochester. The vessel is of 95 tons burthen, 74 ft long, 14 ft 6 in beam and 5ft 6 in side, and has been built for Messrs Lee and Smith for use in the cement trade. The barge is fitted with all the latest improvements, and was christened on leaving the slip ways by Master Smith, the little son of one of the junior partners of the firm.

27 23 May 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

FOR FOURTEEN YEARS **Thomas Cordier**, mate of a barge, was summoned to show cause why he should not contribute towards the support of the illegitimate child of Agnes Aindow of 3 Butcher's Court, Rochester, of which he was alleged to be the father. Defendant did not appear, and in his absence the Bench made an order for him to pay £2 expenses, and 3/0 per week towards the

support of the child, until it should attain the age of 14 years.

MORE ALCOHOLIC SATURATION **Edward Powell**, mate of the barge *Hawk* and living at Strood, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in the High Street, St Nicholas, on the 1st May. Police-constable Barnes deposed that he was called to eject the prisoner from the Post Boys public house. Prisoner, who was mad drunk, made a disturbance after being ejected, and witness then locked him up. A previous conviction was proved by Superintendent Broadbridge, and the Bench now inflicted a fine of 8/0, including costs, in default seven days. Paid.

28 23 May 1891

RAINHAM

OBSCENE LANGUAGE At the Sittingbourne Petty Sessions on Monday, **Edwin Boorman**, a young bargeman of Rainham, was summoned for being drunk and disorderly at Rainham on May 3rd. Instructing constable Packman said he was sent for to go to the Lion public house on the evening in question, and there he found the defendant standing with one foot on the counter and the other on a settle. As soon as he saw witness, he fell down. Then he went outside and used most obscene language. Defendant was drunk as well. Witness said he was one of a number of barge mates at Rainham who made use of filthy language in the public streets, whether females were near them or not, and the residents of Rainham were complaining very much about it. He was fined 5/0, and the costs were 10/8.

29 23 May 1891

WHOLESALE SHOPLIFTING On Thursday afternoon at the Chatham Police Court, before Mr E J Athawes, the Phillips family, consisting of father, mother and three children, were placed in the dock, when several charges of petty thefts were preferred against four of the number. Annie Phillips the elder, who carried a young baby in her arms, Annie Phillips the younger, 11 years of age, and Emily Phillips, age 9, were first charged, the two latter with stealing and the former with receiving a lady's dust cloak, value 25/-, the property of Alderman Thomas Parish Read, draper of High Street, Chatham, between the 6th and the 11th May. Prosecutor identified a lady's dust cloak, value 25/-, as his property. On the 11th May, it was missed from the showroom at the back of the shop. Emma Honey, an assistant to the last witness, gave evidence of seeing the cloak hanging in the showroom on the ground floor on the 5th or 6th inst. She could not positively swear that she had seen it later. The following Monday morning, she missed it. On the 9th inst, the younger prisoner Annie came into the shop, and went into the showroom ; she came again on the Monday, and was served with what she asked for. The cloak was hanging near the entrance to the showroom, and prisoner would have to pass it in leaving the shop. Thomas Blackman, manager to Mrs Clift, pawnbroker, 178 High Street, Chatham, deposed to receiving the cloak produced in pledge on the 11th May. The elder of the two girls brought it in, and he advanced her 4s upon it. The cloak looked as though it had been worn ; it had been rolled up, and the prisoner said that her mother had worn it. Police-sergeant Watson said that he received information of the cloak having been stolen on the 13th instant. On inquiry, he found it pawned at Mrs Clift's. He apprehended the eldest girl in Cowman Street ; he asked her her name, and she replied, "Brooks". She took him to where she lived, and he then ascertained that her name was Phillips. She was brought to the police station and charged with stealing the cloak, when she said that she knew she stole it and pawned it at Mrs Clift's. She was sent out to do that sort of thing, and if she did not go, her father thrashed her. She had a scar on the right eye, and a fresh cut on the head, which she said her father had done that morning. Witness then went back to the house and saw the mother, whom he told that he should have to charge with receiving the cloak. She said, "I knew that it would come to this sooner or later, but what was I to do?" On arriving at the police station, she was charged, but said that she knew nothing about the cloak and had not seen it. The younger prisoner said that her mother and father knew nothing about the cloak and small coat ; she took them and pawned them herself. His worship said there was no evidence against Annie Phillips the elder ; she would therefore be discharged. Mrs Phillips at once

left the dock, and took a seat at the back of the Court.

The next charge was against Robert Phillips, the head of the family, and the two girls, for stealing a gentleman's top coat, a pair of gloves and a silk handkerchief, also the property of Alderman Read, at Chatham on the 11th inst. Prosecutor further identified these goods. He saw the coat in a recess in the showroom on the evening of the 11th. The gloves and handkerchief were in the pockets. He missed the coat on leaving the business. The two younger prisoners were in his shop some time after eight o'clock. They entered the showroom exactly where his coat was laying. Annie had a baby in her arms, and leaned against the coat for some part of the time. She afterwards gave the baby to her sister. Thomas Blackman deposed to receiving the coat in pledge on Monday evening from the eldest girl (Annie), whom he gave 7s. In reply to questions, she said that the coat belonged to her father, and her mother had sent her with it. Police-constable Dunmall, lock up keeper at Chatham police station, proved the arrest of the prisoner Robert. He came to the station to bring his wife a pint of beer. He was not sober, and said that his name was Brooks. On searching him, witness found one of the gloves, produced, in his hand, and the other in his coat pocket. Police-sergeant Watson proved arresting the two girls, and charged them with stealing the articles. Neither made any answer. The prisoner said that she gave her father the gloves the same day as she took the coat. She took the gloves out of the pockets, and threw the papers over Mr Bessant's wharf.

Robert Phillips and Annie Phillips the younger were further charged with gaining under false pretences 32 eggs and two fowls, value 9/0, the property of Mr W Smith, at Chatham on the 20th April. Harriet Smith, the wife of William Smith, labourer, Chatham Hill, said that on the 20th April, at about half past eleven in the morning, the prisoner Annie came to her back door and said, "Mr Richardson, my 'grandpa' has sent me up for the eggs, as he has got customers waiting for them". She further said, "I know 'grandpa' always has your eggs and poultry, because I have seen your son bring them". Witness said, "I was not aware that Mr Richardson had any grandchildren", when prisoner replied quickly, "Oh yes, he has, but I am the only one". She said that it was Mr Richardson the butcher who was her "grandpa", and he liked the eggs because they were so very nice. Witness gave her 32 eggs, and told her to ask her "grandpa" whether he wanted a pair of chickens and, if he did, she would pick them and send them down. The girl went away, but returned in about an hour, and said, "Grandpa will have the chicken, and if you will kill them, I will take them down myself". Witness remarked that Mr Richardson always had the chicken got ready for table, but prisoner said that he wanted them at once, and she would take them at once, as the servants could pick them in the evening. Witness killed the chicken, tied the heads up in a handkerchief, and gave them to the prisoner, who she had not seen since until Wednesday last. Mr Richardson sent for his eggs the next morning, but she had none to supply him with. Councillor Henry C Richardson denied all knowledge of the prisoners, and said that it was not true that he had sent her to get eggs and fowls for him. Sarah Johnson, wife of William Johnson, deposed to the prisoner Annie asking her where Mrs Smith lived. She directed her to the house, and afterwards saw her leave the house and go down the hill. During the time the girl was in the house, witness saw the prisoner Robert (her father) walking to and fro smoking a pipe at some distance off from Mrs Smith's house. He had a carpet bag in his hand. Police-constable Barnard said that he went to the Medway Union with the prosecutrix on Monday evening, and charged the prisoner Annie with having received the eggs under false pretences. She at first denied that she had them, but afterwards said her papa had sent her for the eggs and chicken, and if she had not gone, he would have beaten her.

The two same prisoners were still further charged with stealing about two yards of flannel, value 2s 6d, the property of Mr William Quarrington, draper of 153 High Street, Rochester, on the 14th April. Prosecutor identified the flannel produced as some missing from his shop. He valued it at 2s 6d. He could not say when it was stolen, as he had missed several things of late. He knew both the girls well ; they had been frequently into his shop to ask for empty boxes. Frederick Willows, an assistant to Thomas Dunning, pawnbroker, High Street, Rochester, said that some time during the morning of the 14th instant, the prisoner Robert brought the flannel produced and a pair of boots into his master's shop, and offered them in pledge. Police-sergeant Watson said that while searching the

prisoner Robert's house, on the 15th inst, he found a quantity of pawn tickets, one relating to the flannel, in consequence he made further inquiries, hence this charge.

The fifth and last charge was one against Robert and Annie (the younger) of stealing a boy's serge suit, value 5s, the property of Edward Bates, at Chatham on the 1st inst. John Pay, manager of Mr Bates' clothing store at the corner of Watts' Place, said that the boy's suit produced was similar to those they had in stock. He did not miss it from the stock until the police showed it him on the 20th. The suit was worth 5s. An assistant to Mr R W Crofts, 170 Windmill Street, Gravesend, deposed to receiving the suit produced in pledge on the 2nd May. He knew the prisoner, and had once sent out for the man when Annie came to pledge goods. PS Watson said that he showed a pawn ticket relating to the suit to the prisoner Annie, who said that she stole it from Bates'. They went to Gravesend, and her father went in with her to pawn it. He told her to say that they lived at Denton, but when she got inside she forgot the word, and she was about to say the name of a street, when her father put his hand on her mouth and said Denton himself. The prisoner Robert denied all knowledge of the coat, but had nothing to say in respect to the other charges. Annie also said that her father knew nothing about the theft of the coat. His worship committed the prisoners Robert and Annie to take their trial at the Quarter Sessions for the County on the first four charges, and directed that further enquiries should be made in the last case, and also another in which the prisoners are concerned. He remanded the prisoner Emily to the workhouse for a week, with a view to getting her into an industrial school.

30 30 May 1891

MEDWAY BARGE SAILING MATCH As already announced, the fifteenth annual Medway Barge Sailing Match will take place on Thursday 18th June. The following prizes will be offered in plate to the owners of barges, and purses of money to the crews :- Class I, Champion Topsail Barges – Prize £18 silver cup and £7 purse. Class II, Topsail Barges not exceeding 55 tons register - 1st prize £14 silver cup and £6 purse, 2nd £5 silver cup and £4 purse, 3rd £4 silver cup and £2 purse. If less than four barges start in either class, two prizes only will be given. The crew of each losing barge sailing the whole course will receive :- In Class I 60s 0d, Class II 50s 0d, Class III 40s 0d. Mr J Hulkes, JP, has again kindly consented to act as commodore. The course will be from Bridge Reach, Rochester, round the West Ouze Buoy, and back to Chatham. The list of entries will close on Monday 8th June. A fee of one guinea to be paid for each barge entered. The ps *Lady Margaret* has been engaged as “committee boat”. A portion of the Royal Engineer band will be in attendance to play a selection of music. To promote the comfort and convenience of the passengers, the number of tickets to be issued for the Committee Boat will be strictly limited. Price of tickets if taken before the day of the match :- gentlemen, 6s 0d each, ladies and children under 16, 5s 0d ; if taken on the morning of the match 7s 6d in every case. The committee invite subscriptions in aid of the expenses. They have again undertaken the responsibility of the match, as they still consider that improvement, both in the building and sailing of barges, is brought about by these competitions, and that therefore they should not be allowed to lapse. Subscriptions will be gladly received by the Hon Treasurer (Mr Thomas Weekes, Cuxton), by the members of the committee, and by Mr A C E Bryant, hon secretary, 3 Albany Terrace, Chatham.

31 30 May 1891

GILLINGHAM LOCAL BOARD

OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE PIER LANDING STAGE The Clerk read a letter from Admiral Superintendent Kelly, containing the report of the Dockyard officials upon the application of the Board to extend the landing stage at Gillingham Pier. The officials reported that the proposed extension reached beyond the line of the dock entrance, and as they pointed out last year, such extension would interfere with the safe ingress and egress of Her Majesty's ships into dock. They could not therefore, under the circumstances, recommend that any extension beyond the line laid down be entertained.

The Chairman did not think the reply was at all satisfactory, and he suggested that the Clerk should

be instructed to get up the case for a deputation to wait upon Lord George Hamilton, the First Lord of the Admiralty. They could ask Sir John Gorst to support them.

Mr Hill believed the Board would never get anything done. The authorities would not consent to any obstruction.

The Chairman considered the authorities ought to assist them. They had taken away all the river frontage, worth some thousands of pounds, and also some of the paths in the district. The authorities promised to give them a pier which would be available for steamboats to call at. They agreed to put a brow out some 60 or 70 feet, and Mr Bernays, in his wisdom, placed half of it on the land and half in the water. The consequence was that the steamboats could not call at all now, and the mud was silting up so much that, unless they took some steps, it would eventually be impossible for barges to come alongside the pier. Let the matter be represented to the chief authorities. The local authorities would not do anything, neither would they recommend it. He proposed that a deputation of the Board should be appointed to wait upon the First Lord of the Admiralty.

Mr Sheepwash, seconding, said he quite agreed with everything the Chairman had said.

The proposition was carried unanimously, and it was decided that the deputation should consist of the Chairman and Messrs Hills and Sheepwash, with the clerk.

32 6 June 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY POLICE COURT, TUESDAY

THE FIRST SLIP IN THIRTY YEARS **Edward Cox**, master of the barge *Guy Fawkes*, was summoned on two separate informations for not displaying a red flag on his vessel when loaded with explosives, and also with lying above the powder notice board, in the river Thames on the 4th May. Mr W S Bunting prosecuted on behalf of the Thames Conservancy, and defendant pleaded guilty to the first charge, but denied the second. Mr May, Deputy Harbour Master, stated the facts of the case, and defendant pleaded ignorance of the bye laws in respect of the mooring of the barge when on a passage, and urged that he had taken an old red flag down and was about to replace it when Mr May boarded the barge. Defendant was mulcted in a total fine of £6 and £2/11/8 costs. Defendant has carried powder in his barges 20 years, and this was his first offence.

AN OVERSIGHT Messrs (C....s) and Co were summoned for loading into the *ss Jessica* on the river Thames 25 cases of gunpowder, before giving 48 hours notice to the Harbour Master, on the 14th May. Mr W S Bunting prosecuted, and evidence was given to the effect that the defendant company loaded the powder without having previously given proper notice. The Bench inflicted a fine of £1 and £2/7/0 costs, a clerk having previously stated that it was an oversight.

A SOLICITOR ON STRIKE PICKETING Benjamin Wood was summoned for throwing rubbish into the river Thames at Northfleet on the 24th May. Mr W S Bunting prosecuted, and Mr G Clinch defended. **James Blackman**, a waterman, said that he saw the defendant throw about four or five bushels of rotten onions and rubbish into the river from off his wharf. The rubbish went into the watermen's plying place, and when he (witness) spoke to the defendant about it, he said that he knew he was doing wrong, and directed a boy to recover the onions from the water. The boy succeeded in getting about two bushels, but the others floated up the river. In cross-examination by Mr Clinch, defendant admitted that he was "picket" employed by the Society during the present strike at Northfleet, but denied that he was waiting in the plying place to watch the non union men. He and his mate had arranged to take a fare to a ship lying in the river. **Charles Alewood**, another waterman, gave similar evidence, and in answer to Mr Clinch, admitted that he rowed a man about who was employed by the Society to take the names of the craft and non union men at work on the river. Mr Clinch, in his address for the defence, said that the two witnesses were at the plying place to prevent men from going off and earning an honest livelihood for their wives and families. A more monstrous thing one could not conceive, and the sooner it was put down by the law, the better. Mr Clinch proceeded to state that the defendant had set a non union man on to work, and in consequence of that, the union man had a spite against him. Robert Clarne, a lad in the employ of

the defendant, said that the bank in front of the wharf was slanting, and when the onions were shot onto it, they rolled into the water. Defendant told him to take what he wanted, and shoved the rest into the water. Cross-examined by Mr Bunting : Mr Wood shovelled the onions out of the shed, and when witness first arrived upon the scene, there were some onions then in the water. Edward Clarne, brother to the last witness, also denied that defendant threw the onions into the water, and said that he heard Blackman ask Mr Wood to give him some “'lowance” to square it up. Their worships having retired, the Chairman said that as the evidence was rather conflicting as to Mr Wood's personal responsibility in the case, they therefore dismissed the case, but refused to allow costs.

33 6 June 1891

After the Strood centenarian, I believe **Mr J R Sancto** of Troy Town, Rochester, who died on Sunday at the age of 96, was the oldest inhabitant in this district. He was a wonderful old fellow, and up to within a few weeks ago might be seen daily promenading in the Rochester Castle Gardens almost as briskly as anybody. As a boy he was apprenticed in the bargebuilding trade, but subsequently became a mariner, and sailed and owned barges. Then he became a publican and kept the Lifeboat Inn in Troy Town, from which he retired a few years ago. He would often relate the story of the great fight between the United States frigate *Chesapeake* and the British frigate *Shannon* near Boston in 1813, of which he was a spectator. He heard the Yankee captain, Lawrence, declare that he would bring the *Shannon* in, and great preparations were made to celebrate the victory, but it didn't come off. The *Chesapeake* was obliged to strike her flag to the British ship, and Captain Lawrence was killed. The late Mr Sancto was also present with the British troops at the siege of St Sebastian, and received a bullet wound in the neck, whilst three soldiers standing near him were killed on the spot. The deceased's only son was drowned in New Zealand about twenty years ago. I believe, however, that the latter's widow is still living and, with her son, came to England three or four years ago to pay the old gentleman a visit. His nearest relatives residing in this district were two nephews – Mr Charles Sancto of Rochester and Mr J Scott of New Brompton. Only a few weeks ago, the ancient mariner had his photograph taken by Mr Eastmead. He retained full possession of his faculties up to within a few days of his death, which was due literally to the “decay of nature”. The worthy patriarch was held in high esteem by his numerous acquaintances, and his memory will be affectionately cherished for many years to come.

34 13 June 1891

BOISTEROUS WEATHER – STRANDING OF A BARGE Very boisterous weather was experienced at Sheerness on Saturday night and Sunday. The tide rose considerably above the normal height and flooded the lower esplanade, high water mark being left at the foot of the dwarf wall. About half past twelve an accident occurred to a barge on Grain Spit. The barge was sailing from the Thames into the Medway, and shaped her course to Grain Spit, as if to avoid the heavy seas which were running into the harbour. She was observed to strand, and the waves soon covered her hull. The mishap was observed by the signalman on duty at the Royal Naval Barracks, and upon Flag Captain Keppel being acquainted with the fact, the pinnace belonging to the *Northampton* was despatched to render assistance. Captain Superintendent King also directed the Dockyard tug *Locust* to proceed to the aid of the barge. The pinnace was first on the scene, and found the seas washing over the craft. She cruised for some little time off the Spit, but not finding any trace of the crew, she returned to harbour. It has since been ascertained that the barge was named the *Mary Ann*, and that on her passage down the river she sprung a leak and shipped water to such an extent that her captain deemed it prudent to run the vessel ashore for safety. The crew then took to the dinghy, and rowed ashore to the Isle of Grain. A party of watermen from Sheerness have since lightened the *Mary Ann* of her cargo, and brought her into Sheerness harbour for repairs.

35 13 June 1891

MEDWAY BARGE SAILING MATCH, 1891 There was a full attendance at the Committee meeting on Tuesday evening, the Commodore (Mr J Hulkes) being in the chair. The list of entries closed the preceding evening, and ten barges were found to have been entered, viz :-

CLASS I (CHAMPION TOPSAILS)

Name	Owner
<i>Whimbrell</i>	R H Stewart
<i>Arthur and Rowland</i>	A R and S Sales
<i>City of London</i>	E J and W Goldsmith
<i>Alaska</i>	G H Curel

CLASS II (ORDINARY TOPSAILS)

<i>Pastime</i>	E J and W Goldsmith
<i>Daisy Little</i>	H Little
<i>Henry Little</i>	H Little

CLASS III (SPRITSAILS)

<i>Frances</i>	T F Woods Exors
<i>Bessie</i>	E H Chambers

The Committee have wisely decided to limit the issue of tickets for the *Lady Margaret* to 250 (half her carrying capacity), so that no discomfort should be caused. Those wishing to attend should therefore make an early application for tickets to the Committee.

36 20 June 1891

SNODLAND

A BOAT CAPSIZED : TWO YOUNG MEN DROWNED On Sunday afternoon, Harry Capon, John Harris and William Gray, all young unmarried men of Snodland, took a boat from the barge *Sussex*, which was moored near the ferry, and proceeded for a row to Aylesford. On the return journey, Capon and Harris began larking, with the result that both were precipitated into the river just above "The Cedars". Grey did all he could to rescue the unfortunate men, but both were drowned. The bodies were recovered 15 minutes after the accident, but life was extinct.

37 27 June 1891

BARGES IN COLLISION An Admiralty case of importance to barge hufflers and captains was heard before His Honour Judge Homersham Cox at the Rochester County Court. It was an action brought by **Joseph Westwood** and **Henry Little**, barge owners, Upnor, against Messrs Lee, Son and Co, Halling, for damages in respect of a collision between the barge *Isabella Little* and the barge *Dart*, near Rochester Bridge in March last.

Mr W Bayden Powell, barrister, instructed by Messrs Basset and Boucher, solicitors, appeared for the plaintiffs, and Mr H W Nelson, solicitor of the firm of Messrs Lowless and Co, Admiralty Solicitors, London, for the defendants.

Staff Commander Hilliard RN acted as nautical assessor.

Mr Powell, in opening the case, said it was an extremely simple case of collision in the river Medway, just above Rochester Bridge. The barge *Dart*, which was the property of the defendants in the case, was navigating up the river on the flood tide, and having got through the bridge, anchored in order to set her sails. She had preceded the *Isabella Little* some distance. When her sails were set, the *Dart* proceeded to lift her anchor and sail across the river in order to proceed on her journey up the river. While in the act of going in that direction, she ran into the *Isabella Little*, as she was drifting just clear of the bridge with her sails lowered on deck.

The Judge : Were they both sailing barges?

Mr Powell said they were. The *Isabella Little* drifted through the middle arch, and was practically in the centre of the river when the *Dart* ran into her. Interrogatives had been administered, and the defendants had answered one interrogatory which would simplify the whole case. To the interrogatory as to whether the plaintiffs' vessel did wrong, the answer was nothing.

Mr Nelson : I am not counter claiming.

Mr Powell said that as the plaintiffs had not contributed to the collision, it fell upon him to show that the *Dart* caused the collision, and it was for his friend to show that his plea of inevitable accident (which he understood would be set up) was justifiable. He thought he should show that the collision was caused by want of proper look out. If the *Dart* had used the ordinary precautions of a seaman and looked through the arches, knowing that the craft must shoot through the bridges with her sails down, there could have been no collision. He called

Edward Leigh, a barge huffer of many years' experience, who stated that on the 27th March last, he went on the barge *Isabella Little* at Gashouse Point to navigate her through Rochester Bridge. The wind was strong and hard, from the south west, and about two hours of flood spring tide, running three or four miles an hour through the bridge. They had mainsail, foresail and topsail set, and went on the starboard tack. He saw the barge *Dart* ahead through the bridge, lying at anchor, and heading about south west, with mainsail, topsail, foresail and mizzen set. The *Isabella Little* went through the middle arch of Rochester Bridge – the usual navigation arch. They lowered all the sails to shoot the arch, and drifted through on the tide. The barge was light. As soon as they got through, his attention was called by the captain to the *Dart*, which was coming towards them under full sail, on the port tack. When the barges collided, the *Isabella Little* was about half a length from Rochester Bridge. The *Dart* struck her amidships on the port side. The foresail of the *Dart* was lowered just before the collision, when about half a barge's length off. The anchor of the *Dart* was afterwards slackened down. He believed the *Dart* was going up to Messrs Lee's works, five miles up the river.

The Judge did not think he could take the witness's belief.

Mr Nelson said he would admit that.

Witness added that if the *Dart* had remained at anchor, the collision would have been avoided.

By Mr Nelson : He was positive that he first saw the *Dart* brought up before the nose of the *Isabella Little* passed through the three bridges. He did not report the circumstance to anyone at the time, but he stayed the barge. The *Dart* tried to avoid a collision after the *Isabella Little* shot the bridges ; but the *Dart* should have watched the traffic. It was also incumbent on him to watch the traffic when lowering the sails and shooting the bridge. There was an eddy near the esplanade. He was certain the *Dart* was lying at anchor, otherwise she would have blown back on to the bridge.

William Brand, master of the barge *Isabella Little*, gave corroborative evidence, and in reply to Mr Nelson, said he saw the *Dart* before the *Isabella Little* shot the bridge. If the *Dart* had not seen the *Isabella Little* until she had shot the Bridge, a collision might have been avoided by putting the helm hard a starboard and winding the barge.

A plan was handed to the Judge showing the bridges, the esplanade and Rochester pier. This plan was handed to the witness to mark the positions of the *Dart* on one side of the bridge and the *Isabella Little* on the other before the collision occurred. After the witness had marked the plan,

The Judge said it appeared to him that the witness could see through a brick wall. (Laughter).

After the Judge, the assessor and the Registrar (Mr W W Hayward) had consulted together in private,

The Judge said the case was one in which it was necessary for the plaintiffs to prove negligence. The assessor had a very strong opinion that the plaintiffs had not proved negligence, and there would be judgement for the defendants.

Mr Powell submitted that he ought to be heard further. He had not said anything in his opening speech about negligence, as he thought he should be allowed an opportunity of speaking again at a later stage of the case. No witnesses had been called for the defence whom he might cross-examine.

The Judge repeated that the assessor had a very strong opinion that the plaintiffs had not proved negligence.

Mr Powell : Perhaps the assessor would have varied that opinion if he had heard my argument.

The assessor said he was of opinion that the *Dart* did all she possibly could do to avoid a collision by letting go her anchor and lowering her sails.

Mr Powell admitted that the *Dart* did the proper thing, but submitted that it was done too late. The *Dart* ought not to have moved when the other barge was drifting up and could be seen through the arches.

The assessor did not think that the *Isabella Little* could be seen from the *Dart*.

Mr Powell said he was entitled to ask that the assessor should go and see the spot. He himself went there that morning, and he was astonished to find that he could see through the arches.

The Judge thought this suggestion was a valuable one. Would the assessor visit the spot?

The assessor replied that he was quite willing.

Mr Nelson said it was useless for the assessor to go to the place unless there was a doubt in his mind. He was not at all surprised at the assessor coming to the conclusion that the *Isabella Little* could not be seen from the *Dart*.

Mr Powell contended that there had been negligence on the part of the *Dart*. There was plenty of time for the *Dart* to have got out of the way, if there had been a proper look out. There was not the slightest evidence that there was any look out. The *Dart* ought never to have lifted her anchor and gone into mid stream when the *Isabella Little* was drifting through the arches.

The Judge : You must prove affirmatively that there was negligence.

Mr Powell : I submit that I have.

The Judge : You have proved that your people thought so.

Mr Powell : But they say they did not see us before we were through the bridge.

The assessor : That they couldn't see you.

In reply to the Judge, the assessor said he was still of opinion that the plaintiffs had not proved any negligence.

The Judge said that he agreed with the assessor that there was no evidence of negligence. He knew a little of such matters, having sailed in a yacht a good many times in his life. The assessor had a very strong opinion on the case. There would be judgement for the defendants, with costs.

38 27 June 1891

SUDDEN DEATH OF A BARGE CAPTAIN Edward Thomas Susans, captain of the barge *Phoenix*, died suddenly at Gillingham on Monday night. He arrived off Bennett's wharf on Saturday, but as there was not sufficient water to allow him to draw alongside, he went to his home in Church Street, Gillingham, and waited until Monday night, when another attempt to get the barge in was made. Whilst assisting in the operation, Susans complained of feeling unwell ; he sat down, and his friends were sent for, but the unfortunate man expired shortly after their arrival, owing, it is supposed, to failure of the heart's action.

39 4 July 1891

THE THAMES SAILING BARGE MATCH The Thames Sailing Barge Match of 1891 will be remembered by those present as one of the most successful ever known. The sky in the morning gave promise rather of "bargee's" weather than of a ladies' day. It had an unsettled appearance, and while indications of wind were not wanting, the clouds were solid enough to arouse expectations of rain. Still a company, larger in number than usual, and which included a greater proportion of ladies, were on board the *Laverock*, and were afforded by Captain Boucher a capital view of a most interesting race. The band of the Royal Engineers during the day performed an excellent selection of music. As was the case last year, the barges were anchored in Gravesend Reach, and were started by the commodore in two classes, as follows :-

CHAMPION TOPSAIL BARGES

Not exceeding 55 tons register, for topsail barges which have obtained the champion flag in previous matches ; prize £20 silver cup to owner, and £10 10s to crew.

BARGE	OWNER	MASTER
<i>Gazelle</i>	E J and W Goldsmith	W Bannister
<i>Whimbrel</i>	R H Stewart	J Davies
<i>Alaska</i>	G H Curel	T Latchford

<i>City of London</i>	A H Keep	J Peartree
<i>Arthur and Rowland</i>	A R and S Sales	S Beadle
TOPSAIL BARGES		
Not exceeding 55 tons register ; prize £15 silver cup to winner, and £5 5s to crew.		
BARGE	OWNER	MASTER
<i>Pastime</i>	E J and W Goldsmith	H Munns
<i>Thames</i>	A H Keep	A Gee
<i>Daisy Little</i>	H Little	J Waterhouse

The Ordinary Topsail Class were started at half past eleven, and the Champion Class about five minutes later. The *Pastime* and *Gazelle* were the first away in their respective classes, and there being a strong breeze from the south west, and a good ebb tide running, they went off in good style. Off the Mucking Light, the *Daisy Little* was leading her class, while off the Champions, the *Alaska*, *Gazelle* and *Arthur and Rowland* were in close company. Passing Sheerness, the *Arthur and Rowland* had caught up to the *Thames*, which was the rearmost barge of the Ordinary Topsail Class, and without further change the Nore was rounded as follows :-

	H	M	S
<i>Daisy Little</i>	1	12	40
<i>Pastime</i>	1	13	40
<i>Arthur and Rowland</i>	1	18	13
<i>Thames</i>	1	17	20
<i>Alaska</i>	1	17	21
<i>City of London</i>	1	17	50
<i>Whimbrel</i>	1	20	5
<i>Gazelle</i>	1	20	44

With three hours of the ebb tide still to run, and a head wind to beat up against, good scope for seamanship was afforded to the captains, and some interesting manoeuvring took place, several finding it necessary to shift their jibs for smaller ones, so as to get closer up in the wind. The *City of London*, shortly after rounding the Nore, had the misfortune to carry away her bowsprit, and this, of course, put her out of the race. The *Pastime*, which was exceedingly well handled, gradually came to the front, and by the time the Chapman was reached, was leading by half a mile. The *Daisy Little*, however, met with a mishap, carrying away its jib outhaul. The *Arthur and Rowland* was still leading in the Champion Class, followed closely by the *Alaska*, and it seemed to be anybody's race, most of the others lying well on. There was a good bit of jockeying between the two last named, the *Alaska* trying to luff the *Arthur and Rowland*, and one of the most interesting incidents of the race took place, as off the Mucking Light the *Arthur and Rowland* making too long a stretch over to the north lost a lot of ground, and *Alaska* gained a good lead. By the time Gravesend was reached, the ebb tide had run out, but no further change of position occurred, and the arrivals at Erith were timed as follows :-

	H	M	S
<i>Pastime</i> (winner topsail class)	5	39	4
<i>Alaska</i> (winner champion class)	5	43	40
<i>Arthur and Rowland</i>	5	46	50
<i>Daisy Little</i>	5	50	5
<i>Gazelle</i>	5	58	8
<i>Whimbrel</i>	5	57	50

A better race of the kind has seldom, if ever, been seen, there being only eight minutes difference in the whole of the eight barges in rounding the Nore Light, and only eighteen minutes at the finish of

the race, the duration of which was 6 hours 27 minutes. The prizes were presented on board the *Laverock* at Erith by the commodore, Mr Cecil Long, who has been for so many years at the head of affairs. The captain of the *Alaska*, "Pompey" was warmly greeted, as also were Messrs Goldsmith and Harry Munns. The *Pastime* is, we believe, a new barge, and is a perfect model, both as regards her hull and the set and cut of her sails, and in Harry Munns she has a captain who evidently knows how to make the most of her.

40 4 July 1891

SITTINGBOURNE

AUDACIOUS BARGE ROBBERY At the Sittingbourne petty sessions on Monday, **Thomas Scott**, a bargeman residing at Bridge Street, Milton, was brought up in custody, charged with breaking into the barge *Gillman* and stealing therefrom 4 3/4 lbs of beef, 1 1/2 lbs of bacon, 1/2 lb of cheese, a bottle of jam and 1 lb of sugar, the property of **Thomas William Curling**, at Milton on Saturday June 27th. **Henry Howard**, mate of the barge *Gillman* belonging to Messrs Wakeley Bros and Co of 74 Bankside, London, said he left the barge safe at nine o'clock on Saturday night, June 27th; he placed the above mentioned articles in the cupboard of the cabin of the barge, which was lying alongside Mr Shrubsall's ways in Milton Creek. He then locked up the cabin, and left the barge safe. He went on board again with the captain, Thomas William Curling, at about ten minutes past eleven, and found that the cabin had been broken open. The padlock on the door had been forced, and a shipwright's bolt (produced) was lying on the deck. The cupboard in the cabin was open, and the provisions were gone. Some of the food was lying on the locker, and the lamp, that had been left on the locker, was found near the cupboard. He knew the prisoner and had seen him about the barge and the wharf in the course of the day (Saturday). Police-sergeant Taylor stated that on Saturday night at a quarter to twelve, he received information of the robbery, and at twelve o'clock he went to the prisoner's house and knocked at the door, and prisoner put his head out of the window. Witness said to the prisoner, "Come down, I want to see you respecting your dog". He came down and opened the front door, and then witness said, "I want to look through your house". He said, "What's the matter?" Witness replied, "I will tell you presently". He then went to a cupboard in the back room, and there saw the beef (produced) hanging on two hooks, and the other articles in the same room cupboard. Witness said, "A barge has been broken into, and I am going to send for the captain to identify the goods". Prisoner called to his wife upstairs and said, "Where did you get this meat from, mate?" She answered, "My mother gave it to me". On the arrival of the captain, he identified the stolen goods. Witness then charged prisoner with breaking in to the barge and stealing the articles. The captain said to the prisoner, "What did you do this for, Tom?" Prisoner said, "Forgive me, Tom, hunger will make one do anything". Prisoner was then taken into custody and brought to the police station. On Sunday morning, witness examined the barge and found that the lock (produced) had been forced off, and a wedge (also produced) was lying near the cabin door, and also an iron bolt. There was a mark on the wedge, which showed that it had been used to force the lock. Prisoner, who had nothing to say, and who appeared to feel his position very much, was then committed for trial at the East Kent Quarter Sessions.

41 11 July 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

INFORMATION WANTED **James Henry**, a lad, appeared to an adjourned summons charging him with stealing a quantity of coal, the property of Messrs Haymen and Son, from a barge lying on the river Medway on the 27th March. Police-constable Poynter said on the day in question he was on Blue Boar Hard when he saw the defendant coming away from what was alleged to be his father's boat loaded with coal, with a quantity of coal in a bag. As soon as the defendant saw the constable, he dropped the bag and ran away, but witness pursued and caught him. Defendant then said that the coals were "sweepings", and his father sent him after them. After the boy had got a little way from the lighter, he broke some of the coal into small pieces so as to make them "sweepings". The father of the defendant denied that his barge was lying at Blue Boar Hard on the

27th May, and the constable being unable to state the name of the barge from which the defendant took the coal, the case was adjourned until the 14th inst.

42 11 July 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY POLICE COURT

A FRIVOLOUS OBJECTION John Scutts of 43 Grove, Northfleet, and Edward Williams of 22 Portland Road, Northfleet, were summoned for navigating a barge in the river Thames off Northfleet on the 13th June, they not being either licensed freemen in pursuance of the “Watermen's and Lightermen's Amendment Act 1850”, or apprentices qualified under the said Act. Mr Waters appeared to prosecute, and Mr Lovell defended. Mr Waters produced a copy of the Watermen's Act, but Mr Lovell objected to it as being a private Act and not certified. Mr Waters contended that the objection was altogether frivolous, and applied for an adjournment for a week, and also made an application that the question of the costs of the day should be adjourned. The Bench retired to consider, and upon returning into Court, adjourned the case until Thursday, but made no order as to costs.

BARGE ROBBERY John Hackett, a young man, was charged with stealing from the barge *Scout*, one oilskin frock, one pair of top boots and one vest, value £1/13/0, the property of **William Thomas Fuller**, at Northfleet on the 22nd May. Prosecutor, a waterman and lighterman residing at 64 Lorne Road, Gravesend, deposed to missing the goods mentioned from his barge on the 22nd May. He did not hear of them again until the 2nd July, when he saw the prisoner wearing the boots and vest at the Albert Dock. He told the prisoner that the boots and vest were his property, and he then took them off and laid them on the quay. Prisoner also promised to tell the prosecutor where the frock was, if he would let him off. Prosecutor then gave him into custody. Police-sergeant Reynolds of the Metropolitan Police Force deposed to receiving the prisoner in custody at North Woolwich Police Station. In answer to the charge, he said “the man gave them to him”. Prisoner pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to twenty one days' hard labour.

IMPORTANT TO WATERMEN John Scutts appeared on an adjourned summons for navigating the barge *Swift* on the river Thames on the 12th June, he not being a licensed waterman. Mr Waters prosecuted for the Thames Watermen's Society, and Mr Lovell defended. **John Carpenter** of Stepney, a licensed waterman, said on the day in question he was on the river off Northfleet with a man named Smith. He saw the barge *Swift*, owned by Messrs Knight, Bevan, Sturge and Co, cement manufacturers of Northfleet. She was leaving the ship *Maxwell*, and proceeded to the owners' factory. He boarded the *Swift*, and found that the defendant was assisting to navigate the barge by pulling an oar. The master of the barge had no licensed waterman on board, for the defendant had no license. He took his name and address. The master refused witness's services. By Mr Lovell : He was on the look out for barges being improperly navigated. He had been told to do so by the men belonging to his society. The captain was steering the barge on this occasion. He knew he was a licensed man. **Charles Smith**, a licensed waterman (..... bottom of page and unreadable.....) acting as mate. By Mr Lovell : The defendant was rowing the barge ashore. Mr Waters referred to the fact that a recent decision on an appeal was that a second hand assisting in the navigation of a vessel must be a licensed man. In defence, Mr Lovell maintained that defendant, who was simply pulling an oar, could not be said to be navigating the barge. In the rules of the company, nothing was said about assisting to navigate, but simply that the craft should be in charge of a licensed waterman. He submitted that they were exempt also under the bye laws of the Thames Conservators, which required a competent man on board to navigate the craft. The inference was that they could have as many as they liked to assist. He called **Thomas Henry Wood**, who was in charge of the *Swift*. There were two others on the barge for washing and pumping it out, and were under his orders. He did not call either of them a mate. By Mr Waters : If he asked these men to assist him in the navigation of the barge, they would have to do so. Defendant was rowing. He told Carpenter that he did not know who was his second hand, nor did

he want to. Edward Fitzgerald said he was employed on the barge to pump her out. He received 5/0 for his work. He and the defendant were rowing the barge. The Magistrates convicted the defendant and fined him 2/6 and £1/14/0 costs, after a short retirement. In default of payment and distress, fourteen days' hard labour.

There was a similar summons against Edward Williams for a like offence at the same time on the barge *Brisk*, and he pleaded guilty. Mr Waters pointed out that the Watermen's Act had been infringed in two separate cases in one day. The Magistrates fined the defendant 2/6 and £1/10/0 costs, in default 14 days' hard labour. Mr Waters said the culprits were really the employers, and no doubt they would pay the fines.

The Clerk (Mr Baker) said the summonses against Messrs Bevan (2) had not been served, as those gentlemen were away. Mr Waters said there must be some one responsible, and he submitted that leaving the summonses at their place of business was sufficient service. The Clerk said that the face of the service must come to the defendant's knowledge. Mr Waters said that if the case was adjourned for a week, the defendants would have sufficient time to become acquainted with the fact of the service. Surely the firm knew of the matter, for their sub manager had been present that morning. There was no evidence on oath that they were away, and they might be evading the matter, for all they knew. The case was adjourned for a fortnight.

43 11 July 1891

SITTINGBOURNE

THE THEFT FROM A BARGE At the East Kent Quarter Sessions, **Thomas Scott**, a labourer, was indicted for stealing a quantity of beef, bacon, jam and sugar, the property of **Thomas William Curling**, barge owner, from his barge in Milton Creek, on the 27th June. Prisoner pleaded guilty, and his Lordship sentenced him to three calendar months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

44 11 July 1891

A SAD CASE OF DROWNING occurred at the Tilbury Dock Basin on Friday last, when **Richard Maynard**, a young man of Luton and the mate of the barge *Criterion*, belonging to Messrs Stewart Brothers of the Strood Oil Mills, lost his life. It appears that the skipper of the barge and his mate had retired to rest for the night, and early in the morning were startled by the sound of an approaching tug ; both rushed on deck, only partially dressed, when a slight collision took place. Maynard is supposed to have been jerked overboard. The body of the unfortunate young man has not yet been recovered.

45 18 July 1891

CLACTON BELLE v LORD OF THE ISLE

RACING BY RIVAL STEAMBOATS At the Rochester County Police Court on Friday, **Samuel Mason**, captain of the *Lord of the Isles*, and **Edward Mills**, captain of the *Clacton Belle*, were summoned, on two separate informations, for navigating their steam vessels to the danger of persons and other craft on the river Thames off Northfleet, on the 6th June.

Mr J Eldon Bankes was counsel for the prosecution, Mr Grain, barrister, defended Mason, and Mr Bubb supported the defence for Mills.

The Magistrates on the Bench were Mr J Hulkes, in the chair ; and Mr T H Baker.

Mr Bankes, in opening the case, said that the two boats mentioned in the charge belonged to rival companies. Both were timed to leave London Bridge at 9.30 in the morning, and one arrived at Gravesend at 11.15, and the other at Tilbury, also at 11.15. This was a distance of 26 miles which, according to advertisement, had to be covered in one hour and three quarters. To do it in the time would necessitate their going at the rate of 15 miles an hour, much above the rate of speed allowed in the bye laws of the Thames Conservancy. If they did the first ten miles at the proper speed, it would take nearly the whole of the time. In order to reach Gravesend at the time announced, the ships must go at a very excessive speed. On the day in question, the boats were evidently racing, and in consequence threw up so great a wash that a bawley boat was overturned and sunk, and two

barges lying off the wharf of Messrs Knight, Bevan and Sturge were considerably damaged. The lives of several workmen were also endangered.

Edward Ankins, time keeper for Messrs Knight, Bevan and Sturge, James Freer and George Cleary, labourers of Northfleet, who were at work loading a barge at the time the *Clacton Belle* and the *Lord of the Isles* passed the wharf, gave evidence in support of Counsel's statement, the whole adding that they had never seen ships steam down the river at so great a speed.

Defendant Mason was called for the defence, and said that he had been master of the *Lord of the Isles* since it had run for the association. He had 38 years experience of navigating on the river Thames, and denied that he was going at more than the usual speed past Northfleet on the 6th June. He was going at (?18) miles an hour. He was not racing with the *Clacton Belle*, there was no object in doing so. His boat went to Harwich, while the *Clacton Belle* went to Clacton. He had been 19 years a master, and had never had a complaint made against himself respecting his navigation before. In reply to Mr Bankes, Mason said that Tilbury was 26 1/2 miles from Old Swan Pier, London. He had heard people on the ship remark that the *Clacton Belle* was the fastest. That was as the latter ship passed his vessel. When the *Clacton Belle* passed him, a placard was generally hung over the stern, saying, "Where are you now ; you're getting behind". The advertisement spoke of his vessel as going at 20 miles an hour, but that was only on paper. (Laughter). He had heard it said that his vessel made more wash than others. His owners had told him to use all due precaution, he believed this was in consequence of several complaints received.

William Spencer Bowen, manager for Lloyd's correspondent at Gravesend, also gave evidence for the defence, and was of opinion that the *Lord of the Isles* did not displace so much water as a vessel going at a less rate, because she was so shallow. He could not swear to anything that happened in connection with the vessel on that particular day. In reply to Mr Bankes, witness said that if a wash was thrown up, it would be through navigating the vessel at too great a speed.

Addressing the Court on behalf of his client Mason, Mr Grain expressed pleasure at seeing the rival captains on such good terms that day. He hoped the bench would not take notice of the advertisements pointed out by Mr Bankes, as they were perhaps overdrawn, and a little imaginative. He, however, contended that the company was entitled to do this. He would admit that there was a certain amount of business rivalry as far as the money of the passengers was concerned, but that ended long before the vessels reached the spot mentioned in the information. He asked that the summons might be dismissed in consequence of conflicting evidence, or if not that, only a nominal penalty should be imposed.

Defendant Mills was also sworn, and gave evidence. He stated that he had a 10 years' experience of navigating on the Thames. He never raced with the *Lord of the Isles*. His vessel generally arrived at Clacton first. He had never given any instruction to the engineers about leaving the *Lord of the Isles* astern, as there was no need for it. By Mr Bankes : There was a good deal of talk among passengers as to which was the fastest vessel. The *Clacton Belle* was undoubtedly the fastest on the Thames. (Laughter).

William Henry Loft, a Board of Trade Inspector, deposed to having seen the *Lord of the Isles* and the *Clacton Belle* pass down the river several times. Both were fast boats, but he had never seen them going at an excessive speed.

Mr Bubb having addressed the Magistrates in defence of his client, their worships retired to consider their verdict, and upon returning into court convicted and fined each defendant £5 and £4/1/4 and £2/18/2 respectively. The chairman remarked that he and his colleague were quite cognisant of the fact that the defendants were only carrying out the orders of their companies ; that was to go as fast as they could from London Bridge to Clacton.

A SIMILAR CHARGE NOT PROVEN **George Smith**, a pilot, was summoned on a similar information, in respect to the *ss Perth* on the 3rd June. Thomas Phillips, Charles Harris, Robert Jessup and Charles John Kea gave evidence in support of the case. Defendant denied the offence, and called George Sanford, a boat builder and surveyor, who proved that the sprit of a craft supposed to have been broken by the excessive wash from the steamer, was rotten. Their worships

considered that there was not sufficient evidence to justify a conviction, and dismissed the case

46 18 July 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

DISMISSED **James Honey**, a lad, again appeared on an information for stealing coals from a barge belonging to Mr Haymen. Superintendent Broadbridge said he had no further evidence to offer, as the property could not be identified. The Bench dismissed the case.

[Note : Name shown as Henry in Article 41]

47 18 July 1891

THE FATALITY TO A BOATMAN The body of **Richard Henry Maynard**, mate of the barge *Criterion*, belonging to Messrs Stewart Bros and Spencer, Strood, who was drowned owing to a collision in the Thames, was recovered last Friday, and an inquest was held at Tilbury on Saturday by Mr Lewis, County Coroner for Essex. Deceased was a member of the Rochester Bargemen's Union, and Mr G Robinson, solicitor, watched the proceedings on behalf of that society. After several witnesses had been examined, Mr Robinson pressed upon the Coroner the necessity of a medical examination of the body in order to ascertain whether there were any bruises caused by falling gear. The Coroner acquiesced in the suggestion, and the inquest was adjourned for a month. The body was conveyed to Luton Road, Chatham, where the relatives of the deceased reside, on Saturday evening, and the funeral took place in Chatham cemetery on Sunday, several members of the Bargemen's Union attending.

48 25 July 1891

TRADES UNION PROSECUTIONS

THE TABLES TURNED A number of cases arising out of the recent dispute between Messrs Knight, Sturge and Bevan, cement manufacturers, and their employees, were disposed of by the magistrates at the Rochester County Police Court on Tuesday last. Gen G W P Bingham CB was in the chair, and with him on the bench was Mr J F Edmeades.

The first case was that in which Thomas Bevan and Robert Bevan of the firm of Knight, Bevan and Sturge, cement manufacturers of Northfleet, were summoned under an information by John Christopher Carpenter of 29 Havering Street, Stepney, for that they were the owners of two barges, the *Swift* and the *Brisk*, which were on the 15th June last worked and navigated on the river Thames, off the parish of Northfleet, the said barges being not in the charge of a lighterman licensed in manner provided by the Watermen's and Lightermen's Amendment Act, or by an apprentice qualified in manner provided by the said Act, contrary to the provisions of that Act. Mr Waters prosecuted for the Amalgamated Union of Watermen and Lightermen, and Mr J Cranstoun (instructed by Messrs Keene, Marsland and Bryden) defended.

Mr Waters explained that two men had been convicted of navigating these barges, they not being licensed watermen or lightermen, and now they summoned the owners for employing these men.

Mr Cranstoun said he would draw attention to an important point which was omitted on the last occasion, and if the Magistrates had been aware of it, probably their decision would have been different.

A discussion arose as to the wording of the summons, Mr Cranstoun pointing out that the defendants were summoned for not having "a lighterman" on board the barges. In the previous case, it was proved that there was one licensed lighterman on each barge, and Mr Waters proceeded against the other men for working without a license. Thus the prosecutors themselves admitted that one qualified man was on board, and he therefore submitted that this summons should be dismissed with costs. The case appeared to be a piece of vindictive malice on the part of some men who constituted a society because Mr Bevan had been obliged to adopt this course. The summonses were not under the authority of the Watermen's Hall or the Thames Conservancy.

The Magistrates dismissed the case, with costs of £2/12/6 against the prosecutors.

The second case was against a man named Edward Williams, who was summoned for navigating a barge at Northfleet on the 14th July, he not being a licensed lighterman.

John Carpenter, the informant, said on the day in question he was in his boat off Northfleet, and saw the defendant on the barge assisting to navigate it. He and others got the barge to the *Nova Scotia*, a vessel lying off the deep water jetty. The defendant was a non freeman, and the captain would not employ witness and other men with him.

Cross-examined by Mr Cranstoun, witness said he was doing the work of a practical lighterman now.

When did you last have a regular job? - On the 9th January last.

A man named Fairbairn, who is connected with the Lightermen's Union, here made a remark, and Mr Cranstoun said he objected to him prompting the witness.

Cross-examination continued, witness said he had worked for others since the date he had referred to, but he could not give names and addresses. He was paid 6/- a day by the Union for looking out. That was when he could not get other work, and when he did that, he did not receive his money from the Union. He had been receiving this money for eight or nine weeks. He did not succeed the famous Mr Gardener in this work. He had not got half of the penalties inflicted in cases of this sort. On the day in question, he was really picketing for the Union, and looking out for work as well. He was on the look out for Bevan's barges. He got orders to picket from his lodge in London. He was not aware of a strike at Bevan's, for the dispute referred to was really a lock out.

Mr Waters objected to going into this question.

Mr Cranstoun said it formed part of his defence. Other magistrates had decided that it was a good defence for the employers, if they were able to say that, from the causes he had mentioned, they were unable to get the qualified men.

Mr Waters still objected, and said the only point was whether the defendants were unlicensed watermen or not.

Mr Cranstoun said that if the owner got off by making such a defence as he had mentioned, it would be contrary to all precedent if the defendant could not do the same. He should be able to show the bench that the defendant was not working for "hire or gain", and for a conviction to be obtained, it would have to be proved that they were.

Cross-examined, witness said that the barge was not "dredged" up. He offered his services to navigate the barge when she was about a quarter of a mile from the ship, but they were refused. He expected about 5/- for the job.

Mr Cranstoun maintained that this was not a *bona fide* application for work.

On the application of Mr Waters, the Clerk noted his objection that it was irrelevant to cross-examine as to remuneration paid to watermen.

Witness, in reply to Mr Cranstoun, recognised a bill (produced) which urged the men not to work for Messrs Bevan until they continued to pay the rate of wages settled by the Conciliation Board of the London Chamber of Commerce. The men refused to work because the firm would not pay them the proper money. He did not know of any men being thrown into the river as a consequence, or about any prosecutions arising out of such proceedings.

Mr Waters : I should like to know why -

Mr Cranstoun : I say it is an abuse of the criminal law, and the Magistrates have a right to know.

Fairbairn made a remark, and Mr Cranstoun objected to such a remark as "they meant to make it hot for Bevan".

Fairbairn denied that he made such a remark.

Mr Waters said this was most unjust, for the reporters would mention that Fairbairn had made that remark. He thought that Mr Bevan was making it hot for the men in departing from the agreement, and not paying proper compensation to his men.

Mr Cranstoun : There was no agreement.

By Mr Waters : Witness was a member of the Amalgamated Society, which protected the rights and privileges of watermen and lightermen on the river Thames. His reason for taking out this summons was because of the danger of incompetent men navigating the barges. They might, if

such conduct were persisted in, have another *Princess Alice* disaster, and the loss of 200 lives. (Laughter). He had heard that the *Glen Ross*, a pleasure boat, had been damaged.

For the defence, Mr Cranstoun submitted that the real gist of the case was whether the defendant worked for “hire or gain” as a lighterman or not. A very important case was decided only last year – that of *Skittrell v Showell*, in which a labourer rowed his fellow labourers to work. The man did so by order of his employers, and did not receive any reward for so doing beyond his weekly wage. Lord Coleridge said that unless it could be shown that the man did this special work for hire or gain, the case fell through. He would point out how ridiculous was Mr Waters's argument. Any of them might go on a barge for exercise and do a little work, but who would contend that they were acting as lightermen. The other point was that the defendant was not navigating the barge within the meaning of the Act. The defendant merely helped to raise the anchor and throw out the rope. The object of the bye laws was to regulate the navigation of the Thames for the purpose of keeping the waterway clear. Was that the object of this prosecution? Was that why this man was charged with navigating the barge when he only performed one solitary act? It was done in vindictiveness and malice, and it was a matter of common knowledge that no complaint had been made to the Thames Conservators, and they had not taken it up. Then too it was a reasonable excuse that the employers were not able to get proper men to do the work. He called

Robert Bevan, a member of the firm, who said that he employed the defendant as a watchman only at 33/- per week, and he was in no sense a lighterman. They had to employ watchmen for the barges forsaken by the proper lightermen when they went on strike.

The Magistrates retired, and on their return General Bingham said : My brother Magistrate and myself consider that Williams was not working for “hire or gain”, and therefore the summons is dismissed.

In this case the Magistrates made no order as to costs.

In the next case, Arthur Everest and John Gamble were summoned for a similar offence on the barge *Perseverance* on the 16th June.

Walter Fuller deposed to seeing the defendants at work on the barge at the time in question. Everest refused his offer to assist.

Fairbairn again interpolated a remark, and Mr Cranstoun said he should apply to the Magistrates to have this man turned out of Court if he interrupted again. This man had no business there, and had no *locus standi* at all in the matter.

Mr Waters said that Fairbairn was merely speaking to him, and intended no slight to the Court.

Mr Cranstoun (*sotto voce*) : Absurd.

Mr Waters : I think it is ungentlemanly for you to make such a remark as “absurd” when I am speaking.

General Bingham : I didn't catch the remark. (To Fairbairn) You must be silent, or else you will have to leave the Court.

Robert Bevan, again called, said these two defendants were not paid as lightermen, nor at any time did they act as such.

The Magistrates came to the same decision in this case, and made no order as to costs.

A similar case against John Baker was dealt with in exactly the same way, and the last summons was that against **George Austin** for not having his name on the barge *Sisters*, contrary to law, on the 9th July. Defendant pleaded guilty, and in mitigation, Mr Cranstoun said that defendant had the name of the barge painted on her, and had her registered, and it was simply by a mistake that his own name was not included. Fined 5/0 and 21/0 costs.

Mr Waters said he should seek advice before he gave notice of appeal.

49 **25 July 1891**

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

BORROWED NOT STOLEN Alexander G Wright, Jesse Herbert and George Holloway, three

lads, were brought up in custody charged with stealing a sail and two yards, value 2/0, the property of **John Doherty**, and one mast, value 2d, the property of **John Spooner**, from the barge *Kate*, whilst lying in the river Medway on the 17th instant. Prosecutor Doherty, a bargeman, residing on the Brook, Chatham, said that the sail and two yards were stolen from his lighter during Friday night. On Saturday morning he saw the prisoners with the articles in a boat. Wright said that they picked the sail and yards up overboard. Lads often took his sail, to sail a boat up the river. They usually watched their opportunity, and brought the sail back again. Sometimes he had to go and look for it. River constable Smith deposed to arresting the prisoners in Janes' Creek. The sail was then quite dry. John Spooner identified the mast produced as his property, it was not worth more than 2d (laughter). This was an occurrence that he should take no notice of. People often borrowed his mast without leave and returned it. Each prisoner pleaded not guilty, and said that they picked the sail up. The Bench took into consideration that the lads had been in custody since Saturday, and as they thought the prisoners had no felonious intent, they discharged them (applause in court).

50 1 August 1891

LAUNCH OF THE "PEGASUS" On Saturday afternoon, the new ketch rigged barge *Pegasus* was successfully launched from the upper yard of Mr G Curel, Canal Road, Strood, in the presence of a large concourse of spectators. The vessel has been built for Mr Charles Stone of Northfleet, she is 80 ft long, 20 ft beam and 7 ft side and of 200 tons burthen. She is constructed on the improved system, is intended for coasting purposes, and is one of the largest barges ever built on the river. As the craft left the slipway, Miss Lemon (a niece of the builders) gracefully performed the christening ceremony. The whole of the arrangements were admirably carried out under the supervision of Mr Thomas Clarke, the foreman. On the same day, the barge *May Queen*, built for Mr Smith of Gillingham, was also launched from Mr Curel's lower yard.

51 8 August 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

DRUNK **John Taylor**, a bargeman, was charged with being drunk and disorderly at Strood on the 1st August. Police-constable Cooper proved the offence, and Superintendent Broadbridge said the prisoner was an habitual drunkard. Fined 6/6 including costs, in default seven days. Allowed a week to pay.

52 15 August 1891

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

THE BARGEBUILDERS' STRIKE

MR STEADMAN ADDRESSES AN ENTHUSIASTIC MEETING A very enthusiastic meeting of the men on strike from Messrs Gill and Sons' yards at Rochester was held at the headquarters of the Union, the Coffee Tavern, Banks, Rochester, on Friday evening last, under the presidency of Mr W Packer. The meeting was called mainly to hear an address from Mr Steadman of the London Bargebuilders' Association.

Mr Steadman, after referring to the recent reversal of the decision of Mr Bompas in the higher courts, went on to say that the men had a right to say who they would work and who they would not work with. Consequently, the men at Rochester were justified in coming out on strike against a traitor like the man French. During the strike in London, he received a letter from their secretary at Rochester, stating that two men were coming up to work at Bankside, and he immediately telegraphed to the men on duty there to look out for them. The result was that French and the other man were brought before their strike committee, who paid their fare back to Rochester again. French was fined and justly so, and the amount might well have been much more than 5/0. Since then, French had been to work in Chatham Dockyard, and had written up again to Mr Wrightson in London for employment, and stating that he could bring with him a sober, steady and industrious man who could do justice to himself and his employer. Mr Wrightson didn't accept the offer, and if he had, there would have been a strike in London instead of at Rochester. (Applause). French went

to work in a blackleg yard at Battersea, for Messrs Miller, and he had far better have stayed there, for he was a blackleg at heart and he would ever remain so. As men of honesty, integrity and pluck, they had no alternative but to come out on strike. There were 4000 men in London who were ready to support them financially, and to help them win the battle. Their money would last longer than Mr Gill would be able to do without them, and longer if necessary. He believed that this strike would be the means of cementing the bonds of unionism between the men in London and at Rochester. They would federate in one union – the union of hearts and the solidarity of labour. He also advocated the amalgamation of the various unions at Rochester, Faversham and Milton. Mr Gill had perhaps thought that the strike meant a week's "booze" and then it would be all over. He had now found his mistake out, and he hoped they would not return to work until their employer recognised their union. He should like to see them go in for a nine hours' movement and an increase in wages, and he hoped the day was not far distant when they would not have to fight against a poor contemptible thing like French, but a good honest battle for the improvement of their position. (Applause). He believed that Mr Gill only made a catspaw of French to gain his own ends. He wanted to have a cut at the union, and found a means of doing it in the employment of this man. Mr Gill had forgotten that he could not get blacklegs wholesale and retail like they used to years ago. So long as they stood firm and united, Mr Gill would be taught a lesson. He was trying to starve them out, but he hoped that not one of the 45 men out on strike would betray his fellow workmen and go back to work without being accompanied by all the rest. (Applause). Mr Gill would learn that he had made their Union stronger and more magnificent than ever. He thought Mr Gill would be taught such a lesson this time that, when they asked for a reduction of hours and an increase of 6d a day, he would be willing to concede it to them without seeing them go out on strike. (Applause).

The Chairman said that if Mr Gill had adopted the same rule as Mr Higham, in refusing to employ men without a union ticket, there would have been no need for this trouble at all. Mr Gill's excuse was that if one of the older men had come to him when French was first employed at the Bridge, the man would have been discharged. But that was a lame excuse. They did not wish to go to extremes with Mr French, but simply that he should pay the fine and be reinstated in the union. But Mr Gill then said that he would defend this man to the last, and twitted them with their weakness.

At this point, several men entered the room, and their names were enrolled as members of the union amid great enthusiasm. The Chairman explained that the cause of the demonstration was that these men had remained aloof from them until now. They were employed by Mr Sollitt, and they welcomed them into their ranks. This was the only link that was needed to combine this district into one vast trades' union.

In reply to a vote of thanks, Mr Stedman repudiated the assertion that he was a paid agitator. He had to work for his living, the same as his fellow craftsmen. (Applause).

The meeting was then devoted to the transaction of routine business.

END OF THE STRIKE The following paragraph appeared in some of Monday's daily papers :-
The bargebuilding dispute at Rochester has terminated, and the men have returned to work. The dispute arose over the employment of a man in a yard there who had acted as a "blackleg" in the strike in London last year. For this offence, he was fined 5s, which he refused to pay, and as the employer refused to discharge him, all the men struck. A special meeting of the London Bargebuilders' Trade Union was held on Saturday night at the Hall of the Operative Bricklayers in Southwark Bridge Road, to consider the best means of assisting the Rochester men. Mr Howlett presided, and read the following telegram :- "Packer, Bargebuilders meeting. Strike at an end. Satisfactory". (Cheers). The following resolution was carried :- "That this meeting of the River Thames Bargebuilders' Trade Union hereby congratulates the members of the Rochester Bargebuilders' Union on the successful termination of their strike for the principles of trade unionism."

53 15 August 1891

ACTION BY THE ROCHESTER BARGE INSURANCE ASSOCIATION The case of the *Iron* was heard in the City of London Court on Thursday the 12th. The plaintiff, **Mr James Hubbard** of Upchurch, barge owner, sought to recover damages against Messrs Cory and Son of Eastcheap, coal merchants, for injuries sustained by his barge *Edward and James*, being in collision with defendants' lighter *Iron*. Mr Butler Aspinall, instructed by Messrs Ingledon, Ince and Colt, solicitors (agents for Basset and Bouchier, solicitors, Rochester) appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr L E Pyke (instructed by Messrs F A and H E Farnfield, solicitors, Lower Thames Street) appeared for the defendants. Mr Aspinall stated that on the 14th March last, the barge *Edward and James* was moored next to the lighter *Snipe*, close to the Kensington Vestry Wharf, whilst the lighter *Iron* was moored to the adjoining wharf, belonging to the defendants. During the night the *Iron* sunk and slipped under the *Edward and James*, which sat on her as the tide fell, and sustained considerable damage to her stern post and rudder. Witnesses were called on both sides, and Mr Commissioner Kerr, in giving judgement, stated that he had come to the conclusion that the *Iron* was improperly moored, and accordingly gave judgement for the plaintiff with costs. The *Edward and James* is insured in the Rochester and District Barge Association, on whose instructions the action was brought.

54 22 August 1891

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

ANOTHER DISPUTE BETWEEN BARGEMEN AND EMPLOYERS

THE MASTERS CHARGED WITH BREAKING THE FAITH

BIG MEETING AT THE CORN EXCHANGE A large and representative meeting of bargemen was held under the auspices of the Bargemen and Watermen's Protection Society, in the Corn Exchange, Rochester, on Wednesday, to consider the new rates of freights, demurrage, &c as issued by the Cement Manufacturers' Association of the river Medway, in the place of the one agreed upon through the London Board of Conciliation, by both masters and men, six months ago. The new list lowers the freightage rates about 60 per cent. Mr Riley (president of the Society) occupied the chair, and was supported by Mr C F Ashton (general secretary), Mr R R Fairburn (president of the Society of Watermen and Lightermen of the Thames), Mr Tom McCarthy and Mr A Middleton (organisers of the Dockers' Union), Mr J Tooley (assistant secretary of the Bargemen's Union, Faversham division), Mr C Milton (of No 1 Lodge) and Mr J G Daniel (representative of the Shipping trades' group on the London Conciliation Board). The meeting was confined to members of the Society only, but the representatives of the Press, however, were invited to attend and report the proceedings.

In opening the meeting, The Chairman took his hearers back with him to the time of the formation of the Union in September 1889. Why they formed that union, most everybody present knew. They were so pressed down by their employers in the prices of freights that they found it scarcely possible to live and make a decent appearance in society. They came to the conclusion that as they could not do anything individually, they would try what combination would do, and therefore they started the Society. In the first place they drew up a freight list, and submitted it to the manufacturers for their perusal. But they received no answer from the masters. The price list was to come into force in March 1890, but none of the manufacturers gave any sign of having received the bargemen's communication until February 1890, when the bargemen's representatives were invited to confer with the masters at the Bull Hotel, Rochester. They met, but could come to no agreement, and consequently the matter remained where it was. At that meeting, one of the masters said to him, "I hope you will not take the matter any further, I trust you will give us time to consider". He (the Chairman) refused to bind himself in any way, for it was not his place to concede anything without the voice of the men he represented. (Applause). He, however, offered to stay the matter, if the masters would agree to pay at the men's rate for one month, and he thought that was not asking too much, as the cement trade was then in a most flourishing condition. The men did not want to put their feet on the masters' necks, so they gave them a month's grace to thrash

the matter out. Masters and men met at the London Chamber of Commerce on March 18th, and began to discuss the question. They met again on the 20th, and finally came to a fair understanding, and an agreement was signed by representatives of both parties. It was then stipulated that if any alteration was made, three months' notice should be given on either side. He was sure that anybody could not say other than that every man in that union had behaved himself in a proper manner and stuck to the agreement, and studied the masters' interest in that list. The upshot now was that the masters had given them three months' notice that they were going to revise the list – they didn't even say whether they were going to increase or lower the wage. At last the revised list was sent to them, but not until the three months were just expiring. The masters thrust it, as it were, on the point of the bayonet, and expected them to take the whole in. He considered that in doing this the masters were not treating the men in such a straightforward way as might be expected from gentlemen. The men had expected that the masters would send them the new list to peruse, so that they might have the same opportunity to consider as the masters did in 1890. They had had an uphill battle to fight in their society, and had it not been for the disinterested men who had worked hard and true for the society without pay, or thought of pay, they would not have been in such a good position as they were that day. They had overcome a lot of that uphill work, and he believed as long as they stuck to their colours, success would still be their lot. Some of their masters had attempted to charge commission on freights. God knew that the money the men got for freights from London to Rochester, or from London to Sittingbourne, was quite low enough, without some of these mean humbugs charging commission out of the poor men's wages. Perhaps some of them wondered who he was alluding to ; he was referring to Mr Goldsmith of London. First he paid 1/6 per ton, and then this was lowered to 1/4. Still he was not satisfied, and wanted to squeeze 10 per cent out of the men's earnings. When the men spoke to Mr Goldsmith, he turned round and said, "Currie wants 4 per cent for giving me the work, and I want 5 per cent from the bargemen". ("Shame"). He (the Chairman) wished those present to carefully consider the new list drawn up by the cement manufacturers, and then decide what should be done. He was strongly against striking, and hoped they would use all the legitimate means in the world before they came to such an alternative ; but if the cement manufacturers refused to meet them at the conciliation board, and held the list out, saying, "You can have this or leave", then he would say, "Down tools and strike". (Loud cheers). In conclusion, Mr Riley said he believed that when the manufacturers found they were willing to go to the board of conciliation, they would also go and have a fair understanding.

Mr Ashton then read the new rate of freight, demurrage, &c, showing the differences between it and the list of March 1890. There was a 2d fall per ton in the carriage of cement from the upper part of the Medway to Chatham Point, and a corresponding reduction of one penny to Sheerness. A penny fall to Tilbury Docks ; and another penny fall to Old Ford on the river Lea. "Ketchels" are to be 10/0 per freight less, and "Kensal Green" also 10/0 less, and a 5/0 fall in "shifts". One penny fall to Lea Bridge on the Medway. Sliding cement is just 50 per cent down, while in the sacks there is a reduction of one half penny. Lime remains as before, but chalk to Beckton is two pence less. There is also a penny fall in all the rest of the places. Coke falls a penny per 12 cwt all round, and clay is one penny per ton down. Breeze is 10/0 per freight less, while the demurrage rate is most unsatisfactory, £1 per day to be paid after two "weather working days". Other prices are as before, with the exception of bricks and ballast, which are erased from the list altogether. Mr Ashton thought that the masters or the public could not say that the bargemen had put their backs up in a haughty manner, for they had shown a conciliatory spirit from the first to the last. They meant to do all in their power to drive the merchants to some conciliation. There was a very great object in view with some of the gentlemen, at least one who assisted to prepare the list, in knocking out altogether the freight list. They would like this left open, so that the bargemen might quarrel over the matter between themselves. Mr Porter, Mr Lee Smith, and several other merchants on the Medway had said that the rates as made at the conciliation meeting of 1890 were working very well, and they therefore did not wish to make any alteration, and in the face of this, he (Mr Ashton) could not now understand the masters' action. The merchants had a very poor knowledge of what work was on the water ; they had no idea what disabilities the men worked under. Cold nights, bad weather, and two

homes to be kept going was all in the bargeman's lot, and under those circumstances he was certainly worth a little more than the man who put his shovel down and had nothing to do at night but go home and sleep. There was a misinterpretation put by some of the masters on some of the decisions come to at the London Chamber of Commerce. The first trouble arose over the word "Chelsea", which was understood at the Chamber of Commerce meant Battersea Old Bridge. In consequence of this, he had been in communication with the Chamber of Commerce, whose secretary wrote, saying no notes were taken at the time, but it was generally understood that it meant Battersea Old Bridge. He (Mr Ashton) had also seen Mr Porter, one of the masters, who gave him a map showing that Battersea Old Bridge was meant as Chelsea. Mr Ashton then read a long string of correspondence, both on the subject of "Chelsea" and the new freight list, in which it was shown that Mr Ashton had asked for a meeting between masters and employees. Most of the correspondence was carried out through the London Board of Conciliation. On April 9th last Mr Ashton wrote asking for a meeting, and in reply received a letter from the secretary of the Board informing him that his application for a conference was considered at a meeting of cement manufacturers, when the masters passed this resolution :- "That this meeting, having considered the application of the Bargemen's Union that a conference shall take place with the manufacturers under the auspices of the London Conciliation Board with respect to the interpretation of certain items in the agreement of the 19th and 20th March 1890, resolves that, whilst willing to consider all questions of interpretation of the rates on this price list, all the rates now being paid must be considered at the same time. Secondly, that the following gentlemen form a committee to give effect to the foregoing resolution, and that they report to the Medway Manufacturers on the result of their negotiations ; Messrs Lee Smith, D Bethven, C Cheffins, W Porter, G K Anderson. Mr Ashton then sent a letter in reply saying that the men would be willing to confer upon the matter, on condition that the present rates of freightage should be discussed without prejudice to the Society. This seemed to fairly corner them, and soon after a communication was received from the Secretary of the Conciliation Board on May 28th enclosing one from the cement trades section of the London Conciliation Board informing the bargemen that the masters give notice through their chairman that it is their intention to terminate the agreement between us, three months from the 1st June, notice expiring on the 1st September. The men had understood all the way through that they were to be parties to the revision of the list, but this idea was banished on the 10th of August, when the following letter was received from Mr Samuel Lee Smith :-

"Herewith I beg to enclose you copies of the freight list as settled at a meeting of the Medway Cement Manufacturers held this day. The said list will, in accordance with notice, come into force on the 3rd September".

Mr Ashton again wrote to Mr Lee Smith, asking whether the lists had been sent for him to call a meeting and submit them for the consideration of the men, and received in reply from Mr Smith, the following :-

"In answer to yours of the 11th, I beg to say that the freight list I sent you, to come into force on the 1st September, has been drawn up by the Cement Manufacturers without any particular reference to the Conciliation Board of the London Chamber of Commerce".

"His change of front", said Mr Ashton, "is thoroughly incomprehensible to me".

There was one thing certain, the men had done everything in accordance with their agreement, and had negotiated in a thoroughly fair manner, offering to consider anything the masters brought forward. All through these negotiations, the masters had led them to believe that they were to hold a meeting, and then at the last turned round and told them point blank that the list had been drawn up without any reference to the Board of Conciliation. This was simply because they knew the Board of Conciliation would have fair play. He (Mr Ashton) would have expected a little more straightforwardness from Mr Porter (a voice, "You don't know him"). He supposed he did not know him (laughter) ; he should certainly discount him for ever after. (Hear, hear). The whole affair showed great discredit upon the part of the masters that they would not meet the men to clear up all the little points in dispute. (Applause).

The Chairman took it that the letter from Mr Lee Smith meant to exclude them from the Chamber of

Commerce altogether. He might mention a conversation which Mr Ashton had omitted. Mr Anderson and their secretary met in London some few weeks ago. Mr Anderson said that some of their members were away for their holidays, and expressed a hope that if they should not be back, the men would still work on. And yet the masters took this action. They evidently wanted the men to work on, and have all the trump cards in their own hands. Some of the outside public had run away with a wrong idea of how the bargemen of the Medway were paid. He wished them to understand that if they were paid 1/6 per ton for the carriage of cement to London, the owner received 9d back, so that the captain has to sail his barge to London and pay his crew out of the 9d per ton. The rate of demurrage in the new list rather puzzled him : "If two weather working days". He would like some cement manufacturers to define what that meant. (Laughter). Were they to send to the clerk of the weather, asking him not to send a black cloud over, so as to stop them working? (Laughter). If they were stopped work by the weather for five minutes, they would lose a day's pay. (Shame). In some places, if it rained in the morning, the men were sent away to somewhere else, and even should it turn out to be beautifully fine, they still lose their pay. That was what the masters call a weather working day.

Mr Fairbairn next addressed the gathering, and stated that he had come down as the representative of his society, as what interested Rochester interested them. (Applause). They would have to fight shoulder to shoulder, for they could not afford to be "blacklegged", even if the merchants were, for they had certainly "blacklegged" the Chamber of Commerce. (Hear, hear). He thought this a splendid exposure of the war in which workmen were treated by men who call themselves merchants. How nice it would be to take before the labour commission (laughter). The employers had fairly "capped" themselves, for they had agreed to do a thing, and then because it did not suit, they were now trying to back out of it, even without conciliation or arbitration, which were the true principles of unionism. Mr Bevan had said to him that the crisis in the Argentine Republic, the Chilean war, and the determination of the Germans not to build fortresses as they were going to keep peace in Europe, had ruined the trade (laughter), and he really thought the men ought to lower their wages. (Oh!). Now, if Mr Bevan had spoken in plain English, he would have said, "I am going for my holidays, and I want my men to pay for it". (Loud laughter). Proceeding, Mr Fairbairn referred to the lesson taught the masters by the strike at Northfleet. He did not like to say anything unkind, but just fancy Mr Ashton being "kidded" for over 12 months. He had actually thought that Mr Lee Smith was chairman of the Masters' Association, when that gentleman had given it up for some time. (Laughter). The speaker urged his hearers to stand firm and fight hard, and he would guarantee that no London bargemen came down to do their work. (Cheers). In conclusion he urged the men that, after the way in which the capitalists had tried to shove their list into their neck, not to swallow it, but tell them through their chairman, through the Press and through the public that they would not have the revised list until they had considered it according to promise. (Cheers).

Several members expressed disapproval of the new list and, in answer to Mr Fairbairn, the chairman said it was not so much the revision of the list that the men objected to, as to the offhand and ungentlemanly manner in which they had carried out the business.

The following resolution was proposed, seconded, put to the meeting and carried unanimously amid much enthusiasm :-

"That we, the members of the United Bargemen and Watermen's Protection Society, at a special summoned meeting, consider the rates of freights sent by the cement manufacturers does not settle the disputed points raised in the correspondence that has taken place between our society and themselves during the six months past ; and furthermore show such reductions as we cannot possibly accept".

The member who seconded had a reason for so doing, for being one of the delegates who attended at the Chamber of Commerce, he could say that they gave away all they could give. (Hear, hear). They could keep giving away until all was gone, and the masters had crushed them. This was only a beginning. Here was over 60 per cent reduction, and if they were going to stand to that, they ought to have a 120 per cent reduction next time.

The Chairman expressed his pleasure at the men's decision, and thought that it would show the masters they had sound union men to deal with.

A member : I am of opinion that we ought to send a message to the masters' association telling them that we can't work at their price. (A voice : There's no can't in it ; tell them we shan't). (Laughter). The chairman and other members urged the men to use caution, to use no hard words, and to be determined to stick to their decision.

Mr Ashton thought that as Mr Lee Smith had "kidded" him and also the Chamber of Commerce, they must work very cautiously and see whether the whole of the masters were supporters of the new list. It was his opinion that they were not, but that it was a move on the part of a section only. (Hear, hear).

This second resolution was then proposed and carried :-

"That this meeting of members of the United Bargemen's and Watermen's Protection Society having decided that the freight lists as issued by the cement manufacturers are not arranged so as to be acceptable, hereby direct their executive to endeavour to bring about, through the Conciliation Board of the London Chamber of Commerce, a meeting with the masters and our Conciliation Committee, with a view of satisfactorily arranging the difficulty".

The Chairman said that they would now communicate with the London Chamber of Commerce, and if the masters refused to meet them, they would then call a mass meeting, and let the men decide the next move.

Mr McCarthy next addressed the meeting, urging the union to federate with those of London and district, so as to present a wall of one solid mass of union men for the masters to fight against. Only by doing this could strikes be prevented.

Other speakers followed, and the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Mayor of Rochester for having kindly lent the hall, and also the usual votes of thanks to Chairman and speakers. The meeting lasted upwards of three hours.

BARGEMEN AND DOCKERS On Friday evening last, delegates from the Medway District of the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Labourers' Union met those of the Bargemen's and Watermen's Protection Society at the office of the latter, Gundulph Hall, Rochester, and drafted an agreement for mutual action in all disputes that may arise between masters and employees on the river Medway. The same was submitted to the Council of the Bargemen's Society and ratified.

BARGEMEN AND THE COMMISSION SYSTEM A council, consisting of delegates from the whole of the district branches of the Bargemen's and Watermen's Protection Society, and representatives from the head lodge of the Thames Freemen's Society, from the Northfleet Lodge and also from the Grays lodge of the same society, sat at the Foresters' Hall, Sittingbourne, on Monday, to consider the bargeowners attempt at enforcing a 10 per cent commission on all coal freights to Lloyd's Paper Mills. Messrs Goldsmith and Co, bargeowners, had entered into a contract to run the coals to the mill, and upon their representation nine months back, that in consequence of competition being so severe they could not pay the usual freightage, the men agreed to give 5 per cent off the freight. Messrs Goldsmith and Co, however, soon afterwards gave notice that they intended to take 10 per cent off instead of 5, and consequently the men refused to work their barges. Messrs Goldsmith then arranged with Messrs Smeed, Dean and Co to carry the coal in their barges, and to stop a commission of 7 1/2 per cent from their men. Notions of this were sent to the men on the 9th of July, while the commission was to be charged from the 1st July. The Council decided that such proceedings were monstrous, and directed the members of the Society employed by Messrs Smeed, Dean and Co to refuse to work the barges under such conditions. It was also resolved that, as Messrs Goldsmith and Co had broken faith with the men, and attempted to exact 5 per cent more than was agreed upon, the commission system should be abolished, the men to receive 1/4 per ton clear.

55 22 August 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY COURT

CLAIM FOR DEMURRAGE **Jackson** v Fenner, timber merchant of Chatham.

This was a claim for £8 for demurrage.

Mr G Robinson appeared for the plaintiff on behalf of the local Bargemen's Protection League, and Mr Greathead defended. Mr Greathead raised a preliminary objection, that the plaintiff had no *locus standi*. He was simply master of the barge, and the owner should have summoned. The Registrar (Mr W W Hayward) said that the captain was generally the man who was sued. His Honour said he would hear the evidence before he considered the objection. The plaintiff said he was captain of the barge *William Sankey*, which was owned by William Buxton. It was the custom for him to hand over to the owner half the earnings. In December last, he agreed with defendant to take a freight of timber, at 7/6 per standard. He started loading on the 22nd December (.....unreadable section.....) and finished eventually on the 31st of that month. The severe weather did not interfere with the loading in any way. He came back to Chatham and saw defendant, who offered to pay the freight that day at his office. He agreed to take the money on account. On January 8th, defendant paid him £6/15/0 on account, and witness said there was £8 demurrage, and defendant made out a statement to that effect himself. Mr Greathead said the bill was (.....) at plaintiff's (.....) simply because he could not write. Continuing, witness said he would get the money off the sellers of the timber, and if there was any trouble in getting it, he would deduct it from his bill. By Mr Greathead : Where they were at the docks the timber was not frozen up, because they were at work every day. He knew the weather was very severe. It was certainly not impossible to do the work. He knew they were at the docks a long while, but the company kept them there, and that was how it was he was excused from paying 10/0 rent, which the company at first demanded. They had to load the barge from ten wharves, whereas defendant had said the timber was only at two wharves. Mr Greathead quoted a case in which it had been decided that a claim for demurrage on account of a strike could not be sustained and much less, he submitted, could a claim be sustained on account of bad weather. Jas Fenner, the defendant, said he agreed with plaintiff to bring the timber from London. Between the 18th and 31st December last, the weather was very severe, and the vessels could not navigate. Timber at the side of docks was frozen up about this district, and the reports were the same from London. When plaintiff came back, he said they had been frozen in and could not bring all the timber. He paid the freight, and had to pay £2 extra for the rest of the timber coming by train. Plaintiff mentioned the demurrage, and witness said he had nothing to do with that, and the dock company would have to pay for it. He consequently declined to pay for demurrage. Plaintiff said he had been in trouble, and witness gave him a guinea, for plaintiff stated that he had been delayed in loading the timber. As to the loading, he did not know the number of wharves where the timber was situated. He had never before paid for demurrage, which payments he understood were for unreasonable delay. By Mr Robinson : He instructed his clerk to write the memorandum as to demurrage, because the plaintiff could not write. He signed the paper with the idea of doing his best to get the plaintiff his demurrage. His Honour said it was quite clear to him that the defendant was liable for the demurrage. There would be a judgement for plaintiff, for defendant didn't contradict the statement that he had said he would pay the demurrage and deduct it from the bill for the timber. Defendant said he did deny it.

56 22 August 1891

BOATING ACCIDENT A number of the Royal Engineer officers had rather an unpleasant experience just above Rochester Bridge on Wednesday afternoon. Four were rowing up the river in an out-rigger, whilst a fifth accompanied them in a sculling boat. In consequence of the choppy state of the water, the latter was capsized, and upon its occupant attempting to get into the out-rigger, that was also swamped, and the five were precipitated into the water. Fortunately they could all swim, and with the aid of a life buoy thrown to them by a barge captain named **Lutchford**, they soon gained the shore, and at once proceeded to the Castle Club to await a change of clothing. The accident was witnessed from the bridge and esplanade by a number of spectators, and caused some

excitement.

57 29 August 1891

DEATH OF MRS SIMMONS Many of our readers will regret to hear of the death of Mrs Simmons, wife of **Mr Thomas Simmons**, the well known barge owner. Much sympathy is expressed with the bereaved husband by all classes.

58 5 September 1891

NORTHFLEET

DEAR POTATOES A lighterman named **George John Bull** was charged with stealing two gallons of growing potatoes, valued at 8d, the property of Henry Treadwell of Northfleet. He was ordered to pay 11/8 (penalty, damage and costs) ; in default, seven days' hard labour.

59 5 September 1891

BARGEBUILDERS UNION On Saturday evening, a meeting of journeymen barge builders was held at the Coffee Palace, Milton. Mr Coleman was in the chair, and he was supported by Mr Packer, president of the Rochester branch and the Medway Trades Council, and also by W C Steadman of the London Bargebuilders and London Trades Council. The Chairman stated that they had met for the purpose of organising the bargebuilders of the Sittingbourne and Milton districts, and to hear an address from Mr Steadman on trades unionism. Mr Steadman then addressed the meeting. He stated that he was very glad of the opportunity afforded him of thanking the bargebuilders of that district for the generous support afforded to the London men in the late strike, by which means, after a severe struggle, they had been able to obtain a nine hours' working day and the abolition of systematic overtime. With the exception of a few men working in non union yards, all the men on the river Thames were members of the union. He next spoke of the rapid strides made in trades unionism during the past two years, and stated that he hoped the men in that district would not be behind their fellows in becoming members of a trade union, for it was only by means of combination that the workers could ever expect to benefit their position (cheers). After Mr Packer had addressed the meeting, all those present joined the union.

60 12 September 1891

RAINHAM

ALLEGED THEFT FROM A BARGE At the Sittingbourne petty sessions on Monday, George Naylor, labourer, a married man residing at Rainham, was brought up in custody charged with stealing twelve boards of the value of 6/0 from a barge at Rainham on the 3rd instant. **Archibald Miller**, mate of the barge *Richmond* belonging to Mr H Dalby of Waldengrave Road, Twickenham, said that on the 3rd instant his barge was moored at Lower Rainham Wharf, and he left her safe at about five o'clock in the evening. At that time, there were twelve boards in the middle of the hold. He returned at eleven and found that the boards had been taken away. The two pieces of board (produced) formed one of the twelve planks he missed, and it had since been cut in two. Instructing constable Packman, stationed at Rainham, stated that at 7.30 pm on the 3rd he was in a fruit plantation near Lower Rainham Wharf, and he heard the rattle of boards on the deck of the barge. He saw the prisoner come up the road from the barge with a barrow loaded with long boards. He afterwards saw **John Hawkes**, the captain of the barge, and went on board with him. Hawkes then accompanied witness to prisoner's house, and they found him in the next house, with his shoes off. Witness said, "Naylor, I have come for the boards I saw you wheel away from the barge tonight". He replied, "All right, here they are", and took witness down his garden, when he found that the boards were standing against the lodge. He said, "I have sawn them in halves to make a pig pound". Witness remarked, "These are the boards I saw you bring from the barge". He said, "Yes, I bought them off the captain". Hawkes was present, but the prisoner did not know him. At Hawkes's request, witness said he apprehended the prisoner. There were twelve boards, all of which had been cut in two. He produced one of the boards. On the way to the police station, prisoner

said, "It's no use denying it ; I took the boards. I tried to buy them off the captain, but he would not sell them to me, as he promised a young man named Stokes the first offer ; but he said if he had any when he came back, he would sell me the next lot". John Hawkes, captain of the barge *Richmond*, said that his attention was called to the barge, and on going on board with instructing constable Packman, he missed twelve boards from the middle hold. He accompanied Packman to the prisoner's house, and found the boards in the garden, cut in two. Witness said that it was true that the prisoner asked him to sell the boards, and he replied that they were sold to Mr Stokes. The boards were worth 6/0. Cross-examined by the prisoner, Hawkes denied that he told his (Naylor's) wife to go down and clear the boards from the barge. Prisoner elected to go for trial at the quarter sessions, and after the witnesses were formally bound over, he was committed for trial accordingly. No bail was forthcoming, and he was accordingly removed into custody.

Naylor, the same man, was then further charged with stealing four pennyworth of plums at Rainham on the 2nd instant. Prisoner pleaded guilty to this. A young man named Hales said that he was going through his fruit plantation at Rainham, at about seven o'clock in the evening, when he saw Naylor come down the road, get over the stile into the plantation and pick the plums from off the trees. Prisoner was fined 5/0 and 9/4 costs, or seven days' hard labour. This case, however, will stand in abeyance until after the previous one is disposed of.

61 19 September 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

HE TRIED TO "SCREW" HER NECK **Charles Owen**, a waterman, pleaded guilty to assaulting a married woman named Hadlow in Ship Lane on the 7th September. Complainant said defendant struck her three times and then tried to "screw" her neck. (Laughter). Defendant said he only pushed the complainant, who gave him great provocation, as she "almost" accused him of stealing a paddle. Fined 14/0 including costs. Paid. Mr Stedman advised defendant not to take the law into his own hands. Defendant : I'll put in somebody else's next time.

62 19 September 1891

QUEENBOROUGH

SUNDAY DRINKING AT QUEENBOROUGH On Saturday, before Mr W W Gascoyne and the Mayor (Mr A W Howe), Thomas Giles, landlord of the Castle Inn, Queenborough, was summoned for keeping his house open for the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday August 30th. **Thomas Holmes**, a waterman, was also charged with being on licensed premises on the same date, contrary to the statute. Police-constable Jones stated that, in company with Police-constable Hawkins, he was instructed to go to Queenborough in plain clothes and visit the public houses. He was secreted with Hawkins at about 9 am near the Castle, when he saw four men go away from the back premises, among the number being the defendant Holmes. He saw him served with some beer, and they also saw him tender some coin and receive change. When witness told Giles that he should report him, he said, "I shall burn the ----- house and all such ----- as you with it". Mr C B Harris of Sittingbourne, who appeared on behalf of the defendant Giles, said that he had kept a licensed house for a great many years, as he formerly occupied the Britannia at Milton, and had never had a case of this kind before. Mr Richard Prall, who watched the proceedings on behalf of Messrs Budden, the owners of the Castle, stated that the tenant had entered into a written agreement to keep the house in an orderly manner, and at the same time he pointed out the serious position the defendant had placed himself in through his conduct. Under all the circumstances, he asked their Worships not to endorse the licence. Superintendent Mayne informed the magistrates that he had received complaints about the house for some time past, and that was the reason he had instructed the constables to go there in plain clothes. He also remarked that Giles's language, when detected, was very bad. The magistrates convicted in both cases. Giles was fined £2 and 9/0 costs, and Holmes was mulcted in the sum of 11/0 and 9/0 costs. The chairman added that, under the circumstances, and as nothing previously had been known against Giles, they would not endorse the licence, but they warned him as to his future conduct, especially in the face of what was taking

place all over the country with regard to the licensing laws.

63 26 September 1891

ADMINISTRATION ORDERS Robert Drywood, lighterman of Morden Street, Rochester, whose debts were scheduled at £12/11/10, also applied for an administration order. He made an offer of 4/0 per month. His Honour pointed out that at that rate it would take nearly six years to clear off the debt. He could not accept this, and made an order for 10/0 per month, which would bring it within the three years.

64 26 September 1891

THE POSITION OF THE BARGEMEN Acting upon the resolution passed at the bargemen's meeting on Saturday, the executive of the Bargemen's and Watermen's Protection Society met on Monday at the Gundulph Hotel to consider the disputed rates in the new list of freights issued by the cement merchants. After a careful consideration, the executive arrived at and decided to communicate the following conclusions to the Board of Conciliation :-

- 1 The cement rate in the Medway to remain as per old list.
- 2 We accept the reduction as shown in the new list to Tilbury Docks.
- 3 Lighterage on and off in the Medway we cannot agree to a reduction.
- 4 Slinging cement we don't want on the lists as it is longshore labourers' work and not the bargemen's. In the event of the merchants not agreeing to this, we offer as an alternative to accept 1 1/4d per ton when slinging into sailing ships ; but when slung into steamships, the skipper must meet the extra expenses.
- 5 We cannot accept the masters' reduction as shown in the new list, and may add we are informed by a shareholder in Formby's Cement Co that the contract price for swimming chalk to Beckton and entered into by that firm is 1/3 per ton (the masters offer 1/1). In the event of this being questioned, we have our informant's permission to use his name.
- 6 Clay freights on the old list is 1d per ton lower than it ever was. Another further reduction is contemplated by the new list, but cannot be agreed to by us. The executive also point out to the masters that they have accepted four considerable reductions, while the masters only allow them to retain old rates in two instances.

In the event of the masters refusing to accede to these, the men's last requests, it will be decided by ballot to stop all work on the 1st of October next, the day before the federation comes into force.

AFFAIRS AT THE WEST KENT WORKS The majority of the bargemen employed at the West Kent Works are still on strike. In consequence of this, the barge *Stanley Margetts* was got under weigh by two labourers, who, with the assistance, it is alleged of two City of Rochester

RIVER POLICE NAVIGATED THE VESSEL down the river to Rochester. This alleged action on the part of the police has caused much indignation among the men who, through their general secretary, have addressed a complaint to the Watch Committee of the Town Council. It is rumoured that the police were offered a bribe of £5 to perform the task, but declined to accept any money. The men also urge that, even if police protection were needed, the police had no right on the barge, but should have accompanied the vessel in their boat which, on the occasion, was being towed behind.

65 10 October 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

OFFENCES ON THE RIVER Charles Sancto, master and part owner of the steam tug *Margaret*, was summoned under the Medway Conservancy Act for allowing more than six barges to be towed at one time, contrary to the provisions of the Conservancy Act, at Wouldham Reach on the 1st October. He pleaded not guilty. Mr R Prall, Clerk to the Medway Conservancy Board, prosecuted. The bye laws of the Board were produced by Mr J Whitmore, Clerk to Mr Prall. Captain Wildash, harbour master, stated that on the 1st October he saw the *Margaret* towing six loaded barges and one light one at Wouldham Reach. The barges were two abreast, and the lighter was being towed

behind. At his order, the seventh barge was disconnected. Defendant admitted that he had seven barges in tow, but explained that the seventh barge was simply attached to avoid a collision, and the man in charge would not let go for a distance of 200 yards. Defendant added that the lighter had only one hand on board, instead of two. He was down in his cabin at the time, and he distinctly heard his mate ask Captain Wildash to order the man in charge of the lighter to let go. Captain Wildash denied that he was asked to do this. The Bench convicted, and inflicted a fine of 5/0 and 10/0 costs. Paid.

Charles Campbell, master of the steam tug *Cockerell*, pleaded not guilty to a similar information, in the Medway off Burham on the 18th September. James Shirley, foreman cooper in the employ of the West Kent Cement Company, stated that on the day in question, he saw the tug *Cockerell* going down the river with seven barges in tow, most of them being sailing barges. Edward Judges, in the employ of the same company, corroborated. By the defendant : His attention was called to the barges by Mr Margetts. He was certain that the seventh barge was attached by a rope. Defendant asserted that the seventh barge was only "drawing". There was no rope between the barges. Recalled, the witness Shirley said he could not swear that there was a rope on the seventh barge. The last barge was close up to the others. William Chambers, the owner of the tug, said he had known barges to "draw" for a mile and a half. The Bench convicted, and imposed a fine of £1, including costs. Paid.

66 10 October 1891

BRAVERY Mr Thomas Pocock, fisherman of 2 Higgin's Lane, Medway Street, Chatham, performed a gallant act on Tuesday afternoon. He was standing on Mr Gamman's wharf at Holborn Lane, when he observed a lad named **Joseph Burrell**, aged 16, come out of the hold of a barge, step on a piece of plank lying on the deck, and fall overboard through the plank tilting. Pocock, who is a good swimmer and rendered good service at the Sun Pier disaster, immediately jumped overboard and swam to the lad's rescue. Burrell sank two or three times before Pocock reached him, but was caught hold of and brought safely ashore, it being about high tide at the time. Will the Mayor of Chatham kindly notify the Royal Humane Society?

67 17 October 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY POLICE COURT

BOYS AND THEIR PRANKS **Robert Daniels**, 15, **Percy Wells**, 16, **Robert Brightwell**, 16, **Frederick Beard**, 15, **Herbert Wicker**, 15, **John Webster**, 17 and **Thomas Collins**, 16, lads, were summoned for wilfully committing damage to a stove and fuel, the property of Messrs Lee, Son and Co at Halling, on the 8th September. The whole of the defendants were further charged with assaulting James Burgess at the same time and place. Mr F C Boucher prosecuted, and Mr Greathead appeared to defend Daniels, Wicker and Beard. The whole of the defendants pleaded not guilty to the assault. Wells, Brightwell, Webster and Collins admitted committing the damage, but Mr Greathead's three clients denied the offence. Mr Boucher stated that the whole of the defendants were employed as third hands on barges belonging to Messrs Lee, Son and Co. For some time past, the firm had been annoyed by depredations committed by boys, and by these proceedings it was hoped that an effective stop might be put to the nuisance. **Frederick Fowler**, third hand of the barge *Medway*, said he saw the defendants playing "I spy" round the barge building yard. They afterwards went into the cement shed, threw a sack, and knocked a gas lamp over. Complainant Burgess was stoking at the lime kilns. There was a fire pan which gave light to the man who was stoking. Webster ran out of the shed and said he had knocked the fire pan over. The whole of the boys – including witness – then got brick-bats and threw at the fire pan. Burgess ran out of the shed, whereupon defendants ran away and climbed up the riggings of the barges. **Joseph Styles**, mate of the barge *Medway*, gave similar evidence ; he added that Daniels, Brightwell and Beard were in the rigging of the barges directing operations. This was done in order to prevent either of the brick-bats thrown hitting Burgess. James Burgess deposed to the fire pan being knocked over and damaged. He again placed the pan in position, when the boys again threw stones at it. One

brick had hit against a post, rebounded, and struck him on the back of the leg. Complainant did not believe the defendants wilfully threw at him. Thomas Coulter, night watchman at the firm, deposed to taking the names of the defendant directly after the occurrence, and Police-constable Tutt having also given evidence, Mr Greathead contended there was no direct evidence against his clients. They were with the other defendants and possibly they enjoyed the fun, but there was no evidence to show that they threw at the fire pan. The Bench dismissed the case of assault, and advised the defendants to withdraw their plea of guilty to committing damage, as it had been proved in evidence that the stove was not damaged by the brick-bats, but by the fall after it had been struck. The defendants acted upon the advice of the Magistrates, and were then discharged with a caution.

68 17 October 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT, SATURDAY

ON THE DOWN GRADE William Slipper, formerly a coal whipper, was brought up in custody charged with being found on the barge *Tilford* with the supposed intention of committing a felony. On the application of Superintendent Broadbridge, prisoner was remanded till Tuesday and admitted to bail.

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT, TUESDAY

SHEER MISCHIEF Three lads named Edward William Marsh, William Wallis and Charles Goddard were summoned for unlawfully cutting and casting adrift the lighter *Britannia*, near Strood Canal in the Medway, on the 6th October. **Abraham Vane** of Maidstone, the owner of the lighter, stated that the lighter's rope was cut, and the lighter drifted ashore and was damaged ; and a barge captain proved seeing the defendants in a catamaran. One of them – he could not say which – cut the lighter's rope. Defendants pleaded guilty. Marsh said their boat was driven into an awkward position by the wind, and if they had not cut the lighter's rope, their boat would have been swamped. The Bench inflicted a fine of 4/0 and 6/0 costs against each defendant. Paid.

DISCHARGED William Slipper, on bail, who was summoned before the Bench on Saturday for being on the barge *Tilford* with intent to commit a felony, reappeared this morning. The Superintendent stated that the case was a very weak one, and he would not press it. Asked by the Bench what the occupation of the defendant was, Superintendent Broadbridge replied that he was a “scurfer”, picking up a job wherever he could. The Bench dismissed the case.

69 31 October 1891

SHEERNESS

FOUNDING OF A BARGE About two o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, a large barge, sailing in the direction of Sheerness harbour, foundered off Barton's Point Fort, two miles from the entrance to the Medway. A north easterly gale was blowing at the time, and the coastguardsmen stationed at Scrap's Gate promptly launched their boat and put off to the assistance of her crew, but the men, who took to their boat, rowed into Sheerness harbour before the coastguardsmen reached the vessel. The barge is several feet under water, only the upper portion of the mast and sails being visible.

LANDING GUNS The troops had to be employed on Sunday last in unloading a 29 ton gun from a barge at Barton's Point. The boisterous weather rendered it dangerous to allow the barge to lie on the beach with the heavy weapon, which is intended for the new fort.

70 31 October 1891

SHIPPING DISASTERS **Captain T Illenden** of the barge *Wouldham* of Rochester reports passing on Thursday a sunken barge in the fairway of the Swash (Thames Estuary), lying broadside. On going to the vessel, he discovered the dead body of a man lashed to the rigging under water. He could not recover the body or find out the name of the craft. By the appearance of the body, it seemed to have been there some days.

71 7 November 1891

ROCHESTER CITY POLICE COURT

HE HAD TO DODGE THE MISSILES **Thomas Higgins, Henry Phyll and Edward Crittenden**, bargemen, were summoned for assaulting **Edwin Thomas Wadhams**, a barge captain, on the Medway on the 24th October. Defendants failed to appear, and service of the summonses was proved by River Constable Smith. The Bench decided to hear the case in the absence of the defendants. Mr F F Smith prosecuted. Complainant, living in Ridley Road, said he was captain of the barge *Arthur Margetts*. On the 23rd September (*sic*), while sailing up the river, the three defendants were standing on the wharf near Messrs Lee's works at Halling. They first threatened him, and afterwards threw iron bolts &c at him, but he was not struck. He had to dodge the missiles, as he was standing at the wheel. They shouted that they would give him "Teddy Pritchard" and would knock his eyes out of his head if he came ashore. There had been some dispute about the barge, because of the ownership. The men afterwards attempted to launch a boat down the mud, and threatened to throw him overboard. **George Broom**, third hand, corroborated. Each defendant was fined 15/0, including costs.

72 21 November 1891

NEWINGTON

A NEWINGTON BARGE WRECKED The *Foxglove*, captain **David Denness**, aged 38 (owner Mr Charles Wood of Milton-next-Sittingbourne) was lying at anchor on Friday night in the Swatchway off Grain, laden with flints, when she was run into by the *Colonel Smith*, screw steamer (Scotch), belonging to the North Sea Fishery. She was struck on the starboard quarter, which was cut off, and the small boat was smashed. Denness and his mate were on the locker in trowsers, shirt and stockings. They just managed to get out and into the rigging before the barge sank. A boat was lowered from the *Colonel Smith*, but as it had no oars and the plugs were gone, she immediately sank. Denness, by shouting, was heard by the skipper of the *W H Randall* of Faversham, who, with his crew, had to dress, and they then came and rescued them, after being in the rigging 30 minutes, putting them on board the *Colonel Smith*, which took them to Gravesend where they arrived at 12 o'clock. They came on to Strood by the midnight train, and walked home although they were wet through. They reached Newington about four o'clock in the morning. The light of the *Foxglove* was visible above the water after she sank. It was a clear night. The *Colonel Smith* had a shipwrecked crew on board.

73 28 November 1891

THE ROCHESTER AND DISTRICT BARGE INSURANCE ASSOCIATION

"THE RACOON" This appeal came before the Admiralty Divisional Court on Monday 23rd last, composed of the President (Justice Butt) and Justice Jeune, assisted by Trinity Masters.

The appellants, the owners of the sailing barge *Britannia* (insured in the above association) were represented by Mr Gorrell Barnes QC, and Mr Lionel Pyke (instructed by Messrs Basset and Boucher, solicitors, Rochester), and the respondents, the Corporation of the City of London and owners of the paddle steamer *Racoon*, by Mr T T Bucknill QC and Mr J P Aspinall (instructed by Mr H H Crawford, the city solicitor).

The appeal was from the judgement of Mr Commissioner Kerr, given in the City of London Court on 6th May last in an action for damage sustained by the barge through collision with the *Racoon* in Blackwall Reach on the evening of the 14th January last. From the evidence given in the City of London Court, it appears that the *Britannia* was standing towards the north shore on the starboard tack, and the *Racoon* was proceeding up the river, and that the barge keeping her tack, was run down close to the north shore near Plymouth wharf, where she sank. In the court below, the learned Commissioner found for the defendants, although he intimated that his opinion did not agree with that of the Nautical Assessors who were there to assist him, but that he felt bound to defer to them, and in his own words "yield the inclination of his own mind, as it were, to theirs".

The principal question involved was whether the *Racoon* was in such a position that she was

justified in giving four blasts as she is admitted to have done, and the court, after hearing the arguments on both sides, found that she should have given way, and that therefore the *Britannia* was perfectly right in keeping her course. The appeal was therefore allowed with costs. Mr Aspinall applied for leave to appeal further, but the President intimated that if he had any discretion in the matter he would not give leave, as the case appeared to the court perfectly clear, and with that the Elder Brethren fully concurred.

74 28 November 1891

LAUNCH OF A BARGE **Mr W Higham** of Blue Boar hard, Rochester, barge builder, on Thursday launched a fine new barge which he has built to the order of Mr E R Baker of Rochester. She was christened the *Ada and Edith* by Miss Edith Baker, daughter of the owner. She is topsail rigged, fitted with all modern improvements, and of 130 tons burthen, her dimensions being :- Length 77 feet, beam 17 ft 6 in, and depth of side 5 ft 9 in.

75 28 November 1891

DEATH OF MR JAMES BOULDEN A familiar figure has this week been removed from our midst by the death of **Mr James Boulden** at his residence, the Victoria Inn, Strood, after a long and painful illness, on Saturday. The deceased, who was 67 years of age, formerly kept the Gundulph Hotel, Rochester. He, however, gave up possession of this to take over the Victoria Inn which, it will be remembered, he purchased at a public auction a short time since for £1900. Mr Boulden owned extensive properties in Strood, and was also the owner of several barges trading to and from the Medway. He was a member of the Gundulph Lodge of Freemasons (1050), and was also a prominent worker in the Conservative interest. He leaves a widow and one infant child to mourn their loss. The funeral took place in Strood Churchyard on Wednesday afternoon, in the presence of a large concourse of people. The chief mourners were the widow and immediate relatives. The cortège was met at the church by Messrs R West, J Taylor, G Robinson, J W Huggett, G Payne, F Huggett, R Jeal, J R Bell, B Simmonds and W Cuckney, who attended as representatives from the Strood Conservative Club, of which deceased was a member. Among others who assembled at the graveside were Messrs C D Levy, G H Curel and Mr and Mrs F Sollitt. The Rev St B S Sladen officiated. The coffin, of polished elm, was covered with beautiful wreaths and crosses sent by the following :- The widow, Strood Conservative Club, Mr J T Aldridge, Mr J W Budden, Mr C D Levy, Mr G Robinson, Mr R Jeal, Mrs Dean, and "A friend".

76 12 December 1891

DEATH OF THE STROOD CENTENARIAN We deeply regret – and this sentiment will find endorsement in everyone who learns the fact – to record the death, on Sunday night last at 28 Montfort Road, Strood (the residence of her daughter-in-law, Mrs Hill) of that remarkable old lady, Mrs Sarah Ann Izaby, at the ripe and venerable age of 101 years and five months. The end could hardly come as a surprise with one of such an unusual age, but this does not lessen the feeling of regret that will be experienced at the fact that this link between the 18th and 19th centuries should have passed over to the great majority ; but assuredly her memory will long survive her. Her death must be attributed generally to decay of nature, although for a day or two prior to the end, she suffered from a cold and an affection of the throat. Strange to say, the old lady had expressed the premonition a few hours before that she would not see the completion of another week. On Sunday night, Mrs Izaby, according to custom, engaged in prayer, and it was not long after this when, seated in her arm chair, she sank into an unconscious condition, and life ceased. She must have known that death was at hand, because she feebly uttered the words, "God bless you", as a parting benediction to her daughter-in-law, Mrs Hill, who had tended her so carefully and devotedly, and endeavoured to make the infirmities of age as light as possible. Latterly she had required constant and continuous attention, and had to be fed with a spoon like a child. She had a great desire to have Mrs Hill always in the room with her, and consequently persisted in getting up from bed and sitting in her cosy old arm chair nearly every day.

Sarah Ann Izaby was born at the village of Stoke on the 8th of July 1790, and the parochial register shows that she was baptised in the following October. Her father, Thomas Eatton, was a labouring man, and died when his daughter was nine years old. After his death, her mother moved to Avery and after that to Strood.



Mrs Izaby had resided in the neighbourhood of Rochester all her life, and bore an unblemished character from first to last. Until incapacitated by old age, she was a most industrious and hard working woman, and kept plodding on year after year, as if insensible to fatigue. In her girlhood, she resided with an uncle in the Hundred of Hoo, and this worthy supplemented his legitimate income by smuggling operations. A few months ago, the old lady narrated some of her smuggling reminiscences to a representative of the *News*, and quite chuckled as she recalled some of the stratagems resorted to by her uncle to outwit the customs officers. A lame pony, "Jenny", was kept to facilitate the removal of contraband goods, and upon this Miss Eatton, sitting astride of the animal – as she would herself tell visitors – often rode into Rochester. It was a curious coincidence that events which transpired during her girlhood were more strongly impressed upon the old lady's memory than affairs which occurred during the later years of her life ; in fact, her conversation related chiefly to the affairs of the dim and distant past. She could remember some of the public rejoicings which occurred in England over Nelson's victory at Trafalgar. She also recollected what a scare there was about a threatened invasion of England by Napoleon, and would tell how her friends on one occasion got up in the middle of the night and took to flight, because it was rumoured that Napoleon had actually effected a landing at Sheerness. She could remember quite clearly and distinctly the execution of Parker, the leader of the mutiny at the Nore, from the yardarm of a ship off Sheerness. Although a mere child, she witnessed this ghastly business from the opposite bank of the river, and would tell of the painful scene that occurred with Parker's wife, who tried to get a boat to take her to her husband's ship but was repeatedly turned back. The old lady could also recall to mind the delight of the people when the news came that the Duke of Wellington had defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. She was especially proud of the fact that she had witnessed the

celebration of two jubilees of the English throne – King George the Third and Queen Victoria. She had a vivid recollection of the “high jinks” that were in Rochester on the former occasion.

Mrs Izaby was married at St Mary's Church, Chatham, to John **Hill**, being at the time only seventeen years of age. Nine years later, her only child, John, was born. He eventually became a Custom House officer, and went to London. Upon his superannuation from the service five or six years ago, he took his mother from the alms houses at Cobham, where she was then living, and thenceforward she resided with him and his wife. The son died last year, and his mother, although then over 100, followed his remains to the grave, around which four generations were gathered as mourners. To go back, it may be mentioned that the deceased's first husband had been dead for many years and, after a long widowhood, she contracted a second marriage with Mr Izaby of Strood (her sweetheart as a boy), being at the time 77 years of age. Her daughter-in-law, Mrs Hill, acted as her bridesmaid. Mr Izaby had unfortunately forgotten the ring, and the old lady, quick as thought, slipped her first wedding ring from her finger and passed it to the venerable bridegroom. The old couple lived happily together for eight or nine years, when Mr Izaby died. The centenarian's husbands were both interred in Strood churchyard. Many of the older inhabitants of Rochester and Strood will remember the venerable lady as a hawker of fish. She performed her daily rounds with cheerfulness and alacrity, and everybody had a good word in praise of both “Sally” and her fish.

When Mr Hill died, his pension lapsed, and his widow subsequently experienced some little difficulty in maintaining the old lady and herself, although – notwithstanding that she is herself over seventy – she worked very hard. A public subscription raised by the *Chatham News* on Mrs Izaby's 101st birthday was a great assistance, for since then they had been in receipt of a weekly allowance. Only a fortnight since, a donation of £1 came to hand from some American readers. We shall shortly make a statement with reference to this fund.

The centenarian looks very calm and peaceful in her coffin. Her great age now appears more strongly marked upon her features than when she was alive, but beneath the white cap which covers her head – she always wore a white cap with a band of black velvet – locks of luxuriant brown hair cluster, scarcely a “silver thread” being discernible. The expression on the countenance tells of a painless death – of a gentle transition and rest.

77 12 December 1891

SUDDEN DEATH ON BOARD A YACHT On Monday evening, Mr W H Bell LLB, coroner, held an inquest at the Guildhall, Rochester, on the body of Frederick Percival Waterhouse, aged 30 years, who was found dead on the 6th inst on board the yacht *Lindd*, on the river Medway off Chatham. Mr P C Boucher watched the proceedings on behalf of relatives of the deceased.

William Quilter of 2 Strand, Leigh, Essex, captain of the yacht *Lindd*, stated that the deceased was the owner of the vessel. He had been in the Royal Militia. Witness had sailed with deceased for about twelve months. Deceased was an unmarried man. Witness was with the deceased on the yacht *Lindd* on the 6th inst. He was then in a very indifferent state of health, and could scarcely get his breath. He had been getting worse during the last two months. He had lived with witness on the yacht since May 14th. He had complained of his liver, and also said his heart was weak. He had not, however, been attended by a doctor since May. He had not taken any food for the last week, until the 6th inst, when he had four eggs. These, however, he vomited. So far as witness knew, deceased lived entirely on intoxicating drink, taking whisky as a rule. He drank considerably to excess. He was generally ashore all day, and when he returned was in a feeble state and incapable of taking care of himself. This witness attributed to his drinking habits. Deceased was aboard the yacht all day on the 6th instant, and ordered witness to go ashore and obtain half a pint of whisky. Witness was away about a quarter of an hour, and on his return he found his master dead. Witness at once sent the mate of the barge *Essex*, which was lying alongside, for the doctor.

By Mr Boucher : Witness noticed the shortness of breath prior to the 6th inst. Deceased had complained to him of his heart on the 6th inst.

Dr Holroyde said that he was called to see the deceased on the evening of the 6th inst. Witness found him lying on his back on his bunk quite dead. The body was warm, and death had only

recently taken place. He had made a *post mortem* examination of the body. There were no marks of violence. The body was that of a well nourished man. The brain was very congested, while the heart was unnaturally large, and in a state of fatty degeneration. The lungs were gorged with blood, free, however, of present and past disease. The stomach contained a very small quantity of liquid, having a distinctly alcoholic odour. There was no solid food whatever. The coats of the stomach were intensely congested, and the upper part of the small intestines in a similar condition. The liver was greatly enlarged, as were also the kidneys. He concluded that death was due to fatty degeneration of the heart, probably accelerated by excessive drinking. In his opinion, excessive drinking was the cause of death.

By Mr Boucher : He should say that the fatty degeneration of the heart had been going on for some time. Fatty degeneration was the primary cause of death.

The jury returned a verdict of death from fatty degeneration of the heart.

Asked by the Coroner whether the jury desired to add anything as to the deceased's drinking habits, the foreman replied in the negative.

78 12 December 1891

A FATAL FALL Mr W H Bell LLB, coroner for the City of Rochester, held an inquest at the Board Schools, Troy Town, on Monday evening, touching the death of a little girl named Beatrice Leigh, aged between five and six years, whose parents reside at 34 Union Street, Troy Town. It appears that the child fell on the footpath in the middle of October last, striking her head, and she has since suffered from the injuries she then sustained, and expired on Friday night.

Mr William Gutteridge was chosen foreman of the jury.

William Leigh, father of the deceased, deposed that he resided at 34 Union Street, Troy Town, and was a master mariner employed on the barge *Industry*. Deceased, who was between five and six years of age, had been ill for seven weeks, under the care of Dr Dartnell. Deceased never told him that she had a fall of any sort. He was only at home occasionally, as he was engaged on the water.

Elizabeth Christopher, a young woman living at (?13) Castle Road, Luton, stated that the deceased was her cousin. She had been nursing the deceased for the past seven weeks, from the time she was first taken ill. Deceased complained of great pains in the head, but she was quite sensible throughout her illness, and told witness that she had had a fall on the footpath near the Blackmoor's Head in King Street. The mother of the deceased had recently been confined and was then ill. Every attention was paid to the deceased, under the direction of the doctor.

A little girl named Eliza Wady, eleven years of age, living in Martin's Court, Union Street, recollected the deceased falling while running down King Street. Witness was in front with a perambulator, and she heard the deceased crying. Witness went back, and the deceased, who was picked up by a man, said she had hurt her knees.

William George Lord, employed by Major Rochford-Boyd at the Gleanings, Rochester, said about the middle of October he saw a child (whom he believed to be the deceased) fall down in King Street, face downwards. The child cried bitterly, and after witness picked her up and wiped her face, she walked away.

Another little girl named Emily Skilton, living at 31 Union Street, was also called, but she deposed that the deceased fell from a doorstep on to the pavement, and was picked up by the previous witness and carried home.

Dr A W Dartnell, practising at Rochester, stated that on Monday the 19th October he saw the deceased, who was vomiting and apparently suffering from concussion. She continued vomiting a good deal up to the time of her death, which occurred on Friday night. He had no doubt the deceased had met with some injury. There was no bruise, but a swelling on the head, and deceased told him, as he understood, that she fell from a doorstep on to the pavement. He believed the actual cause of death was haemorrhage in the skull, such as would result from a fall.

A jurymen enquired whether the jury were likely to know the actual cause of death at the finish of the enquiry. The doctor only thought what the cause of death was.

The Coroner said the doctor had attended the deceased for several weeks, and that was the opinion

he had formed of the cause of death. He did not think they could obtain any additional evidence. Another jurymen pointed out that the evidence of the little girls was contradictory. The Coroner remarked that their evidence might have referred to two different occasions. The deceased had told the doctor that she had had a fall from a doorstep. The jury returned a verdict to the effect that death arose from haemorrhage in the skull, probably caused by an accidental fall.

79 19 December 1891

ROCHESTER COUNTY POLICE COURT, FRIDAY

A DAVID COME TO JUDGEMENT **David Pickett**, described as a bargeman of Greenwich, was charged with being drunk in the London Road, Northfleet, on the 9th inst. Prisoner, who pleaded guilty, was bound over in the sum of 40/- to come up for judgement if called upon. Police-constable Fuggle proved the case.

MEAN CONDUCT TOWARDS A FOREIGNER **Henry Sparks** and **John Lyons**, both bargemen and of Northfleet, were charged with being concerned together in stealing 18/- and a purse worth 1/-, the property of J L N Hillstrand, at Northfleet on the 9th inst. Prosecutor, who is a Dane, deposed through the medium of an interpreter that on the evening of the 9th inst he went ashore from a vessel, the *Annie Sophie*, upon which he was cook, lying at Northfleet. He went into a tobacconists at Northfleet and purchased some cigars &c, and on leaving met the prisoners, of whom he enquired where the post office was. The prisoners said, "Yes, and you must give us a glass of beer", and thereupon, in company with the prisoners, went into a public house and had some beer. The prisoners followed him as he left the public house, and he again treated them to beer. When he left the public house, he took out his purse and gave the prisoner Sparks sixpence. The prisoner Sparks then took hold of his hand, whilst Lyons took the purse out of the other hand. Prisoners then ran away, and he pursued them, but failed to catch them. There were 18/- in the purse when the prisoners stole it. Sergeant Hoare deposed that on the night of the 9th inst, the prosecutor complained to him of having been robbed, and next morning the prosecutor identified Sparks, who was on a barge, near to the vessel in question. Witness then took Sparks into custody, and later on arrested Lyons. Prisoners pleaded guilty, and were each sentenced to one calendar month's hard labour.

TUESDAY

THAMES CONSERVANCY CASE **C T Bouring** was summoned by J Hughes for throwing ashes from the steam vessel *Justin* into the Thames, off Cliffe, on November 24th. Mr Bunting prosecuted on behalf of the Thames Conservancy. James Clarke gave evidence to the effect that he saw ashes thrown from the starboard side of the vessel in question on November 24th. Corroborative evidence was also given by a fisherman named John Blankley. Defendant, through the medium of a letter, admitted the offence, and stated that, as it was a first offence, leniency was solicited. A gentleman appeared to represent the defendant and repeated the terms of the letter. Defendant was fined £10 and £4/11/7 costs. The money was paid.