

BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST
BOATMAN ARTICLES 1857 to 1880

1 December 10 1857 Birmingham Police Court

ALLEGED HIGHWAY ROBBERY John Lakin, a boatman, living at Curdworth, was placed at the bar, charged with assaulting John Beacham, and robbing him on the highway. Between twelve and one o'clock on the night of the 3rd instant, Beacham met the prisoner, who was an acquaintance of his, in Stafford Street, and was asked by him to stand a drop of beer. Intimating his willingness to do so, they went on towards Aston Street, and on arriving at the corner of the street, Lakin put his hand in Beacham's pocket. Beacham remonstrated with him for doing this, and the fellow threatened to strike him if he asserted again that his hand was in his pocket. The prosecutor declared that he had put his hand into his pocket, whereupon the prisoner knocked him down with such force that he became insensible. On recovering, he found 9s missing from his pocket, and Lakin gone. Sergeant Scull apprehended the prisoner from his description, on Monday last, and in reply to the charge made against him, he said he knew nothing about it. In defence he admitted knocking the prosecutor down, but denied touching his money. The Bench committed him for trial.

2 January 7 1858 Wednesbury

CUTTING AND WOUNDING Joseph Green and John Wilson, two boatmen, were charged at the Petty Sessions with stabbing another boatman, named **Isaac Bird**. Bird stated that he met the two men in the street at Tipton on the night of the 20th, and they offered him rum out of a bottle. As they were fresh, he advised them to go home. Afterwards, a little before twelve, having occasion to go to his boat, he came up to the prisoners at the door of the Beehive Inn, on the canal side. The people of the inn refused to admit them, on which the prisoner Green turned upon him, and stabbing him in the neck with a knife, ran off. Complainant was stunned a little, but recovering, followed Green and gave him into custody. Another boatman deposed to coming up after the affray, and to seeing Green wipe the knife on his trousers, and say, pointing to the complainant, "I gave that b-- so much (showing how much) of this knife". Parish Constable Heath spoke to the prisoner Green having been given into his custody by Bird on the Sunday morning after the stabbing. The knife produced (a large clasp one) was found by witness in the possession of the other prisoner. Mr Underhill, surgeon, Tipton, said the wound received by the complainant was about two inches long, and had evidently been inflicted with a blunt instrument. Had it not been stopped by coming in contact with the upper part of the windpipe, which is a resisting substance, the wound would have been a very deep one. The prisoners were committed to the Assizes,

3 January 7 1858 Worcester Sessions

PETTY THEFT AT DUDLEY Robert Commander, boatman, was charged with stealing a chain from William Henry Dawes of Dudley on the 27th December. A workman at Withymore Foundry deposed to seeing the prisoner take the chain from a windlass used in moving castings, and called to him, whereupon he nimbly "picked up his stick and out", but was pursued by the workman, and captured. The defence was a denial *in toto*, and there being no corroborative evidence, the prisoner was acquitted.

THE ATTEMPTED BURGLARY AT MOSELEY WAKE GREEN James Pettifer, boatman and **Thomas Smith**, boatman, stood charged with an attempt at burglary, at the house of the Misses Anderton, at Moseley Wake Green, on the 17th of December. Mr Chance prosecuted; the prisoners were undefended.

Police Constable Hawkes of the Worcestershire force, deposed: That about half past one o'clock on the night named, he was on duty in the neighbourhood of the Misses Anderton's house, and noticed that the garden gate had been wrenched open. He (witness) listened, and heard a voice say, "Come in". The man then retired a few yards, but the officer turned his light upon him, and discovered that he was the prisoner Smith. Witness then endeavoured to capture him, but he resisted, and other footsteps approached from behind. Witness was immediately after struck on the head. He returned

this blow, but immediately received another, which staggered him. Two men then came up the garden, and escaped by climbing a shed and scaling a wall. Shortly afterwards, meeting Police Constable Lane, he told him what had occurred, and the prisoners were arrested about four o'clock the same morning. The premises were then examined, and Hawkes found a crowbar on the roof of the shed over which the prisoner Smith and the other man climbed. Witness believed the other man was Pettifer. The garden gate had been broken, and the hasp forced off by some such instrument; and the marks on the door also exactly corresponded with the crowbar. There were likewise other marks on the drawing room window, and also on the front door, which had been pierced with a centre bit. The door was, however, lined with iron, and the attempt there had failed. There were marks of footsteps of two persons in the garden, and several of them exactly corresponded with the shoes of the two prisoners. The impressions were perfect, the soil being sandy.

Police Constable Lane deposed to meeting the prisoners on the Birmingham and Worcester Road, after he had received information of the attempt at burglary from the preceding witness. It was about an hour afterwards that he saw them; and in reply to a question by Lane, they said they were returning from Worcester to Birmingham. The road in which the prisoners were apprehended was not the Worcester road, and in excuse the prisoners said that being strangers they might have mistaken the road. The place where the prisoners were taken is about half a mile from the Misses Anderton's, and the prisoners could easily get there by crossing some fields. They did not go the direct road, or the witness would have met them earlier.

Superintendent Humphries deposed to receiving the prisoners into custody, and comparing their shoes with the footmarks in the garden. They exactly corresponded. In a field into which the two prisoners dropped from the wall, there were distinctly perceptible the footmarks of five persons, and all pointed in the same direction. In this field the impressions of the prisoners' shoes were clearly traceable.

These witnesses were closely questioned by the Right Hon Chairman, in order to clear up any doubt as to the identity of the footmarks.

Pettifer made no defence; but Smith said that he and Pettifer had been to Worcester to "work a boat", and were walking back to Birmingham, when they were stopped by the policeman. They had not been near the prosecutrix's house, and being strangers, it was a matter of no surprise that they had turned a little out of the direct road. - The learned chairman summed up in a most comprehensive manner, and pointed out to the jury the necessity that they should be quite satisfied as to the evidence of the identity of the footmarks. - A verdict of "Guilty" was returned; and in the summing up, the Chairman said that there was no doubt that the prisoners formed part of a gang who had left Birmingham for the purpose of committing a gross outrage. That was prevented by the vigilance and good conduct of the police, who deserved the greatest amount of credit for the manner in which they had performed their duty. The Court thought it a good policy always to reward such meritorious services, and he would therefore direct that a reward of £5 should be presented to Police Constable Hawkes, and £2 to Police Constable Lane; while the conduct of Superintendent Humphries could not be passed over without an expression of approbation. The prisoners were then sentenced to two years hard labour each.

4 January 15 1858 Brierley Hill

SINGULAR CHARGE OF STEALING A HORSE On Thursday, at Brierley Hill, before John Leigh Esq., a boatman, named John Featherston, was charged with stealing a horse, and with embezzling the sum of £1 11s, the property of Mr Firmstone, ironmaster, by whom he had been employed. Mr Homfray appeared to support the charge, and Mr Burbury for the defendant. From the evidence of the prosecutor's managing clerk, Mr James McEwan, it would appear that, on the 30th of November last, the prisoner was entrusted with a chestnut coloured pony, and with £2 6s 10d, to proceed on a voyage with a boat load of pig iron to Messrs Barrows and Hall's ironworks of Tipton. Thence he had instructions to proceed with his boat, etc, to Frognall, and bring back a load of ironstone. He ought to have returned in ten days from the date of starting, but he never returned. It was ascertained that at Bloomfield, Tipton, the prisoner disposed of the prosecutor's pony, and he

was subsequently taken into custody. It was calculated that by going to Bloomfield, where he duly delivered the iron, he earned the sum of 15s, and this being deducted from £2 6s, which was advanced to him to pay the expenses of the journey, left £1 11s, which never having accounted for, he was charged with embezzling. Mr Burbury denied the charge of felony altogether, and said he would satisfy the Bench that the man had been taken very improperly into custody. His instructions were, that the man came into possession of the pony by giving two donkeys and £5; that the £5 was advanced by Mr Firmstone, and that in proof of this his client had paid £1 to Mr Firmstone in four instalments, in reduction of the debt. Mr McEwan, however, denied this arrangement, and said the instalments of 5s were paid for the use of the pony only. He also said that the donkeys which were given with the £5, which he paid himself, also belonged to Mr Firmstone; but the prisoner himself said he bought the donkeys, and paid Mr Firmstone for them by instalments. Mr Homfray was quite prepared to admit that the charge of stealing the horse was incorrect, and said they were now prosecuting for the fraudulent disposal of £1 11s; but Mr Burbury denied that there had been any advance of this money, contending that his client had during the voyage been working upon his own money. Mr McEwan was prepared to swear that the 2s 6d was advanced as alleged; and Mr Homfray contended that it was a fraud, and that if such cases were not taken cognisance of by the Bench, the ironmasters and others in the district, who he believed were in the habit of making such advances to their workmen, would have no protection. Mr Leigh was of opinion that there was an intended purchase of the horse, but Mr Homfray replied that Mr Leigh, as a lawyer, well knew that until payment there was no transfer of property. Mr Firmstone, he said, might have intended to give the prisoner the horse when he had paid him £5. Mr Leigh: if he receives a horse with understanding he is to pay for it by instalments, that would not be a larceny. - Mr Homfray: I don't put it as a larceny, but as a fraud and misappropriation. Ultimately, the case was remanded to Stourbridge.

5 January 19 1858

SERIOUS ACCIDENT TO A BOATMAN. About half past eight o'clock yesterday morning, as a boatman names **Charles Caythorn**, twenty six years of age, residing in Spring Hill, was assisting in unloading a boat, at the wharf of Messrs Lloyd and Summerfield, Birmingham Heath, he met with a severe accident. Two boats were lying together, and in the act of stepping from one to the other, his foot slipped, and he fell down in such a manner as to occasion a fracture of the leg just above the ankle. He was taken to the General Hospital, where he remains.

6 January 19 1858 Tipton

ROBBERIES OF IRON. At the Public Office, West Bromwich, on Saturday last, before A Kenrick, T Bagnall and J Sharp Esqrs, a rough looking fellow, named **Thomas Westwood**, was brought up under the following circumstances. Police Constable Steele stated that on the preceding Thursday, he was on duty at Tipton Green, near the house of a marine store dealer, named Jordan, when he saw the prisoner come up with a quantity of iron on his shoulder. This he carried into Mrs Jordan's, and put into the scales near the door. However, the process of weighing was dispensed with, for the officer enquiring as to how had the iron come into the boatman's possession, and not satisfied with the old tale "Raked out of the canal", took Westwood to the station. Robert Ceeney, butty collier at Messrs J and W Hopkins pits at Dudley Port, proved that the stolen iron consisted of large "doggings" used to carry the great air troughs to ventilate the mines, were the property of the above firm. The identity was clearly established. The prisoner, who said up to the last fortnight he had been boating iron for Captain Bennitt, Oldbury Furnaces, added that whilst raking for coal, he brought up this iron. Mr Kenrick said, even if that were so, he then had no right to take it. After some consultation, the Magistrates ordered the iron "finder" to the treadmill for two months.

7 January 27 1858 West Bromwich

SINGULAR CASES OF IRON STEALING At the Public Office, West Bromwich, on Saturday last, before A Kenrick, Thomas Bagnall and Thomas Bodington, Esqrs, a boatman named William

Barlow, was brought up on remand, charged with stealing a quantity of pig iron, the property of Messrs Plant and Fisher, ironmasters, etc. It was shown in evidence that on Friday the 15th inst., Police Constable Ordish and William Adams, furnace manager to Messrs Hopkins and Son, whose works are directly opposite to those of Messrs Plant and Fisher, the prisoner and another man were caught in the act of conveying pig iron in a wheelbarrow from a stock of iron belonging to Messrs Plant and Fisher, which for convenience was placed on the premises of Messrs Hopkins. The officer saw also in the boat about 5cwt of the same kind of iron. The prisoner, who said he and the other man (who got off), had brought the metal from the Messrs Hopkins, was taken into custody. The identity of a portion of the iron was fully proved, and as the only defence was that the man who ran away was the thief, the prisoner was committed for trial. Referring to this and the following, a second charge against Barlow, we may state that he is a boatman under Mr Stone, who contracts at various ironworks for the removal of ashes, and was so employed when he took Messrs Plant and Fisher's iron. The prisoner was secondly charged with stealing, at the same date, a quantity of iron chain, and some wrought iron bars, the property of Messrs Hopkins and Son. The same witnesses who had given evidence on the previous matter proved in an equally clear manner this charge, and the cinder boatman was committed for this offence also.

8 February 11 1858 Birmingham County Court

LIABILITY OF PUBLICANS **Moore** v Charlesworth (Jane) – This was a small matter, but yet the judges decision invests it with interest. The parties conducted their own cases, and the point stood thus. Plaintiff is a boatman, from Shallborough, near Derby, and the defendant is a landlady of the Tyndall Arms, Cambridge Street. At this inn, which abuts upon the canal, a row of stabling has been erected, for the purpose of accommodating the horses of the boatmen passing along the canal. The charge is 3d per horse per night (for stabling only), and on New Year's night, Moore put his horse and the harness into one of defendant's stables, as above. Going the next morning for the animal, that was safe enough, but a large portion of the harness was missing. No doubt but that it had been stolen, as the stable doors are not locked, and the boatman sought today to recover a sum of £1 5s, as the value of his lost tackle. Defendant said that she could not see in what way she was liable: but his Honour said she was clearly responsible for the safe custody of the harness, and gave plaintiff a verdict for the sum he claimed.

9 March 16 1858 Warwick Assizes

CUTTING AND WOUNDING AT TIPTON. **Joseph Green** and **John Wilson**, boatmen, were indicted for cutting and wounding Isaac Bird, at Tipton, on the 20th of December. The grand jury ignored the bill against Wilson. Mr Hill prosecuted, and Mr Cooke Evans defended the prisoner Green. - **Isaac Bird** deposed that he was a boatman, and a little before twelve o'clock on Saturday night, the 20th December, he met two men at the end of High Street, in that town, one of them was Joseph Green, the other was a man named Wilson. Prosecutor drank some rum out of a bottle with them, and then went home. He remained there a short time, and again went out. He came up with the two men a second time at the Beehive Bridge, and the prisoner and his companion tried to get into the Beehive Inn. Some females pushed them out, saying the tap was locked up. Prosecutor had just got to the spot, and the prisoner rushed at him and struck him on the left side of the throat with what he believed to be a knife, as he saw something glistening in the prisoner's hand. He immediately ran off with his companion. Prosecutor took off his handkerchief and tried to stop the blood. Some time afterwards the prisoner was seen by prosecutor in another street; he again ran off, but was stopped by a person in Park Lane and given into the custody of Police Constable Heath. Prosecutor had never quarrelled with the prisoner. An assistant of Mr Underhill, surgeon, dressed the wound the same night. Cross-examined: Green and Wilson were drunk, and there had been a little misunderstanding between some other boatmen, the prisoner and Wilson, and prosecutor interfered. A strange man also came up and “sniggered” round Wilson and Green as though to irritate them. Prosecutor told him to desist, as the men were “fresh”. The reason he left home a second time was to fetch a coat from the cabin of his boat. “If he had not done so, somebody else

would have had it before morning". The boat was close at hand. Would swear that he never struck Wilson. At Wednesbury, before the Magistrates, Wilson said he had been knocked down, and witness then denied that he had struck him. He told the doctor that he did not know whether he had been wounded with a knife or with a tobacco pipe. - **Thomas Dovey**, a boatman, deposed that at about twenty minutes past twelve on the night in question he was near the Beehive Inn, when Green came up and asked witness if he knew where a policeman lived. Witness said he did, and would take him there. Wilson then came, and asked Green where his cap was. Green replied that it must be on the ground, and it was afterwards found near the door of the inn. Prisoner had something in his hand, and said, "I have had this so far (pointing) into that b – opposite", meaning the prosecutor. Witness would not like to swear that it was a knife, although the moon was shining. Prisoner wiped it "up and down" his trouser leg. Wilson again came up, and took the article from him. Witness deposed to the prisoner and Wilson running away, and to the prisoner's apprehension. Witness was cross-examined, but nothing material was elicited. The prisoner, Wilson and witness were all "fresh". - Heath, a watchman, received Green in custody, and found nothing on him but a short black tobacco pipe. About half an hour afterwards, Wilson was taken into custody, and a pocket knife found upon him. - Mr W L Underhill, surgeon, deposed that the wound received by the prosecutor was on the left side of the neck, and passed upwards and inwards until it was stopped by the cartilage of the upper part of the windpipe. It was an incised wound, about an inch and a half long, and was not dangerous, and might have been inflicted by the pocket knife produced. - Mr Evans, in defence, contended that the wound was inflicted in self defence, and that there was nothing to clearly show that Green was the man who inflicted it. - Underwood Johnson, a tailor, of Leicester, had known the prisoner for twelve years, and he was a thoroughly honest man. His Lordship then minutely summed up, and the Jury returned a verdict of guilty of unlawfully wounding. Prisoner was sentenced to nine months hard labour.

10 March 22 1858 Warwick Assizes

PLEADED GUILTY **John Wills**, boatman, to having in his possession five half crowns and two shillings, all counterfeit, at Napton-on-the-Hill, on the 9th of March. Twelve months hard labour.

11 March 23 1858 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A BOAT HORSE A rough, ill-looking fellow, named **Thomas Witton**, a boatman employed by Mr Jutson of the Liverpool Street Vitriol Works, was charged as above. Mr C J Pettitt, a factor in Suffolk Street, stated that being on the canal side, near the nail works, at Smethwick, he saw the prisoner on two distinct occasions not only beat his boat horse with his whip in a most savage and brutal manner, but actually "rammed the butt end of the whip into the poor animal's ear". The last time this savage act of cruelty was done, the horse fell as it were insensible, and had to be unloosened from the boat, and was a long time ere it recovered. Applying to the fellow for his name, that was refused; and Mr Pettitt was told that as the animal had not been beaten "with and unlawful weapon" he could do nought in it. However, witness was not to be thus put off from performing what he felt to be an act of public duty, and he at last got the defendant's name from Mr Jutson. Of course the poor animal did not belong to that gentleman; it had been bought at a low figure, and was in a very weak state. Mr Kynnersley said it was an act of great brutality, and the perpetrator must pay a fine of 40s, or go to gaol for a month. Mr Pettitt, who had received the thanks of the Stipendiary for his very humane conduct, asked whether the punishment could not be lessened. Mr Kynnersley said he could not, consistently with his duty, do so; the full penalty for such inhumanity was £5, and the term of imprisonment six months.

12 March 26 1858 Birmingham Police Court

A BRUTAL WIFE BEATER A savage looking boatman named **John Biddulph**, living in a court in Navigation Street, was charged with being drunk and beating his wife, on Wednesday night last. The wife, a poor looking, emaciated woman, stated that she was constantly subjected by the defendant to brutal ill-usage; and Claxton, the head turnkey, said that in July last the fellow was

sentenced to three months hard labour for a similar offence. Police Constable Cousin stated that last night, about eight o'clock, he was called into the court above named, and there saw the prisoner beating his wife, and also heard him threaten the neighbours. He had nothing to say in extenuation, and was committed for three months hard labour; at the expiration of that period to find two sureties in £10 each, himself being bound in £20, to keep the peace for six months. In default of finding sureties to be further imprisoned for six months.

13 April 1 1858 Dudley

CRUELTY TO A HORSE Yesterday, a lad about 15, Stephen Fleet, son of a furnace manager named William Fleet, of Dudley Port, was charged with cruelly torturing a horse belonging to **Charles Williams**, of Tipton Green, boatman, on the 14th March. Mr Lowe was for the defence. The lad was shown to have struck the animal while in the stable with a large fork and to have inflicted a large wound. Mr Fleet and several members of his family were called to prove an alibi, but the Bench, after expressing an opinion that all the witnesses for the defence had perjured themselves, fined the complainant £5 and costs.

14 April 30 1858 Wolverhampton

MAGISTERIAL Yesterday, at the Police Courts, before T R Andrews, E Perry and G Edwardes Esqrs, Susannah Herrington was charged with illegally pledging several articles of wearing apparel, the property of **John Hodson**, boatman. It appeared that Hodson lived apart from his wife, and had been cohabiting with the accused, who on Monday night pawned some of his clothing, as she alleged, to redeem her own, and to pay debts which she had incurred for him. Prosecutor had since partly condoned the offence, and the Bench discharged the prisoner, at the same time telling the prosecutor that they had no sympathy with him, that he had been rightly served.

15 May 17 1858

SINGULAR ACCIDENT TO A BOATMAN As a man named **William Heath** was, on Friday evening last, going with his boat along the canal, near Fazeley Street, by some means the horse attached to the boat suddenly fell upon Heath, who was in the act of driving at the time, and fractured the unfortunate man's thigh. He was taken to the General Hospital, where the sufferer is going on well.

16 June 25 1858 Birmingham Police Court

THE ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN A man named **James Slater**, brought up on remand, was charged with stealing £1 4s and a waistcoat, the property of a boat captain, **R Pearley**, at the Thirteen Locks. The thief, who had an arm broken (it was said in trying to make his escape from the officers in pursuit of him) went slyly into the vessel referred to at twelve o'clock on Saturday night last. A girl was in the cabin, the men on board being asleep; and she will prove the robbery charge against Slater, the boatman. But a remand of the matter was directed until Saturday, as the prosecutor is gone on a voyage, a short one, and will not return until that day.

17 June 28 1858

At the Public Office, on Saturday, **James Slater**, boatman, remanded on a charge of stealing £1 4s from a canal boat, on the 20th last, at the Thirteen Locks, was again placed in the dock. Police Constable Newton, 305, having stated that the prosecutor did not appear, being absent on a "distant voyage", the prisoner, who had broken his arm in attempting to escape from the constable who captured him, was discharged.

18 June 30 1858 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

STEALING OF A WATCH ETC AT KINFARE Joseph Morris was charged with stealing a silver watch and other articles, the property of **Thomas Watton**, at Kinfare. The main facts against the prisoner were that on the 5th of May, about nine o'clock at night, the prosecutor, a boatman, went to

bed in the cabin of his boat, putting his trousers, in the pocket of which was 1s 6d in money, a silver watch and a leathern purse, under his head. On awakening, he missed his trousers; and the next day the prisoner pawned the watch at a shop in Wolverhampton. When arrested he gave different accounts of how he got the watch, accusing a man named Court of having given it to him. Court, however, was acquitted of any participation in the robbery by the Magistrates, and discharged. The prisoner was found guilty, and a previous conviction having been proved, he was sentenced to eight years penal servitude.

19 July 16 1858 Walsall

A CANAL BOATMAN DROWNED About noon on Tuesday, a boatman named **Charles Blakemore**, who resided in Alison Street, Birmingham, was accidentally drowned in the canal, near Perry Barr. He had been engaged along with his brother in conducting a boat laden with coal from Rushall to Birmingham, and when near Perry Barr he went to fill a lock. Some ashes that were lying on the bank which slopes to the lock caused him to slip into the water in his return, his brother being at the time about a hundred yards from the spot. The body was recovered twenty minutes afterwards by **Thomas Sadler**, the lock-keeper, but life was of course extinct. An inquest was held on the following afternoon, at the Malt Shovel, on the Birmingham Road, before A A Fletcher, Esq, Borough Coroner, and a verdict of "Accidental Death" returned by the Jury.

20 August 17 1858

INQUESTS YESTERDAY The first of these enquiries, before Dr Davies, was held at the Queens Arms, Miles Street, on the body of **William Barrett**, a boatman, sixty years of age, who met with his death under the following sad circumstances. - A respectable man, named Cox, stated that on the preceding Thursday night, about eleven o'clock, he met the deceased in a state of intoxication in Sandy Lane. As well as he could understand, Barrett was in search of his boat, on the canal near, and witness directed him accordingly. Deceased then said, "All right", and Mr Cox left him. He had, however, scarcely done this when he heard the boatman call out, "Here, here". Returning immediately to the canal bank, he saw deceased in the water. Two young men accidentally passing, instantly went into the canal, and diving to the bottom, after some time succeeded in bringing up the deceased, who was quite dead. After hearing the remarks of the Coroner, the Jury returned a verdict "That the deceased was accidentally drowned while in a state of intoxication".

21 September 2 1858

CASUALTIES A boatman named **William Brookes**, from Gloucester, whilst coming with his boat through the lock at the Worcester Wharf, met with the following accident. He was on the wood gate of the lock when his boat striking against it with great force, the shock threw him off the gate on to the laden vessel. By this his rib was fractured and his shoulder blade broken.

22 September 9 1858

ACCIDENTS A boatman aged 58, named **Thomas Beaman**, whose home is in Kidderminster, was conveyed to the same institution (General Hospital), yesterday morning, having sustained a fracture of the leg by a fall of timber, while assisting to unload a boat at the Curve.

23 September 22 1858 Birmingham Police Court

THE CASE OF STABBING WITH A KNIFE We gave in Tuesday's Post the facts of a case of this serious nature, in which a man named William Knight, of Blews Street, labourer, stood charged with stabbing, with a table knife, a boatman named **William Baker**, of Pritchett Street. As is so often the case in these matters, drinking was going on at the public house, the Globe Tavern, Blews Street, being the scene. The complainant, defendant, Jemnay the carter, the water-cress man, and a "friend" of Bakers, were mixed up in a sort of fighting challenge, which took place. According to his own account Knight had the knife in his hand, and with that weapon cut the left hand of Baker in two places. Mr W P Goodall, house surgeon at the General Hospital, proved the existence of the

wounds, which had been dressed and attended to at the institution on Monday, the affray taking place on Sunday night last. The defendant said Baker got the cuts in an endeavour to take the knife from him, and that he (the complainant) urged him to fight, or said that he had struck a man named Hollins, a friend of Baker's. It was further stated against the accused, that he had wielded his knife in so reckless a manner as to wound a begging man in the neck, and another person, but neither of these parties appeared. The Magistrates thought that quite sufficient cause had been shown to induce them to send the case before a jury, and the prisoner was then committed for trial.

24 October 4 1858 West Bromwich

THE IRON ROBBERY AT GREET'S GREEN At the Public Office, on Saturday last, a boatman named **William Wimblett**, in the employ of Messrs B Richards and Sons, ironmasters, Greet's Green, was charged with stealing a quantity of pig iron, the property of his employers. It was shown in the course of a long enquiry that the prisoner had been a boatman in Messrs Richards' service for about three months. Suspicion as to his honesty had arisen, and some idea may be formed of the importance of this case, when Mr Thomas Richards (one of the firm) stated that, within the last two months, they had been obliged to pay to customers for short weight in their iron deliveries between £30 and £40. The discovery as to the guilt of the prisoner arose thus. A respectable man, formerly a puddler, now a shopkeeper at Greet's Green, named Edward York, stated that on the 27th of September, being on the premises of a person named Dallaway, a general dealer, he saw Wimblett, who had a lad with him, carry some pigs of iron from a boat towards Dallaway's yard. Suspecting that all was not right, he gave information to Police Constable Fenner, who subsequently took the prisoner into custody. When spoken to, Wimblett gave the officer the same account he had previously given the witness York, "I found the iron near Tividale, in the boat, and I was going to sell it at Dallaway's". The whole quantity found in the prisoner's boat was worth at least £3. Mr Richards, junior, and the witness York clearly identified a portion of the stolen pigs as the property of the firm. After some prevarication, the boatman pleaded guilty to the charge. Lord Calthorpe, in the course of his address to the prisoner, said that this was an important case and very often the difficulty as to identifying stolen iron caused the escape of many guilty parties. The court, by way of example, were determined to give the full amount of punishment allowed by law, and Wimblett must go to Stafford, to hard labour, for the period of six months.

25 October 11 1858 Wolverhampton

STEALING TIMBER At the Police Court, on Saturday, before the Mayor, W Warren and J Underhill Esqrs., **William Heath**, a boatman, was charged with stealing three planks, the property of Mr William Walford, timber merchant, Wolverhampton. From the evidence adduced by the prosecution, it appeared that the prisoner was in the habit of bringing lime from Stoke-on-Trent, and on his return voyage carrying timber for the prosecutor and others. In September last, he had two lots, one for a party near Stafford, and one for another at Stoke. Of the Stafford lot it seemed he had retained three planks, although, as they were not counted by the receiver, he got his return note duly signed, and these planks he endeavoured to dispose of to a neighbour of Mr Walford's. The prisoner's defence was that when he lost any wood, he had to pay for it, and he seemed to think inversely, that when he had a surplus, and had his receipts all right, he had a right to retain it. The Bench, however, did not think so, and as he declined pleading guilty, and having the case disposed of summarily, he was committed for trial.

26 October 14 1858 Second Court

CHARGE OF STABBING A boat hauler, named **William Knight**, was charged with the above offence by a man named **William Baker**, a boatman. There had, it was shown in the course of a long enquiry, been a row in Manchester Street, and a companion of prosecutor's knocking the prisoner down, without any provocation, Knight cut Baker's fingers with a case knife. After hearing the charge of Mr Spooner, the jury acquitted the prisoner.

27 October 15 1858 Birmingham Police Court

TOO MUCH BEER AND TOO MUCH WATER An aged devotee of the “jolly god”, whose appearance indicated that he could scarcely receive too much water in a sanitary point of view, was brought up on a charge of drunkenness, under rather peculiar circumstances. He gave the name of **Edward Glover**, and said he was sixty seven years of age, and a boatman. Police constable Clews (214) stated that he found the old toper drunk in the canal, near Snow Hill, at half past one in the morning, and unable to get out. He had evidently been over head in the water, but seemed to have struggled to a shallow place, where he lay crying for help. Upon help reaching him in the shape of Clews and another officer Mountford (281), the old fellow indignantly rejected the ready aid of a walking stick, but hiccupped an intimation that he preferred lying among the eels until one of his own tools (a boat hook) was procured. After some delay, during which this stickler for business customs lay patiently in the mud and water, a hook was obtained, with which he was literally hooked on to the bank by the collar of his coat. He said he had been a teetotaler for two months, but having had a donkey or two drowned he had taken a little beer to drown his sorrow, and was on the way to his boat when he fell into the water, and was nearly drowned himself. Upon promising to be more careful in future, he was allowed to depart without punishment, the Bench evidently thinking the quantity of water he had taken upon the beer, was a sufficient liquidation of the offence of tippling.

28 October 21 1858

TWO MEN DROWNED IN THE CANAL AT OLDBURY Last evening (Wednesday) an inquest was held at the Railway Inn, near the Stour Valley Station, before Ralph Docker, Esq., and a Jury of which Mr Cornelius Bagnall, of Oldbury, was Foreman on the bodies of **Thomas Weobley**, boatman aged thirty eight years; and **Charles Thomas** aged fifty years, also a boatman, who were found drowned on Tuesday morning last at the Plash Arm of the Low Level Canal, near the Railway Carriage Works, Oldbury. It appeared from the evidence of John Morris, a sawyer working at the carriage establishment, that he was following his employment looking for some timber by the canal side on Tuesday morning last, about seven o'clock, when he perceived a body partly doubled up in the water, the head and feet being down, and the back visible above the surface. He called for a boat hook, and the body, on being pulled out, proved to be that of Charles Thomas, The deceased (Thomas) was known to be connected with a boat belonging to Mr South of Ledbury, which was lying near; and as Weobley, who was also employed with Thomas on the same barge, was not seen anywhere about, a search was made, and his corpse was found about ten feet from the place. The night of Monday was very stormy. The deceased were in the Cross Guns Public House, Oldbury, about nine o'clock, and left in the direction of the canal; and it is alleged that the fact of their having had a little drink, and the path to the boat being wet, slippery and dangerous during the storm, which prevailed at the time they must have been going on board, had caused them to slip into the canal, and there have remained in a helpless state and expired. A verdict of “Found drowned” in both cases was returned. Weobley has left a wife and four or five children; Thomas is unmarried.

29 November 17 1858 News of the Day

DEATH FROM DROWNING Last night, an inquest was held at Mr C Mulligan's, the Queens Arms, Miles Street, Coventry Road on the body of a fine boy, seven years of age, named Wm **Johnson**. The evidence went to show that deceased lived with his parents (his father being a boatman) near the banks of the Warwick and Napton Canal in the vicinity of Miles Street. On Sunday afternoon last, about three o'clock, deceased, without saying anything to his mother, went out of the house. Why did not clearly appear, but as if Mrs Johnson had some presentiment of evil, she in less than two minutes went to seek her son, and shouted out his name aloud. Not finding deceased either at the back or at the front of the cottage, she proceeded to the towing path of the canal and here a man named Millard told her he thought her son, when he had heard her call, was in the water, as he just before heard a splash in the water. The poor woman then ran for her husband, drags were procured, and in a short time the body of the poor boy was found nearly opposite the

gate of his home. He was lifeless, as twenty minutes had elapsed before his corpse was got out of the canal. As the tin bowl belonging to the family was seen floating on the edge of the water, it is inferred that deceased was amusing himself with dipping this vessel into the canal, and the wind being strong at the time, he overbalanced, and fell headlong into the watery element. After hearing the remarks of the Coroner, the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

30 November 18 1858 Dudley

STEALING A PAIR OF BREECHES Yesterday, (Wednesday) at the New Town Hall, Dudley, before J E Swindell and William Haden, Esqrs., **Joseph Gibson**, boatman, was brought up on remand charged with stealing a pair of trousers, the property of William Dance. The prisoner was apprehended on Saturday morning last, at two o'clock, in High Street, in this town, by Police-constable Tyler, for having in his possession a bundle of new clothes, for which he could not satisfactorily account. Amongst the articles was a pair of new breeches, which Mr Dance, the prosecutor, who lives in the neighbourhood of Dudley, identified as his property, and which, it appeared, had been taken from his premises. The prisoner, on being taken into custody, alleged that the breeches were given to him by a person he had been working for in lieu of wages. He was committed for trial.

31 November 23 1858 Dudley

THE HOP STEALING CASE AT DARBY HAND Yesterday (Monday), at the New Town Hall, Dudley before Captain Bennitt, William Round, landlord of the Boat Inn, Netherton, was brought up on remand charged with stealing two bags of malt and a half a packet of hops, the property of Mrs Morgan, of the Crown Public House, Darby Hand. An additional witness named **Brookes**, a boatman, living at Primrose Hill, Dudley, deposed that about three o'clock on the morning of Friday week he was travelling along the road, and saw three men near () Bridge (about one hundred yards from the prosecutrix's premises), one of whom had two full sacks on his back, and the other two one sack each with them. He did not, however, see the faces of any of the men, and was unable to identify them. Another man, named Thomas Pritchard, a collier, living next door to William Round, the prisoner, at Netherton, said that on Friday morning week, between three and four o'clock, he heard some men outside his house talking, and got up and looked through the window. He then saw something like a bag resting on the top of a wall adjoining, in the charge of four men. It was so dark that he could not tell who they were. The prisoner cross-examined the last witness, and asked him how it was that being a neighbour, and knowing his voice, he could not tell whether he (Round) was there or not. Witness replied that he could have done so, but he never heard him speak. The prisoner was still further remanded till Monday next.

32 December 2 1858 Wednesbury

STEALING SHOES On Tuesday, **William Wise**, a boatman, was charged with stealing a pair of shoes, on Friday, from the bar of a public house at Tipton. These belonged to Henry Jones, who had gone there for refreshment, and missed them five minutes after he had placed them on the floor near the counter. Police-constable 192, from information he received on Friday night, took the prisoner into custody, with the shoes in his possession. The prisoner was committed to the House of Correction for one month, with hard labour.

33 January 7 1859 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

CHARGE OF RECEIVING STOLEN PROPERTY John Smith, a marine store dealer, surrendered to take his trial on a charge of feloniously receiving 60lbs of cast iron, the property of John Jones and John Murcott, at Wednesfield, well knowing the same to be stolen. Mr Hill was counsel for prosecutors, Mr Jenkins for the prisoner. The case against the prisoner rested mainly on the testimony of an approver named **Pilsbury**, who had stolen the iron from the prosecutors, and it appeared from his testimony that the prisoner was a marine store dealer, living near the canal side at Wednesfield, and that he (Pilsbury) was boatman for the prosecutors, and managed the boats from

one of their works at Spring Vale to the other at Birch Hall. On the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of last month, he left iron at the prisoner's house, which he had taken out of the boat, and for which he received payment. To corroborate this statement, a man named Bradley was called, who deposed that on the days in question he saw the prisoner stop his boat, and take from it some bulky substance, wrapped in a rough sack; but on cross-examination it transpired that the prisoner's wife received one of the lots of iron, and as the money paid by the prisoner for the quantities was the usual one paid for old iron, the Jury acquitted the prisoner of any felonious intention, and he was discharged.

34 February 8 1859 Wolverhampton

HORSE STEALING At the Police Court yesterday, before B Hicklin, J Wynn and G L Underhill, Esqrs., **Joseph Wolff** was brought up on remand charged with fraudulently disposing of a horse, the property of his master, **Henry Fisher**, boatman, Brierley Hill. The prisoner, who was entrusted with the horse, brought it to Wolverhampton on Thursday last, and disposed of it for 16s 6d. He was committed for trial at the assizes.

35 February 22 1859 Birmingham Police Court

WHOLESALE COAL STEALING Another juvenile, named **James Sweatman**, aged twelve years, who is engaged in canal boating, stood charged with being concerned in stealing 10cwt of coal, from the wharf at Oozells Street, the property of Joseph Brooks, of Swallow Street. The charge was proved by **John Leedham**, a boatman in the employ of the prosecutor. The latter stated that within the last three months he had lost a great quantity of coal, sometimes as much as a ton per night. The prisoner admitted the offence, but was ordered to be remanded til today for the attendance of his father.

36 March 8 1859 Rushall

ROBBERY BY A SOLDIER AND ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE FROM PRISON **Thomas Stokes**, a boatman, aged about twenty five, was charged before Mr Bagnall and Mr Bealey, at Mr Wilkinson's office, yesterday, with having on the 4th February stolen a silver watch and some articles of wearing apparel, from the house of Joseph Walker, at Rushall. Benjamin Walker, to whom the watch belonged, deposed that on the night before the day in question, the prisoner came to his father's house, and asked for a night's lodging. He was dressed in the uniform of the Light Dragoons, and said he was on furlough. A night's lodging was given him, and he slept in the same room but not in the same bed with witness and another man. The watch was hanging from the bed post, and was quite safe when he went to sleep, but on the following morning, when the prisoner had gone, the watch was missed. It was subsequently found at Mr Wood's, pawnbroker, Dudley, and was identified. Ezekiel Mainwood gave evidence to the effect that a shirt, pair of trousers, and a silk necktie, belonging to him, had been taken away from the bedroom in which he, last witness, and the prisoner had slept, and the articles produced he fully identified as his. The other evidence proved that the watch was pledged in Dudley by the prisoner; that Inspector Price, after repeated enquiries, apprehended the prisoner on Monday, the 28th ultimo; and that he was then wearing the shirt and trousers produced. The prisoner, who said he had been a soldier twelve months, was committed to take his trial at the County Sessions. Inspector Price stated that the prisoner had endeavoured to make his escape from the lock-up, to effect which he had taken some bricks out of the wall, torn the sheet iron from the cell door, and broke a cast iron grating. This he did on Saturday night, and then put the bricks back, and removed all traces of his work, with the view of resuming it the next night. The damage done to the cell will cost about £2 to repair, and the Magistrates ordered the fact to be entered on the depositions.

37 March 10 1859 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING A WATCH A Young woman named Ann Stewart, a prostitute, living in Granville Street, was brought up, charged by **David Pearson**, a boatman, living in Oldbury, with stealing his watch. It appeared that on the 21st of February last, the complainant went to a beer house in Broad

Street, where he saw the prisoner there, they had some beer together, and he subsequently went home with Ann Stewart. The complainant shortly afterwards went to bed, and was awoke about twelve o'clock by hearing a noise in the room; he felt for his watch, but found that it was gone, he immediately dressed himself and left the house. He did not see his watch again till Monday last, when he found that it was in the possession of a man named Harris, who was in the public house in Broad Street, where the complainant had first met the prisoner. Asking how he got possession of it, he replied that he had given the prisoner 3s 6d for a pawn ticket, the watch being in pledge. The prisoner, who pleaded not guilty, was committed to the Sessions for trial.

38 March 10 1859 Dudley

STEALING IRON At the Public Office yesterday, before Captain Bennett, W Haden and E H Molyneux, Esqrs., **James Fox**, a boatman, was placed in the dock, on a charge of having, on the 2nd instant, stolen about three quarters of a hundredweight of iron from the works of Messrs Swindell, at Netherton Lock. There was some considerable doubt about the case, but ultimately, after a lengthy and tedious investigation, the Bench considered the charge proved, and therefore sentenced the prisoner to twenty one days hard labour.

39 March 24 1859 Warwickshire Lent Assizes

LEAD STEALING AT KNOWLE **William Cox**, aged 28, boatman, pleaded not guilty to stealing about 70lbs of lead, value 14s, the property of Mark Sturley, on the 16th of October 1857. Mr Elers prosecuted. The lead was stolen from an uninhabited house. The prisoner and three other men were drinking together at a public house at Knowle, on the night before the robbery. They all left together, and the next morning the robbery was discovered. Suspicion fell upon the four men, and a watch was set upon their boat, which lay on the canal near Knowle. The boat was started in the direction of Birmingham, when the constables pounced upon the men, and took the three already convicted into custody. The lead was found in the cabin of the boat. The prisoner begged to be allowed to navigate the boat to a certain lock, which was granted. On nearing the lock, another boat approached upon which the prisoner leaped, and so escaped to the other side of the canal. He got clear off, and was not seen again until the 4th of February last. The Jury found a verdict of guilty, and the prisoner was sentenced to six months hard labour.

40 March 31 1859 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

STEALING A WATCH Ann Stewart, aged 22, a married woman, was found guilty of stealing a watch, chain and seals, the property of **David Pearson**, a boatman. The evidence of the prosecutor showed that on the night of the 21st of February, he met the prisoner, whom he had previously known. They had something to drink together, and eventually went to bed. The prosecutor put his watch into his trouser's pocket, and placed the garment behind his pillow. About twelve o'clock at night, he was awoke by a noise downstairs, and immediately discovered that both the prisoner and his watch were gone. It was also proved that the prisoner had pledged the watch, and offered the ticket for sale to a person who bought it; and by a strange circumstance, offered it for sale to the prosecutor. The prisoner was traced, and given into custody. She was found guilty, and sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment.

41 April 4 1859 North Staffordshire

FENTON At the Fenton Police Court, on Friday, before T B Rose, Esq., **Charles Davis**, a boatman, for impeding Police-constable Robert Wood in the execution of his duty, was sent to prison for one month, in default of paying a fine of 40s and costs; and for threatening to throw the officer into the canal was required to find sureties to keep the peace.

42 May 3 1859 Wolverhampton

AN INGRATE At the Petty Sessions, yesterday, **Richard Bristow**, a boatman well known to the police, was charged with stealing four shirts and a pair of boots, the property of another boatman

named **Thomas Wildman**. He had met with several other boatmen on the Saturday night, who had given him his supper, and the ungrateful scamp returned, and stole the articles mentioned. He was apprehended next night by Police-constable Niblett. Prisoner alleged that he had taken the boots and shirts from the real thief, whom he had also tried to apprehend. The Bench did not believe the story, and committed him to prison for three months, with hard labour.

43 May 30 1859 Tipton

STEALING MONEY FROM A BOAT At the Public Office, West Bromwich, on Saturday last, before A Kenrick and W Sharp, Esqrs., a lad giving the name of **John Morgan** was brought up on the above charge. **Thomas Nicholls**, a boatman, stated that some weeks ago, he being ill at the time, his wife had taken the prisoner, who was in a state of destitution, to help drive the boat home. He, however, had not been with them but two days when he broke open their cupboard and stole 9s. The young vagabond was sent to gaol for fourteen days, with an addendum to have one good whipping.

44 June 3 1859 Walsall

BRUTAL ASSAULT On Saturday last, the police received information that a man named **Thomas Holden**, a boatman, living in Phoenix Street, West Bromwich, had been attacked on the previous night in the most brutal manner, and so badly used as to render it necessary for him to be conveyed to his home, and procure medical aid. Upon enquiry, it was discovered that this was quite true, and that the assault was committed on the canal side, near the Pleck, Holden then having charge of a boat laden with coal. The men, whom he said he could identify, beat and stabbed him, and inflicted several wounds of a serious nature upon his head and body. Two men named Patrick Ward and John Ward, living in the Blue Lanes, have since been apprehended by the police, and are now in custody. They will undergo an examination on Monday next, at the Guildhall, if Holden is well enough to give evidence.

45 June 13 1859 Stourport

SHOCKING DEATH OF A BURGLAR On Thursday night last, about twelve o'clock, a most painful and shocking occurrence occurred in this town. A boatman, who it afterwards appeared was **Isaiah Godfrey**, in the employ of Messrs Danks, Venn and Sanders, carriers, broke into the offices of the above named firm, which are close to the basin. He appears to have entered by forcing the bars and shutters of the office window, near the bridge, and which is in a very exposed situation. About twelve o'clock some people passing by the office were attracted by the noise, and at once gave an alarm to Mr Danks, who with Police-constable Stanton quickly arrived at the office. The burglar, perceiving that he was discovered, and his retreat in the way he entered cut off, opened a window overlooking the basin, and at once jumped into the water. The night was very dark, and the burglar had, it appears, made up his mind not to be caught; he went towards the bridge, and it appears he rested with his arms upon the side, but by this time several people had arrived, and to avoid detection, he being an expert swimmer, at once swam to the middle of the basin towards his boat. Owing to the darkness of the night he could not be seen. Lanterns were held on the water, and the people shouted to him to induce him to come to them, but it was of no avail, and being unable to reach his boat he became exhausted and was finally drowned, the body not being found till next morning. On searching the office it appeared that the desks and drawers had been forcibly entered with a crowbar, which was left behind, and some of the windows broken. He did not meet with much spoil, as only 3s 11d and forty four postage stamps were taken. On searching the body the postage stamps and money were found in the pockets. The deceased, it appears, was a single man but of indifferent repute. He was a native of this town, and has been working a boat to Gloucester etc, lately. He had once been transported, and dreaded being apprehended; and it is said that shortly before the occurrence he stated that if he thought he should be caught in anything again, he would rather be drowned than be caught. Being considered a good swimmer, he doubtless expected to be able to gain his boat. An inquest will be held on the body today.

46 June 15 1859 Smethwick

ROBBING AN EX CAPTAIN At the Wednesbury Petty Sessions, yesterday, before Mr Leigh, **John Horton**, boatman, was charged with having, on Monday night, at the Windmill Tavern robbed Josiah Scuder Osbaldeaton of several books and papers. Prosecutor stated that he was formerly captain in the 13th Regiment of Infantry and returned from America in 1828. On Monday night he went to the house above named, having the property he had lost in a bundle. The prisoner was there, but he did not see him take the books. Police-constable Harrison, who was called at the time, took the prisoner into custody, and found the stolen goods in his pocket. Prisoner's wife said she had compromised the affair with prosecutor for 7s, but the Bench could not, of course, take notice of any such arrangement, and therefore ordered a committal to the Sessions, but intimated that bail in two sureties of £20 each would be accepted.

47 June 21 1959 Birmingham Midsummer Quarter Sessions

A BAG SNATCHER HEAVILY PUNISHED **William Trusler**, aged 20, a boatman, pleaded guilty to an indictment of two counts, charging him with snatching from Elizabeth Gray, on the 12th of April, a bag containing a portmonnaie and 3s; and on the 14th of April, another bag containing 13s, and a pair of stockings, from Jane Jordan. Trusler has been convicted no fewer than seven times, and the Recorder said there was no probability of his becoming a better man until he had undergone a long probation of punishment. He was sentenced to ten years penal servitude for stealing Mrs Gray's bag; the other charge to hang over him, so that at any subsequent period, if he again misbehaved himself, he might be retaken and sentenced upon it.

48 July 1 1859 Birmingham Police Court

REMANDED CHARGE OF STEALING BOTTLES A boatman named **Joseph Poyner**, sixteen years of age, having no fixed residence, who has been remanded some days on the charge of having in his possession six stone bottles, supposed to be stolen, was again brought up. Police-constable 182 said he had made enquiries, but could not find any owner for the property. The prisoner was therefore discharged.

49 August 12 1859 Tunstall

DISGRACEFUL ASSAULT At the Police Court, yesterday, Wilmot Hassall, beerhouse keeper, Tunnel End, near Tunstall, was charged with assaulting an old woman, named **Elizabeth Rowley**, the wife of a boatman. According to the complainant's evidence, it appeared that the defendant had been in the habit of harbouring her son in his house, and inducing him to spend his money in dissipation. He had succeeded so well in this that her son, who earned 27s a week, seldom gave his mother more than 4s or 5s a week, though she was partially dependent on him, and provided him with food and lodging. She was naturally indignant at this course of treatment, and as naturally blamed the defendant as her son. She often went to the defendant's house to fetch her son away, and went on this errand on Saturday evening. The defendant came and ordered her out, threatening to knock her old brains out, and took hold of her by her shoulders, struck her in the back, and turned her out of the house. The defendant said that the complainant was in the habit of coming into his house and creating a disturbance, and he had told her several times he would not have her there. She was very abusive. The Magistrates, after administering a severe castigation to the defendant for his unprincipled conduct towards the unfortunate old lady, fined him 40s and costs, or one month in default.

50 August 17 1859 Leamington

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE About seven o'clock on Sunday evening last, a young man named Frederick Knowles, formerly a gentleman's servant, was seen standing on the Tashbrook Road, near the canal bridge. He was observed to take his hat off, and set it down on the ground, by a boatman, named **Elijah Moore**. The latter directly afterwards heard and saw a splash in the water. He then

obtained his boat hook, ran to the spot, and succeeded in drawing Knowles to the side, but was unable himself to get him out of the canal. Assistance, however, speedily arrived, and with the aid of a young man named Keightley, he was rescued from his perilous position, and taken to the police station in a very weak and exhausted condition. Mr Busby, surgeon, of Leamington was promptly in attendance, and under his skilful care the foolish fellow soon became "himself again". On Monday, he was brought before C Milward, Esq., at the Town Hall, charged with an attempt at self destruction, for which he was sentenced to seven days imprisonment. It appears that some two years ago he married at Leamington a female named Bazeley, and a short time back she came to pay her mother a visit, in Queen Street, Leamington. On Thursday week he left London and came to Leamington, wishing to see his wife, in order to take her back with him, but she refused to accompany him home. His mother-in-law denied him admittance into the house, and nothing more was heard of him until Friday afternoon, when he again visited his mother-in-law's house for the purpose of claiming his wife. After remaining some time he was ordered out, but he objected to leave unless he could take his wife with him. Subsequently, however, he did leave, but without his "better half", which probably was the reason of his attempt at self destruction.

51 August 26 1859 Aston Petty Sessions

Yesterday, before Jno Aston and J O Bacchus, Esqrs, a pleasant-featured scampish looking young fellow, named George Smith was charged with stealing three live rabbits, the property of **Joseph Thompson**, a boatman. The animals were seen safe in their hutch on the night of Monday last, and on the owner going to feed them the next morning, he found the place empty. Police-constable Joseph Hewitt deposed that at an early hour on Tuesday morning he met the prisoner and another man, who got away. Suspecting from the bulk of his pockets that he had been on some marauding expedition, he searched him, and found the three rabbits, still alive, in his possession. One was a fine doe, which gave birth to nine young ones at the station, all of which died. Smith acknowledged his guilt, and thanked the Bench in the most pleasant manner for sending him to hard labour for three months.

52 September 2 1859 Hanley

BOROUGH MAGISTRATES MEETING At the Hanley Borough Police Court, held yesterday, before W Brownfield, J Ridgeway and J Dimmock Esqrs., **Richard Frost**, a boatman, was fined 40s and costs, or two months imprisonment in default for forcibly opposing the collection from him of 1 1/2p, due at the Etruria Gate on account of a horse which he was riding. Not contented with forcing his horse through the gate, he assaulted the collector, William Grainger, by striking him with a whip and twitching his nose. For this latter offence he was fined 10s and costs, the one term of imprisonment to commence at the expiration of the other.

53 September 20 1859 Birmingham Police Court

DAMAGING A CART A boatman named **Joseph Anson**, living at Warwick, was charged with wilfully damaging a cart, the property of Samuel Lowe, Mill Street. The prosecutor said that the principal witness in the case would not appear unless he was summoned. The Magistrates said it would be better if the matter was arranged between themselves, and the prisoner, on agreeing to pay £1, the damage done to the cart, was discharged.

54 October 7 1859 Stoke on Trent

A BOATMAN'S MODE OF CORRECTING A CHILD A most disgusting case of cruelty to a child on the part of his father occupied the attention of the Magistrates, Messrs Haywood and Edwards at Tunstall, yesterday, when a cowardly looking fellow, named **James Hammond**, a boatman, was charged with assaulting his step-son, a child eight years of age, named Francis Dawson. The boy, a quiet looking little fellow, appeared in court with his head bandaged all round, his face bloody and dirty, and altogether presenting a most miserable appearance. The first witness was Police-constable Phillips, who said he found the child in a boat on the canal, at Stoke, on the previous

evening. The boy's head and face were bleeding very badly, and he took him to the police office. He proposed to take him to a doctor's, but the child was not willing to go, saying his father (the defendant) would beat him if he did. The officer afterwards apprehended the prisoner, and charged him with beating and assaulting his son. The prisoner treated the matter very lightly, said he had beaten the boy, but did not think he hurt him, and that he had beaten him because he had broken some windows, and he (prisoner) had been obliged to pay eighteen pence for them. Mr Chief Superintendent Sweeting deposed to receiving the prisoner into custody at the station, and charging him with the assault. The prisoner said that the boy had broken two panes of glass, and he thought he had a right to correct him. Mr Sweeting said the surgeon to whom the boy was taken was at first afraid that the skull was fractured. A certificate from Mr Garner, surgeon, of Stoke, who attended the boy, stated that there were several severe contused wounds on the scalp besides several other wounds about the head and face; and there was also, it appeared, a severe cut inside the mouth. It was not proved by what means the brutal father "corrected" his child, but it was stated on supposition that it was effected by kicking, which, from the nature of the wounds, appeared to be most probable. The prisoner, who tried hard to produce a tear or two, without success, and to look miserable, said he was very sorry and repeated the defence he had previously made to the officer and Mr Sweeting. Mr Edwards: The idea of correcting a child in that way. Why, according to your notions, you might cut off his head to correct him. A hair's breadth more you would have killed the child. It is a most shocking case. Mr Heywood: This is one of the most brutal assaults I have ever heard of. For a man like you, who is the father of a child, instead of taking care of your child, to beat him so cruelly as to nearly destroy his life, it is perfectly horrible. Both myself and Mr Edwards think we shall not do justice to the boy and to the public if we do not send you to prison for three months to hard labour; and in default of your finding a surety for three months, at the end of your term of imprisonment, you will again be committed for another three months. The Magistrates warned the child's mother, who pleaded for her husband, that if the child died through any want of attention on her part, she would be made accountable.

55 October 10 1859 Worcester

CAUTION TO BOATMEN An elderly man named **Wakeman**, a boatman, has been fined £6 and costs by the Magistrates at Worcester, for wilfully causing an obstruction in the lock of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, in that city, in August last, by keeping his boat therein for upwards of four hours. A dispute, it appeared, had arisen between Wakeman and the keeper of the lock, when, to gratify his revenge, he kept the boat in the lock for the time mentioned, having stayed the egress of the water by letting down the paddle. Mr Hodgkinson, of Birmingham, clerk to the company, with a solicitor, attended before the Magistrates this week, and instituted a prosecution against the defendant. The bye laws of the company state that if any boatman keep his boat or barge more than five minutes unnecessarily within the lock, he shall forfeit 20s, and a further penalty of £5 for each hour beyond the first ten minutes he shall so remain. The Bench animadverted severely on the conduct of Wakeman, and as Mr Hodgkinson wished to press the case, they ordered the defendant to pay a fine and costs as above. The practice is said to be a very common one between Birmingham and Worcester.

56 October 20 1859 Staffordshire Sessions

STEALING MALT AT TIPTON **James Green**, 39, boatman and **George Hughes**, 23, also a boatman, were charged with having, at Tipton, at the beginning of the month, stolen one bag of beans and two bags of malt, the property of Joseph Nock. Mr McMahon prosecuted: Mr J Motteram, instructed by Mr Thomas Harding, of Birmingham, defended. The first witness was Thomas Brooks, a man who, on the 5th October, was in the service of the prosecutor, on which day the prisoners delivered to his premises twelve bags of barley. A bundle of empty sacks was also delivered the same night. After arranging the malt in the malt-house, he left it, and the door was fastened. A witness named Jackson, in prosecutor's employ, deposed that he went into the malt-house the following day, and from the appearance of the heaps of malt, he missed some that was

there on the previous night. There were footmarks on the "couch"; and he traced them to a window from which a bar was missing. This window overlooked the canal side. He missed a bag of beans from a ruck of fifteen bags, which were marked "Thomas Reeves", just as the bag produced was marked. He went to the canal side to the boat occupied by the prisoners, and in the boat found two bags of malt, and one of beans. Afterwards gave both prisoners in charge. Police-constables Steele and Moore deposed to taking the prisoners into custody. Hughes said at the time he knew nothing about the malt, and Green said he bought it. For the defence, Mr Motteram made a powerful address, contending that the evidence as to the identity of the malt was worthless, and that the beans were bought for the feed of the boat horses. The Jury having heard the evidence read by the Assistant-chairman, immediately returned a verdict of guilty. Sentence nine months imprisonment with hard labour.

57 October 30 1859 Warwick

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS The Magistrates present at these sessions, which were held at the Shire Hall on Saturday last, were E Wheeler and B Jephson, Esqrs., and only one case was brought before them. A boatman, named **Edward Sharman**, was charged with stealing fifteen turnips worth 3d, the property of Mr Wm Rogers, of the New Inn, Hatton, on the night of Friday week. He pleaded guilty, and from the statement of Police-constable Elvins, stationed at Hatton, it appeared that about ten bushels of turnips having been previously stolen, he secreted himself in a hedge, and on the night in question, about half past ten o'clock, he saw the prisoner actively engaged in gathering his favourite vegetable, and took him into custody. The prisoner, who is in the employ of the Grand Junction Canal Company, was fined 6s 3d the value of the turnips, and 12s expenses.

58 November 4 1859 Birmingham Police Court

SUSPICIOUS **John Bruff**, a boatman, living in Pritchett Street was charged with stealing a lump of coal from the wharf in Blew Street. From the evidence given it appears that about eleven o'clock on Wednesday night the policemen on the beat saw the prisoner coming from the wharf with the coal under his arm. When brought up this morning he said that he had had it from his master's boat, and he was in the habit of taking coal home by his master's permission. Of course the coal could not be identified, and the prisoner was discharged.

59 December 14 1859 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY IN A BROTHEL A rather simple-looking fellow, who said his name was **Edward Nune**, a boatman, from Stroud, Gloucestershire, stated that on the preceding evening he met two girls in Vale Street, who, after he had treated them to liquor, persuaded him to accompany them to a brothel. He had not long been upstairs when he found that he had been robbed of his purse, containing £25 in gold. Going down into the house, and calling the police, a fellow, known to the police as a bully named John Conwall, came running down the street, and going to the house threatened to knock his brains out if he did not be off. The boatman did so, and got the assistance of Police-constable Jones, who searched in vain five or six houses in quest of the prostitutes who took Nune's money. The case, when it came to this stage, was adjourned, and the bully remanded. But later in the day, the officer brought in the thief, a well-known young woman of light character, named Ann Brown, of Vale Street. As the evidence was not complete, the matter was remanded until Friday. The prosecutor told the Bench that he subsequently found the empty purse in the room.

60 December 15 1859 Worcester Winter Assizes

CHARGE OF HIGHWAY ROBBERY AT OLDBURY **Enoch Allen**, 33, boatman, and **David Allen**, 18, boatman, were arraigned for having, on the 17th of September, at Oldbury, assaulted Samuel Osbourne, and robbed him of one half sovereign and two half crowns. Mr Cresswell for the prosecution and Mr Kenealy for the defence. Osbourne is a nailer, residing at Wood End, near Oldbury, and about eight o'clock in the evening of the above day, returned from Oldbury market,

towards home. When he reached the Malt Shovel, he turned off by a stile to go across the fields. When half way across the third field he was met by two men, who knocked him down on the pathway, and took his money. Joseph Hackett, who heard Osbourne's cries of murder, was called and stated that he came up in an opposite direction soon afterwards, but he did not see any one. John Hipkiss said that he set out from home about twenty minutes to eight o'clock on the night in question, and went down the road towards the Malt Shovel. He turned over the stile, and went in the same direction as Osbourne had proceeded. When about forty or fifty yards along, he met the two prisoners on the new canal bridge; they were running, and ran down the canal side. He was quite sure the two men he saw were the prisoners. Other witnesses were called, who gave corroborative testimony. After a short consultation, the Jury found the prisoners not guilty.

61 January 18 1860 Wednesbury

STEALING IRON BY WHOLESALE At the Petty Sessions, yesterday, before Messrs Jesson and Round, five men named respectively, Fulford, Ward, Drake, Deaken and Rogers, were charged with having stolen a large quantity of iron, belonging to Messrs Blackwell and Co. Mr Ebsworth prosecuted. The evidence of a boatman named **Cornelius Wood**, was to the effect that on Saturday morning, at about four o'clock, the boat containing the iron being then near the works of Messrs Barrow and Hall, he saw six men bring another boat alongside, and carry about 11cwt of iron pigs from the loaded boat and put into the empty one. He distinctly saw them all, and was positive as to the identity of the prisoners, two of whom he spoke to. Other evidence, as to the weight of the cargo of iron, was called, and this being conclusive, the prisoners were all committed to take their trial at the next county Sessions.

62 February 21 1860 Smethwick

STEALING COAL FROM BOATS At the Public Office, on Saturday last, two cases of plundering boats laden with coal were gone into and adjudicated upon by the Magistrates. The first matter was a charge against a man named Samuel Billington, and his sister, Sarah Billington. The evidence of Police-constables Blantern and Pilbeam went to show that the coal in question was contained in a boat belonging to Mary Bodington and Sons, flour merchants, Birmingham, and was stolen when the vessel was moored for the night near Brass House Bridge. The quantity of coals actually stolen did not exceed two hundredweight for the appearance of the officers interrupted the removal per wheelbarrow, or perhaps a large quantity might have been stolen. The second case was that of a boatman named James **Cheadle**. He was charged with stealing coals from a laden boat, the property of the Birmingham and Staffordshire Gas Company. Mr Jackson (firm of Jackson and Travers) was retained for the prisoner. James Hill, an employee in the service of the Company, proved the extraction of coals from one of their laden boats, near Ryder's Green Bridge, by the prisoner. After cross-examining this witness, and others called in the case, Mr Jackson examined Mr Batley, the prisoner's master, who gave him a good character. The agent of the Gas Company, who was in court, after stating to the Bench that their losses by coal robberies were great, recommended the prisoner to mercy, under the circumstances, and Cheadle was sent to gaol for three weeks. In the first case – that of William(sic) and Sarah Billington – the sentence was two months imprisonment.

63 March 20 1860 Wolverhampton

PETTY SESSIONS At the Petty Sessions yesterday, before the Mayor and J Wynn and G L Underhill, Esqrs., **Henry Williams alias Rodman**, a boatman, and an old offender, was charged with stealing a silk handkerchief and 2s from the person of **Elijah Johnson**, also a boatman, on the previous night. It appeared that the parties had been drinking together on Sunday, and that in the course of the night the prisoner had entered Johnson's boat and committed the robbery with which he was charged. He was remanded until today (Tuesday) for further evidence.

64 March 26 1860 Wolverhampton

A QUESTION OF INTEREST TO WORKMEN AND MASTERS At the Public Office, on Saturday last, a boatman named **Benjamin Brookes** summoned his employer, Mr John Gittoes, coal merchant, Gold's Green, for 10s 6d, wages alleged to be due. Mr G H Hinchcliffe was retained for the defendant. A rather lengthened hearing satisfied the Magistrates that the only point for their decision was as to a sum of 3s which had been stopped out of complainant's wages under the following circumstances. Brookes had been sent some distance to a customer with a boat load of coke. During the voyage, complainant had idly and carelessly trodden down the surface of the coke to save himself trouble. When, therefore, Mr Gittoes went to receive the sum for this boatload of coke, the cargo had been so much damaged by the conduct of the boatman, that the consignees compelled Mr Gittoes to take off a sum of 30s for the damage done to the article. In such a state of things the Bench thought that Mr Gittoes, who had withheld the 3s referred to towards the cost of the coke damages, could not do so. His remedy must be at the County Court. It was quite clear that the wages of Brookes had been duly paid, and all he got today was the sum just mentioned.

65 April 16 1860 West Bromwich

STEALING AN IRON ROLL FROM THE EAGLE IRON WORKS At the Public Office, on Saturday last, an elderly man, a boatman named **Joseph Chadwick**, was charged as above. Mr G S Watson (in the absence of Mr H Plunket) appeared to prosecute for Mr William Robins, the representative of the Eagle Company. The prisoner, who had been for many years employed as a boatman to Pickford and Co., pleaded guilty. The short facts of this rather singular affair are that the watchman in the works (James Nesbitt) on the preceding Thursday night met the accused in the works carrying an iron roll, weighing 30lbs, the property of his employer. When asked what he was doing with the roll, he said he picked it up, and was going to sell it to enable him to buy some "bacca". Police-constable Hollis was sent for, and took the prisoner into custody. Mr Thomas Lloyd, the manager in the works, proved the value and identity of the roll, and the boatman, who seemed in ill-health, was sent to gaol for twenty one days.

66 April 17 1860 Hanley

HIGHWAY ROBBERY AND ASSAULT At Hanley Police Court, yesterday, Samuel Eardley and Lloyd Large were charged with assaulting on the highway and robbing **James Dodd**, a boatman. Mr Tennant appeared for the prisoners. The prosecutor stated that he was at a public house at Kidsgrove, on Saturday night, and the prisoners were also there. In the course of the evening he quarrelled with Eardley, and when he left, at half past eleven o'clock, the prisoners and several other persons followed him. About 200 yards from the house he was knocked down, Eardley kicked him several times, and someone took 3s, a knife and a tobacco box out of his pocket. After hearing a portion of the prosecutor's evidence, the Bench decided to take the case as one of common assault, and Large was discharged, but Eardley was fined 40s and costs.

67 April 26 1860

A CHILD FOUND IN THE CANAL On Tuesday morning, shortly after six o'clock, as a boatman named **Thomas Godfrey** was proceeding along the New Canal, near Monument Lane, in charge of a boat, his attention was attracted to a substance in the water. On making a further examination he found it to be the body of a female infant, apparently about three months old. It had only a nightdress on, and from the position in which it was found, it is supposed the child came to its death by foul means. An inquest will, in all probability, be held on the body today.

68 May 10 1860 Wolverhampton

Benjamin Jordan, landlord of the Balloon Public House, Wheelers Fold, was charged with stealing £5, the property of **Philip Smith**, boatman. It appeared that the complainant had been drinking in the house on the 1st instant, and in the course of a dispute offered in general terms to fight the company, putting down the £5 as his stake. He alleged that the landlord had pocketed the money.

The case was adjourned for a week to give an opportunity of returning the money.

69 **May 14 1860** **Wolverhampton**

A WOMAN KILLED BY HER PARAMOUR On Saturday night, about a quarter to ten o'clock, a boatman named **Humphreys**, but better known among his associates as "Besom Ned", in a fit of passion, killed a woman who lived with him as his wife. The tragical occurrence took place on the Cannock Road, not far from the woodyard and wharf belonging to Mr Bishton, in whose employment Humphreys is. The boat managed by Humphreys is at present lying at Sheldon's Wharf, at the bottom of Canal Street; but the unfortunate woman, by name Elizabeth Evans, had gone that evening, in company with **Mrs Davis**, the wife of a boatman, to visit her sister-in-law, who is subject to fits, and who had had several in the course of the day. On coming away with Mrs Davis, who seems to have been considerably intoxicated, the deceased met an acquaintance, **Jane Ward**, also a boatman's wife, who observed she had been working hard all day, and would like half a pint of ale. The deceased upon that said if she would accompany her and Mrs Davis to the Fountain Inn, a short way off, she should have some ale, and she (deceased) would pay for it. The trio accordingly set off, and on the way they saw Humphreys, and waited until he should come up. As he approached, Mrs Ward states that she noticed he was very angry, and he came up "raging". She (Mrs Ward) asked him what was the matter with him, to which he replied by asking her what that had to do with her. He then threatened the deceased, and went forward to strike her, upon which Mrs Ward seized hold of him, but let him go on his saying that if she did not leave off he should give her as much as he was going to give deceased. He then struck deceased two or three violent blows, until she fell against the paling which forms the fence of the road, and hung upon it in a fainting state. Next, going back several paces, he took a running kick at the deceased, which took effect under her ribs. On receiving it, she uttered a singularly piercing shriek of, "Murder!" and fell apparently insensible. Humphreys then turned about and proceeded to his boat. Several of the people living in the neighbourhood assisted to carry the deceased to the Fountain, and she was taken into the bar of the house, and laid upon the table. She never spoke, however, after crying out on receiving the kick, and died in a few minutes after being taken into the house. Some persons ran to the Stafford Street police station, and fetched Sergeant Thomas, who sent word to Dr Dehane; and that gentleman's assistant was speedily in attendance: but of course the poor woman was then far beyond the reach of human aid. Another version of the occurrence is given by Mrs Davis. According to it, when Humphreys came up to the deceased he said, "You --, how should you like my fists?". The deceased replied, "Ned, what have I done to deserve it?" Humphreys then struck out at her, exclaiming, "You ----, take that!" Deceased then fell against the paling as has been already related, and the woman called out she was killed. On which Humphreys, exclaiming, "D--- your eyes, if you are not dead, I'll kill you", gave the unfortunate woman the terrible kick which seems to have killed her almost on the spot. About this time, Sims, the pointsman on the Great Western railway, which passes the Cannock Road near the spot, came forward and asked Humphreys "if he was not ashamed to serve a woman like that". He replied, "You ---, if you come near me, I'll serve you the same", on which, as Humphreys is a big powerful fellow, Sims thought it prudent to draw back. It may be proper to state that Mrs Ward denied that Humphreys made use of any such expressions as those given above: but she is very deaf, and it is possible that they may have been used without her hearing them. Humphreys, as has been said, went off to his boat, whence he was taken about twelve the same night, by two boatman named **William Fancliffe** and **Daniel Simpson**, and conveyed by them to the Police station. When told that Evans was dead, he burst into tears, and expressed great contrition. The deceased had been drinking rather freely during the day, and that, undoubtedly, was the occasion of the violence used towards her by Humphreys.

70 **May 15 1860** **Wolverhampton**

THE MURDER OF A WOMAN BY HER PARAMOUR An inquest was held yesterday, at the Elephant and Castle, Cannock Road, before Mr T M Phillips, Esq., Coroner, on the body of Elizabeth Evans, who was killed on Saturday night, near the Flowing Fountain Inn, by **Edward**

Humphreys, a boatman, with whom she had been living in concubinage for several years. The Jury having been sworn, Harriet Davis, wife of Walter Davis, labourer at the Great Western Railway Station, deposed that she knew deceased, whom she saw last about seven in the evening of Saturday last in the tap room of the Flowing Fountain Inn, Cannock. There were several persons with her, including Edward Humphreys, and the deceased's brother and sister-in-law. They were all drinking together, but deceased appeared to be sober. No quarrelling took place between deceased and Humphreys there. About half past eight, witness left the house with deceased and her sister-in-law, Mary Ann Evans, and Humphreys accompanied them to witness's house door, then went straight on to the Talbot Inn, near the top lock. Witness and deceased shortly afterwards proceeded to that house, where they found Humphreys in the kitchen, with some ale before him in a quart jug. He appeared to be very drunk. Witness and deceased were in the house about ten minutes, and left Humphreys there. Deceased went to Humphreys boat, which was lying by Sheldon's timber yard, and got her shawl. Witness and deceased next proceeded to deceased's brother's boat, by Morris and Griffin's works, deceased having expressed a wish to know if her sister-in-law had got home safe. Witness did not go in, but stayed on the canal bank till deceased came out. This would be between nine and ten o'clock. At witness's suggestion, she and the deceased were proceeding towards the town along the Cannock Road, when they met **Jane Ward**, the wife of a boatman, whom witness's husband had been assisting to load. Mrs Ward asked them to go and have share of a pint of ale at the Flowing Fountain. Witness at this time saw Humphreys coming from the direction of Wolverhampton, and they waited till he came up. When he came up he said, "I have a good mind to give you my fists". He was very drunk. She asked him what for. She said she had done nothing amiss. He said, "You don't care for me, so as you can serve your own turn", and with that he struck her somewhere on the right side of the head. She put her hand to her head, when Humphreys again struck her on the side of the head, and she reeled and fell against the palings. He next kicked her on the side, when she screamed and dropped on her knees. It was not a running kick. The deceased never spoke afterwards. Humphreys remained there about ten minutes: but did not touch the body, or assist in any way. Witness helped four other women to carry deceased to the Flowing Fountain, and Humphreys went away in the same direction. Deceased died in about half an hour after receiving the kick. Witness had known deceased and Humphreys for seven years, and never knew them quarrel before. Deceased lived all that time with witness(sic) as his wife. They had no children; but deceased told witness a short while ago that she believed she was in the family way. When deceased left the Talbot, she told Mrs Hughes not to fill Humphreys any more drink, and that might be the cause of the quarrel. Jane Ward was next examined. She deposed that she was the wife of **Joseph Ward**, a boatman, in the employment of Mr Bishton. They did not keep any house, but dwelt in the boat. Had known Elizabeth Evans from a little girl, and had known Humphreys about nine years. Evans had cohabited with Humphreys for about nine years to witness's knowledge. They sometimes lived very disagreeably; about three months ago he gave her a pair of black eyes; they did not, witness believed, live happily or comfortably together. About five minutes before the assault took place witness met the deceased. She had been with the previous witness from about three in the afternoon. Witness saw the deceased, about eight o'clock, in Bishton's Tommy shop, with Davis. She seemed to have had some drink, but was not tipsy. Next saw her about ten, near Mr Bishton's wharf, in company with Mrs Davis. Witness proposed to the deceased and Davis to go to the Flowing Fountain to have some ale, and as they were going they saw Humphreys coming, and waited for him. When he came up he said something to deceased which witness, being deaf, did not hear. He made as if to strike her, and witness seized him by the waistcoat. He, however, flew out of witness's hands, and struck her twice on the head with his fists. At the second blow, she reeled against the paling, when he gave her a kick. She then screamed out, and fell. She stretched herself out, and appeared to be dying. Humphreys stood there for a minute or two, and then went away, going over a wall behind the Flowing Fountain, and running off. George Sims, pointsman on the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway, next deposed as follows: Lives on the Cannock Road, and is stationed at the main line junction between that line and the Great Western. About twenty minutes to ten, on Saturday night, was going home, from

Wolverhampton market, along the Cannock Road. On getting to the end of the Cannock Road bridge – about ten yards from where the fatal occurrence took place – witness heard a dreadful shriek, which appeared to be that of a female. Walked on sharp, and saw a woman stretched out as if she had been in a fit, and was dead. There was a man standing at her feet. Heard him say to the woman, “If you don't get up, I will kick your b--- guts in”. The woman seemed all still. Witness went up and asked what was the matter. The man replied, “If you interfere, I will serve you the same”. A woman standing by said, “Ned , you have killed her”. He replied, “If I have not, I will. I'll pay her out when she gets to the boat”. Witness said, “If that's what you mean, I'll see about someone to take care of you”. Witness then left the spot, and gave information to Police-sergeant Thomas, who sent a policeman with witness, and followed himself. The woman was then at the Flowing Fountain, on the table in the bar, dead. At this stage the enquiry was adjourned till Thursday morning next, for a post mortem examination of the body. The unfortunate deceased is said to be pregnant.

71 May 18 1860 Stafford

THE FIRE AT ACTON **George Harrison**, 18, the boatman who left the house of Mrs Morris half an hour previous to the disastrous fire on her premises last week, was taken before J H Webb and N T Locker , Esqrs., on the 9th inst, and remanded to Cannock. On Monday last he was brought before the sitting magistrates there, who, after hearing the case, discharged the defendant, considering the fire to have arisen purely through accidental circumstances.

72 May 25 1860 Wordsley

PETTY SESSIONS Last Monday, at the Petty Sessions, **Joseph Cater** and **William Jacques**, two boatmen, were fined 10s each for assaulting **William Dickson**, also a boatman, on the night of the 14th inst. Complainant's face presented a terrible collection of cuts and bruises; his head had been cut in two or three places, and some of his ribs broken. In default of paying the small fine of 10s, they were sentenced to twenty one days imprisonment; but they preferred the alternative.

73 June 7 1860 Walsall

CHARGE OF HIGHWAY ROBBERY John Bonnin and George Pearce, labourers, were on Tuesday charged with having, on Saturday night, the 20th ult, assaulted **Thomas Pargeter**, boatman, and robbed him of 15lbs of beef, a quantity of flour, a basket, and other articles. Prosecutor was returning from market when the prisoners met him and committed the assault complained of. Mr Shakespeare (from Mr Plunkett's office) appeared for the defence, and the case was adjourned for a fortnight.

74 June 21 1860 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING FROM THE PERSON A girl of loose character, named Caroline Long, stood charged with stealing a purse, containing 11s 1 1/2 pence, from the person of **George Ward**, boatman, Burton on Trent. She was committed for trial.

75 June 21 1860 Oldbury

PETTY SESSIONS John Banin and John Pearce, two youths, were brought up on remand. Charged with assaulting **George Pargeter**, on the night of the 20th of May, and robbing him of various articles, including beef and bacon. Prosecutor, a boatman, gave a very confused account of his proceedings on the night in question, and Mr Shakespeare, for the defence, having called several witnesses to prove an alibi, The Bench, after a patient hearing, dismissed the case. (Note: this is clearly the same case as above, but names are slightly different).

76 July 11 1860 Borough Quarter Sessions

ROBBERY BY A PROSTITUTE Caroline Long, 17, was charged with having, while in the Royal Exchange Inn, Summer Lane, picked the pocket of a boatman, named **George Wood**, the sum

stolen being 11s 1 1/2d. The prisoner was found guilty, and sentenced to nine months imprisonment. (Note: George Ward in earlier article)

77 July 20 1860

A MAN UNKNOWN FOUND IN THE CANAL Yesterday evening, an inquest was held at the Royal Oak, Fazeley Street, on the body of a man, name unknown, who was found in the old Birmingham Canal, under the following circumstances:- A boatman, named **Joseph Gold**, stated that he was going to work, along the towing path of the above canal, about half past four o'clock on Tuesday morning. When near the Proof house his attention was called by three man on the other side, who pointed to a substance in the water, which they believed to be a human being. Witness got a boat hook, and on examination found it to be the deceased. The body, which was cold but not stiff, was then got out, and removed to the above house. There were no marks of violence. Ann Jefferies, the landlady of the Royal Oak, said that the deceased came to her house on Monday, and drank some beer. He left about half past ten o'clock, after having another half pint of beer and some tobacco. During the afternoon he told witness he was a clock and watch maker, from Coventry, and had come to this town to seek employment, but being unable to obtain any, he should be off back (to Coventry) on Tuesday morning if nothing happened. After the body had been found, a drover who saw it said the deceased was named Bill Smith, a dyer, living at Coventry, and he promised to inform the deceased's wife of the occurrence. No further information, however, had been received. Police-constable Gardner gave a description of the deceased. He was 5 feet 7 1/2 inches, had sandy whiskers and auburn hair, and appeared about fifty years old; he wore a brown alpaca coat, black cloth trousers and a black cloth cap, but no waistcoat. The Coroner said that a photographic likeness of the deceased would be taken, and after summing up the evidence, the Jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned",

78 July 24 1860 Staffordshire Summer Assizes

THE WOLVERHAMPTON MURDER CASE

Crown Court – Monday

Mr Justice Hill took his seat on the Bench at nine o'clock.

Edward Humphries, 28, boatman, was indicted on a charge of feloniously killing and slaying one Elizabeth Evans, at Wolverhampton, on the 12th of May, 1860. Mr Scotland appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Brown for the prisoner. The prisoner pleaded not guilty; and the learned counsel for the prosecution was proceeding with the opening of the case, when Mr Brown said he had examined the depositions, and could not resist the charge of manslaughter. The prisoner would withdraw his plea of not guilty and plead guilty to the charge of manslaughter. The prisoner was then formally called upon to plead, and pleaded "guilty". A formal verdict of "guilty" of the charge of manslaughter was then returned by the Jury, and the verdict of "not guilty" on the charge of wilful murder, on which the prisoner had been committed by the Coroner.

79 July 31 1860 Dudley

SUSPECTED IRON STEALERS Yesterday, a labourer named Raybould and a boatman named **Wilcox** were charged on suspicion of stealing a quantity of pig iron, the property of the New British Iron Company. Francis Percy, furnace manager at Corngreaves Works, deposed that the pig iron produced was found in the canal, and corresponded in shape with the moulds from which they made pig iron at their works. They never sold any pig iron, but sent it to the works in Lock's Lane. When the boats containing pig iron arrived at the latter place there was often one or two hundredweights short. Sarah, wife of **James Lester**, a boatman, residing at Woodside, opposite the canal, stated that she had seen Raybould standing on a boat loaded with pig iron and throw something into the water, but she could not say what it was he threw out. Witness saw the other prisoner, standing about twelve or fourteen yards off. Martha, the wife of Thomas Mathews, deposed to seeing Wilcox on Monday last give another man, not in custody, a piece of pig iron. Thomas Hartshorn, a marine store dealer, of Old Hill, stated that he bought 102lbs of pig iron, in seven pieces, from the

prisoners for 3s 4d. They told him, in answer to his enquiries, that they raked it out of the "cut". (The Bench cautioned this witness that he must be a little more particular in his purchases, and he promised to be so,) Mr Percy said the value of the iron sold was 4s 6d or 5s. Police-constable Rudge deposed to apprehending Wilcox, and to the latter saying that he only did what others did, and what he thought he had a right to do, when he raked the iron out of the canal between the Nine Locks and the tunnel. Wilcox also informed the constable that he could make nothing of the case, as the pieces were not marked, and they were all odd. Police-constable Choyce deposed to apprehending Raybould. The prisoners pleaded that they were guilty of taking the iron out of the canal, but were not guilty of "intending" to steal it. The Bench cautioned the prisoners that they had no more right to take anything out of the canal than they had to take things out of a man's house. Whatever was in the canal belonged to certain owners; or, if they could not be found, to the canal company. Still, as there was some doubt about their guilt, the Magistrates intimated that they would give them the benefit of it. Accordingly, they were discharged.

80 August 2 1860 Birmingham Police Court

ALLEGED ROBBERY IN A BEERHOUSE A comely-looking married woman, named **Hannah Collins**, Lower Nelson Street, wife of a boatman, was placed in the dock charged with stealing a florin from an elderly man named **Michael Causer**. The short facts of the case are that the complainant, going into the Hen and Chickens retail beerhouse, Broad Street, about half past ten on the preceding night, laid his head upon the table, asleep, as it was inferred. Mrs Collins, the accused, together with a soldier and a rifleman, were also in the tap room. Suddenly some silver fell from the boatman's pocket on to the floor as he aroused himself, and he swore that he found the prisoner's hand in his pocket. However, it was quite clear that she picked up and gave him a shilling, and he added that he took two half crowns out of her hand. Still he missed the florin, and believing that she had taken it, gave her into custody. The usual search was made at the Police Station, but the lost silver piece was not found. Mr Buckley, who heard the case, thought it of too doubtful a character to send to a jury; and finding that the woman was addicted to drink, after giving her some good advice, said she might be discharged.

81 August 7 1860 West Bromwich

SINGULAR CHARGE OF STEALING A BOAT At the Public Office, on Saturday last, an elderly man, named **John Whitehouse**, a boatman, was charged as above. Mr Bayley, Wednesbury, was retained for the prosecution, and Mr Watson for the defence. However, the case was brought to a speedy conclusion on a point of law urged by Mr Watson, and this being so we merely state that Mr Thomas Burton, nail manufacturer, had placed the boat, loaded with iron, in charge of the prisoner, who after duly delivering the same, had, contrary to Mr Burton's directions, neglected to return the vessel to the Messrs. Highway's, Hart's Hill, and during the same night the boat was missed, and had not yet been recovered. Its value was £35. This being the whole of the evidence in support of the prosecution, Mr Watson contended that it was insufficient. The learned gentleman contended that in the absence of Mr Highway the case could not go on. The Magistrates, after hearing their clerk, Mr Hebbert, took the same view of the matter, and the prisoner was discharged.

82 September 11 1860 Stoke-on-Trent

STEALING HAY FROM A FIELD At the Hanley Police Court, yesterday, **William Fletcher** and **Walter Fletcher**, an old boatman and his son, were charged with stealing 60lbs of hay, the property of George Brassington, farmer, at Trentham. The prosecutor having missed hay from his field the previous night, on the night of Friday last watched for a repetition of the offence. The prisoners' boat was close alongside of the field from which the hay was stolen. He heard the old man whistle, and directly after, the juvenile prisoner jumped from the boat into the field, took two coils of hay, and hastened with them back to the boat. When the prosecutor subsequently went with a policeman to have the prisoners arrested, the latter threw the hay into the canal, and moved the boat to the opposite side of the canal, to prevent the officer going on board. The old man had since offered

prosecutor 5s to compromise the case. The old man loudly protested that he knew nothing of the robbery, and his son confirmed that statement, and took upon himself the whole of the guilt and responsibility. There were, however, circumstances in the case which left the Bench no alternative but to punish both prisoners alike, and accordingly each was sent to prison and hard labour for three months.

83 September 17 1860 Dudley Port

DEATH FROM EXCESSIVE DRINKING On Thursday last, at the Wellington Inn, Park Lane, before Mr Hooper, an inquest was held on the body of a boatman, 40 years of age, named **Thomas Winwood**, who died on Tuesday afternoon last. Deceased had been drinking heavily all day on Monday, and also at night, and as he was leading a horse down Park Lane, about two o'clock on the following afternoon, he suddenly fell down in the road, and in five minutes was a corpse. It is stated that during the few minutes intervening between the attack and death of deceased beer actually rushed out of his ears, nose and mouth. The Jury returned a verdict of "Died from excessive drinking".

84 October 2 1860 Wolverhampton

PETTY SESSIONS Yesterday, before the Mayor, and G L Underhill, Esq., Rachel Evans was sent to prison for three months with hard labour, for robbing **Job Gibbill**, a boatman, of £2, in a house of ill-fame, in the Brown Bear yard.

85 October 11 1860 Birmingham Borough Sessions

ROBBERIES BY A BOATMAN A young red-haired fellow, several times previously convicted, and giving the name of **Thomas Beach**, pleaded guilty to two indictments for stealing wearing apparel, from the premises of George Williams, John Best and Hepzibah Cook. After remarking on the career of crime pursued by this determined inveterate thief, he was sentenced to five years penal servitude.

86 October 17 1860 Worcester Quarter Sessions

STEALING A MARE AND FOAL AT DUDLEY **John Price**, 20, boatman, was charged with having, on the 26th September, at the parish of Dudley, stolen one mare and foal, the property of **William Hingley**. Mr Powell prosecuted. William Hingley said he was a boat steerer, and lived at Blackbrook, in the parish of Dudley. He had a mare and foal, which, on the night of the 25th September, were in a field near his house. From some information received in the middle of the night, he went to the field, whence the mare and foal had been taken. They were brought him next morning by a man named Howes. He saw nothing of the prisoner till the 30th September, and he then gave him into custody. - John Howes said he knew the prisoner, who was formerly in Hingley's employ. On the morning of the 26th September, between one and two o'clock, he saw prisoner and another man in Hingley's field. Prisoner put a halter on the mare, and got on her back. He saw prisoner ride away on the horse through the gate and past Hingley's house. As the prisoner was going past witness, he asked him where he was going with the mare. The prisoner said "home". The prisoner rode on with the horse, the foal following. After calling up the prosecutor, witness went in search of the mare and foal, and he found them abandoned in the road, and led them back. Sergeant Davis said he apprehended the prisoner on the 30th of September. He charged him with stealing the mare and foal. Prisoner said he was innocent: two men whom he named were with him at the time in question, and could testify to his innocence. After the prisoner was brought before the Magistrates at Dudley, he (the prisoner) remarked to him, "It will be laid on thick this time if it's proved against me". A letter was read from a man named Isaac Mullett, stating the writer through urgent business was unable to attend at Worcester, but the prisoner was with him all the night (of the 25th September, though no date was given) and that the said Isaac Mullett solemnly averred that the prisoner was innocent of the charge. Mr Powell said this might be, for the witness Howes said there were two men in the field. The prisoner was found guilty, and having pleaded guilty to a previous

conviction, he was sentenced to four years penal servitude.

87 October 26 1860 Wednesbury

MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR – MAN FOUND DEAD IN A BOAT On Wednesday evening, a man named **Thomas Evans** was found dead under the following circumstances:- He was employed by Mr Evans as a boatman, having charge of a boat, in the cabin of which he used to live and sleep. On Wednesday, his boat was lying at Messrs Lloyds, Peaters, and Co's wharf, and he was seen during the day about his work as usual. In the afternoon he was known to partake of a good tea, but does not appear to have been afterwards seen alive. Later in the evening, or early yesterday morning, his employer, William Evans, went into the cabin of his boat, and there found deceased lying on his back quite dead. The body was removed to Moxley, where an inquest will be held. Deceased was fifty years of age.

88 October 29 1860 Birmingham Police Court

SERIOUS CHARGE OF ATTEMPTING TO DEFRAUD Two men, named **Joseph Pearson**, boatman, Stratford-on-Avon, and Henry Hathaway, waggoner, Lodsam Street, were charged with attempting to defraud Mr Thomas Bonser, iron merchant, Bath Row, of 3s 10d, by altering the figures on a machine ticket. Mr Powell appeared for the prisoner Pearson. It appeared that Hathaway, who was in Mr Bonser's employ, was sent by that gentleman on Friday morning to the Worcester Wharf, to purchase a quantity of straw. The other prisoner, who is a boatman at the Wharf, sold him some, and it was taken to the weighing machine, and found to weigh 6cwt. The ticket was handed over to Hathaway, and he went away with Pearson. They then proceeded to the Malt Shovel in Fordrough Street, and ordered some beer. Whilst at the house Hathaway asked for a pen and ink, and was seen to write something on a ticket. The other prisoner was, however, not present at the time, but was in the tap room. On arriving, between one and two o'clock, at the prosecutor's premises, the ticket was handed over to him. He instantly detected that an alteration of the figures had taken place, and the ticket showed the straw weighed 7cwt instead of 6cwt. He spoke to both the prisoners, and they said it was all right; Pearson adding that he had come for his money, and must have it. The prosecutor's suspicions were aroused, and he made enquiries of the machine-keeper, which resulted in his giving the prisoner into the custody of Inspector Maxton, and on being charged with the offence, they both denied it. They were both committed to the Sessions for trial, bail being accepted for Pearson in two sureties of £10 each.

89 October 29 1860 Wolverhampton

CHARGE OF ROBBING THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY At the Wolverhampton Petty Sessions, on Saturday, an underboatman named **Guest** was charged with stealing a bar of soap, the property of the above company. Daniel Slater, a clerk to Mr Banlock, the goods agent in Wolverhampton of the Great Western Company, deposed that at five o'clock on Friday evening the soap was safe in a truck alongside the Victoria Wharf, consigned to **James Nock**, of Cradley, and was to have been loaded on board the boat which the prisoner was assisting to work. At half past six o'clock the watchman at the basin saw the prisoner steal the soap, which was worth about 10d. The prisoner pleaded guilty. He said he came from Stourbridge, was married and had two children, and earned 18s a week. Mr W J Burlinson, a goods manager of the company, pressed for a heavy punishment, because there had been so many robberies between Wolverhampton and Stourbridge, and the difficulty of detecting the offenders was so great. The Magistrates sentenced the offender to a months imprisonment.

90 November 2 1860 Bilston

DEATH FROM DROWNING Yesterday forenoon, **James Thacker**, aged eight years, the son of a boatman, living in Wolverhampton, fell into the canal, near Millfields, and was drowned. The boat in which the child's parents were lay near at hand; and the deceased at the time of the accident was engaged, with other children, in picking out of the water fish that had been dragged. Thomas

Allmark got the child out as soon as possible, but death took place immediately upon the body being brought upon the bank.

91 November 8 1860 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING WEARING APPAREL A boatman, who gave the name of **William Walker**, living in Bromsgrove Street, was charged with stealing a quantity of wearing apparel, the property of **Thomas Kelsey**, a boatman on the Grand Junction Canal. The prosecutor said that he was bringing a boat along a canal in Northamptonshire, on the 18th ult, and when near Fenny Stratford, he met the prisoner and gave him a "lift". The same evening he went to sleep, leaving the prisoner in charge, steering the boat, but on waking up the next morning about two o'clock, he found the prisoner had decamped with a jacket, waistcoat, a knife and other articles. Witness saw him again in Birmingham on Tuesday evening, wearing the jacket, and then gave him into custody. In his possession he also found the stolen knife. He pleaded guilty to the charge, and was sentenced to three months imprisonment, with hard labour. He also admitted being a deserter, upon which charge he was committed to gaol.

92 November 8 1860 Wolverhampton

ANOTHER SUICIDE Yesterday morning, a boatman named **Joseph Harris** was working his boat along the Essington Canal, near to Wednesfield, when he discovered the body of a man in the water. Information was laid at the Wednesfield Police Station, and the body was conveyed to the Stag Public House in Horsley Fields. It proved to be that of John Jones, a baker and confectioner, in business, near to the turnpike, in Horsley Fields. He had been drinking on the previous night, and at about five o'clock yesterday morning, after having exchanged some angry words with his wife, went out, and there is little doubt soon threw himself into the canal. He had been accustomed to drink to excess. On such occasions he almost universally destroyed portions of his furniture, became jealous of his wife, and threatened violence to her and himself. Under such circumstances, the police have been several times sent for to his house.

93 November 13 1860 Great Bridge

STEALING COAL At the Public Office, West Bromwich, on Saturday last, a married woman, with an infant in her arms, and giving the name of Mary Ann Brookes, was with her brother, a young man, a labourer, named George Lewis found guilty of stealing coal from the pit of Messrs. James and W Bagnall. A witness named **Thomas Davis**, a boatman, found that the male prisoner took off the coal from a laden boat and gave it to the female prisoner. Mr Edward Smallwood, manager to the firm, stated that the losses of the Messrs, Bagnall, from the coal robberies, were very great, and they had come to the determination to make an example in the present case. Police-constable Lees, the officer in the case, having given his evidence, the Court said however sorry they were to punish the woman (who said she had seven little children at home), yet the property of parties must be protected, and therefore the prisoners must go to gaol for ten days each.

94 December 14 1860 Warwickshire Winter Assizes

SMASHING AT STRATFORD **Thomas Greenhill** (20), boatman, was charged with having, at Stratford-on-Avon, on the 23rd of November, passed several pieces of counterfeit money, knowing at the time they were counterfeit. Mr Balgay prosecuted; the prisoner was undefended. It seems that the prisoner uttered, on the day in question, a counterfeit florin at the shop of a woman named Mary Whiting, and that she, detecting that it was a bad one, sent it back to him, receiving in return good money. The prisoner then went and uttered the same coin at the shop of Sarah Collins, and this time succeeded. He also passed to William Sabin on the same day a counterfeit shilling, and on being taken into custody another shilling was found in his pocket. The prisoner was found guilty, and sentenced to nine months imprisonment.

95 January 2 1861 Warwickshire Quarter Sessions

STEALING A HORSE COLLAR AT HALESOWEN **Edward Holden**, 20, boatman, was charged with stealing a horse collar, the property of Thomas Peasland. He was found guilty, and two previous convictions having been sworn against him, he was sentenced to four years penal servitude.

96 January 17 1861 Oldbury

AN IRISH ROW Yesterday a number of persons were summoned to answer a charge of assault, and there were also many cross-summons issued for the same offence. Patrick Kenny summoned Thomas Cave, John Shaw summoned John Flinn, William Mallen summoned John Sylvester, William Mallen summoned John Bradshaw, John Bradshaw summoned Coleman, John Clarke summoned the wife of Coleman, and John Smith summoned Thomas Connor. Mr John Smith of Birmingham appeared for some of the complainants, and also some of the defendants, and Mr Powell did the same. It was utterly impossible to understand the merits of the various cases. As far as the evidence taken yesterday went, and after occupying the attention of the court for some time, they were adjourned till Tuesday next, which day will be specially devoted to the consideration of the various cases. The general facts appear to be that, early on the morning of Sunday, the 6th instant, a boatman was going along the side of the canal, when some men attacked him, and attempted to throw him into the water. The man resisted, and assistance came to both sides, when a regular row ensued: boatmen were on one side, and Irishmen on the other: one had his head split open with an axe, one received a severe blow on the head with a poker, the wife of Bradshaw caught hold of the back of the neck of a man with her teeth, rails and pokers were freely used, blood was spilt, and plenty of work for medical men was the consequence. The hearing of the cases as far as it went occupied the greater part of the day, and necessitated the adjournment of many cases.

97 January 18 1861 Wordsley

PETTY SESSIONS At the Petty Sessions on Monday, before J Holcroft and F Evers, Esqrs. **Benjamin Cartrey**, boatman, **William Challon** and **Samuel Phillips**, two lads, were charged with stealing a horse rug, the property of James Hatton, carter, of Stourbridge, on Thursday last, at the ? The horse and cart were standing at a door, and the prisoners were seen near it, the rug being afterwards found under a canal bridge. Police-constable Higgs heard the man say to one of the lads that if they had not stolen it they would have been comfortable on their boats. The man was sent to prison for one month, and the lads to seven days each.

98 March 8 1861 Staffordshire Adjourned Assizes

STEALING A SILVER WATCH AT KINFARE **Joseph Lockley**, 32, boatman, was charged with stealing a silver watch, the property of John Bridgewater, at Kinfare. The case was clearly proved, and the prisoner was sentenced to ten years penal servitude.

99 March 25 1861 Warwickshire Lent Assizes

STEALING A GUN AT LEAMINGTON **George Cartwright**, 26, boatman, was charged with stealing a gun, value 50s, the property of George Viner, at Leamington Priors, on the 10th of January last. The Hon E C Leigh appeared for the prosecution. The prosecutor went into the tap room of the Ranelagh Tavern on the day in question, and having placed his gun in one corner, sat down near the prisoner. Soon afterwards he had occasion to go out for a short time, and upon his return he found that both his gun and the prisoner were missing. The prisoner was soon afterwards apprehended with the gun in his possession. He was found guilty, and sentenced to four months imprisonment with hard labour.

100 March 26 1861 Warwickshire Lent Assizes

INDECENT ASSAULT AT HATTON **George Edmunds**, aged 17, boatman, was charged with having, at Hatton, on the 18th January last, feloniously assaulted a girl, named Elizabeth Knight. Mr

Merryweather prosecuted. The evidence of prosecutrix went to show that on the night in question the prisoner met her by the side of the canal, and committed the assault complained of. A witness named Perks proved hearing her cries, and seeing the prisoner holding prosecutrix forcibly. The Jury returned a verdict of guilty. Sentence: Four months imprisonment with hard labour.

101 March 29 1861 Wolverhampton

ATTEMPT TO COMMIT A FELONY Yesterday, at the Petty Sessions, before the Mayor, Messrs., Edward Perry and H Walker, **Thomas Johnson**, a boatman, was brought up on remand and sentenced to two months imprisonment, for being on the premises of the Great Western Railway Company, near the Victoria basin, about half past two on Tuesday morning, with intent to commit a felony.

102 April 9 1861 Dudley

ASSAULTS UPON WOMEN Yesterday, before the sitting Magistrates, Captain Bennett, W Haden and F G W Barrs, Esqrs., **John Bowen**, a boatman, was charged with assaulting his wife, Caroline Bowen, on the 2nd instant. His wife said that on the day in question he charged her with wanting to go to Hales Owen fair on the previous day, and struck her a blow under the ear. He was about to take a "running kick" at her, but a lodger prevented him. Complainant ran out of the house and did not return for an hour or two, and in the mean time defendant amused himself by breaking the clock and various other articles of furniture. Complainant had been married about ten years, and defendant began abusing her about twelve months after marriage. She had not lived at home since the last assault, and she was afraid to go home again. Defendant said he was fresh at the time, was sorry for what he had done, and was willing to either find his wife a home, or allow her a settlement. Complainant, who had a child, blind in one eye, said she would be content with an allowance of 5s per week. The Bench considered it a very reasonable demand, and adjourned the case for a month in order to allow defendant an opportunity of settling the case by acceding to the arrangement.

103 April 10 1861 Coseley

DESPERATE HIGHWAY ROBBERY – DEATH OF PIPER A few days ago we gave a brief account of an old man named **Walter Piper**, a boatman residing at Deepfields, having been garotted when on his way home, in a field leading from Ladymoor to Mount Pleasant, how he was brutally assaulted by two ruffians, and how they stripped him of various articles, leaving him lying on the ground insensible. He has exhibited but little life since the occurrence, and yesterday (Tuesday) about one o'clock, he expired, obviously from the injuries he received. He has been assiduously attended by Dr Best of Bilston. The Rev. - Fletcher (as a Magistrate) has taken Piper's depositions. Mr Costello, the superintendent of police of this district, is exercising his tact to find out the wretches, and with the information he has gleaned success is very probable. The inquest will be held on Friday afternoon.

104 April 11 1861

HIGHWAY ROBBERY AND MURDER NEAR BILSTON

Yesterday afternoon, at half past four, Mr W H Phillips, Deputy-Coroner, held an inquest at the Bull's Head, Darkhouse Lane, near Coseley, on the body of **Walter Piper**, aged about 63, who had been waylaid, robbed, and injured near that place, as already stated in the *Daily Post*.

George Wotton, a shoemaker of that place, deposed that the deceased lodged with him, and was a boatman. On the morning of the 20th of March last he left his home in the morning, saying he was going to take a boat near Birchills for his employer, Mr Samuel Willcox, of Darkhouse Lane. He used to go to Ladymoor every night to feed his horse, and on every Monday night he used to go to Bilston Market. At about nine o'clock on the evening of that day, witness heard that the deceased was injured, and lay in the house of Thomas Jones, a neighbour. Witness found him suffering from a frightful blow in the forehead, the skull being driven in. When the deceased slightly recovered,

witness took him to his house, and sent for Mr Smith, surgeon, but he did not come. The next morning, Mr Best of Bilston was sent for, and his assistant came, and the deceased continued to receive medical attention till his death. On Sunday last, after he had been insensible, he said he was coming through the Blue Button Lessowe, in Ladymoor, when two men sprang out of the hedge close by the pathway, one of whom clutched him by the throat, and the other dragged him out of the footpath, and under a hedge, where they rifled his pockets of a brass tobacco box, containing 3s 6d, and a bag containing 1lb of bacon, 1lb of cheese, two small loaves of bread, and some meat. He was a very quiet man, and witness never knew him to quarrel with anyone. His friends lived at Hagley, and his employer was a very distant relative. He had no property but what was in his (witness's) house, and he was in the Bilston Church Club.

Thomas Jones, a miner, deposed that on the night in question he found the deceased lying in the field: he had known him for many years. On getting into the field spoken of, and when about twenty yards from the stumps or stile at the entrance, a man dressed in dark clothes, and carrying something with him, "darted by him like lightning", in the direction of Bilston. Directly after he had passed, another man came up running in the same direction. On coming up to him, this second man said, "Where is he? Oh, there he is; I see him", and ran off. He was dressed in a round jacket and light trousers: but witness could not identify either of them. There was no light but furnace light, which was before the witness and behind the men as they passed him. The second man could not see in which direction the first had gone. Forty yards further on, he (witness) found the deceased lying with his face in the grass, and moving his hand about on the ground, but he could not speak. His hat was off, and lay on the grass near him. When witness picked up his hat and saw his face, he knew who it was, and asked him, "if those men had been doing something to him?" He did not speak until witness had lifted him up, when he became conscious and said that they had robbed him of his marketings. He was bleeding from a wound in his forehead. Witness had seen him three quarters of an hour before by Mr Higgins in High Street, Bilston, with his bag and going in the direction of home. He was quite sober. The spot where he was found was the first secluded spot on the road to his home. At the same time there was an engine-house about 100 yards off, at which there was a watchman.

A Juryman: And my house was only 300 yards away.

When witness had picked him up he seemed very anxious to keep the matter quiet, and said, "Don't make a bother about – keep it quiet." He also insisted on going to the water to wash the blood from his face. Witness went with him, and if he had not held him he would have fallen into the canal. He took him to his (witness's) own house, and with his wife attempted to stop the bleeding, but could not. They also sent for the deceased's landlord.

Police-superintendent McCrea, the Chief of Police at Bilston, deposed that he heard of the circumstance for the first time on Friday, the 20th ult. On that day the Rev H B Fletcher and Mr Bowen, the assistant Magistrates Clerk at Bilston, took the deceased's deposition at his lodgings. He said he thought he should die. Witness was present, and now produced the deposition, which the Coroner took possession of to place upon his notes. The only additional information which the deposition afforded was that one man first knocked him down by a blow on the forehead, before the other clutched him by the throat; and that in addition to the property mentioned, the bag contained a basin and plate, the basin having meat in. The tobacco box had also two 1s receipt notes for pew rent at Darkhouse Lane Chapel. The box had a railway carriage engraved upon it, and was indented at the bottom from frequent use. He did not see the men until they sprang upon him.

It was known that he died on Tuesday last.

The Coroner adjourned the inquest till next Tuesday week, for the evidence of a surgeon.

105 April 22 1861 Wolverhampton

ROBBERY FROM A CANAL BOAT At the Petty Sessions, on Friday, two boatmen named **Richard Evans** and **John Yates**, were brought up on remand, charged with stealing from the cabin of a canal boat, a watch, a pair of boots, and a pair of trousers, on Saturday, the property of another boatman named **Thomas Wise**, of Penkridge. Evans was apprehended while offering the watch for

sale at a pawnbroker's shop, and Yates was arrested by Inspector Thomas, on Tuesday, and found to be wearing the missing boots, and the trousers were found in his lodgings, in Canal Street. The prisoners were remanded to Penkridge.

106 May 14 1861 Birmingham Police Court

REMANDS **Henry Ford**, a boatman, was charged with embezzling £2, the property of Mr Joseph Edwards, coal dealer, Worcester. On the application of the police, the prisoner was remanded, to be sent to Worcester in which city the offence was committed.

Thomas Wood, a boatman, residing in Oxford Street, stood charged with absconding with £10, the monies of his employer, **Isaac Borden**, boatman, Aston Road. Mr Edward Powell appeared for the defence. Detective Clarke who apprehended the prisoner said the offence was committed in the parish of Aston, and he therefore applied for a remand in order to convey the prisoner before the County Justices. The prisoner was remanded accordingly.

107 May 29 1861 Wordsley

PETTY SESSIONS Charles Sidaway was brought up on a charge of horse stealing. Superintendent Mills, in applying for a remand, said that the prisoner had been previously convicted for the same offence as that he was now charged with, and on that morning (Monday) he offered a boatman, named **Edward Williams**, a horse for sale at an incommensurate price. Williams, thinking prisoner had not come by the animal very honestly, gave information to the police. Superintendent Mills therefore applied for, and obtained a remand, in order that time might be allowed to make enquiries as to the owner of the animal.

108 May 30 1861 Longton

A CAUTION TO BOATMEN At the Longton Police Court, yesterday, **John Davis**, a boatman, was summoned under the Trent and Mersey Canal Act 1 William IV., c 55, s 21, and charged with not having his name affixed to his boat. It appeared in the course of the enquiry that the prisoner's boat was one of several belonging to Mr Bull, of the Ravendale Ironworks, who at his failure disposed of the boats to various parties, and while his name had been removed from all, in several cases, no other name had been substituted, one of this class being the defendant's boat. Mr Bull owing the Canal Company a considerable amount of tonnage, they, upon his becoming insolvent, seized several boats, the defendant's among the number, when they discovered that the insolvent had been too sharp for them. The case having been proved, the defendant was fined 6s and costs.

109 May 31 1861 Brierley Hill

OBTAINING BREAD BY FALSE PRETENCES Yesterday, **William Jones**, boatman, was charged with obtaining a loaf of bread from John Cooper, by stating that a person with whom he formerly lodged had sent him for it. This statement was afterwards proved to be false. He was remanded to Stafford for a week, then to be discharged.

110 June 6 1861 Wordsley

PETTY SESSIONS On Monday, before F Evans, Esq., a man named Charles Sidaway was brought up on remand, charged with stealing a horse, the property of **Abraham Timmins**, a boatman, residing at Oldbury. The prosecutor saw the horse safe in a field on the evening of the 26th ult., and missed it on the following morning. He did not see it again till the morning of the 28th, at Brierley Hill. The other evidence adduced was to the effect that the prisoner offered the horse for sale to a boatman named **Edward Williams** on the 27th ult.; but Williams judging from the prisoner's anxiety to get quit of the animal, suspected he had stolen it, and accordingly gave information to the police. The prisoner was thereupon taken into custody. He made no defence, and was committed for trial to the Sessions.

111 June 18 1861 Birmingham Police Court

GAMBLING IN WHARF STREET A lad named **Thomas Lapworth**, boatman, Worcester, was charged by Police-constable Stevens with gambling and causing an obstruction in Wharf Street, together with about thirty other youths and lads, at about twenty minutes past eleven o'clock on Sunday morning. He was fined 2s 6d; in default to be sent to prison for seven days.

112 June 20 1861 Wednesbury

FATAL ACCIDENT TO A BOATMAN On Saturday evening, a boatman named **Charles Turner**, aged 18, was killed at Messrs. Lloyd and Foster's ironworks at Wednesbury. Deceased was loading a quantity of iron plates with a crane, and it is supposed that through the insecurity of one of the plates which was being hoisted to the crane, the plate slipped from the hoist, and falling on to his head he was instantaneously killed. Deceased was soon afterwards conveyed to his home at Ettingshall.

113 June 26 1861 Birmingham Police Court

WILFUL DAMAGE A young fellow, named **William Rayner**, boatman, Holliday Street, was charged with breaking a table and some earthenware, value 5s, the property of Mary Hobson, the woman with whom he lodged. Prisoner said the furniture was his own, but Mrs Hobson produced a note showing she had bought it of his wife for 25s, towards which she had paid 11s. It was arranged that the 5s should be deducted from the sum that still remained to be paid.

114 August 2 1861 Warwickshire Summer Assizes

ANOTHER GAROTTE ROBBERY AT BIRMINGHAM Thomas Miles, 21, filer, was charged with having, at Birmingham, on the 9th of April last, feloniously robbed **Thomas Neville** of one watch, one chain and 1s 4d and with causing at the time of the robbery personal violence to the said Thomas Neville. Mr Balguy appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Bless for the defence. The prosecutor, who is a boatman, said that on the evening in question he was drinking at the Waggon and Horses public house, where he saw the prisoner and another man, and treated them both to something to eat and drink. About half past eight o'clock he left the house to go to the Railway Station, accompanied by the other two men, who asked him to go with them to another house and have some drink. They were then in Edmund Street: and upon the prosecutor refusing to go with them, the man not in custody threw his arm around his neck, nearly strangling him, and the prisoner rifled his pockets, taking out the articles named in the indictment. The next morning prisoner was apprehended by Detective Beal. For the defence it was contended that prosecutor was so drunk at the time that he would not be able to speak to the identity of the prisoner. His Lordship summed up, and the Jury having found the prisoner guilty, he was sentenced to four years penal servitude.

115 August 16 1861 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING WEARING APPAREL A young man of 19, named **Henry Clarke**, described as a boatman, was charged as above. Inspector Jennings stated that meeting the prisoner about two o'clock that morning in the Parade, he, from information he had received, at once took him into custody. The property was stolen from Mr Hale, of Swan Village, West Bromwich; and the prisoner, at the request of the Inspector, was accordingly remanded to appear before the Magistrates at that town.

116 August 16 1861 Wolverhampton

A CHILD DROWNED Yesterday an inquest was held on the body of Abraham Webbler, a child of five years, whose father is a boatman, living in Oxford Street. Deceased whilst playing on his father's boat, near Norton's Mill, on that day, fell into the water, and was drowned. The accident was unobserved, but the father seeing his child's toy on the boat, searched and found the body in the canal. Verdict, "Accidental death".

117 August 31 1861 Birmingham Police Court

BURGLARY IN WATER STREET **Henry Huggins**, boatman, and Caroline Connolly, prostitute, both living in 30 Court, Livery Street, were charged with breaking into the house of Sarah Doe, 36 Water Street, and stealing a large quantity of wearing apparel; and Harriet Evans and Elizabeth Sheldon, two prostitutes living in the same court, were charged with receiving the same, knowing it to be stolen. Mr Kimberley prosecuted. The prisoners had been remanded from Wednesday in order that the pawnbrokers with whom the articles had been pledged might be present to give evidence. Ernest Timmiss stated that he was assistant to his father, a pawnbroker, in Coleshill Street, and that Evans pledged with him the two anti-macassars produced, for 9d, on Tuesday afternoon. In consequence of the absence of an important witness, who was the last person in the house, and who was therefore necessary to be present to prove the breaking and entering, the case was again remanded to Tuesday.

118 September 11 1861 Wolverhampton

WILFULLY WASTING CANAL WATER At the County Petty Sessions, on Monday, before Mr Hill and William Tarratt, **Edward Evans**, a boatman of Wombourne, was fined 10s for wilfully wasting the water in the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal whilst navigating his boat there on the 29th ult.

119 October 16 1861 Stafford Sessions

A WHOLESALE FOWL STEALER **George Perry Dimmock**, 24, boatman, pleaded guilty to four separate charges of fowl stealing, at Rowley Regis, and also to several previous convictions for similar offences. He was sentenced to penal servitude for ten years.

120 October 18 1861 Birmingham Police Court

THE CHARGE OF STEALING £3 10S The man Henry Frett, a pearl button maker, residing in a court in Great King Street, who was remanded on a charge of stealing a waistcoat and £3 10s from a boat at the Snow Hill Wharf, the property of **Alfred James**, a boatman, residing at Tardebigg, was again brought up, and committed to the Sessions for trial.

121 November 13 1861 Warwick

ASSAULTING A POLICEMAN **Thomas Benton**, of the Saltisford, boatman, was charged with assaulting Police-constable Hamlet, whilst in the execution of his duty, the preceding evening. Upon being called upon, the defendant said he could not recollect what had occurred, as he was the worse for beer. Hamlet then stated that he was on duty in West Street a few minutes before eleven o'clock, when a fight commenced at the Nelson Inn. The defendant was one of the parties fighting, and on his going to stop the fight he was struck twice by the defendant with his clenched fist. The other man ran away, and he took the defendant into custody. A soldier then came up and rescued him. He caught hold of the soldier, and subsequently apprehended defendant at his own house. The Bench inflicted a fine of £1 and 7s 6d costs, in default fourteen days imprisonment.

122 November 22 1861 Birmingham Police Court

ASSAULT AND HIGHWAY ROBBERY George Thomas alias Alfred Coates, lockmaker, Tanter Street, was placed in the dock charged with violently assaulting **Thomas Neville**, a boatman, living at Derby. Mr Hominant appeared for prisoner. The prosecutor stated that on Tuesday, the 9th of April last, he delivered a boatload of lime for Messrs. Chance of Oldbury, and came to Birmingham to receive the money for so doing. Having received his money, £1 13s 9d, he, after going to the railway station to ascertain the time a train returned to Oldbury, proceeded to the Waggon and Horses, in Edmund Street, where he met with the prisoner and a man named Miles, who was tried and convicted at the lent Warwick Assizes on the same charge. Some other persons were also in the room at the time. The prosecutor had some eggs and bacon cooked, and the prisoner and Miles having said that they had not had anything to eat or drink for a long time, he shared it with them,

and called for two quarts of ale, which all the room partook of. About twenty minutes to nine in the evening the prosecutor left the house, accompanied by the prisoner and Miles, for the purpose of going to the railway station. When they had got about 100 yards from the house, the prisoner seized the prosecutor by the neck and pressed his thumbs into his throat whilst Miles took his watch from his pocket. He tried to call out, "Police", when Miles told the prisoner to "Pinch harder". He did so, and the prisoner then became insensible. When he recovered he found himself lying in a gateway close by, with the back of his head bleeding very profusely. On searching his pockets he found that his watch and purse, which contained £1 4s, was gone, but some loose money had not been taken from his pocket. He went back to the Waggon and Horses and told them what had happened, and then gave information to the police. Henry Berridge, a servant at the Waggon and Horses, stated that he was in the room with the prisoner and the prosecutor on the night in question, and could swear that the prisoner was one of the men who left the house with the prosecutor. Detective Clark said that, from a description he had received of the prisoner, he went to a house in Tanter Street, where he found him in bed. He apprehended him and told him the nature of the charge. The prisoner denied all knowledge of it. The officer added that the prisoner was well known to the police, and had "done" four years penal servitude. He was committed to the Assizes for trial.

123 November 26 1861 Birmingham Police Court

REMAND **Samuel Storer**, a boatman, residing in Great Tindall Street, was, on the application of Detective Mountford, remanded on suspicion of stealing an axe.

124 November 27 1861 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING FROM A TIMBER YARD A boatman named **Samuel Storer** was charged with stealing a large timber axe from the branch timber yard of Mr J Clarkson, who has also timber yards in Newhall Street. The place where the axe was stolen from is in Monument Lane, and on Saturday evening last, Detectives Mountford and Clarke, who were on duty close to the spot, saw the prisoner near the timber yard, and going up to him they found the stolen property lying close to his feet. He told the officers that he had been dragging the canal, and fished up the axe: but, as Mountford told the Magistrates, when found the implement had no appearance of having been in the water. When the fence round the timber yard was examined, some portion newly broken was found, and by the opening thus made Storer had obtained entrance. The owner of the axe, Thomas Cullen, working for Mr Clarkson, stated that the tool belonged to him, and that he had placed it, as usual, in the proper shed. Mr Hemmant was retained for the prisoner, and after this gentleman had cross-examined the witnesses, by his advice the prisoner, who had a good character from his employer, Mr Perkins, pleaded guilty, and he was sent to gaol for twenty one days.

125 December 2 1861 Notices

BANKRUPTCY

The Bankruptcy Act 1861
in the County Court of Staffordshire
Holden at Oldbury

JOSEPH HOLLOWAY, of Wootten's Lane, West Bromwich, in the County of Stafford, Boatman and Greengrocer, having been adjudged bankrupt, under a Petition for Adjudication of Bankruptcy, filed in the County Court of Staffordshire at Oldbury, on the 11th day of November 1861. A Public Sitting for the said bankrupt to pass his Last Examination, and make application for his discharge, will be held before ALLAN MACLEAN SKINNER Esq., the Judge of the said Court, on the 31st day of December 1861, at Ten o'clock in the forenoon precisely, the day last aforesaid being the day limited for the said Bankrupt to surrender. Joseph Henry Watson and George Steward Watson, Esqrs., the Registrars of the said Court, are the official Assignees; and John Francis Dalby, of West Bromwich, is the solicitor in the Bankruptcy. The First Meeting of Creditors has been duly held in the said Bankruptcy, and at the Public Sitting above-mentioned Proofs of Debts of Creditors who

have not proved will be received, and the said Bankrupt will be required to surrender himself to the said Court, and to submit himself to be examined, and to make a full disclosure and discovery of all his Estate and Effects, and to FINISH his EXAMINATION.

126 December 9 1861 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING IRON George Bill, a lad residing in New-town Row, was charged with stealing three bars of iron from a boat, near Love Lane Bridge, the property of a boatman, named Thomas ? He was remanded till today.

127 December 11 1861 Tipton

DEATH BY DROWNING An inquest was held on Monday last at the Castle Inn, before Edwin Hooper, Esq., Coroner, on the body of a man named **Abraham Betts**, a boatman. From the evidence given it appeared that deceased was last seen alive on Friday evening last, in the act of pushing his loaded boat into the Pond Tunnel, on the Birmingham Canal, near this place. As he did not return home at the usual hour, his family became alarmed, and on examining his boat, his boat-shaft was found in the water. The canal was thereupon searched, and his body found. As there were no marks of violence about his body, the Jury, after hearing the remarks of the Coroner, returned an open verdict of "Found dead in the canal".

128 December 11 1861 Worcestershire Winter Assizes

STEALING WHEAT AT UPTON **Samuel Tovey** (33), boatman, and **Frederick Gilchrist** (36), boatman, was indicted for stealing four bushels of wheat on the 29th of October, the property of Messrs., Rice and others. **Richard Waring** (on bail), lock-keeper on the Severn, was indicted for receiving the same, knowing it to be stolen. For the prosecution, Mr Powell and Mr Richards appeared. Mr Kenealy defended Waring, and Mr Best for Tovey, Gilchrist was undefended. A boy named **Thomas Clements** stated that on the 28th of October he was in a boat belonging to Messrs., White and Jones, and came up the Severn from Tewkesbury to Upton with a load of wheat and barley. Tovey and Gilchrist were also in the boat. At Upton the boat was moored alongside the bank of the river, and Mr Rice's boat also came up alongside. **Rice** asked Gilchrist and Tovey if they would "lend him a hand" while his men went to dinner. The request was acceded to, and witness said he saw Tovey and Gilchrist take a sack, containing four bushels of wheat, out of Mr Rice's boat, and take it on board their own. Gilchrist, after their arrival at Worcester, was seen by witness to take the sack from Jones's boat into Waring's house. The defence was that Tovey was acting under the instructions of his master, Gilchrist, and that, therefore, he could not be charged with the theft; and in the case of Waring the learned counsel urged that there was no proof of his having received the wheat knowing it to be stolen. The case was of no general interest, but it occupied the attention of the court a considerable length of time. At its conclusion, upon Gilchrist being asked if he had anything to say, he replied, "The wheat I was supposed to steal was what I had saved from one time to another". Witnesses were called to character in Watling's case, one of whom was Mr Higgs, scripture reader of St James, Edgbaston. They all gave Waring a good character for honesty. After a very careful summing up by the learned Judge, all the prisoners were found guilty by the Jury, but sentence was reserved until the conclusion of the second indictment against Gilchrist, the particulars of which are contained in the following case.

STEALING WHEAT AT TIPTON **Frederick Gilchrist** was then indicted a second time, charged with stealing a sack of wheat on the 4th of November last, the property of Messrs., Beach, of Tipton Mills. **Nathan Bunn**, a lock-keeper, was indicted for receiving the same, knowing it to be stolen. The same counsel were engaged for the prosecution as in the preceding case. Dr Kenealy defended Bunn. On the 28th of October last Messrs., White and Jones consigned a quantity of wheat to Messrs., Beach, and it was conveyed in one of Mr Rice's boats. After the delivery of the grain at Mr Beach's mill, and after Gilchrist, the boatman, had transacted all necessary business, he was discovered in the mill again by George Robins, manager to Mr Beach. **George Rice**, the captain of the boat used, said that on the 7th of November he saw the prisoner Gilchrist at Lane End Colliery.

Witness was there for the purpose of making enquiries about a sack of wheat. He saw a sack of foreign wheat in Gilchrist's boat, and the latter asked him whether he could do anything with it, remarking at the same time that he had it from Tipton Mills. Witness answered in the negative. The lad **Thomas Clements** was again called and his evidence went to show that on the 28th of October he went in a boat with Gilchrist from Worcester to Lane End Colliery. They took out corn and unloaded at Beach's mills, and took in coals at Lane End Colliery. Witness saw a bag of wheat in the boat, along with the coals. Gilchrist told Rice that he had had the wheat from Tipton Mills. The wheat was subsequently taken to the house of the prisoner Bunn. - **Daniel Miles**, who worked the boat with the prisoner Gilchrist, deposed to seeing the wheat in the boat with the coals. Mark Gibbs, farmer and publican, Stoke Prior, deposed that he lived between the houses of Waring and Bunn. On the 11th of November witness met Bunn in his (witness's) yard, and Bunn said he had put some flour in his granary, alleging as his reason, that, as they had been searching another lock-keeper's house (Waring's) for a sack of wheat, he had thought they might search his house, as he (Bunn) had bought a sack of wheat also. Witness allowed the grain to remain. Bunn had always borne a good character in witness's opinion. - Other witnesses proved that Bunn had the wheat ground. When apprehended, Bunn denied the guilty knowledge, but admitted that he had bought a bag of wheat from Gilchrist for 16s 6d. (It was stated that the value of the wheat was 28s or 30s). - The jury found both prisoners guilty; but Bunn and Waring were recommended to mercy. - His Lordship sentenced Gilchrist to six months hard labour, and Waring, Bunn and Tovey to three months hard labour each, remarking at the same time that he passed lighter sentences on the latter three in consideration that two were recommended to mercy, and Tovey might possibly be under some sort of restraint from Gilchrist, who was his master at the time as captain of the boat.

129 December 16 1861 Warwickshire Winter Assizes

ROBBERY WITH VIOLENCE George Thomas, 29, gun-lock fastener, was charged with having, at Birmingham, on the 9th of April last, robbed **Thomas Neville** of a watch, a purse, and £1 4s, and used personal violence to him. Mr Saint prosecuted. The prosecutor, a boatman, said that on the evening of the day in question he was in Birmingham, and went to the Grand Junction Lock, where he received £1 9s 6d. He afterwards went to the Waggon and Horses Inn, in Edmund Street, and he there found the prisoner and another man, who said they were hard up, and he treated them to something to eat and drink. When he left the Waggon and Horses to go to the railway station, he was followed by the prisoner, who garotted and robbed him. Prisoner was at large until November 14th, when he was apprehended by Detective Clarke. The prisoner was found guilty, and pleaded guilty to a previous conviction. He was sentenced to ten years penal servitude.

130 December 30 1861 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY FROM A BOAT A boatman named **James Baker**, living at Hopwood, was charged with stealing a pair of boots, a cap, and a few other articles, the property of **William Pugh**, a boatman, living at Bar Lock, Worcester Wharf. It seems that a few nights ago the property was stolen from the prosecutor's boat, and on the previous day the prisoner was seen wearing a cap similar to the one stolen and was at once given into custody. The cap could not be properly identified by the prosecutor, and the prisoner was therefore discharged, the Magistrates intimating that the prisoner might be again apprehended if any further evidence could be brought forward.

131 January 2 1862 Staffordshire Epiphany Sessions

A GANG OF TIPTON IRON STEALERS **Thomas Williams**, 19, boatman, James Morton, 21, labourer, and **George Hughes**, 26, boatman, were charged with having, on the 16th of December, stolen eight pieces of pig iron, the property of Mr W Matthews. The case was fully reported in our columns at the time the prisoners were examined before the Magistrates, and it is only necessary to say that the prisoners were caught by the police in the act of removing the iron in question from a boat onto the bank of the canal. They were all found guilty, and sentenced as follows:- Williams to twelve months imprisonment, with hard labour; Morton to six months; and Hughes, an old

offender, to three years penal servitude.

132 January 23 1862 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL A man named **Thomas Lorekin**, a boatman, living in Tindall Street, was charged with stealing three pieces of coal, value 1s, from a wharf in Tindall Street, the property of Mr Ball, coal dealer, St Vincent Street. It appeared from the evidence that in consequence of some suspicion he entertained that he was being robbed the prosecutor had several pieces of coal on his premises marked. On the previous evening the prisoner was seen by one of the prosecutor's employees to take some coal from a stack upon the wharf and place it in front of his (the prisoner's) door and go away. The coal was examined and found to be some of that which had been marked. A constable was sent for and the prisoner was shortly afterwards apprehended. He was committed for trial. Mr Palmer appeared to watch the case on behalf of the prisoner.

133 February 11 1862 Hanley

POLICE INTELLIGENCE **George Griffin**, boatman, charged with violently assaulting **Thomas Gotham**, lock-keeper, at the Cockshot Lock, on the Trent and Mersey Canal, while engaged in the execution of his duty, was ordered to pay £4 and costs, or go to prison for two months. - **Edward Clayton**, boatman, charged with damaging a lock, and threatening to injure James Proudlove, at Messrs., Brown Westhead and Co's flint wharf, Etruria Vale, was ordered to pay 2s 6d and costs, 18s and 6d, and find sureties of the peace.

134 March 7 1862 Staffordshire Adjourned Sessions

COAL STEALING AT WEST BROMWICH **David White**, a boatman, 29 years of age, was found guilty of stealing a quantity of coal, the property of Messrs. Weston and Grice, at West Bromwich. Previous convictions for felony were proved against the prisoner, and he was sentenced to three years penal servitude.

135 March 28 1862 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING IRON A boatman, named **Joseph Bishop**, who resides in a court in Sheepcote Street, was brought up on remand, charged with stealing twelve pieces of iron, from the Oozells Street wharf, the property of the Birmingham Canal Company. Mr Powell, sen., appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Palmer defended the prisoner. The evidence went to show that, on Friday evening last, a man named Robinson, who is employed upon the wharf, noticed the prisoner and two other men standing near a stack of rod iron, which had been delivered by the company for tonnage and wharfage, and which was placed near the water. The two men who were with the prisoner then got into a boat that was lying in the water near to the stack. Witness thereupon went up to the prisoner and asked him whether the men who were in the boat were come for a load of iron, and he replied that he supposed so. Robinson then went away. He, however, afterwards saw the two men in the act of taking the iron from the stack, and after placing it in the boat, they pushed to the opposite side of the canal. Another witness, also employed at the wharf, afterwards noticed the prisoner with other men on the opposite side of the water, and saw the two latter take the iron from the boat, and carry the greater portion of it away. The prisoner he saw carry the remainder, about twelve or fourteen rods, from the place where it had been thrown out from the boat. The witnesses informed their employer of what they had seen, and the police were promptly communicated with. Detective Mountford shortly afterwards apprehended Bishop on Friday Bridge. He told him the nature of the charge against him, and he replied that he had not been near the place alluded to that day. There was at the time he was taken into custody a quantity of iron rust upon the prisoner's shoulder, which he said he could not account for. Bishop now said he was not guilty, but was committed to take his trial at the Sessions.

136 March 29 1862 West Bromwich

BOARD OF GUARDIANS The usual weekly meeting of this body took place on Monday last, at

the Board Room at the New Workhouse. It will be recollected that on a former occasion it was stated to the Board that Mr Male, surgeon to the Workhouse, had charged the sum of £3, for setting the broken leg of a boatman named **William Rudge**. The man, after the accident, was taken to the Workhouse, where Mr Male reduced the fracture, but having attended the patient subsequently at his own house, Mr Male had made the charge above-mentioned. It was argued that as he received a certain yearly stipend as a medical officer at the Workhouse, the charge of £3 could not be claimed by Mr Male. The matter, however, having been laid before the Poor Law Board, it was now stated that that body had decided that such charge could not be sustained.

137 April 1 1862

SINGULAR CHARGES OF CONSPIRACY At the Public Office yesterday, before Mr Kynnersley, Mr Ixod, iron merchant, Mr W S Hill, Mr James Sutton, and Mr Jacob Poole, described as clerks, and **Thomas Leighton**, a boatman, were summoned at the instance of Messrs., E B Thorneycroft and Co., of the Staffordshire Ironworks, West Bromwich, on a charge of conspiracy together, and obtaining a quantity of iron from that firm. Mr Staveley Hill, barrister, of the Oxford circuit (instructed by Messrs., Hooper and North, of West Bromwich), attended on behalf of Messrs., E B Thorneycroft and Co, and Mr Motteram and Mr Kenealy, also of the Oxford circuit (instructed by Mr Beaton of Dudley) appeared for the defendants. The precise nature of the case did not transpire, an arrangement being made between the learned Stipendiary and the counsel on both sides that it should come on for hearing on Saturday. We believe the matter involved is one of much interest, and that the hearing will occupy the court for a considerable time. Some short while after the foregoing arrangements for postponement took place, Mr Kenealy applied to the Court for summonses to procure the attendance of Mr Samuel Griffiths (Mr E B Thorneycroft's partner), and of his clerk, Mr Whitehead, on Saturday, to answer a cross-charge of conspiracy.

138 April 2 1862 Wolverhampton

BODY OF A CHILD FOUND IN THE CANAL On Sunday last the dead body of a child named **Isaac Hobley**, aged five years, whose father is a boatman, was found in the Birmingham Canal, near Bilston Street Bridge. The child was missed from its home on the previous day.

139 April 15 1862 Dudley

EXTENSIVE RAILWAY ROBBERY At the Police Court, yesterday, **Edward Lloyd**, boatman, was placed in the dock on the charge of being concerned, with another man, since dead, in stealing, on the 27th of June last, a quantity of leather and quilled silk, the property of the West Midland Railway Company. Superintendent Burton, in applying for a remand, stated to the Bench that on the day above named he was in company with Police-sergeant Davis at Holly Hall, when they saw the prisoner Lloyd and another man named Aston. They had two bags with them, which contained together about seventy yards of quilled silk and forty eight sides of kip. At the ensuing Assizes, Lloyd and Aston were convicted on another charge of robbery from the London and North Western Railway, but they were not convicted on the present charge on account of the difficulty experienced in finding out the owners of the stolen property. Since then, Aston has died in prison, and on Lloyd's release, last Saturday, Police-sergeant Davis took him into custody, Superintendent Burton applied for a remand, in order to allow Police-sergeant Davis to visit Rotherham, where the owner of the leather resides, and Bradford, where the owner of the silk lives. The remand was granted.

140 April 26 1862 Birmingham Police Court

A SMASHER A boatman giving the name of **Thomas Sheldon**, who resides in Palmer Street, was charged with having passed a counterfeit half crown at a beerhouse in Adderley Street. It appeared from the statement of Police-constable Beckley, that on the previous day the prisoner tendered the coin at the King's Head Inn, Deritend, on the previous day for some beer, but on being told it was not a good one, he received it back again. Later in the day he went to a beerhouse in Adderley Street, and calling for a glass of ale offered in payment the counterfeit half crown. The landlord

finding that it was base, gave information to the police, and the prisoner was shortly after apprehended by the above-named officer. He was remanded till Monday, in order that enquiries might be made as to whether he had passed any other counterfeit money.

141 April 28 1862 Stafford

PETTY SESSIONS **Joseph Squires**, boatman, for stealing 54lbs of coal from the canal side, at Stowe, was committed to prison for fourteen days.

142 April 29 1862 Birmingham Police Court

THE CHARGE OF PASSING COUNTERFEIT COIN The man named **Robert Sheldon**, a boatman, residing in Palmer Street, who was remanded on a charge of attempting to pass a counterfeit half crown at a public house in Deritend, under circumstances narrated in the *Post* of Saturday, was again placed in the dock. It could not be proved that the prisoner had attempted to utter the coin with a guilty knowledge, and he was therefore discharged with a caution. Mr John Powell appeared for the prisoner.

(Note see Thomas Sheldon above)

143 April 29 1862 Dudley

THE LATE ROBBERY FROM THE WEST MIDLAND RAILWAY Yesterday, **Edward Lloyd**, a boatman, was again brought up on remand, charged with having been concerned in a robbery of leather and silk, to the value of £37, the property of the West Midland Railway Company. The outline of the case has been already given. Yesterday, Mr Bentley of Worcester, appeared for the prosecution and Mr Warmington for the defence. James Carter, residing at Rotherham, and carrying on business as a leather merchant, in partnership with William McCallam, said that on the 25th June 1861, he selected two dozen of kip butts for a customer named Fieldhouse, of Wolverhampton. The goods were given to a servant named Thomas Harrison to pack up. The leather produced by Superintendent Burton and Police-sergeant Davis he could swear to as being his property, as it bore his private mark. It weighed 86lbs. Thos Harrison deposed to having packed up the leather in question in the canvas bag produced by Police-sergeant Davis, and to delivering it to Messrs Pickford and Co's carter, a man named Simpson. Simpson was then called to prove the delivery of the goods to the railway station, and several other witnesses were formally called to prove the transit of the goods from one place to another previous to their arrival at Dudley station, where it was alleged the robbery took place. Superintendent Burton then deposed to having, in company with Police-sergeant Davis, found the prisoner and another man (since dead) at Holly Hall, between five and six o'clock, on the morning of the 27th of June last. They had a bag each, containing something bulky. Witness apprehended the prisoner, and in his bag found the three pieces of stuff and twelve pieces of leather produced. At the police station he charged the prisoner with having stolen the property found upon him from the West Midland Railway Company. He did not ascertain all the facts connected with this case until the prisoner and his companion, a man named Aston, had been convicted of another robbery from the London and North Western Railway. For that offence they were both sentenced to nine months imprisonment. Aston died in gaol, and prisoner was apprehended on this charge, on witness's application, immediately after his release from prison on the first offence. Police-sergeant Davis corroborated Superintendent Burton's evidence, and went on to say that he looked into the bag which Aston had, and found it to contain the leather produced. The prisoner reserved his defence, and, being unable to satisfactorily account for his possession of the stolen property, was fully committed for trial at the next quarter sessions, to be holden at Worcester. There was a second charge against the prisoner of being concerned in stealing silk or alpaca cloth, consigned at the same time as the leather, and, the evidence being materially the same as in the last case, Lloyd was committed for trial on this case also. Bail was agreed to be accepted, prisoner in £200, and two sureties of £100 each; but, not being forthcoming, prisoner was locked up.

144 May 6 1862 Birmingham Police Court

SUSPECTED FELONIES A man named **Samuel Stores**, who resides in Great Tindal Street, was charged on suspicion of having stolen a quantity of timber, which was found in his possession. He was remanded till Wednesday. Mr Hemmant appeared for the defence.

145 May 7 1862 Oldbury

SINGULAR CASE OF CONSPIRING TO DEFRAUD THE MESSRS CHANCE At the Police Court, yesterday, before F Adkins, Esq., Henry Millership and **Samuel Smith**, both in the employ of Messrs., Chance, at the Alkali Works, Oldbury, were charged with having conspired to defraud their employers out of certain moneys. They were also charged with obtaining money under false pretences. The former charge was gone into first. Mr Shakespear prosecuted. Mr Jackson, of West Bromwich, appeared for Smith and Mr Bayley, of Wednesbury, for Millership. The fraud had been committed by Millership, the machine man, and Smith, a boatman, with others, agreeing to make out accounts for ironstone used in the works which had never been delivered. The cashier paid these accounts, and the money was divided amongst those concerned in the fraud. These were the simple facts detailed by Mr Shakespear in opening, and further details will be found in the evidence below. - Henry Cuttell said he was a clerk in the employ of Messrs., Chance, of the Oldbury Chemical Works, and knew both prisoners. Millership was a weigher, or machine keeper, and Smith was in the habit of bringing in small quantities of pyrite stone to the works, generally in boats, From the boats it was unloaded into carts, and taken to Millership's machine to be weighed. When stone was weighed Millership gave a ticket stating the weight, which was invariably brought to witness, from which he made out an account, and sent it to Smith. On the 10th of April last, Smith brought witness the ticket produced, and the account produced for £2 11s 8d was made out from that ticket, and given to Smith to take to the cashier. The ticket in question was a voucher to witness that the stone had been produced, and was in the handwriting of Millership. Millership had told witness that the stone had been brought in. Cross-examined by Mr Bayley: He said he was there when the stone was brought in, and saw the carter bring it. Two men named Round and Turner had to take charge of the dobbin carts from the boats to the weighing machine. Round had absconded. Cross-examined by Mr Jackson: Smith was well known to the firm, and had been in the habit of bringing stone to the works since 1859. Round, Turner, and other men had been in the habit of picking pyrites out of the slack and selling it to the works. Henry Goodyear, cashier to the works, deposed that on the 10th of April last the account produced was brought to him marked with Cuttell's initials, and he paid Smith £2 12s 8d. James Beele, labourer, in the employ of Messrs., Chance, stated that he received all the pyrite stone that came on to the ground. It was all brought to a particular place, and it was his duty to stack it. None was brought without his knowledge. About a month before the 17th of April he received certain orders, in consequence of which he watched Smith. The latter did not bring any stone in during the month before that date, and he had not brought any in since. The ground was fenced with railings, but there was no gate, and the place was open to any body. Witness, however, was there during all the time the machine was open, and saw all that came from the machine. Cross-examined by Mr Jackson: Did not know that a man named Turner and another named Round brought stone from a boat belonging to Mr Yeomans on the morning of April 16th. Did not know that it was weighed before the machineman came; but would not swear that no stone had been weighed in the absence of the machineman. William Turner, one of the dobbin drivers referred to, deposed that it was his duty to draw slack and stone out of the boats to the machine. He did it for Mr Yeomans. He never did weigh any stone. He could neither read nor write, and could not therefore have made out the ticket. Besides Millership, Mr Gough in the store room had weighed some of the stone. Millership had told witness that if he could get him a customer he should have a share of the money. Witness had had money from Joseph Round for some stone which had been said to have come in from Samuel Smith; but which stone had never been brought in. The amount was 17s or 17s 6d. By Mr Wright: This was on the 16th of April; but witness had "seen a little" before. Round told him he had put some stone in for Samuel Smith; but witness knew he had not, and knew that it meant making a demand for stone which had never been

brought at all. In consequence of this understanding witness received the money. Cross-examined by Mr Bayley: Witness told Millership, by Round's directions, that Round had weighed some stone, and that it was down on the slate. Cross-examined by Mr Jackson: Did not bring any stone to be weighed, but Round told him to say he had done so, and he told Millership so accordingly. That statement was a lie. Witness, along with other men, had picked pyrites, and they "threw in" together. Had not sent in pyrites in other person's names; but would not say he would not do such a thing, as he dare say he was as bad as anybody. He had been examined by Mr Shakespear, and told that if he would give evidence he should not be prosecuted. By Mr Wright: Did not know what amount of money was received. He was quite content with the 17s 6d received. Re-examined by Mr Shakespear: He told Millership that some stone had been "put in" in Smith's name. By that he meant that some stone had been paid for which had not been delivered, and he told Millership so. Thomas Yeomans, assistant to his father in bringing coal and stone into the works, deposed that Samuel Smith had never brought any pyrites into the works in their boats. On the 28th of April, witness saw Smith, after he had been in custody, and Smith said that Turner and Round had been the means of drawing him into it; and also said that he had given Round 18s to take to Turner, as Turner and Milliship's share of the money. Smith asked witness if he thought he went with Mr Jackson to Mr Henry Chance, it would have any influence in preventing a prosecution of himself. Witness suspected something wrong because he saw a great deal of drinking going on, and he accordingly set a watch. The conversation took place in Fowler's public house. Cross-examined by Mr Jackson: Had appeared as a witness against Smith before the conversation, and yet did not caution him as to what he said. Reuben Morton, boat unloader at the works, said that he was ordered to watch if any stone was brought in except by Yeomans, and he knew that Smith did not bring any in after the 7th of April. Police-sergeant Simmonds deposed to the apprehension of Millership and Smith. The latter said Round was as guilty as he was, and ought to be there, for he had drawn him into it. He further said that Round wished him to receive the money because he could get more money for it, and he accordingly did so, and gave it to Round. At the conclusion of the evidence Mr Bayley addressed the Bench on behalf of the prisoner Milliship, and contended that although his client had been guilty of great negligence he had not been guilty of any criminal act. The Bench, however, committed both prisoners for trial. The second charge was not gone into.

146 May 8 1862 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING HAY A man named **William Higginson**, a boatman, living in Cleveland Street, was committed to the House of Correction, with hard labour, for three months, for having stolen a truss of hay from the premises of Mr Rollinson, coal dealer, Blews Street.

147 May 17 1862 Wolverhampton

A BRUTAL HUSBAND At the Petty Sessions, yesterday, a boatman named **Thomas Vaughan** was brought up charged with beating his wife. Excited by drink, the defendant left the Raven Public house, and proceeded to the house of his father, where he assaulted his wife with much severity: and when his father and his sister interfered, he turned his wrath upon them, striking each to the ground. The learned Stipendiary bound him over to keep the peace towards his wife.

148 May 21 1862 Worcester

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE On Monday, before the City Magistrates, a young woman, named Elizabeth Lewis, living in Copenhagen Street, was charged with attempting to commit suicide by drowning herself in the Worcester and Birmingham canal, at an early hour on Sunday morning. It seems that the prisoner jumped into the canal near to the gasworks soon after one o'clock, and the alarm of a woman being in the water awoke a boatman named **Noah Dayus**, who was asleep in his boat at the time. He immediately procured a drag, and searched the place where the woman was supposed to be, and after dragging for some little time his drag caught in the folds of her dress, and she was brought to the surface. Dayus had, however, to jump into the water to bring the body to shore, and it was then seen that she was very far gone, and that a speedy remedy would have to be

devised for her recovery. The young woman, however, revived after the lapse of some time, and ultimately she was given into the custody of Police-constable Vaughan, who conveyed her to the police station. She refused to assign any cause which had led her to take so rash a step; but her sister, who was in Court, said she had been induced to come from the metropolis by a young man named Bent, who was employed at the Vulcan Works, and who had sent her money for that purpose. She had been keeping company with this man, and had lately discovered that he was married. It is therefore supposed that the sudden knowledge of this caused her to attempt self-destruction. The Magistrates ordered the woman to be remanded; and told the boatman (Dayus) that his gallant conduct would be represented in the proper quarter.

149 May 31 1862 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL **Thomas Jackson**, a boatman, residing in a Court in Hospital Street, was placed in the dock charged with having stolen a quantity of coal from the premises of Mr Cooper, coal dealer, Woodcock Street. The prosecutor was not in attendance, and the case was therefore adjourned till today.

150 June 12 1862 Wolverhampton

POACHING FISH Yesterday, at the Wolverhampton Police Court, a boatman, named **Richard Meredith**, was summoned for poaching fish on that portion of the Birmingham and Liverpool Canal which passes through the estate of Mr Giffard of Chillington. One of the keepers of the plaintiff deposed to having seen the defendant in a boat, using a net with very small meshes, while his wife was beating the water in advance. Defendant refused to give his name, and the keeper then went on board and secured the net. Mr Turner, solicitor, who appeared for Mr Giffard, complained that, the meshes of the net being so small, fish of every size were taken by it, and therefore the depredation was of a serious character. Mr Bartlett appeared for the defendant, and urged that his client was unaware that the act he was committing was an illegal one. The magistrates fined the defendant in the mitigated penalty of 40s and costs, in all £2 19s, which was paid.

151 June 19 1862 Solihull

MAGISTERIAL BUSINESS On Monday, before W James and H H Chattock, Esqrs., a charge of horse stealing, as well as assault, was preferred against a man named **Thomas Woodward**, who had been out upon bail. Mr Lane of Stratford-on-Avon, conducted the prosecution, and Mr A W Suckling, of Birmingham, appeared for the prisoner. Mr Suckling, before the case was entered into, urged that under the circumstances it ought not to be considered as a case of premeditated felony. It was simply a case of disturbance amongst a lot of boatmen. The Magistrates, however, decided upon hearing the case. **Robert Rainbow**, the prosecutor, stated that he was a boatman on the canal, and lived at Stratford-on-Avon. He and prisoner were at Mr John Castle's Inn, the Travellers' Rest, Solihull Lodge, on the 14th of May last. Prosecutor had a black horse, and prisoner a brown mare, and they entered into conversation about an exchange. Prisoner wanted £8 and the black horse in exchange for his mare, and it was ultimately agreed that prosecutor should give him £6 10s and the horse. It would seem that the prisoner afterwards repented of the transaction, and declared he would have the mare back again, although he had *bona fide* sold it to the prosecutor. During the night of the 7th of June, the prosecutor, prisoner, and others of their acquaintance, were at the Travellers' Rest, when Mr Castle, the landlord, locked the mare up in the stable, and took the keys upstairs to bed, saying that, if any more men came in with horses, he would throw the keys down to them. In the course of the night his wife awoke him, and said there was someone breaking into the stable, which proved to be the case. The prisoner had violently broken into the stable and taken out the mare, and declared that he would keep her. The Magistrates remanded the case until Saturday, when they said they would give their decision. Bail for the prisoner was renewed. The Magistrates would, however, now hear one of the two assault cases which occurred when the mare was taken out of the stable, and they would hear the other case on Saturday. **James Smith** was then charged with assaulting Robert Rainbow, the prosecutor in the horse stealing case. Rainbow said that

defendant struck him two or three times and knocked him into the canal, by which his life was endangered. Something had been said about Smith having assisted the prisoner Woodward in breaking open the stable door and stealing the horse. The Magistrates, however, said there was no evidence before them of his having done that, but that they should fine him £2 10s with costs, or one months imprisonment. Smith asked what there would be to pay altogether, and, on being told £3 7s 6d, said that he thought he should pay it in Warwick Gaol.

152 June 23 1862 Dudley

FATAL ACCIDENT On Saturday afternoon a man named **William Roberts**, boatman, was proceeding along Birmingham Canal, Netherton, when the boat came in contact with a bridge buttress, and deceased was consequently thrown off and terribly crushed between the side of the boat and the towing path. Of course he was taken home, and Mr Davenport, from Mr Horton's surgery, attended him. He sustained a fracture of the ribs and severe injuries about the head. The injuries proved fatal, and he died the same day.

153 June 30 1862 West Bromwich

STEALING HORSE CORN On Saturday, at the Petty Sessions, before W Sharp and T Kenrick, Esqrs., Samuel Fairclough, horse fettle, and **John Bate**, boatman, were charged with the above offence. The principal witness, Thomas Felton, watchman at Mr Dawes's Bromford Colliery, deposed that at about five o'clock last Monday morning he saw the prisoner Fairclough coming from the top stables with a bag of horse corn on his shoulder, which he carried down to the canal and threw into the middle of a cabin boat that was moored at the wharf. He then went away, and on the witness going to the boat, he saw the bag of corn, and a truss of hay. In about three quarters of an hour, the prisoner Bate unmoored the boat, and was going away, when the witness informed Mr Millard, one of the proprietors of the colliery, what he had seen. Mr Millard then deposed to finding the bag of corn hidden under a tarpaulin in the prisoner's boat, as well as the hay, both of which he identified as property of himself and partners. Upon asking Bate how he came by them, he said he did not know who put them there. The prisoners were committed for trial; Fairclough for stealing, and Bate for knowingly receiving the stolen property. Mr H Jackson appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Travis for the defence.

154 July 2 1862 Staffordshire Sessions

PETTY OFFENCES **Reuben Price**, boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing a great coat and other articles, the property of William Higgins, at Willenhall. Prisoner having been previously convicted, was sentenced to four years penal servitude.

John Thomas Rhind, 31, boatman, was indicted for stealing, on the 24th of June, a pair of boots, the property of William Wootten at Daw End. Found guilty, and sentenced to three months imprisonment with hard labour.

155 July 2 1862 Worcester Midsummer Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **Edward Lloyd**, 31, boatman, pleaded guilty to a charge of having stolen 80lbs of leather, 83 yards of alpaca, and other articles, the property of the West Midland Railway at Dudley. He was sentenced to eight months imprisonment.

156 July 7 1862 Birmingham Police Court

EMBEZZLEMENT A boatman, having no fixed residence, named **Samuel Lankey**, was remanded till today on a charge of having embezzled the sum of £10, the moneys of his employer, Mr Thomas Ward, coal merchant, Smethwick.

(note this and next case are clearly the same)

157 July 8 1862 Birmingham Police Court

ALLEGED EMBEZZLEMENT A boatman named **Samuel Sankey**, who was described as having

no fixed residence, was brought up on remand charged with having embezzled £10, the price of a boat load of coal, belonging to his employer, Mr Thomas Ward, coal merchant, Smethwick. Mr Edward Powell appeared for the prosecution, and Mr John Powell defended the prisoner. It appeared from the statement of the prosecutor that Sankey was employed by him to fetch a boat load of coal from Kettlebrook to Birmingham. The prisoner obtained the coal, and instead of forwarding it to the prosecutor, he sold it at the Worcester Wharf, and kept the money. In cross-examination by Mr John Powell, Mr Ward further stated that after the prisoner had sold the coal he came to him, and stating that he had disposed of the property at the Worcester Wharf, handed him a sovereign in part payment, and promised to pay the rest as soon as he could. Under these circumstances the Magistrates thought the case a matter for the County Court, and therefore discharged the prisoner.

158 July 8 1862 Wolverhampton

THE CHILD MURDER AT WEDNESFIELD HEATH Yesterday, at the County Petty Sessions, before Mr Henry Hill and Captain Fowler Butler, Mary Ann Stringer, aged 20 years, was charged with the wilful murder of a newly born male child, at Wednesfield. Mr Travis of West Bromwich, prosecuted, and Mr Cresswell defended. Police-constable Thomas Cooper deposed: On the 14th of June last, I went to the side of the canal at Wednesfield, and there I saw a boatman of that canal, named **Moses Goodwin**, from whom I received a bundle. I opened it in his presence, and there found the body of an infant female child, and a large stone. I placed the body in the New Inns public house, and gave information to the Coroner, who held an inquest, and a verdict was returned of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown". On Saturday last, from information I received, I went to a house where the prisoner resides with her father and mother, which is about a quarter of a mile from the canal. She was at home. I told her that I supposed she was the mother of the child. Before she replied, I cautioned her as to the use that would be made of her statement. She said, "I have not had a child". I took her to Dr Collins, surgeon, of Queen Street, Wolverhampton; afterwards she was seen by Mr Bunch, surgeon. Mr James Bunch deposed that he was a surgeon of Wolverhampton. He proceeded: On Sunday I examined a prisoner in the police station. She has been recently delivered of a child. I cannot tell exactly within what period; I should think two months. Cross-examined: It is possible three months; but I should think two months. Mr Travis applied for a remand for a week, and it was granted. Since the termination of the inquest a reward of £50 had been offered for the apprehension of the offender.

159 July 15 1862

THE CHILD MURDER AT WEDNESFIELD HEATH
COMMITTAL OF THE ACCUSED FOR WILFUL MURDER

Yesterday, the young woman Mary Ann Stringer, of Wednesfield Heath, was again brought up before Mr H Hill, Mr S Cartwright, and Captain Fowler Butler, charged with the wilful murder of a newly-born child, at Wednesfield Heath, on the 14th of June.

The case occasioned much excitement amongst a large number of people, who thronged the court. Mr Travis, of West Bromwich, again appeared for the prosecution; and Mr Cresswell defended the prisoner.

Moses Goodwin, a boatman, deposed that on Saturday, the 14th of June last, he was navigating a boat along the canal from Solly's Works, to Wednesfield Heath on his way to Staffordshire Potteries. When he got to the second canal lock he saw a bundle floating out of the lock, and took it up into his boat. In doing so he tore the cloth, and saw what was in it. He saw it was a child. He did not open the bundle. He gave it to Police-constable Cooper. The officer opened it and took it away with him. It was then five in the afternoon. There was a stone in the bundle; and the emptying of the lock caused the bundle to rise.

Mrs Lucy Bostock, the wife of a licensed hawker in Wolverhampton, deposed that the prisoner was her apprentice for seven months, up to the 1st July, to learn the Millinery trade. The girl came to her at nine in the morning and remained there until eight in the evening daily. On Friday, the 6th June,

the prisoner, whilst at work, complained of a pain in the stomach, and frequently left the room. The night being wet, she (witness) recommended her to remain at her home all night. She did so, and slept with another apprentice, named Emma Bowers, and her (witness's) servant, named Mary Millington. On the following morning, she appeared as ill as before, and on her (witness's) recommendation, she went home at about noon. She returned to work on the Monday, at about nine in the morning. There was no further alteration in her appearance than that she appeared somewhat paler. She walked a little lame; but, in explanation, said that whilst descending the steps at the railway tunnel on Friday she fell and hurt her knee. During the time the prisoner was in witness's service two old calico sheets were cut up and made into dusters, The dusters produced were made of old calico; but she could not say that the dusters produced were made of the old sheets.

Cross-examined: Knew nothing of the family to which the prisoner belonged. Understood, however, that the prisoner, before she became her apprentice, lived at Mr Blakemore's, a greengrocer at Willenhall. Had not a tittle of complaint to make against her. Thought on the 6th of June that she was suffering from diarrhoea, and had no reason now to alter the opinion then formed. Should think it impossible for a young woman to be in labour on the Friday, walk to Wednesfield Heath on the morrow, and return to Wolverhampton on the following Monday.

Mary Millington sworn: I am servant at Mrs Lucy Bostock's. On Friday before Whit Sunday, June 6th, the prisoner slept with me in my bed in the attic. Next morning she said that she was better. She said she had been up during the night, She did not say that she had been down stairs. I came down at five o'clock, and left the prisoner in bed. About February last I made some dusters out of two old calico sheets. One of the dusters now produced by the officer is one of them, and the sewing on it is mine. I have another duster here of the same kind, of my own sewing. I am quite satisfied that the duster produced by the officer was made by me. I never gave the prisoner one of the dusters.

Cross-examined: I especially know my own work, from the practice I have of leaving a knot, with a piece of thread behind the knot, at the commencement of the sewing. I can also tell my own sewing from other features it displayed. I recognised the duster as my work immediately that the policeman brought it to me. My mistress made one duster; and the work in that one is very different to the work in mine.

William Dane, parish-constable, of Wednesfield Heath, deposed: That on the 7th of June, he saw the prisoner pass his house at about nine o'clock at night. She bent herself forward, and seemed in great pain. He could hear her groaning twelve yards away. To his wife, who was with him, he remarked that the girl was either in labour or had recently been in labour, He had known the prisoner several years, and some weeks before the 7th of June had thought that she was in the family way.

Cross-examined: He told Cooper what he saw on the 7th June, when he (Cooper) called upon him last Thursday week. If any reward was obtained he should expect part of it.

Elizabeth Cooper, single woman, of Portobello, deposed that last Monday she was in one of the cells at the Wolverhampton Lock-up, with the prisoner. On that evening the prisoner said she had no child; but on the following morning, whilst they were washing, she (witness) having observed plaisters of pitch only upon the prisoner's breasts, she asked her what she had the plaisters there for: she replied to "assuage the milk". Witness then reminded her that she had said that she had no child. Prisoner, in responding, said, "I have had one: it is as good to own to the truth as to keep it to myself".

Cross-examined: She was in the lock-up for assaulting a publican at Willenhall, but had never before been in custody. She lived with her sister, and earned her living on the pit-bank. She left the lock-up on Tuesday week, but said nothing about the prisoner having confessed to being a mother till Thursday. She did so on that day to Policeman Smith, who, as she stood at the door of a house in Moseley Hole, asked her if anything was said to her by the prisoner when they were in the lock-up.

Mr Bunch, surgeon, would have been recalled, but he could not leave a patient.

Police-constable Cooper's evidence was then read over. We published it last week. It will be remembered that one of the dusters, sworn to by the witness Millington, was produced by this

witness, and deposed to by him as the wrapping (described as a pillow case) in which the body was found. Cross-examined: Had suspected two persons before he suspected the prisoner. When he arrested her, she said she had no child.

Mr Cresswell wished to have an opportunity of examining Mr Bunch before the Magistrates decided upon the case.

Their worships however, determined to commit the prisoner upon the evidence before them, and the prisoner, upon the recommendation of her solicitor, made no statement, and was formally committed for trial at the Assizes.

160 August 1 1862 Staffordshire Summer Assizes

SENTENCES **George Smith**, 23, boatman pleaded guilty to a charge of stealing a chain and an iron beam, the property of William Springthorpe, at Tipton, on the 18th of July, two months hard labour.

161 August 14 1862

A CHILD DROWNED IN THE CANAL An inquest was held at the Fox and Dog, Princip Street, yesterday afternoon, before Dr Birt Davies, Borough Coroner, on the body of Thomas Whitehouse, aged three years and three months, son of **Thomas Whitehouse**, boatman, who was drowned in the old Birmingham Canal, near Boddington Mill, Princip Street, on Monday last. From the evidence of the mother, it appeared that they have their residence on board the boat, Lincolnshire, which plies on the canal. About one o'clock on Monday afternoon, deceased's mother saw him sitting on the cabin top, and at that time gave him something to eat. She went into the cabin, but on coming out a few minutes afterwards she found he had disappeared. Seeing his cap floating on the water, she suspected he had fallen in, and asked some boys who were bathing to dive for him. They did so, but without success. An engineer after dragged for him with no better result; but about half an hour afterwards, his mother found the body lying under an open boat which was moored near to where the Lincolnshire was lying. He was then, of course, quite dead. He was frequently in the habit of sitting on the top of the cabin, and she had never thought that he was in any danger when doing so. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

162 August 16 1862 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF STEALING BOAT CLOTHS A man named **William Higginson**, a boatman, living in the Aston Road, was brought up on remand, charged with having stolen six boat cloths, the property of the Bridgewater Trustees, from a boat that was lying at Boddington's Wharf, Princip Street. The evidence being incomplete, he was further remanded till Wednesday next.

163 August 21 1862 Birmingham Police Court

SUSPICION OF FELONY The man, named **William Higginson**, a boatman, living in the Aston Road, who has been several times remanded on suspicion of stealing six tarpaulin sheets from a boat lying at Boddington Wharf, Princip Street, the property of the Bridgewater Trustees, was again brought up. Detective-sergeant Mountford having stated that he had no evidence to offer against the prisoner, he was discharged.

164 August 27 1862 Wolverhampton

THROWING A POLICEMAN INTO THE CANAL At the County Petty Sessions, on Monday, before Mr H Hill and Mr S Cartwright, **William Castery**, a boatman, was charged with wilfully assaulting and beating Police-constable Tubman, of the county force, whilst in the execution of his duty, and **Joseph Wassell, Ann Wassell and Charles Hemmings**, also "boat people" were charged with having "unlawfully obstructed and opposed" the same William Tubman, whilst he was in the execution of his duty. The facts seemed to be that on the 18th of August, Castery was bowling skittles at the Boat Inn, at Botteram; near Wombourn, with the landlord of the house, whose name

was Turner. Castery was not successful in the play, and paid for the drink which constituted the stakes, and afterwards, in payment for other drink, subsequently played between himself and the landlord, produced a sovereign; and for the defence, which was conducted by Mr W Ward, it was maintained that he handed the sovereign to Turner, and that in consequence of Turner refusing to admit that he had done so, a dispute arose between them. Whether this was so or not, a dispute did arise, and the landlord called in a police officer. The police officer finding that there was a dispute about the money at first said the case was one for a County Court, but subsequently found it necessary to arrest Castery. Castery resisted, and threw the officer into the canal. Tubman, however, regained the bank, and a severe struggle took place between him and Castery. He, however, succeeded, after using his staff, in handcuffing his assailant, and was proceeding with him towards the nearest lock up, when Castery made his escape by leaping into the canal. After diving some distance he came out on the opposite bank, and ran away. On the following Thursday the handcuffs were delivered to the officer. The other defendants named were shown to have taken part in the affray, though only a minor one. The defendants all received a good character from Mr Thomas Beck, the manager in this district for the firm by whom they are employed. The Magistrates, however, convicted them, and fined Castery £5, Joseph Wassell 10s, Ann Wassell 5s and Charles Hemmings 10s, and costs in every case.

165 September 1 1862 Birmingham Police Court

A "FOWL" AFFAIR An old offender, named **William Higginson**, a boatman, living in the Aston Road, was charged with having stolen two fowls, the property of Mr Jabez Slatter, clerk at the Snow Hill Wharf. From the statement of Police-constable Aston it appeared that shortly before four o'clock that morning, he, hearing the cries of some fowls proceeding apparently from the premises of the prosecutor, went on the wharf, and there saw the prisoner, who had just come from the fowl pen, in the act of making his escape over some gates. The officer stopped him, and took him back to the fowl pen, which was broken open. Two fowls were found lying, one of them dead, but warm, and the other in a dying state, upon the floor. Higginson was charged with having killed them, with the intention of stealing them, and he replied that he had done so. The prisoner, who had been several times previously convicted, was committed to the Sessions for trial.

166 September 5 1862 Rushall

MAGISTERIAL **Charles Coley**, a boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing a quantity of beans and chaff, the property of Elijah Beakley, of Pelsall, from a hut at Brownhills, and was sentenced to one month's imprisonment, with hard labour.

167 October 1 1862 Walsall

ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN Yesterday, at the Petty Sessions, before J Anderson, J W Newman, and P Potter, Esqrs., **Charles Boat**, a boatman, in the employ of Mr Oakley, was charged with having stolen a quantity of iron, valued at £1, from the premises of Messrs., Jones, at the Birchills. Mr Matthews appeared for the prosecutors. From the evidence it seemed that on Saturday night, Mrs Oakley had occasion to visit the boat, and on going into the cabin found the iron concealed in the bed. She at once locked the room, but on returning on the following morning ascertained that the lock had been forced and the iron removed. The iron was afterwards discovered in a wood yard belonging to Mrs Boyce, and identified as belonging to Messrs., Jones. The prisoner, who pleaded not guilty, was committed to take his trial at the Assizes.

168 October 6 1862 Smethwick

BURGLARY: A PLUCKY PROSECUTOR At the Petty Sessions, West Bromwich, on Saturday, before Messrs J Bodington and H Williams, a boatman, named **Edward Thompson** was placed in the dock, charged with feloniously entering the dwelling house of Mr John Stones, a roller, residing at the French Walls, on the night of Monday, the 22nd ult. Mr Emmanuel Stones deposed that, hearing a noise about half past twelve o'clock on the night in question, he went downstairs, and

finding the back door open, which he had fastened before retiring to rest at eleven o'clock, he walked over the stable and the field, to see if the horses were all safe, and then went over the house. In the pantry he found a man, whom he seized by the throat and dragged into the passage, when another man came out of one of the rooms, and seized him round the throat from behind, at the same time placing his hand over his mouth so that he could not speak for some time. Prosecutor, however, did at last manage to tell them that if they loosed him he would let them go. Upon this the man whom he held went away, and the other one whom he seized broke loose and got away also. He could not swear to the prisoner, but he believed he was the man whom he seized in the pantry. He afterwards examined the pantry and found a man's cap and shoe; he also found that several articles of wearing apparel had been removed from a drawer in the pantry and laid in the middle of a large shawl on the floor ready to be tied up. Entrance had been effected through a broken pane in the pantry window, which was large enough to admit a man. Sergeant Passey deposed that from information received he went to Stoke-on-Trent, on Wednesday last, where he found the prisoner in custody, having given himself up. He charged him with the offence, and he said, "It's right; I did it". The prisoner also said that the cap which was found by the prosecutor in the pantry was his. The prisoner, who now observed he should reserve his defence, was committed for trial at the next Assizes at Stafford.

169 October 9 1862 Birmingham Borough Sessions

FOWL STEALING **William Higginson** (21), boatman, was charged with having, on the 30th of August, stolen three tame fowls, the goods of Jabez Slatter. Mr Bennett prosecuted. It appeared from the evidence of Police-constables Aston and John Smallwood, that on the morning in question the prisoner was seen to come out of the prosecutor's fowl house, and was apprehended immediately afterwards, and two fowls, dead but warm, and one alive, were found in a bag. The prosecutor identified the fowls as his property. The Jury found the prisoner guilty, and he also pleaded guilty to a previous conviction. He was sentenced to three years penal servitude.

170 October 11 1862 Stourport

At the Magistrates' Office, on Wednesday, before T S Lea and Slade Baker Esqrs, **Joseph Owens**, Canal Boatman, was charged with stealing a quantity of coal, the property of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company, from a boat of which he was Captain. Owens was seen by Superintendent Stanton in the act of wheeling the coal away at half past eleven o'clock on Sunday last, and was at once apprehended. He was sentenced to 14 days hard labour.

Robert Wheeler, another boatman, was charged with stealing a stone jar, containing a quart of porter, and some bread and beef, the property of Mr James Vaughan, of the Crown and Anchor Inn. Wheeler, it appeared, was drinking at the house, when he went down into the cellar and took the articles. He was met by James Vaughan jun, coming out of the cellar with them in his possession. He was given into the custody of Police Constable Ingham. Sentence 14 days hard labour.

171 November 5 1862 Tipton

A COUPLE OF IRON STEALERS At Wednesbury Petty Sessions, yesterday, before T Walker and J Haines Esqrs., a boy named John Holden, and **John Cox**, a boatman, in the employ of Mr G H Hickman, were charged with having stolen an iron pulley block and chain, the property of Cox's employer. Police-constable Williams stated that early that morning he was at the house of Thomas Jordan, a marine store dealer, residing in Canal Street, Tipton, when the prisoner Holden entered and offered the iron for sale. In reply to witness's questions, he said a boatman had given him the iron, and offered to point out the man. Witness went with the boy, who conducted him to Cox, and Cox at once admitted that the boy's statement was correct. He then took the prisoners into custody, and subsequently ascertained that the property had been stolen from Mr Hickman's premises. Arthur Wise, a stock taker in the employ of Mr Hickman, identified the iron, and the prisoner Cox, who in pleading guilty to the charge, said the iron had accidentally fallen into the boat, and he had neglected to return it, was sent to prison and hard labour for three months, but Holden was

discharged.

172 November 17 1862 Wolverhampton

ROBBERY FROM THE PERSON At the Petty Sessions on Saturday, Mary Gould was charged with stealing two guineas from the Person of **William Draycott**, a boatman. From the evidence of a policeman it appeared that the robbery had been committed on the previous night. Complaint was made by the prosecutor, and the witness proceeded to the residence of the defendant, which is situated in a yard notoriously the resort of thieves and prostitutes. Obtaining no response to his knock, he shot back the bolt of the door by using a knife from without. He found prisoner in bed, and took her into custody. The prosecutor did not appear, and the prisoner was remanded.

173 November 24 1862

DEATH BY DROWNING An inquest was held on Saturday afternoon, at the New Inn, Nechells Park Road, before Dr Birt Davies, the Borough Coroner, touching the death of a little girl, named Hannah Wright, the daughter of **William Wright**, a boatman. It appeared that on Wednesday last the boat of which the deceased's father was captain arrived at the Saltley Wharf, and on Thursday morning, about half past nine, the father went into the boat to breakfast, at which time the little girl left the boat and went upon the towing path. The father missed his child shortly afterwards, and, after searching elsewhere, he dragged the canal, and found the body of the child quite dead. He supposed that she had accidentally fallen into the water. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

174 November 23 1862

FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE ICE On Sunday afternoon a number of men and boys assembled on the pool of the Fenton Manor House Estate, for skating and sliding, and among them was a lad, fourteen years of age, named **Beckett**, the son of a boatman. Venturing on defective ice, the boy went through, and was drowned before he could be rescued from his watery grave.

175 December 4 1862 Tipton

STEALING A BOAT At Wednesbury Petty Sessions, on Tuesday, before J Marshall and T Jesson, **William Draycott**, a boatman, in the service of Mr Fellows of Tipton, was brought up on a warrant, charged with having stolen a boat, the property of his employers. Mr W H Fellows, of Horseley Heath, attended on behalf of the prosecutor, and stated that, on the 19th of November, the prisoner was instructed to proceed to the Potteries, Mr Fellows giving him 20s on account of his wages. The prisoner got into disreputable company at Wolverhampton, and lost his money. He then sent his wife to Mr Fellows for a further draw, and his request being met with a refusal, he made an engagement with the Grand Junction Company, and took the boat to London, where he was apprehended. Mr Fellows said that as the prisoner had promised to behave better for the future, the prosecutor had consented to withdraw his charge. The Bench, therefore, discharged the prisoner with a caution.

176 December 15 1862 Worcester Winter Assizes

RAPE AT KIDDERMINSTER **Peter Walford** (22), boatman, was charged with committing a rape upon the person of a little girl named Charlotte Hooper, on the 11th of November. Mr Griffiths prosecuted. The details are too horrible for publication. It was proved that the prisoner had been previously convicted for a similar offence, and sentenced to penal servitude. He was sentenced to imprisonment, with hard labour, for two years.

177 January 9 1863 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN **Samuel Storer**, a boatman, living in Great Tindall Street, was charged with having stolen the wheel of a barrow, belonging to Mr H W Winfield, Cambridge Street. The evidence went to show that on the night of the 16th December the barrow wheel was

purloined from the wharf of Mr H W Winfield, and that on the 29th of December, the prisoner sold it to a Mr Jones, for 2s 6d. It was afterwards found in the possession of Jones, in consequence of whose statement, the prisoner was apprehended. He was committed to the House of Correction, with hard labour, for one month.

178 January 9 1863 Worcester

CITY SESSIONS James Phillips, a bad character, was charged with stealing a silver watch, belonging to a boatman named **Bowkett**, of Ledbury. Bowkett, when drunk, lost his watch in Worcester, and next day it was found in the possession of the prisoner, who sold it to a man named Prosser. In defence, prisoner said he bought the watch of a hawkker in the street. Several previous convictions were proved, and on this occasion the prisoner was sentenced to six years penal servitude.

179 January 16 1863

DEATH BY DROWNING An inquest was held yesterday afternoon at the Odd Fellows' Arms, Adams Street, on the body of **Christopher Wilkins**, a boatman, fifty four years of age, who resided in a court in Fleet Street. From the evidence that about two o'clock on the morning of Monday last the deceased, whilst towing a boat with his son through the No 11 lock, at Aston, was in the act of shifting the helm to prevent it coming in contact with the side of the lock, when he was over-balanced and fell into the water. His son at once raised an alarm and stopped the boat. The deceased, however, by that time had sunk and floated under the vessel. Wilkins, with assistance, was at length got out; but was then quite dead. The Jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased was "Accidentally drowned".

180 January 19 1863 Kings Heath

MAGISTERIAL At the Petty Sessions, on Friday, before Messrs Joseph Purser and Thomas Lane, **William Bennett** was summoned for defrauding the Stratford-on-Avon Canal Company. He did not appear himself, but his wife appeared and stated that her husband was so engaged in his occupation as boatman on the canal that he was seldom at home. It was proved that the summons had been served at his house on Tuesday, and there had been plenty of time to apprise him of it between Tuesday and Friday, although he might not have been at home. Mr Hudson, the Company's manager, was there to conduct the case, and William Smeaton was the witness. It appeared that on the 21st of December last, defendant had a boat load of manure which he made a declaration according to the furnished form, he was taking from King's Norton to Waring's Green, but he took it on to Hockley, which was two miles further, by which he had made himself liable to a penalty of £20. The Magistrates on examining the Act of Parliament of the Stratford-on-Avon Canal Company, found that they had no power to mitigate the penalty. Under the circumstances, as Bennett had not appeared under the summons, they ordered that a warrant for his apprehension should be immediately taken out.

181 January 21 1863 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING LEAD FROM THE TOWER A man named **Joseph Fowler**, alias **Poyner**, a boatman, described as having no fixed residence, was charged with having, in concert with some other man, stolen a quantity of lead from the roof of the Tower in Bagot Street. Mr George Whateley appeared for the prosecution. It appeared from the evidence of a boatman named **William Buxton**, that shortly before nine o'clock on Thursday night last he was in his boat, when he saw some men throwing pieces of lead into a boat from the roof of the Tower, then put out a boat shaft into the vessel, and push it over to the opposite side of the canal. The prisoner, who was standing on the towing path on the far side, took up the lead and carried it away, remarking that it was "a very clever job". Buxton at once gave information of what he had seen to the police, and on Wednesday evening the prisoner was apprehended by Police-constables Copestake and Bishop, at the Red Lion public house, in Aston Road. Poyner was committed to the Sessions for trial.

182 February 5 1863 Tipton

DEATH BY DROWNING An inquest was held, on Monday last, at the Old Bush Inn, before G Hooper, Esq., Coroner, on the body of a boy named **George Lloyd Griffiths**, aged eleven years, who was drowned in the Birmingham Canal on Friday last. The evidence went to show that about eight o'clock on the morning of Friday last the deceased and a boatman were taking a boat through the Factory Lock. The man was in the act of closing the bottom lock, and deceased was engaged in drawing the middle lock, when suddenly the man lost sight of the boy, and on going to the middle lock he saw the boy and the windlass in the water. Assistance was called, and without loss of time the body was taken out. Medical aid was sent for, but life was found to be extinct. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death", the deceased having no doubt fallen into the water in consequence of the windlass becoming detached. The Coroner suggested to the employer of the lad the propriety of his not engaging youths of such tender years for the purpose of drawing the locks.

183 February 9 1863 Birmingham Police Court

Francis Vaughan, 37, New Canal Street, boatman, and Margaret Sanders, who lives with him, were charged with being in possession of a number of housebreaking implements. The prisoners had been several times remanded, and it was stated by Detective Sergeant Kelly that nothing could be traced against them. Mr Dicken, who appeared for Vaughan, said that according to his instructions, the prisoner bore a good character, and that the implements referred to were used by him in his ordinary occupation as a boatman, it was admitted also that the prisoners did not come directly within the pale of the law, because the articles were found in the house, and not upon the person of the prisoners. The police were directed by the Bench to retain the implements, and the prisoners were discharged.

184 February 13 1863 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A HORSE A boatman named **Thomas Godfrey**, residing in Nelson Street West, was charged by Simeon Sell and James Heffer, two officers of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, with having cruelly tortured his horse by working the same in an unfit state. The officers, it appeared, found the horse at work on the canal side, near Dartmouth Street Bridge. On examining the animal they found that one of its legs was dislocated, which together with other injuries, rendered it totally unfit for work. The prisoner consenting to the destruction of the horse in the presence of the officers, a penalty was not inflicted.

185 March 18 1863 Dudley

BRUTAL ASSAULT UPON A WOMAN At the Police Court, on Monday, before Captain Bennitt and Mr Barrs, **John Vickers**, boatman, was charged with having assaulted Mary Ann Sutton. Prisoner pleaded guilty, but said he was provoked by complainant who struck him first. Complainant stated that she lived in Gads Lane, and that on Sunday afternoon, about three o'clock, the prisoner came to her house and remained there to ten. They then went into Dunn's public house, and had some ale together. They afterwards returned to her house, when the prisoner demanded money from her. She refused to give him any, whereupon he struck her five or six times about the face and head. One of the blows felled her to the ground, when he, with a fearful imprecation, seized her by her hair and kicked her on the eye. Complainant's face was frightfully cut, bruised and black. Confirmatory testimony was given, and it was shown that the prisoner had for two hours continued his brutal treatment, and that during that time he kept the door locked. When the police arrived they discovered blood all over the floor of the house, and complainant's face was a mass of blood. Captain Bennitt said it was the most abominable case he had heard for many years. Prisoner said he was very sorry, but it was shown that he had previously assaulted her in a most violent manner, and the Bench did not consider he was entitled to any consideration. He was sentenced to four months imprisonment with hard labour.

186 March 24 1863 Tipton

THE ROBBERY FROM THE WEST MIDLANDS RAILWAY COMPANY At the Petty Sessions, West Bromwich, on Saturday, before Messrs W Sharp and T Kenrick, **Thomas Robinson**, boatman, was brought up on remand charged with stealing, on the 16th of February, a quantity of men's caps, the property of Messrs., Morgan and Sons, Leicester, who had consigned them to Mr Grainger, draper, Kidderminster, per the above company. They arrived safely at Dudley on the 15th, where they had to remain a night. The box was abstracted from the truck, and some of the caps were traced to the possession of the prisoner. Mr Bentley, of Worcester, solicitor to the company, conducted the prosecution, and called Mr Yarborough, manager to Messrs., Morgan and Sons, who deposed that he caused the caps to be packed as per invoice produced, and the caps in the Court were some of those so packed. The case of caps was traced from station to station by numerous witnesses who were in attendance, until it got to Walsall in safety, but when the truck in which the case ought to have been brought, arrived at Dudley, it was missing. Thomas Jordan, general dealer, Tipton, deposed that he knew the prisoner, who lived near him, and on the 17th of February, he asked him "if he could do with a couple of dozen of billy cocks" or "if he could do with a few for the children" but he declined to have anything to do with them. William Spittle, marine store dealer, deposed that on the 18th of February the prisoner asked him if he would buy some "billycocks" which he had in a bundle under his arm. He asked him how he came by them, when the prisoner said, "I purchased them cheap off a man in the Dudley New Road, and if you'll take the lot you shall have them at one shilling each". He agreed to take them, and the bargain was struck. The caps were sent by the last witness to an uncle of his, who kept a small tobacconist's shop at Tipton, who ticketed them at 1s 10d, and sold two, when the police seized the remainder. Inspector Phair, with Police-constable Swift, arrested the prisoner on the charge. The prisoner denied all knowledge of the caps, but when confronted with Spittle he owned to having sold him some which he bought off a man, a stranger to him, for a shilling a piece. This completed the case, and the prisoner was committed to take his trial at the ensuing Sessions.

187 April 2 1863 Bilston

FRAUDULENT REMOVAL OF GOODS On Tuesday, before the Magistrates, **John Smart**, a boatman, was charged by Rhoda Maybury, his landlady, with fraudulently removing a quantity of goods. The defendant had rented a house for 2s 6d weekly, from the prosecutrix, and had recently removed a number of articles of domestic use while his rent was three weeks in arrears. His wife now appeared, and in defence asserted that the goods had been sold in consequence of extreme want. The defendant was ordered to pay double the amount of the property removed, or in default six months imprisonment.

188 April 2 1863 Wolverhampton

ROBBERY IN A HOUSE OF ILL FAME At the Police Court, yesterday, a rough looking fellow named Robert Goulding was charged with having, during the preceding night, robbed two men named respectively **William Griffiths** and **George Venables**. The prosecutors were boatmen, and had on the previous evening repaired to a house of ill-fame in the "Cat Yard". After remaining for a short time, they left, but again returned at about three o'clock on the following morning. Shortly before five o'clock they fell asleep, and on waking, Venables, who had possessed one purse containing £4 19s 6d, and also another containing 15s, found that the latter had disappeared, and that from the former £3 had been abstracted. Both the men had also missed their tobacco boxes. One of these, containing half a sovereign, was found upon the prisoner, who had been in the house during the night, and it was shown that he had offered to present the other to one of the witnesses. Prisoner at first refused to acknowledge the theft, but wishing to have the case at once disposed of, he subsequently pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

189 April 7 1863 Staffordshire Easter Sessions

CHARGE OF CAP STEALING AT DUDLEY **Thomas Robinson** (35) boatman, was indicted for stealing a dozen caps, the property of the Midland Railway Company, at Dudley. Mr Kenealy appeared to prosecute. James Yarborough, manager of Messrs., R W Morgan and sons hat manufactory at Leicester, deposed to having packed up five dozens of deer-stalker hats on the 13th of February, and addressed the parcel to "Mr Grainger, Kidderminster". Several railway officials appeared to speak to the transmission of the parcel as far as Dudley, but there it was missed, and Mr Grainger swore that he never received it. Two persons of the name of Spittle, father and son, carrying on the business of general dealers at Tipton, said the prisoner offered them a dozen "billycocks" at 1s each, on Shrove Tuesday or Ash Wednesday. He said he was a hawker. They bought them, and sold them again at the same price. The prisoner was found guilty, and, as he had been previously convicted, was sentenced to four years penal servitude.

190 April 20 1863 Tipton

A CAUTION TO BOATMEN At the Petty Sessions, West Bromwich, on Saturday, before Messrs., T Kenrick and H Williams, **Joseph Darby**, boatman, was charged with stealing 139lbs of coal, the property of the London and North Western Railway Company. Edward Jukes, watchman, in the employ of the company, while on duty, on Friday night, saw the prisoner come down the lock in an empty boat, and getting off it on to a boat loaded with coal, throw a quantity into his own boat. The prisoner pleaded guilty, and was committed for twenty one days hard labour.

191 April 22 1863 Bilston

A DISHONEST BOATMAN Yesterday, before the Magistrates, **Isaac Selwood**, a boatman, and a boy named J Greenway, were charged with the theft of coal from a boat belonging to the Earl of Dudley. From the evidence of Police-constable More, a constable in the employ of his Lordship, it appeared that between four and five o'clock on the same morning the boy, while passing a boat laden with coal, near the Fox's Yard Colliery, had sprung on board from his own boat, the speed of which had been purposely slackened by the elder prisoner, who was in charge of the animals by which it was drawn, and having secured a lump of coal had returned. Selwood was sentenced to seven days imprisonment, and the lad was discharged.

192 May 14 1863 Wolverhampton

SUMMONED FOR NON PAYMENT OF WAGES Yesterday, at the Police Court, William Jones, in the employ of the Parkfields Company, was summoned for non payment of £2 7s 6d, wages alleged to be due to **Henry Southall**, a boatman, formerly in his employ. Mr Bartlett appeared for the complainant, and Mr Bowen for the defendant. The claim was disputed upon the ground that £2 of the account had, with the consent of the complainant, been deducted in respect of a horse, the death of which had been occasioned by his neglect. The case was adjourned for a week for the production of a witness and of a wages' book.

193 May 26 1863 Birmingham Police Court

REMANDS A man named **Thomas Tilling**, a boatman, residing in Lawley Street, was remanded until Thursday next, on a charge of having stolen a quantity of wearing apparel from a boat lying in the canal, near Friday Bridge.

194 May 27 1863 Wolverhampton

RESCUED FROM DROWNING **James Nicholls**, a boatman in the employ of the Bridgewater Trustees, leaped into the canal, near to Messrs., Norton's Mill, at a quarter to ten last Monday night, and rescued from drowning a woman named Susannah Penrice, of 24 Union Street, who he thought was attempting to commit suicide, but who states that she fell in the canal by accident.

195 June 1 1863

ACCIDENTS The following accidents were reported at the General Hospital on Saturday. **Samuel Thomas**, of Love Lane, a boatman, who had quarrelled with a man, who kicked him and inflicted a severe scalp wound.

196 June 24 1863 Bilston

PETTY SESSIONS **Roger Jones**, a boatman in the employ of Messrs., G B Thorneycroft and Co, was convicted, on the complaint of Mr John Whitehouse, the inspector of the Birmingham Canal, with having, by steering two boats with only one rudder, infringed a bye-law of the company, and was fined 13s 6d, or fourteen days imprisonment.

197 June 30 1863 Birmingham Police Court

BREAKING INTO A BOAT Two men, named John Jones, rule maker, Lancaster Street, and **George Green**, boatman, Cotton Street, and three women, named Maria Gough, Harriet Evans and Ann Green, all of whom reside in Cotton Street, were, in the application of Detective-sergeant Seal, remanded until Friday, on a charge of having, on the 28th inst., broken into the cabin of a boat lying at the Grand Junction Wharf, and stolen therefrom a quantity of wearing apparel, a shoulder of mutton, and other articles, the property of William Griffiths, Walsall Street, Wolverhampton.

198 July 1 1863 Oldbury

AN OLD OFFENDER At the Petty Sessions, yesterday, **Joseph Grigg**, boatman, was charged with having stolen 104 pounds weight of cast iron, the property of Mr Richards, of the Cape, near Smethwick. The iron was found in the prisoner's house, and it was identified by Mark Stokes, who was at work with the prisoner last Saturday week, the day on which the robbery was committed. Prisoner admitted that he had been before convicted of stealing coal. As he had been in prison more than a week, the Bench discharged him, remarking that they took a lenient view of the case. They, however, cautioned the prisoner as to his future conduct.

199 July 1 1863 Worcestershire Quarter Sessions

TIMBER DEALING **Edward Edwards**, labourer, was indicted for having, on the 22nd of April, at Northfield, stolen 93 feet of deal timber, the property of Thomas Wildsmith. Mr Richards prosecuted. On the above day as Thomas Allen, a watchman in the employ of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Company, was on duty, he saw the prisoner, who is a boatman, come up to Selly Oak with his boat, and deposit eight planks in a boat which belonged to a man named Weston, who afterwards threatened to throw them into the canal. Believing that the deals had been stolen, Allen communicated his suspicions and the prisoner was apprehended, when he said that the planks had been given to him by a man near the tunnel at Tardebig to carry to Selly Oak, and that he received 3s for his trouble. The planks had been stolen from a wharf at Worcester, and were the property of Mr Wildsmith. Witnesses gave the prisoner a good character. Three months hard labour.

200 July 7 1863 Birmingham Police Court

THE ROBBERY FROM A BOAT Two man named John Jones, a rule maker, residing in Lancaster Street; **George Green**, a boatman, living in Cotton Street; and a woman, named Harriet Evans, a dress maker, residing in Cotton Street, were brought up on remand, charged with having broken into a boat, lying at the Grand Junction Wharf, Fazeley Street, and stolen therefrom a quantity of wearing apparel, a purse containing 6s, and some provisions, the property of a boatman, named **William Griffiths** of Wolverhampton. It appeared from the evidence, that during the night of the 28th of June the cabin of a boat of which the prosecutor had charge was broken into, and the articles in question stolen. Griffiths was lying asleep at the time, and did not hear the thieves in the vessel, but on awaking in the morning he missed the property, and at once gave information to the police. Shortly afterwards, Detective-sergeant Seal found in the possession of the prisoner Green a cap which had been stolen from the boat, and upon Evans a purse which the prosecutor believed to be

his property. Jones had been seen to leave the boat on the night in question, but the witness who saw him having gone from Birmingham, and there being no chance of finding him for a considerable time, that prisoner was discharged. Evans said that the purse found in her possession was her own property; and as the prosecutor could not satisfactorily identify it, she was liberated. Green, who pleaded guilty, was committed to the House of Correction for six months, with hard labour.

STEALING GUN BARRELS Two men named Isaac Whitehouse, a glass blower, residing in Pritchett Street, and **Thomas Fradley**, a boatman, living in Bagott Street, were charged with having stolen five gun barrels from the premises of Mr Clive, of Bagott Street Works. The evidence went to show that about six o'clock that morning, Police-constable Kelly and Mr Parker, a coal dealer, saw the prisoners enter the premises of the prosecutor. They waited until they returned, and then found concealed under the coat of Whitehouse five gun barrels, belonging to Mr Clive. The prisoners were both taken into custody, and on the premises of Whitehouse being searched eleven other gun barrels similar to those belonging to the prosecutor were found by the officer. Fradley had been in the employment of Mr Parker, whose coal yard adjoins the manufactory of Mr Clive, and knew well the premises of the prosecutor. The property having been identified the prisoners were each committed to the House of Correction with hard labour for six months.

201 July 7 1863 Wolverhampton

A FRAUDULENT BOATMAN At the Petty Sessions, yesterday, **John Hankinson**, a boatman, formerly in the employment of Mr Major, a manufacturing chemist, of Monmore Green, was charged on remand with the fraudulent appropriation of certain moneys, the property of his master. Mr H Underhill appeared to prosecute. As we have already given the facts connected with the first charge brought against the prisoner, it is only necessary now to state that, in connection with a second charge, it was yesterday shown that the prisoner had, in giving an account of expenses incurred on a voyage from Fazeley in April last, presented a receipted bill for 5s 9d for horse corn, signed by a Mr Lankester, whereas it was now shown that no such person was living in the town. Prisoner, who was undefended, was committed for trial at the Assizes upon the two charges.

202 July 24 1863 Staffordshire Midsummer Assizes

FRAUD BY A BOATMAN AT WOLVERHAMPTON **John Hankinson** (41), boatman, was indicted on a charge of fraudulently converting to his own use (he being bailee) the sum of 10s, the moneys of John Clarkson Major, at Wolverhampton, on the 28th of March. Mr Underhill appeared for the prosecution. The prisoner was in the employ of Mr Major, manufacturing chemist, Wolverhampton, as boatman, and it was usual when he started on a voyage with his boat for his master to give him a sum of money to pay the expenses incurred on the voyage, and on his return it was his duty to account for the money he had spent and produce receipts for the amounts he had paid to tradesmen. On the 5th of March, as he was about to set out on a journey, prisoner received £2 from his master, and on his return on the 28th of March, he produced a long list of items expended, and among them was one of 16s 10d for hay, purchased from Mr Skinner, corn and hay dealer, at Worcester. It was afterwards found that he had only paid 6s 10d for the hay, and that he had written "1" before the "6", making the amount 16s 10d, and thus appropriating 10s to himself. The prisoner admitted the offence, and pleaded poverty as an excuse. The Jury found a verdict of Guilty, and he was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

203 August 5 1863

ACCIDENTS An elderly man named **William Wimblett**, a boatman, residing at West Bromwich, fell down yesterday and fractured a rib. He was taken to the General Hospital and is going on favourably.

204 August 13 1863 Darlaston

IRON STEALING On Tuesday, at Wednesbury Petty Sessions, before Mr T Jesson, **Thomas Adey**,

a boatman, was brought up on a warrant, charged with being concerned, along with two other men not in custody, in stealing one ton fifteen cwt of pig iron, and other articles, the property of Mr S Mills. Sergeant Fenner gave evidence to show that on the 22nd of May the iron was stolen from a boat of which the prisoner and two other men had custody. The men immediately afterwards absconded, and as the prisoner had only been apprehended on the preceding evening, he applied for a remand. The prisoner was remanded till Saturday, at West Bromwich.

205 August 20 1863 Aldridge

DISHONEST BOATMEN At Rushall Petty Sessions, on Tuesday, two boatmen named **Thomas White** and **Thomas Hales** were charged with having stolen about half a ton of ironstone, the property of Messrs., John Colbourn and Sons, of Horseley Heath Furnaces, Tipton. It appeared from the evidence that **James Williams**, and another boatman in the employ of Mr Thomas T Butterworth, of Great Bridge, were on the 8th inst., engaged in conveying a load of ironstone along the canal from Aldridge, when the water being low, and the boat being heavily loaded, they, with a view of lessening its draught, placed about half a ton of the ironstone upon the bank, intending to take it up again on their return. The prisoners passed shortly afterwards with an empty boat, and took possession of the property, part of which was subsequently found at Hales's house in Coleshill, and the other part in the boat jointly worked by the two men. White was sentenced to seven days imprisonment, but Hales, who seemed to have acted in a more straightforward manner than his companion, was discharged, a conviction being registered against him.

206 August 22 1863

ROBBERIES Between six and seven o'clock yesterday morning, **John Daynes**, a boatman, who had left his horse in a stable in Brewery Street, New Town Row, on going to the stable found that some thief of equestrian tastes had levanted with his steed, which he valued at £7.

207 September 3 1863 Wolverhampton

STEALING MONEY FROM A BOAT Before the Stipendiary, yesterday, a boatman named **Jesse Court** was charged with stealing £6 17s 6d, the moneys of **Hannah Postings**. The prosecutrix is a boatwoman, living at Broad Lane, Sedgeley, and the prisoner is in her employ. On the previous Saturday night she had, with Court's knowledge, placed £6 17s 6d, in a cupboard in the cabin of her boat, lying at Millfield Bridge. The cupboard was locked, the key was given to the son of Mrs Postings, and the boat was then left in charge of the prisoner, and her grandson, a lad of fifteen. On the following morning, **William Postings**, a son of the prosecutrix, on going to the boat found that the cupboard had been broken open, that the money had been taken out, and that Court had decamped. Information was conveyed to the police, and ultimately the prisoner was apprehended by an officer named Taylor, at Shrewsbury, and he afterwards made a statement to the effect that he had taken the money on Saturday night, that he had quitted Wolverhampton on the following morning, that, with another boatman called Fine Bone, he had gone to Shiffnall, had there drank at a public house nearly the whole of the day, that while lying on the sward in front of the house he had been robbed of several pounds of the money by his companion, and that of this he had only recovered two sovereigns. He now pleaded guilty to the charge, and was sent to prison for six months, with hard labour.

208 September 16 1863 Birmingham Police Court

SERIOUS CHARGE OF IRON STEALING **John Stokes**, living at the back of 39 Cleveland Street, boatman, David Veasey, landlord of the Barrel Welders' Arms, Cecil Street, and Samuel Heeley, 4 Court, Brass Street, ironfounder, were charged with having stolen a ton and a half of pig iron, the property of Mr Hawkswood, of the Bagot Street Wharf. In applying for a remand, Detective-sergeant Mountford stated that during the past few weeks a large quantity of iron had been stolen from the wharf, and by his advice the prosecutor marked a portion which remained there. Between Saturday night and Monday morning a ton and a half of the marked metal had been

carried off, and on the previous day he, with Sergeant Seal, visited Stokes's house, where they found a portion of a pig, marked, They then proceeded to Veasey's, and enquired whether he had purchased any iron recently, and he denied that he had. They returned thither in the evening, and after some time he admitted that he had bought some iron, and had it buried under the floor of a shed in his yard. The iron was dug up, and proved to be a portion of that which had been stolen. Mr J Powell (Powell and Son) who appeared for Veasey, said he would rather the case had been gone into at once, but would not offer any opposition to the remand. The accused were remanded until Monday next.

209 September 18 1863

ASTON PETTY SESSIONS At the Petty Sessions, yesterday, before Messrs., S S Lloyd and W James, two men named John Gough and **William Godfrey**, the first named being an engineer in the employ of Mr J Wrightson, chemist, Rocky Lane, and the latter a boatman employed in carrying cargoes to and from the works, were charged under the following circumstances:- The first witness was John Creigh, carter to Mr Wrightson, who deposed to having seen all made safe on the night of Friday last. On the morning of Saturday he found that the horse and cart which he had left safe on the previous night was missing, and subsequently he found it in the pound at Smithfield, it having been conveyed there by the Birmingham police, who had found them standing unattended in the streets. Information having been given to Superintendent Bloxham, the officers proceeded to search the house of William Godfrey, where they found a quantity of oats, in bags, which Mr Wrightson was now enabled to swear to to the satisfaction of the Bench, the corn also corresponding with the stock he had on the premises. Mr John Powell ably attempted to prove the prisoners' innocence; but the Bench committed Godfrey for trial at the Sessions, agreeing, however, to accept bail, himself in £50, and two others of £25 each. Gough was discharged. Gough was then charged with having stolen a quantity of gutta percha tubing, some pieces of boarding, and a quantity of paper for decorating rooms. Mr Bloxham gave evidence as to the finding of the property on the premises of Gough, and Mr Wrightson having sworn to the identity of the various articles, the prisoner, under the Criminal Justice Act, was sentenced to one months imprisonment with hard labour. It is but justice to Gough to state that Mr Marris, the brewer, gave him an excellent character.

210 September 22 1863 Birmingham Police Court

THE CHARGE OF STEALING PIG IRON The three men named David Veasey, ironfounder, Cecil Street, **William Stokes**, boatman, Cleveland Street, and Samuel Healey, ironfounder, Brass Street, were brought up on remand, charged with having stolen, and also feloniously received, 30cwt of pig iron, the property of Mr Charles Hawksford, ironfounder, New Town Row. Mr Hawkes appeared to prosecute, and Messrs., Powell and Dicken defended the prisoners. The prosecutor not being in attendance, the case was further adjourned until today.

211 September 22 1863

THE SUPPOSED MURDER AT WILLENHALL THE INQUEST YESTERDAY

Yesterday afternoon, an inquest was held at the Black Lion, Monmore Lane, Willenhall, before Mr T M Phillips, Coroner, on the body of a married woman, aged twenty three, the wife of a locksmith named Benjamin Wright, who was found dead in the canal as stated in yesterday's impression. Wright had recently been away at Burton, and the deceased, having received a letter from a brother-in-law at Linton, instructing her to meet her husband at the Walsall Railway Station last Wednesday night, went to Walsall, and was seen at the railway station as late as nine in the evening. Nothing more was seen of her until Saturday, at half past one, her body was found in the canal near to the blast furnaces of Messrs., Fletcher, Solly and Co. The circumstances which led to the finding of the body were unusual. On consequence, suspicion at one time existed that she had met with her death by foul means. There does not, however, seem to be any reason to conclude that the woman's death was otherwise than accidental. The circumstances which first excited suspicion was the fact that a

pawn ticket, which deceased was known to have had in her possession, and which related to a portion of her husband's clothing, was presented at the pawnbrokers, in Willenhall, with whom the clothes had been deposited. The pawnbroker knew that the woman was missing, and detained the man. He, however, accounted for his possession of the ticket by saying that he had bought it and five others from a boatman who had found them floating in a purse on the canal. The man from whom he bought the tickets was found, and his statement as to the finding was confirmed by his wife and child. The spot where the body was found is that at which boats are unloaded at Messrs., Solly's furnaces, and where the masonry of the bank is partly destroyed. A person walking towards Willenhall from Walsall along this route would have the glare of the furnaces behind him, and the flickering light and the dense smoke of some coke heaps in front, and would be very likely, if walking near to the brink of the canal, to stumble and fall into the canal. Such, it is surmised, was the manner in which the deceased came by her death, for when found she had no marks of violence upon her person. But her husband maintains that she must have been thrown into the canal. Still he is unable to give any further reason for coming to this conclusion than that, because she had often gone this way before, she knew the road well. Many statements are in circulation, to the effect that the deceased had been sadly ill-treated, before her death, but they cannot be substantiated. The first witness called was Ann Evans, the wife of a locksmith, with whom deceased and her husband had lodged about two years. She deposed that they had lived comfortably together. Deceased's husband was a locksmith, and worked for Mr James Marsh. Last Sunday week the husband went to Derbyshire, where his mother lived. On the following Wednesday the deceased left home and had not since returned. The husband came back on the succeeding Thursday, and afterwards engaged with the deceased's father and others in trying to find out where his wife was. He seemed much distressed. At one time trade was very bad, and the deceased pawned some of her husband's clothes. Before leaving home on Wednesday, deceased said that she had received a letter telling her to meet her husband, who, she added, would arrive at Walsall either at twenty minutes past four, or twenty minutes past seven. On Saturday, deceased's body was brought to her (witness's) house, but she was unable to detect any bruises or marks of violence upon it. Other women stripped the corpse. She had on the same clothes as when she went away, excepting her shawl, and the body had no shawl upon it. The corpse was not disfigured when it was brought to her house, but it was now discoloured. Witness did not think that the deceased meditated suicide. Deceased knew the road well, and used to pass the spot where she was found several times a week.

- Emmanuel Evans, a key stamper, of Clothier Street, Little London, deposed to having seen the deceased at the railway station in Walsall. She told him she had been there ever since half past six waiting for her husband to come by train. He left Walsall by the train which brought him to Willenhall at about ten o'clock.
- Jacob Evans, a boy, the son of Ann Evans, deposed that when deceased went out on Wednesday, he ran after her and offered to go with her to Walsall, as she was usually very timid; but she declined to have him with her, saying it would be dark before she returned.
- Thomas Rowley, a locksmith, of Little London, deposed that he was walking along the canal, watching the men who were dragging for the deceased, when, in the water, about 120 yards from the works of Messrs., Fletcher, Solly and Co., he saw the deceased's body rise to the surface of the canal. It came up after a loaded boat had passed over it, and was taken out. The bonnet was hanging down at the back of her neck, with the strings tied under the chin.

- **Moses Wells**, a boatman, of Stratford on Avon, deposed that on Thursday morning, at six o'clock, he started with his boat from the top of Wednesfield lock. His wife, and a child aged twelve, were with him. He went with his boat to Mr Rose's, of Moxley. In the pound, between the two locks at Messrs., Solly's, he found a portmonnaie floating on the surface of the water. There was no money in it – only a plain brass finger ring, and six pawn tickets. The purse was nearly all to pieces, and he had destroyed it; but he took the pawn tickets, and sold them on the towing path at Wolverhampton, to a boatman, of Tipton, named **Henry Thomas**, who gave half a crown for the tickets. He did not then know that the deceased was missing. [The ring and the tickets were produced by a policeman, as also a pocket handkerchief and the letter from deceased's brother-in-law, both of which were found in the woman's pocket.] - Mr Pulman, the foreman of the Jury, remarked that he saw the body when it

was taken out of the canal, and the deceased had a kind of keeper ring, of brass, on her finger. He found the purse near to the spot at which the body was found. - James Jones, a labourer at Fletcher and Solly's furnaces, said that he lived near the spot where the body was found. Between one and two o'clock, on the preceding Saturday, a man named Rowley had said that the woman's head had appeared above the water in a particular spot. In consequence, a boat-hook was procured, the canal was probed, and the body brought out. It was stiff, cold and dead, and was clothed in a lilac dress, much soiled by mud. The bonnet was hanging from the back of the head. The cheeks were very purple, probably from the effects of the water; but beyond this nothing unusual was apparent, and no bruises could be discerned. - Police-constable Hampton proved that in a pocket on the outside of the woman's dress he had found a letter from her brother, and a pocket handkerchief. - Mr Taylor, assistant surgeon to Mr Harthill, was present, and was asked by the Coroner if he could take upon himself to say from what cause the woman had died? Mr Taylor: From drowning, I should imagine. - Coroner: Why do you come to that conclusion? From her appearance. - Coroner: Were there any marks of violence? - Mr Taylor: Not the slightest mark anywhere. - A Jurymen remarked that it appeared somewhat strange that the purse containing the pawn tickets should have been found floating on the top of water, while the handkerchief remained in the pocket. Other Jurymen suggested that possibly the woman might have carried her purse in her hand, or in her bosom; and Inspector Thomson said that he had himself tried a similar purse, weighted to the same extent as the purse in question, and had found that it would float. The Coroner said that as yet there was no satisfactory evidence upon which to act. It was not positively certain that the woman had been drowned. Because she was found in the water was no reason which could lead to a satisfactory conclusion respecting the cause of death. He thought, therefore, that the inquest should be adjourned for a *post mortem* examination. The Jury concurred, and the enquiry was adjourned until Thursday morning at ten o'clock. Mr Taylor was instructed to make a *post mortem* examination of the body in the meanwhile. It is a singular fact that many years since the dead body of a man was found in the canal at a spot not far distant from that in which Wright's body has been discovered. In that case, an inquest was held, and a verdict of "Found drowned" was returned. Seven or eight years afterwards, however, a boy made a statement which led to the conclusion that the man had been murdered, and one of his supposed murderers was taken up and tried upon the charge. We believe, however, that he was acquitted. Major McKnight, Superintendent McCrea and Inspector Thomson were present during the enquiry yesterday.

212 September 23 1863 Birmingham Police Court

THE CHARGE OF STEALING PIG IRON The three men named David Veasey, iron founder, Cecil Street, **William Stokes**, boatman, Cleveland Street, and Samuel Healey, iron founder, Brass Street, were brought up on remand, charged with having stolen and also feloniously received 30cwt of pig iron, the property of Mr Charles Hawkesford, ironfounder, New Town Row. Mr Hawkes prosecuted, and Messrs., J Powell and F Dicken defended the prisoners. The particulars of the case having already appeared in our columns, it is only necessary to state that the evidence was now completed, and that the prisoners were all committed to the Sessions for trial.

213 September 24 1863

SINGULAR CASE OF STEALING AND RECEIVING IRON AT BILSTON At the Petty Sessions, held at Bilston, on Tuesday last, before the Stipendiary Magistrate, **Richard Sumner** and **Walter Bibbins**, both boatmen, were charged with having stolen between nine and ten tons of iron, the property of the Birmingham Banking Company. Joseph Whitehouse, of the Phoenix Foundry, Tipton, was also charged with receiving the same iron, knowing it to have been stolen. Mr Kennedy (of the Midland Circuit) instructed by Mr Beaumont, of Birmingham, conducted the prosecution; and Mr Motteram (of the Oxford Circuit) instructed by Mr Round, of Tipton, appeared for the defendant Whitehouse. Mr Jackson, solicitor, Bilston, defended Bibbins. From the opening statement of Mr Kennedy, it appeared the Birmingham Banking Company were the owners of several tons of iron which had been stored at Shale's Wharf, at Millfields, some four or five miles

from Whitehouses's foundry at Tipton. In August last they entered into a contract to sell to the Barbersfield Company between four and five hundred tons of this iron, but as the purchase money had not been paid the iron remained upon the wharf. He should be able to show that on the night of Saturday, the 18th instant, the two prisoners, Sumner and Bibbins, loaded a quantity of iron from Shale's Wharf into a boat and conveyed it by canal to within a short distance of Whitehouses's foundry. An agreement was there made between a person named Barney, Mr Whitehouses's agent, and it would be shown that Whitehouse himself purchased the iron from the two prisoners, knowing it to have been stolen. Mr Kennedy then called Mr Fowler, a member of the firm known as the Barbersfield Company, who proved the contract by the firm to purchase the iron in question from the Birmingham Banking Company, and stated that he, together with an agent from the bank, marked the iron as it lay stacked upon Shale's Wharf. On Monday, the 21st instant, he went with two police officers to Whitehouse's foundry, and identified a quantity of this iron, which he then ascertained had been stolen from the wharf. He had since had a conversation with the prisoner Sumner, who, upon the condition that he (witness) would use his influence with the Bench to take a merciful view of his part of the robbery, made a statement respecting the robbery. He stated that he and Bibbins, alias Watty, agreed to sell the stolen iron to Joseph Whitehouse for £8, and that they went with Barney (Whitehouse's agent) to a public house in Tipton, kept by a person called Hipkins. A bill was there made out, but on the suggestion of Whitehouse, the sum named upon it was £18, instead of £8. The account was made out by a person named Shaw, the shopman at the public house, who accepted the bill for Sumner putting his mark to it. The witness then went on to say that he had that morning held a similar conversation with the prisoner Bibbins, in the presence of Mr Beaumont, solicitor. Bibbins stated that he had received £2 2s 6d as his share of the transaction. The prisoner Whitehouse, when asked to account for his possession of the stolen iron produced the receipt for £18, and said he had bought it from two boatmen, who represented to him that they had taken it in lieu of wages. - In cross-examination by Mr Motteram, he (witness) stated that the contract price for the iron was £2 10s per ton. Whitehouse had bought it from the other two prisoners at the rate of £2 5s per ton. Witness had agreed to pay the Birmingham Banking Company for the iron on the 10th of October, whether it was delivered or not. - **John Townshend**, boatman, stated that the prisoners Sumner and Bibbins requested him to assist in loading the boat at Shale's Wharf with iron for Mr Fowler. They took the boat to a place called the Malthouse Lock at Tipton, and they then sent him home with the horse. - Mr Kennedy then, with the consent of the Stipendiary, abandoned the charge against Sumner, and called him as a witness for the prosecution. Sumner stated he was a boatman in the employment of Mr Fowler. He worked for Townshend, and Townshend was employed by the company, and he had worked for him on and off fifteen years. On Friday, the 18th, he saw Bibbins, as they were unloading the boat at Wolverhampton. He came back with him in the empty boat, the boy Townshend driving the horse. On the way Bibbins said he "knew where they could take a bit of iron to, if he (Sumner) knew where they could get it". Sumner replied, "There is some at Shale's Wharf, yonder, at Millfield"; and asked him where they could take it to. Bibbins said that Joseph Whitehouse, at Tipton, would buy any quantity from him. - He received the sum of £8 from Whitehouse for the iron, and gave the prisoner £2 2s 6d for his share. In cross-examination by Mr Jackson he stated that Bibbins was not with him when he received the money for the iron. - William Shaw, shopman in the employ of Mr Hipkins, licensed victualler, deposed to having made out the bill for Sumner in the name of Jones. Upon seeing him about an hour after he asked him if he had received his money, to which Sumner replied by producing a handful of gold and silver, amounting to about £14 or £15. Witness could not swear to Bibbins. Police-sergeant Harrison said that the prisoner Whitehouse showed him the receipt for the iron, and afterwards attempted to snatch it from his hands, when he went with Police-constable Cook to inspect his premises. - Mr Motteram then addressed the Bench on behalf of Whitehouse, and asked that this man might not have his character ruined upon the unsupported evidence of Sumner, who, upon his admission, was a rogue and a thief. The Stipendiary committed both Whitehouse and Bibbins for trial. Bail was granted, in two sureties of £100 each, and the prisoners £200.

214 October 1 1863

ALLEGED EXTENSIVE RECEPTION OF STOLEN GOODS BY AN IRONFOUNDER

Yesterday, Joseph Whitehouse, ironfounder, of Tipton, was brought before the Stipendiary and Mr Sidney Cartwright, at the Petty Sessions, at Wolverhampton, charged with receiving twenty tons of pig iron, the property of the New British Iron Company, knowing it to have been stolen by a youth named **Cornelius Wood**, boatman to the company. Wood was also arraigned with Whitehouse, charged with stealing the iron from his employers.

Mr Kennedy, instructed by Messrs., Coldicott and Canning, Solicitors, of Dudley, appeared for the prosecutors; Mr Young, instructed by Mr Round, of Tipton, appeared for Whitehouse, and Mr Thurstams appeared for Wood.

When the case was called on, Mr Young said he had to make an application for an adjournment. His Honour would remember that there was a charge made against Whitehouse at Bilston last week of a similar nature to the present, when in consequence of certain information which he gave at the time to the police this charge was brought. Wood, however, had only just been apprehended. In consequence, Whitehouse had not had all the opportunity he desired in which to make the necessary enquiries. His Honour would know how prejudicial it would be to a man even if he should be innocent, and have two charges against him at the Sessions or Assizes. Therefore he hoped that the Magistrates would adjourn the case.

The Stipendiary: It appears to me that I ought to go into the case as far as it goes; and then if there is reasonable ground for an adjournment it can be granted.

Mr Kennedy then rose and said the case was a short one. He appeared on behalf of the New British Iron Company, who carry on business and have premises at Corngreaves, near Brierley Hill. They had been for some time past in the habit of sending pig iron to Messrs., Barrows, ironmasters, of the Bloomfield Works, Tipton, where Mr Whitehouse lived. The iron was usually sent in quantities of twenty tons at a time. Wood, the elder, was a boatman in the employ of the Company, and the younger Wood, the prisoner, was in his father's service. On the 15th of September, twenty tons of pig iron were sent in the usual way to Messrs., Barrow and Sons. It was entrusted to young Wood, who, instead of delivering it to Messrs., Barrows, sold it to Whitehouse for the normal sum of £65; but Wood really received only about half that amount. When arrested, he said he had bought it from Wood, who had received it as wages. But young Wood had made a confession, and would plead guilty on that occasion. With the Magistrates' permission, he proposed to have Wood convicted and sentenced under the Criminal Justices' Act, and then to produce him in the witness box to give evidence as to the nature of the transaction with Whitehouse.

The Stipendiary: You can go into the stealing first, and then we will see. Whitehouse had better stand down.

The prisoner Wood was then charged with stealing the iron, the the following evidence was produced in support of that charge.

Mr C B Hodgetts, furnace manager to the New British Iron Company, deposed that he knew Wood, whose father was a boatman in the employ of the company. On Thursday last he found a quantity of iron at Whitehouse's wharf, at Tipton. He believed it belonged to the company. - Samuel Pearson deposed that he was stocktaker to the company. On Tuesday the 15th of September, he had loaded a boat of twenty tons at Fly Wharf for the company. He told the prisoner and his father to take the iron to Bloomfield. He found the boat gone the next morning. On Thursday last he went to Whitehouse's. I there saw a quantity of iron of the company's. It was the same that had been loaded in the boat. - William Phair, police-inspector at Tipton, deposed to apprehending the prisoner. On Tuesday morning the 22nd of September, he took the prisoner into custody, and handed him over to the parish constable. The prisoner, however, got away. He did not see him until Tuesday morning, when he found him at Messrs., Barrows' offices. He told him he should charge him with stealing twenty tons of iron, the property of the British Iron Company. Before he could tell him more prisoner said, "It's all right; I've been telling them all about it; and I'll tell you all about it". He said, "I sold the iron to Joseph Whitehouse:" that he got six £5 notes at Whitehouse's own house. There was no one by, he said, but Whitehouse's own wife. He said, I asked him for some more.

Mrs Whitehouse was then going upstairs. He said, "Hush! Don't let her hear you." Whitehouse gave him 3s more. He said he brought the iron from the British Iron Company. In answer to a question, he remarked, "No one else was concerned in the robbery but myself". He added, "I took the boat about 200 yards beyond the Bloomfield Basin. I then went up to Whitehouse's. On the Saturday morning, the 19th, I wanted a line and shaft to get the boat up, and young Sam Whitehouse gave me a new rope and shaft to do it with. Whitehouse and his brother James were by at the time. I met Whitehouse after in the street, and told him that the iron was right". He said he left the iron in an arm that runs up to the Meat Colliery, and that he told Whitehouse where he had left it. He then went between eight and nine o'clock at night to Whitehouse's house, where he told him to call again in a couple of hours. He went again in about three hours.

By Mr Kennedy: He said he unloaded the iron from the British Iron Company's boat into Whitehouse's boat himself. It took him an hour and a half or two hours. No one was with him. He was frightened that any one should know it besides himself. Prisoner denied that he had told Whitehouse that he had received the iron for wages. He said, "I had no receipt for the money at all". The mark in the receipt produced was not his mark. The following is a copy of the receipt:- Tipton, Sept 19th, 1863, Bought of C Wood, jun, 20 tons of pig iron, at £3 5s per ton, £65". To this paper, which is half a sheet of note paper, there is a receipt stamp affixed, having on it a large cross in ink. The writing is much like that of a woman. The figures "19" in the date had apparently been written by a man, and were marked over a date that seemed originally to have been "12th". The £65, also had originally been £60, but the alteration was made by the same apparently feminine hand which wrote the £60. Witness asked him what he had done with the six notes, he said he had five of the £5 notes in his pocket when witness caught him, the night he escaped. He had about three sovereigns in his pocket besides. In the sculls, however, he said he lost the notes.

The prisoner Wood pleaded guilty to stealing the iron.

Mr Pearson deposed, in reply to Mr Thurstans, that the prisoner had been employed in the company about two years. He had never heard anything against his character before this time.

Mr Kennedy said it was the wish of the prosecutors the prisoner should be dealt with summarily but leniently.

Mr Spooner said the Magistrates had considered the case very carefully, and they thought they could not mitigate one single iota of the punishment which the Act allowed them to give. The only thing they could do towards adopting the recommendation of the prosecutors was not to send the prisoner for trial. In ordinary cases of a servant stealing from a master nothing would have induced him to pass judgement upon it himself, as he thought that no judgement he could pronounce would be equal to the offence committed. Still, however, there were circumstances in this case – the recommendation to mercy and the prisoner's previous good character – which induced him to deal with the case summarily, instead of sending it to the Sessions for trial. It was a great question in his mind, however, and he thought it also in the minds of the other Magistrates, whether he ought to deal with it summarily. He could not, as he had before said, diminish one single iota of the punishment he was able to give. He should sentence the prisoner to six months imprisonment with hard labour.

Whitehouse was then called up, and evidence was given against him on the charge of receiving the iron, for stealing which Wood had just been sentenced.

Pearson, the stock taker, deposed that he had seen a boatload of iron near the bank at the Corngreaves Works, on the 15th September. One of the pigs had a "runner" attached to it, and the pig now produced was the one in question. The iron was also marked in chalk "No 4" and "5". These numbers represented the quality of the iron, which the Company sold in large quantities to Messrs., Barrows; and the boat was loaded and marked for them. Last Thursday he went to Whitehouse's wharf, and found in a boat there the pig with a runner now produced, and also four pieces marked with chalk, as he had described. The boat was not the Company's boat.

Cross-examined by Mr Young: The two Woods were in the habit of taking iron from the Company to Bloomfield. The iron was in no way concealed at Mr Whitehouse's.

Mr C B Hodgett, the furnace manager to the prosecutors, was then re-examined, and gave similar

testimony to that before given by him, and confirmatory of the evidence of the last witness. Before Pearson came to Whitehouse's premises he had the iron that was on the wharf put back into the boat. He was not there when Pearson came. Cross-examined by Mr Young: Police-sergeant Harrison came to him in the first instance and desired to have it examined. The iron in question was worth about £4 a ton. It was gray forge pig iron, and the current price of the iron on the 19th of September, was about £4 a ton, four months bills, with 2 1/2% off for cash.

Cornelius Wood was then brought back into court, in the custody of the police, but the Stipendiary having suggested that he should be the last witness examined, he was again taken out for a time. Inspector Phair was then recalled. On the 21st he said he went into Mr Aston's public house, Owen Street, Tipton. He called him out, and said, from information he had received he wanted to know how he came possessed of 20 tons of iron lying at his wharf. The prisoner said, "It is all right, I can produce the bill for that". Witness then walked with the prisoner and one of his brothers to his house, accompanied by Police-sergeant Harrison. On the way, witness asked him where he had it from? Prisoner replied, "I bought it of young Nealey Wood." Witness asked him what he gave for it, and he replied, "£65". In the house witness said, "If you will produce me the bill that is all I want". Prisoner directed his wife to look for it in the window. Soon Mrs Whitehouse came downstairs with it. Prisoner then said, "I gave him thirteen new Bank of England notes for this; didn't I, missis", (addressing his wife). His wife said, "Yes". Witness said, "Do you know how Wood became possessed of this boat load of iron". Prisoner replied, "He told me he got it for wages". Witness took Wood into custody, and he escaped. Witness then went again to Whitehouse about one o'clock in the morning of that night. He was in bed. Witness told him that he must take him into custody on a charge of receiving this iron, knowing it to be stolen. Witness did not then know whose iron it was. Prisoner, on the road to the station, made the same statement as before as to how he came by the iron. On the way to Bilston prisoner began to talk about it, as he rode in a cab to Bilston Police Court. He said, "I expect they will turn round and say I have not given him so much money for it as I have". Witness cautioned him to say nothing, as he should have to tell it again, and he (Whitehouse) would be offended.

Cross-examined: Witness took down no note of the conversation. Did not remember that the prisoner said, "They may as well say that I stole the twenty tons that I bought from Wood the other day". Must refuse to tell from whence he got the information about the prisoner having twenty tons of iron, but would say that he did not receive the information from Wood. Declined to say where he heard that Wood was to give evidence that day (yesterday).

Police-sergeant Harrison recalled. On Monday morning, the 21st of September, at half past six, he went to the prisoner's wharf, with Mr Fowler, the prosecutor in the case that was heard last week, and there saw some iron in a boat. He went away and returned about four in the afternoon, with Inspector Phair, with whom he went to Aston's public house and from there to the house of the prisoner. There Inspector Phair asked him for the bill. Prisoner and his wife began to look for it. Phair left the house and on his return Mrs Whitehouse brought the bill downstairs. On the following Thursday witness went to the wharf with Hodgetts, who said it belonged to the prosecutors, and witness remained in charge of the iron. He then sent for the prisoner, who came to the wharf. Witness said, "I charge you with stealing or receiving this iron, the property of the British Iron Company, knowing it to have been stolen, and I am going to take it away". Prisoner responded, "I bought it; you can take it". Witness said, "Whose boat is this that it is in? I am going to take it". He replied, "It is mine". Witness then removed all the iron, which weighed nineteen tons. The piece identified by Pearson was amongst it, and also four pieces marked with chalk. - Cross-examined: Had not had any conversation with Wood.

Inspector Phair was then again recalled, on the application of Mr Young. He deposed to apprehending young Wood, and handing him over to the parish constable, he went out to arrest his father. Immediately upon it he heard a door slam. He went back, and found that young Wood had escaped. Since then he had been in diligent search of him, but although he had heard of Wood being at the Potteries and elsewhere, he could not arrest him till he found him at Messrs., Barrows. Whitehouse had extensive dealings, and was in business with his brother as an ironfounder.

Re-examined by Mr Kennedy: Whitehouse had no counting-house, and kept no books. He was a cinder dealer and ironfounder.

Esther Wood called and deposed: On Saturday last she saw the prisoner near Aston's public house, in Tipton. He asked her if they had got young Wood (meaning Cornelius, her nephew), and added that they (meaning her sister, Cornelius's mother) were to keep him back till it was over, and, further, that he (Whitehouse) had given £65 for it, and if he should be asked where he got the iron from, he was to say they must find out.

Cross-examined: Neither Wood's mother, nor anybody else but Mr Whitehouse, told her that Wood had received £65. That day (yesterday) was the first day that she detailed the conversation with Whitehouse. The person to whom she detailed it was Police-sergeant Harrison. She had before told this extraordinary story to her husband and his brother, and the boy's father, with whom and with her husband she had come to Wolverhampton.

Cornelius Wood deposed: My father is a boatman to the British Iron Company, and I assist him. I remember on the 15th of September last being directed to take a boatload of iron to Messrs., Barrows of Tipton. I sold that iron to the prisoner for £30. We had a boat over more than we had a note for. About a month before that time the prisoner had asked me if I could get him a boat of iron. I have known him several years. I have lived near him; and I suppose he knew I was employed for the British Iron Company. I sold the prisoner the iron on the Saturday after the Tuesday on which I had been directed to take the boat to Bloomfield. He paid me in six £5 notes. I gave him no receipt. I made my mark upon no paper. Until Inspector Phair showed me the paper produced (the alleged receipted bill described as above) I had never seen it. I did not make that mark upon it. The prisoner paid me in his house, and his wife was going upstairs at the time. I can neither read nor write.

By the Stipendiary: I took the iron on the Tuesday, and put the boat against the Tippington Iron Wharf, at Tipton. On the Saturday, I got a boat from the prisoner, and loaded the iron out of the New British Iron Company's boat into that belonging to the prisoner. I shoved the company's boat 200 or 300 yards from this place. The distance from the New British Iron Company's works to Messrs., Barrows is five miles. I have always lived at Tipton, and about 200 or 300 yards from the prisoner's house.

Cross-examined: I was paid the £30 at about six the same (Saturday) night. No paper was brought out to be receipted. I did not go down to the Post Office for any stamps, and Mr Whitehouse did not tell him I must give him a stamped receipt. Mr Whitehouse did not give me a shilling to buy receipt stamps on that day, nor did I go down to the Post Office on the same day for a shilling's worth of postage stamps.

Mr Young was proceeding in his cross examination when

The Stipendiary suggested that probably he had better reserve it, as the Magistrates had resolved to commit.

Mr Young said he was told that it was not unusual in that district for wages to be paid in iron.

The Stipendiary: What! £60 worth of iron? I should like to be the boatman.

Mr Young wished to put further questions but

The Stipendiary again counselled their being reserved for the trial.

Mr Young conversed with the solicitor by whom he was instructed, and then said he should act upon the suggestion of the Stipendiary, and was about to apply for bail to be taken, when

The Stipendiary interposed, and said that nothing should induce him to take bail, "If there were no receivers," he added, "there would be no thieves. It was a case of the utmost possible importance".

Mr Cartwright said that if the counsel talked all day he should still remain of the same opinion as the Stipendiary.

The prisoner: He told me it was his iron. He told me it was his father's iron. If you please, so take bail. I have nothing to say only I should like bail. There is Mr Barrows there (on the Bench), he has known me for many years; Mr Barrows, if you please.

Major Barrows: I have nothing to do with it.

The prisoner was then committed to the Sessions, and the Court, which had been crowded, now

became much thinned. Looking round to the back of the Court before he was taken out, the prisoner called out "Good bye"

215 October 14 1863 Birmingham Borough Sessions

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF PIG IRON Three men, named **John Stokes**, David Veasey and Samuel Heeley, were indicted for having, on Monday the 14th of September, stolen 30cwt of pig iron, the goods of Charles Hawkeswood, ironfounder. They were also charged in a second count, with having received the same knowing it to have been stolen. Mr Buzzard prosecuted, and Mr Elers defended Veasey and Heeley. The evidence went to show that during the night of the day in question a large quantity of pig iron was stolen from the premises of Mr Hawkeswood, who is an ironfounder in Bagot Street. Information was given to the police, and Detective-sergeants Mountford and Seal, a few days afterwards visited the house of the prisoner Stokes, who is a boatman, residing on the canal side. There he found a piece of iron, which he believed to have been stolen from the prosecutor's stores. On asking Stokes to account for having stolen property in his possession, he said that he had fished it out of the canal. The end of it, however, which had been broken from another piece, was quite bright, and had not the slightest appearance of having been in water. Having taken Stokes into custody, the officers went to the house of the prisoner Veasey, who is in business on his own account as an ironfounder, and by whom Heeley was employed as a labourer, and discovered buried in the garden at the rear of the house a large quantity of pig iron, which exactly corresponded with that found in the possession of Stokes. Heeley admitted having buried the iron, but stated that he did it at the request of his master, and also stated that the latter had purchased it of the prisoner Stokes. The whole of the iron was satisfactorily identified by the prosecutor, who stated that he found one of the pigs in a pig-stye on Veasey's premises. Mr Adams thought that was a very proper place for it [Laughter]. Mr Elers addressed the Jury at some length on behalf of his clients, and called as many as half a dozen witnesses, consisting of manufacturers, ironfounders and Detective-inspector Kelly, who said they had known Veasey for as many as twenty years, and that they had always considered him to be a highly respectable and honest man. The learned Assistant Recorder summed up at great length, during which Mr Buzzard said that he would on the part of the Crown withdraw the prosecution against Heeley. That prisoner was accordingly acquitted by the Jury. Stokes was found guilty of stealing, and Veasey of receiving. Stokes was sentenced to eight months imprisonment, with hard labour; the sentence of Veasey was deferred until this morning.

216 October 14 1863 Bilston

PETTY SESSIONS Sarah Ann Detheridge, aged twenty seven, a woman of the town, who had been in custody on nineteen previous occasions, was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions, charged with robbing **Isaac Baker**, a boatman in the employ of the Parkfield Company, of £1 7s 6d, in a house of ill-fame.

217 October 19 1863

ACCIDENTS **John Cox**, a boatman, living in Richard Street, (was) suffering from a contused thigh and dislocated hip, sustained by him in consequence of a fall while following his occupation.

218 October 21 1863

ALLEGED MURDER AT WORDSLEY On Saturday evening an affair occurred on the banks of the canal at Wordsley which has resolved itself into a charge of wilful murder against a boatman of the name of **David Allport**. On the evening of that day Allport was heard to use threats of a violent character to another of the same occupation as himself, a man named **Nibbs**, and these he speedily carried into execution. He cut Nibbs's head open with some instrument, and then taking advantage of the stupor produced by the effects of the blow, he pushed the unfortunate man into the canal. Nibbs was got out of the water before his immersion could prove fatal, but such were the effects of the injuries he had received, and particularly, it is believed, of the blow on the head, that he expired

at an early hour on Monday. Allport was brought before Messrs., J Holcroft and B J Matthews, at the Wordsley Petty Sessions, on Monday, charged with the capital offence, and Mr Burbury appeared on his behalf. Sergeant Heathcock gave some evidence, and asked for a remand for a week. Heathcock stated that the prisoner told him that morning that he did not intend to kill Nibbs, but only to give him a ducking in the canal. The Bench then remanded the prisoner till next Monday.

219 October 22 1863 Staffordshire General Quarter Sessions

FOWL STEALING **John Tomkinson** (31), boatman and **Charles Sheldon** (28), boatman were indicted for stealing three fowls, the property of Mary Steele, at Milton. Mr Young conducted the prosecution, and Mr Kenealy defended Tomkinson. The Jury found both the prisoners Guilty. Tomkinson was sentenced to six months imprisonment. Sheldon, who had been previously convicted, was ordered to be imprisoned twelve calendar months.

220 October 22 1863 Warwickshire Michaelmas Sessions

STEALING OATS AT ASTON A man named **William Godfrey** was indicted for having, at Aston, on September 11, stolen thirty-three bushels of oats, the property of Francis Wrightson. Mr Balguy prosecuted, and Mr Elers defended the prisoner. The evidence went to show that on the day in question the prosecutor's granary was broken into, and thirty-three bushels of oats were stolen therefrom. Information of the circumstance was given to the police, and a few days afterwards the whole of the stolen oats were found concealed in a cellar in the prisoner's house. Godfrey said, in defence, that he bought the oats of a boatman, and also put in a document, which purported to come from his master, testifying to his good character. The Jury, however, found him guilty, and he was sentenced to three months imprisonment, with hard labour.

221 October 23 1863

THE DEATH OF A BOATMAN FROM VIOLENCE AT THE DELPH An inquest was held at the Bell Inn, the Delph, yesterday morning, before T M Phillips, Esq., Coroner, on the body of **William Nibbs**, a boatman, who met his death under circumstances of which some account has already been given in the *Post*. Mr Travis, of West Bromwich, attended the enquiry. From the evidence of the witnesses in the case, it appeared that Nibbs was sitting on the tail end of a lock gate at The Delph, on Saturday evening, when **David Allport**, another boatman, sent a lad down to fill the lock. Nibbs would not let the boy do this, and on Allport becoming aware of it he ran towards Nibbs, asking him why he would not let the boy fill the lock, Allport then seized hold of Nibbs by the legs, and tumbled him over into the lock. The distance Nibbs fell was 15 feet, and he appeared to have struck his head in falling against some part of the brickwork. Allport at once made efforts to get the man out of the water, and this was at length effected. Nibbs was then in a very weak condition, and expired on Monday morning. The deceased had been suffering from a complication of diseases, and eventually the inquest was adjourned to allow a professional examination of the body to be made.

222 October 23 1863 Staffordshire General Quarter Sessions

THE TIPTON IRON STEALING CASE

YESTERDAY

BEFORE THE EARL OF LICHFIELD, CHAIRMAN

Walter Bibbins (27), boatman, was indicted for stealing nine tons weight of iron, the property of the Birmingham Banking Company, at Bilston, and Joseph Whitehouse (on bail) was indicted for receiving the same, he well knowing it to have been stolen.

Mr C R Kennedy (specially retained) and Mr A S Hill conducted the prosecution. Mr Kenealy and Mr Motteram defended Whitehouse. Mr Young appeared on behalf of Bibbins.

Mr Kennedy, having briefly opened the case, called

Henry Fowler, who stated that he was the agent of the Barber's Field Company, at Bilston. On the

24th of August last, he had contracted with Mr Morris, the agent of the Birmingham Banking Company, for the purchase of 400 or 500 tons of iron, which was lying stacked up at Shale's Wharf, Millfields. In consequence of something said to him by Mr Morris, he marked the iron with a piece of mortar, or something of the kind, which he picked up in the yard. (A piece of iron was here produced, which the witness identified as part of the iron he had marked). Witness continued: On the 21st of September he went, in company with Police-sergeant Harrison and Police-constable Cook, to the premises of the prisoner Whitehouse, where they found a quantity of iron similar to that which he had marked. He knew Sumner from his working under Townsend, who was a steerer in their employ. On the 20th of September, he saw Sumner at the Police Station, and it was in consequence of something which Sumner told him that he went to the house of the prisoner Whitehouse. On the 22nd of September, he saw "Barney" who was an agent of Whitehouse. The prisoner's works were near the canal side, and about four miles from Shale's Wharf. Bibbins was a stranger to him; the first time he saw him was at the Police Station, on Sunday. On the following Tuesday, previous to going before the Justices, he told him that he had received £2 2s 6d as his share, and that he expected no more. The day previous, witness had seen Whitehouse, who said he had purchased the iron from two men, who said they had received it for wages. He further stated that he had given them £18 for it, and that he had got a receipt, which he produced. The prisoner went with him, and pointed out the iron which he had bought. Witness was returning the receipt to Harrison, the policeman, when the prisoner snatched it away, saying that it was his property. Cross-examined by Mr Young: Sumner had not received any punishment. It was on the Sunday he saw Sumner in the cell at Bilston. Witness said, "Speak the truth; it will be in your favour afterwards". He also promised to use his influence to obtain a mitigation of punishment. When he saw Bibbins on the Tuesday Sumner was there. There were also present Mr Beaumont, the attorney for the prosecution, and several police-constables. Cross-examined by Mr Kenealy: He was informed by the police that "Barney" was the agent of Whitehouse. He would not swear that Whitehouse was an ironfounder. When Harrison wanted to keep the receipt the prisoner said he wanted it, and then snatched at it. Harrison then said to prisoner, "If you don't give it up I shall take you and the iron as well". Prisoner then gave up the receipt to Harrison. Witness stated that he was not aware that it was at all usual to pay boatmen their wages in iron, but upon being pressed by Mr Kenealy he admitted he had known isolated cases of it being done.

Richard Sumner said he was a boatman, and worked under John Townsend, who was a steerer, in the employ of the Barber's Field Company. He had worked for him about fourteen or fifteen months. In September last he went to Wolverhampton in a boat. When he arrived there he saw Bibbins, who helped him to unload the boat. They then went back together to Millfields. On the way Bibbins said "Barney" had been to him, and wanted him to get some iron, and told him he knew a place to take it to. Bibbins said there was some at Millfields. He said take some, as he knew where they could sell any quantity, and upon being asked where, said at Whitehouse's, at Tipton. Witness, Bibbins and Townsend then went to Shale's Wharf and took the iron, and put it in the boat. The weight of the iron they took was nine tons all but 14lbs. They left the wharf at about seven o'clock in the evening, and went with the iron to the Malthouse Turn. In going to the Malthouse Turn they passed through a lock. In passing through the lock Bibbins said, "Tell them it is "lightening"". Upon arriving at the turn they made the boat fast. The Malthouse Turn was about 200 yards distant from Whitehouse's. At about ten o'clock that night he went to "Barney's". The next morning, at seven o'clock, he went to Mr Whitehouse, and told him they had brought the iron "Barney" had told Bibbins to bring. Whitehouse asked if it was the iron "Nealy Wood" had spoken about. Witness said, "No", and then asked if "Barney" had not mentioned it to him, when he said, "No, he had not seen "Barney"". Witness then told Whitehouse the iron was there, and he said, "Bring it into the basin, and I will go and look at it". Witness saw Whitehouse soon after, when he told him he had seen the iron, and that it was not up to much, and then asked what they wanted for it. Witness replied, "What you think proper". Whitehouse said he had eight sovereigns in his pocket, and they could have that if they liked. Bibbins was present. He took the eight sovereigns, and Whitehouse asked where they had the iron from. Witness replied, "Not far off". He did not say

that they had received it for wages. Whitehouse said he should require a bill of the iron, and that the sum of £18 was to be put on the bill as the price paid for the iron. The bill was drawn up in a liquor vaults in Tipton, in the presence of witness and "Barney". "Barney" was not present when the bargain was made. Witness and Bibbins got the iron out of the boat. After getting the iron out, they met Whitehouse and "Barney". Whitehouse sent "Barney" to get the bill made out. The bill was made out, at the request of "Barney", by a Mr Shaw. Wm Hughes was not present at the time. **John Townsend**, a boatman, said the prisoner Bibbins came to him and Sumner on the 18th of September, whilst they were unloading a boat at Wolverhampton. They all returned together, but witness did not hear the conversation between Sumner and Bibbins as they were in the boat, and he was driving the horse. Sumner said that Mr Fowler had promised to give them some ale to take the iron to Tipton. They went to Shale's Wharf and loaded the iron. Upon arriving at the Malthouse Turn he left the other two, and returned with his horse. He recollected the Deepfield Stop. The man asked for a ticket when they arrived there, when Bibbins said, "Say it is only a bit of lightening". James Shaw said he remembered Saturday morning, the 19th September. On that morning, Sumner and "Barney" (whose proper name he believed was Barnabas Bowman) came into the spirit vaults in which he was an assistant. He knew "Barney" worked for Whitehouse. Both "Barney" and Sumner asked him to make out a bill. "Barney" asked him first. Sumner described himself as "Richard Jones". After he had made out the bill they went away. - On cross-examination by Mr Kenealy, the witness stated that Sumner returned in about an hour with three others, and ordered something to drink. He put his hand into his trousers pocket, and brought out a handful of money. He (witness) said he should think there were not less than fourteen or fifteen sovereigns in his hand. He had an opportunity of seeing, as the prisoner had to look over his money in order to pick out a shilling with which to pay for the liquor. He had some silver in his hand, but not much. He read the bill and receipt over to Sumner (who could neither read nor write) before he affixed his mark. John Harrison stated that he was a sergeant of police. On the 21st of September he went to the house of the prisoner Whitehouse. He asked him if he had bought any iron during the last week besides at sale. Prisoner replied that he had bought some on the previous Saturday from two men on the canal. He did not know the men, but had seen one of them about twenty years ago. He then produced a bill which he gave to witness, who handed it over to Mr Fowler. Mr Fowler examined the bill and returned it to witness, when the prisoner snatched it away saying, "I shall keep this". He told the prisoner that the iron was stolen on the 18th September from Shale's Wharf, Millfields. Prisoner then went with him and Mr Fowler and showed them the iron. Witness told Whitehouse that he should summons him for receiving the iron knowing it to be stolen. Prisoner said, "I bought the iron and paid for it". After snatching the bill away he afterwards returned it. Mr Fowler was then recalled and said that in August iron of the same description as that which was stolen was worth £3 per ton. In answer to Mr Kenealy, he stated that the price of iron at that time was very fluctuating.

This being the case for the prosecution, Mt Young addressed the Jury on behalf of the prisoner Bibbins, and was followed by Mr Kenealy, who, in a speech of some length and great ability urged upon the Jury the unreliable nature of the evidence brought forward against his client, and stated that he should call witnesses who would by their evidence completely establish the innocence of Whitehouse of the charge preferred against him. Subsequently, however, he intimated that he should not do so.

Immediately upon this intimation being made, Mr Kennedy claimed his right to reply, upon the ground that Mr Kenealy had mentioned circumstances which he said he should prove in evidence, and which he now declined to do. - The noble Chairman suggested to Mr Kennedy that he should withdraw his claim to a reply, as the Jury would put their own construction upon the matter.

Mr Kenealy then called his witnesses.

Mr Turner said he was a clerk in the employ of Messrs., Blackwell and Co., and that he had known instances of steerers being paid their wages in iron.

Mr Thompson, a clerk in the service of the Parkfield Company, corroborated this statement, and added that the sum Whitehouse had paid for the iron (£2 5s per ton) was not a small price at the

time. Other evidence was produced confirmatory of these statements, and a number of witnesses were called who testified to the good character of the prisoners.

Mr Kennedy having replied,

His Lordship summed up, and the Jury after consulting for a few minutes expressed a wish to retire. After being absent half an hour they returned into Court, and delivered a verdict of Guilty against each of the prisoners. - His Lordship then sentenced Bibbins to three months imprisonment, remarking that there could be no doubt but that he had been made the tool of others, both from the small sum of money he had received, and the whole circumstances surrounding the case.

Joseph Whitehouse was then indicted for feloniously receiving from Cornelius Wood twenty tons of iron, the property of the British Iron Company, at Tipton, he well knowing the same to have been stolen.

(By Electric Telegraph)

Verdict "Guilty". Sentence eighteen months imprisonment.

223 **October 27 1863**

THE DEATH OF A BOATMAN FROM VIOLENCE AT THE DELPH

THE INQUEST

The adjourned inquest was held at the Delph, yesterday morning, before T M Phillips, Esq., Coroner, on the body of **William Knibbs**, a boatman, who died in consequence of being thrown into the canal, at the Delph, on the 17th inst., by another boatman, named **David Allport**. The inquest was adjourned in order that a *post mortem* examination of the body might be made.

Mr John Ireland, surgeon, Kingswinford, said he had made an examination of the deceased's body. A lacerated scalp wound was the only external injury he saw. There was no fracture of the skull, nor was there any effusion of blood corresponding with the scalp wound. The brain was congested. The lungs were very greatly engorged with blood, and the liver was also congested. He was of opinion that congestion of the lungs was the cause of death, and that the congestion was caused by the deceased having been immersed in water.

Allport, who was present during the enquiry, made a statement to the coroner, the purport of which was that the deceased was thrown into the lock by him (Allport) pulling the lock gate open. He immediately ran for a line, and got the deceased out as soon as possible.

The Jury returned as their verdict that the deceased had been feloniously killed by being thrown into the canal by David Allport. Allport was then committed for trial for manslaughter.

EXAMINATION BEFORE THE MAGISTRATES

A SCENE BETWEEN THE ATTORNEYS

In the afternoon, Allport was brought up at the Wordsley Petty Sessions, before F Smith and T Evers, Esqrs., charged with having, on the 17th instant, feloniously killed William Knibbs. Mr Travis, of West Bromwich, and Mr Miller Corbet, of Kidderminster, ostensibly appeared to prosecute, and Mr Burbury for the defence. On the case being called on, Mr Travis said: In this case I appear on behalf of the prosecution, for the friends of the deceased.

Mr Corbet: Before Mr Travis goes further, I think it nothing but right to state that I also am instructed by the friends of the deceased.

Mr Travis: Name them, name them.

Mr Corbet: By the widow, Mary Knibbs. I hold in my hand a written retainer, and I am perfectly willing to inform the Bench how I became possessed of it.

Mr Travis: What is the date of that retainer?

Mr Corbet: The 25th

Mr Travis: I hold a retainer from the widow and others, dated a week ago.

Mr Corbet said he had seen the widow, and she informed him that on Tuesday, only twenty four hours after the death of her husband, when in a state of great agitation, she was waited upon by a policeman, and a lad, who, he supposed, was Mr Travis's clerk, and she placed her signature to something. She was not aware she had signed a retainer.

Mr Travis said the son and son-in-law of the deceased were present, and he wished them to be

questioned as to who was to conduct the prosecution.

Mr Corbet said before that was done, he wished on behalf of himself and other professional men, to mention one or two things.

Mr Travis: I -----

Mr Corbet: I see your reason for the interruption.

Mr Travis: If the friends of the deceased wish, I will at once withdraw.

Mr Corbet: You have thrust yourself into the case, and -----

Mr Travis: I ask the Magistrates to ask the prosecutor himself whom he wishes to conduct the case.

Mr Corbet: And I should like them to know how you came to act for the prosecution. With regard to the son-in-law, I submit he is not a person to give instructions in the case. The widow is more interested than anyone else. A gentleman in Court can explain how I obtained my retainer. The only title that Mr Travis has is that he happens to be the son-in-law of Major McKnight, the second in command of the police force in Staffordshire.

Mr Travis: I deny it.

Mr Corbet: It is notorious whenever there is a case of this kind, and the allowance for the prosecution is likely to be liberal, Mr Travis is at once placed in the position of prosecuting attorney.

In reply to Mr Smith, Mr Travis said his retainer was dated the 20th, and he had another dated the 26th. He had been attending the inquest, but Mr Corbet had not.

Mr Corbet explained how his retainer was given him. Having alluded to a policeman accompanying Mr Travis's clerk to the friends of the deceased on the 20th, he said there was an order at the Quarter Sessions which directed that no policeman should act as an agent to an attorney in any prosecution. How did his friend get informed of the case?

Mr Superintendent Mills said that the policeman Mr Corbet spoke of only acted as a guide on the occasion he spoke of.

After some further discussion, Mr Travis said he stood on his rights in respect to the retainers he had mentioned.

Mr Corbet said he thought it must be evident that his friend did not think much of his first retainer, or he would not have taken the trouble to get another.

The son was then questioned, but could give no satisfactory account of his mother's wishes in the matter.

After some further recrimination, Mr Corbet said his only object was to have the matter ventilated, and he was only doing his duty in mentioning it.

Eventually both Mr Travis and Mr Corbet withdrew from the case, and the examination was conducted by the Magistrates' Clerk.

John Male, lock keeper at the Nine Locks, the Delph, said he knew the deceased, William Knibbs. He was at the fifth lock on Saturday, the 17th. The deceased was at the lock, and prisoner came down and said, "How is it you didn't let the boy fill the lock". No sooner had he spoken these words than the prisoner pushed the old man into the canal. Witness said, "Oh dear, oh dear, you have killed the old man". Prisoner made no reply. The deceased was got out of the water as quickly as possible. The prisoner and three others pulled the deceased out. When the deceased was pulled out he said, "Oh dear, John, what have I done?" Deceased was taken home in a cart. Before deceased was pushed into the canal he was in good health. It was 15 feet to the water, and there was 5 feet of water in the lock. In cross-examination, witness said the prisoner appeared very sorry for the old man. The old man was near to the edge of the lock when prisoner pushed him in. He could not say where the prisoner touched the deceased.

Joseph Darby also gave evidence as to the deceased being pushed into the canal by the prisoner. There was no time for deceased to give prisoner a blow, for the moment prisoner got to him he was in the water. The deceased was sober. He supposed the other man was sober. Cross-examined: It did not appear to him to be by accident that deceased was tilted into the water.

Cornelius Wood, boatman, said he was employed on the prisoner's boat on Saturday week. He stated that he was sent down by the prisoner to open the lock, and the deceased would not let him.

Allport came down, and there was a scuffle between him and the deceased. The deceased fell into the lock immediately afterwards, Cross-examined: the deceased slipped into the lock “accidentally” in the scuffle.

Mr Ireland, surgeon, was also examined, and gave similar evidence to that at the inquest. Sergeant Heathcote was also examined, and said the prisoner had told him he did not mean to injure the deceased, but only to give him a ducking. The witness was severely cross-examined. Mr Burbury then addressed the Court in defence of the prisoner, and he was afterwards committed for trial at the Assizes.

224 October 30 1863 Birmingham Police Court

BURGLARY IN GREAT BARR STREET Three youths, giving the names of **James Vaughan**, a boatman, John Bassett, steel toy maker, and Frederick William Bassett, a blacksmith, all of whom reside in a house in Glover Street, were charged with having burglariously broken into the house of Mr Pitt, baker, Great Barr Street, and stolen therefrom a quantity of provisions, wearing apparel, and other articles. Mr Dicken appeared for F W Bassett. The evidence went to show that between nine and ten o'clock on the previous evening the house of the prosecutor was locked up, and the family retired to rest. It was discovered that the premises had shortly before four o'clock on the following morning been entered through the back kitchen window, and that a number of loaves of bread, a coat or two, a pistol, and other goods had been carried off. From information they had received, Detective-sergeant Seal and Police-constable Kirk went to the house in which the prisoners lived, and found nearly the whole of the stolen property. There was a fire in the house, and the prisoners, to all appearance, had only just gone to bed. They were taken into custody, and on being brought before the Magistrates, committed to the Assizes for trial. They were, however, also remanded for a week on a charge of robbing several boats on the canal.

225 November 7 1863 Worcester

IMPORTANT TO BOATMEN At the Police Court, yesterday, **Richard Dayus**, boatman, was charged with an offence against the Birmingham Canal Company's Act, by opening the lower gates of the Blockhouse Bridge lock before shutting the upper ones. Waldron, the lock-keeper, said no one was allowed to pass through the locks without either producing an order from Mr Needhouse, or paying a sovereign. Defendant, on Monday, brought his boat to the lock, and when asked for the order or the sovereign, he went and drew the cloughs of the lower gates before shutting the upper ones. The Bench fined defendant 20s, including costs.

226 November 12 1863 Wolverhampton

PETTY SESSIONS Yesterday, at the Police Court, before the Stipendiary, **Benjamin Slater**, a boatman, was charged with stealing 13s 6d from the person of **William Higgins**, another boatman. About nine o'clock on the night of Monday last the two met at a public house, and Higgins treated Slater to drink. They afterwards adjourned to a boat, where Slater partook of something to eat, the prosecutor went to sleep, and waking on the next morning he found himself alone, and his pockets rifled of 13s 6d. The prisoner now pleaded guilty, and the Stipendiary sent the prisoner to gaol for six weeks only with hard labour.

227 November 13 1863 Walsall

THEFT BY A BOATMAN At the Guildhall, yesterday, before Messrs., S Stephens, P Potter and H Highway, **Robert Smith**, a boatman, was brought up on remand, charged with having stolen about half a ton of pig iron, worth about £2, the property of Mr Henry Lancaster, of the Pleck. Mr Matthews (from Mr Wilkinson's office) appeared for the prosecutor, and Mr Ebsworth for the defendant. Police-constable Hubbard deposed to having, on Sunday, visited a boat of which the prisoner had charge, and to having found concealed under a bed therein twenty one pieces of iron, weighing altogether about half a ton. A youth named **Pickering**, and another witness, both recently employed in the prisoner's boat, gave evidence to the effect that they had been instructed by him to

endeavour to dispose of some iron, and that they left the boat, which was moored at Mr Boys's wharf. In Bridgeman Street, on Saturday, Alfred Wilkes, a stock taker in the prosecutor's employ, deposed to the loss of the iron from Mr Lancaster's wharf, and stated that the pieces produced were similar to those taken away, and he had every reason to believe they belonged to his employer. The prosecutor spoke to the value of the iron: and Mr Ebsworth having addressed the Bench for the defence, the prisoner pleaded not guilty, and was committed to take his trial at the Borough Quarter Sessions.

228 December 23 1863

ACCIDENTS Admitted to the General Hospital yesterday. **Thomas Goddard**, 56, Forge Street, boatman, with a fracture of the right ankle, caused by a kick from a man with whom he had had some dispute.

229 December 23 1863 Wolverhampton

ASSAULTING THE POLICE A boatman named **Edward Evans**, who had been before convicted and fined 20s, was yesterday ordered to pay 40s and costs, or to be imprisoned a month, for drunkenness and assaulting the police, in the Five Ways, on the previous evening.

230 December 24 1863 Oldbury

LEAD STEALING During the night of Friday, about 3cwt of lead were stripped off the malthouse of Messrs., Thompson, Tut Bank, and the same night some more was stolen from the top of the bar window of Mr C Hicken, the Engineers' Arms, close by the malthouse. In the course of the next day, four fellows were observed fishing up a quantity of lead from the canal at Smethwick. Information was given to the police, and on the approach of an officer the men decamped. From information forwarded to Birmingham, Sergeant Griffiths, the same night, arrested two men named Smittens, a shoemaker, and **Carless**, a boatman, who were on Tuesday taken before Captain Bennitt, and remanded on the charge of having been concerned in the robbery.

231 December 30 1863 Oldbury

DARING ROBBERIES BY LEAD STEALERS Yesterday, at the Police Court, Joseph Smitton, spoon maker, and **Edwin Carless**, boatman, both of Birmingham, were brought up for re-examination before Mr F Adkins, on the charge of having been concerned with two other men, not in custody, in stealing a quantity of lead from the malthouse of Messrs., Thompson, Tut Bank. Mr George Thompson, one of the firm, said that on the morning of Saturday, the 19th inst., he found a large quantity of lead had been stripped off the malthouse, and carried off. James Bant, a maltster in the employment of the prosecutors, stated that he saw the lead in its usual position at two o'clock on the afternoon of Friday, the 18th inst., and that it had been removed at half past ten o'clock on the following morning. Police-constable Porter, of the Staffordshire Constabulary, deposed that about two o'clock in the afternoon of the 19th, he went to the canal side, near the Summit Bridge, and found a portion of the lead produced in a boat in which there were two men. The moment they observed the witness, the men threw as much of the lead as they could into the water and then ran away. Witness took the lead to his station, at Smethwick. The accused were not the two men he saw in the boat. Police-sergeant Simmons (Worcestershire Constabulary) stated that on the 21st inst., he proceeded to the canal, near the Summit Bridge, and raked the upper or old canal, a separate canal from that in which Porter found the lead. He pulled out the piece of lead produced. He had compared this piece with another which had been taken from the roof of the building, and they entirely corresponded. He received the prisoners into custody at Birmingham, and told them the nature of the charge against them, and they said they could prove they were in bed when the robbery was perpetrated. - Mr Frederick Bailey, plumber and glazier, stated that he caused a piece of lead to be cut off the "cowl" at the malt-house, and having it compared with the lead produced by Sergeant Simmons, found that it matched it in every respect. Witness had likewise compared the lead found by Police-constable Porter with nails on the roof of the malthouse, and found that the

nail marks in the lead corresponded with the nails left in the roof. A man named Buttress, who would be enabled to identify the accused as dealing with the property the day after the robbery, not being in attendance, the prisoners were further remanded until Wednesday (this day). - They were then charged with having stolen a quantity of lead from the premises of Mr Charles Hicken, the Engineers' Arms, close by the scene of the other robbery. Mr Charles Hicken proved that the lead over his bar window was safe on the 18th inst., and that it was gone on the following morning. Police-sergeant Passey (Staffordshire Constabulary) stated that in consequence of information which had been received from Police-constable Porter, he went on the Saturday afternoon to Birmingham, and with the aid of one of the borough officers, apprehended the prisoners at a public house in Essex Street, Birmingham. When charged with the robbery, Carless said he knew nothing about it, and the other stated that he could prove an *alibi*. On the Sunday morning following the robbery, witness took some pieces of lead from Mr Hicken's house, and compared them with a portion of the lead found by Police-constable Power, and they corresponded. The accused were remanded on this charge also.

232 January 1 1864 Oldbury

THE LEAD STEALING CASE On Wednesday last, the prisoners Smitton and **Carless** were brought up for re-examination. **William Buttress**, a boatman in the employment of Mr John Boffey, of Oldbury, said that on Saturday, the 19th inst., at about half past twelve o'clock, he saw the prisoners and two other men on the canal side, near the Summit Bridge, at Smethwick, fishing some lead out of the water. Witness went off to give information to the police, and on his return, in half an hour, he observed that some lead was being shifted from the water into a boat which was close by. Witness subsequently pointed out the spot to Police-sergeant Simmonds (Worcestershire Force) and Police-constable Porter (Staffordshire Constabulary). He (Buttress) did not see Carless get the lead out, but he did see the other prisoner take it from the cut. The prisoners were committed for trial on both charges, the particulars of which were fully reported in Wednesday's *Post*.

233 January 11 1864

A BIRMINGHAM BOATMAN "IN TROUBLE" At the Clerkenwell Police Court, on Saturday, a strong powerfully built man, who gave the name of **Charles Maskew**, and described himself as a boatman, residing at 202 Great King Street, Birmingham, and who, it was stated, is the captain of the barge *Lovely Polly*, was charged before Mr D'Eyncourt with having in his possession a rug, the property of George Bates, of 3 New Charlotte Street, City Road, printer. The complainant said it was not so much the rug he came about as he did about his other property and his dear lost wife. - Mr D'Eyncourt: What has your wife got to do with the prisoner? - Complainant: The prisoner is a bad man, although I never met with him until last night. [A laugh] He has taken away my wife and one of my children, and has got them at his house in Birmingham. I went and saw the prisoner on his barge, and there I saw the rugs produced, and knowing them to be my property I asked him how he became possessed of them, and he said my wife had given them to him. I am quite distressed and broken-hearted about my poor wife, and should like to have her back to live comfortably and happily with me. - Mr D'Eyncourt: How long has the prisoner been acquainted with your wife? The complainant: I am not quite certain, sir, for he is a bad man. [A laugh.] He was an in patient in St Thomas's Hospital, where my wife was a nurse, and there it was that they made matters up. It was done without my sanction or consent. My wife has taken everything away from me. - The prisoner: It is true that his wife gave the rugs to me, but she told me that they were hers, and that her husband had deserted her and left her and her family in the greatest misery and distress, and it was not till he had been away some time that she heard where he was, and then she could not get near him. - Mr D'Eyncourt: Is it true that you went away, as the prisoner describes? - Complainant: Not exactly. I was away, but when I came back I did not expect to find my wife, family, and goods gone. My wife took all the goods on board the prisoner's barge. The prisoner: Why don't you speak the truth? You know you are a convicted thief, and that you have only just come out of prison. - Mr D'Eyncourt: Is that so? The complainant: Yes; I have just come out of Holloway

prison. I was sent there for robbing my employers in Newgate Street. Mr D'Eyncourt said it was not a case he should send for trial, and he should, therefore, discharge the prisoner. \it should be known that if a man went away with another man's wife and took away the husband's goods, he rendered himself liable to be taken into custody and convicted of felony.

234 January 14 1864

SAD DROWNING ACCIDENTS IN THE RESERVOIR

THE INQUESTS YESTERDAY

Our readers will remember that on Sunday last a sad occurrence took place at the Canal Reservoir, in the Reservoir Road, by which two persons – the one a young man named **Joseph Law**, a boatman, of twenty one years of age, living at No 19 Sherbourne Street, and a little boy named Edwin Smith, some twelve years of age, the son of Thomas Smith, a tailor, living at 40 Granville Street, were drowned through falling through the ice. The inquests were held yesterday afternoon, at the Reservoir Tavern. It being necessary to hold a separate inquest concerning each death, the case of the young man Law was taken first. A cousin of the deceased, named Benjamin Law, who lives in Holme's and Bassett's Buildings, in Sherbourne Street, spoke as to the identity of the deceased, and also to the fact that on Sunday afternoon he went to the Reservoir for the purpose of skating. William Bedworth, of No 77 Essington Street, a bedstead maker, stated that about a quarter to five o'clock on Sunday evening he was near the Reservoir, when he saw a policeman and a crowd of people at a point situate about half way between the engine-house and the western end of the reservoir, previous to which a large number of persons had been skating and sliding upon the frozen surface of the water. He was going in the direction of the crowd when he saw the deceased sliding across the reservoir from the south side. Witness "hooted" to deceased to stop. He tried to do so, but was unable in consequence of the rapid rate at which he was progressing. Immediately upon this the ice gave way under deceased, and he disappeared. Rising again he struck out to swim, but was not able to progress more than a few yards in consequence of the floating ice around him. He broke the ice several times, but at length growing exhausted, he sunk. Upon seeing this, witness called to the two police-officers, who were in the crowd when the boys had gone through the ice – some three hundred yards away. Witness took three handkerchiefs and tied them together, in order to throw them to the deceased, who was struggling in the water, but they were not of sufficient length to reach. He called on several persons to give him their handkerchiefs to make sufficient length, but they would not, Had they done so, the life of the deceased would have been saved. Witness then went to the engine-house, and procured a small boat, which they carried and dragged over the ice to where deceased had got in. He then, in company with a policeman and other, obtained a drag, and after dragging the water for some time found the body and brought it to the surface – but this was not until he had been in the water for three quarters of an hour. When got out he was quite dead. The ice cracked badly when witness went upon it, in consequence of the rapid thaw of the previous twenty four hours.

By a Juror: Before witness fetched the boat a man, who was standing by, attempted to rescue the deceased by wading into the water, but when he had got up to his middle he was seized with the cramp, and witness drew him out by taking hold of his hand. Some planks and a ladder were also brought, but this was not until after deceased went down. This concluded the evidence in the case of Joseph Law, and the Jury, after a few moments consideration, returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

235 January 16 1854 Tipton

DEATH OF A BOY BY DROWNING Yesterday, an enquiry was held by Mr E Hooper, Coroner, at the house of Mr Luke Sheldon, the Royal Oak Inn, Toll End, on the body of Reuben Clifton, a boy eleven years of age, who was drowned while sliding on the ice at Messrs., Bagnall's Pool, on Wednesday afternoon. Jane Glover, the wife of William Glover, a miner, living at Gold's Green, stated that about half past one on Wednesday afternoon, she was returning homewards after having taken her husband's dinner to his place of work, when she saw deceased and a number of boys at the

pool. Witness saw deceased break the ice with his clog at the side of the water, and advised him not to venture on it, but he said he would slide, and as soon as he went on the ice gave way, and he was immersed in the water. Witness made an alarm, and a man came with drags, and got out the body, - Henry Jukes, the man referred to, who is employed as a watchman at the Great Bridge station of the London and North-Western Railway, said that drags and a boat having been got to the spot, witness recovered the body, which was in twelve feet depth of water, and nine or ten yards from the bank. The deceased was the son of **Simeon Clifton**, a boatman. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

236 January 19 1864

THE RECENT CASE OF MANSLAUGHTER AT THE DELPH THE ATTORNEYS AND THE PROSECUTOR

Many of our readers will remember that in the month of October last a case of manslaughter occurred at the Delph, the deceased, a boatman, named **William Knibbs**, having been pushed into the canal by another boatman, named **David Allport**. Allport was brought up at the Wordsley Police Court, and committed for trial at the next Stafford Assizes. At the time of the examination Mr Travis, of West Bromwich, and Mr Miller Corbet, of Kidderminster, both appeared ostensibly for the friends of the deceased; but, after a discussion as to the manner in which the respective retainers had been obtained, the Bench thought it would be best to leave the Magistrates' Clerk to conduct the case, and at the close of the hearing he was bound over to prosecute. Yesterday, at the close of the ordinary business of the Wordsley Petty Sessions, Messrs F Smith and F Evers being on the Bench, the question was again introduced. Mr Travis and Mr Corbet were both present, and also Major McKnight, who had been referred to in the course of the proceedings at the committal of Allport.

Mr Corbet said he was there owing to an instruction he had received that Mr Travis was going to make some application to the Bench on the subject of the prosecution in the case of David Allport. He had no application to make himself, and he had thought that the decision of the Bench, on the 26th October, was a final one.

Mr Smith said they had already decided how the case was to be conducted, and they were not prepared in any way to depart from that decision. They were willing to hear what the legal gentleman had to say, but they only did it as a matter of courtesy, and not officially.

Mr Travis said that when the Magistrates' Clerk was bound over to prosecute, he was bound over subject to the widow of the deceased appearing before the Bench in order that she might state which attorney she wished to conduct the case.

Mr Corbet said that if the Bench enquired into the matter at all, he hoped they would enquire into it most fully, as it was the conduct of Mr Travis at the commencement which more particularly needed explaining. He was happy to say that he had had the thanks of nearly every professional gentleman he had met for taking the part he had, and they hoped, on public grounds, that he would not abandon the matter. He hoped the Bench would request Mr Travis to give a full and ample explanation as to how he became possessed of his retainer of the 19th of October.

Mr Travis said an attack had been made upon him, and the widow, Mrs Knibbs, was now present, and could give the fullest evidence on the subject of the retainer.

Mrs Knibbs then appeared in the witness-box, and gave an account of Mr Travis's visit to her on the 19th of October, and her signing a paper instructing him to prosecute. She said, that when she subsequently signed the retainer for Mr Corbet she did not know what it was. When her friends, she said, knew what she had done, they convinced Mr Corbet, the surgeon (brother of Mr Miller Corbet), that Mr Travis was already employed in the case. She knew Mr Travis before the misfortune happened, but she did not know that she had spoken to him before.

Mrs Knibbs was questioned by Mr Corser (Clerk to the Magistrates), and Mr Corbet, at some length. While this was going on, the remarks made by Mr Corbet, in October, were recalled. They were to the effect that Mr Travis owed his retainer to the fact of his being the son-in-law of Major McKnight.

Major McKnight: I have attended here in order that I may distinctly deny that either myself, or through any of the officers and men under my command, I have ever in any way tried to induce them to use any undue influence in such matters, I deny it most distinctly.

Mr Corbet, after remarking on the interruption, continued his questions to Mrs Knibbs, but the answers he obtained from her were not of a very clear character, and she said she was unable to recollect the circumstances Mr Corbet questioned her about owing to the trouble she was in at the time the retainers were signed.

Mr Corbet wished to address the Bench, but Mr Smith said they could not hear anything but the statement of Mrs Knibbs.

At the close of the proceedings, Mr Smith, addressing Mrs Knibbs, said: I am very sorry it has been necessary to recall the painful sense of your husband's death. I hope no gentleman, who is a solicitor, will ever detract from the dignity of the profession by unreasonable pertinacity to widows in their affliction.

237 January 20 1864 Greet's Green

FOUND DROWNED Yesterday morning Mr E Hooper, Coroner, held an inquest at the house of Mr William Holland, the Vulcan Inn, on the body of a woman about fifty years of age, name unknown, who was found dead in the Birmingham Canal on Sunday. It appeared from the evidence of **John Astley**, a boatman, residing at Spon Lane, that he was returning home about half past ten on Sunday morning, from the Albion Station, where he had been to see if his boat was secure, he saw the body of a woman floating in the water, near the Albion Bridge. He obtained a piece of an iron rod, and with the assistance of a man, got the body out. The deceased was dressed in a black mantle and plaid shawl, and she appeared to have been in the water about three days. Astley immediately fetched the police, and the body was conveyed to the Vulcan Inn, to await the Coroner's enquiry. The Coroner suggested the propriety of adjourning the inquest, to afford opportunities for the identification of the deceased, and that the body might be medically examined in the mean time, to ascertain whether any violence had been used. It might, he remarked, be just possible the deceased had met her death by walking into the canal during the fog. One of the jurors observed that he had heard that the wife of a lock-keeper in the locality where the body was found had heard a cry of murder at midnight on Saturday, proceeding from the direction of the canal. The Coroner directed Police-sergeant Bailey to make every enquiry respecting the rumour, and adjourned the inquest until Friday morning next.

238 January 22 1864

ROBBERIES On Wednesday night, a boatman named **Jesse Gardner** was robbed of two sovereigns, while in a disreputable house in the Red Lion Yard, Smallbrook Street.

239 January 29 1864 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF CRUELTY A boatman named **Thomas Smith**, residing in Bromsgrove Street, was charged with having cruelly beaten two asses entrusted to his care. John Burton, an officer of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, stated that on the previous day he saw the prisoner, who was driving two donkeys along the canal side, beating the animals in a savage manner with a stick. He also saw him kick the donkeys. The prisoner was fined 2s 6d and the costs.

240 February 11 1864 Tipton

SUDDEN DEATH OF A BOATMAN Mr E Hooper, the district coroner, on Tuesday held an enquiry at the house of Mrs Sarah Roper, the Britannia Inn, Lea Brook, respecting the death of **Thomas Cornwall**, a boatman, who was found dead in the cabin of his craft, at an early hour on Sunday morning. The deceased resided at Newcastle-under-Lyme, and, with his sons, was employed in working a boat on the Birmingham Canal. He was of intemperate habits, and had been drinking on Friday and Saturday. At a late hour on the night of the latter day he left the Britannia, near which his boat was moored, and was assisted by one of his sons on board, and placed, partly

undressed, into a sleeping berth. The next morning, another son, a lad of twelve years of age, discovered him lying dead. Mr Horton, surgeon, was sent for, but his services were, of course, of no avail. A verdict of "Found dead" was returned.

241 February 15 1864 Great Bridge

COAL STEALING AT THE RAILWAY STATION At the West Bromwich Police Court, on Saturday, an elderly man, named **William Fisher**, by occupation a boatman, was charged with having stolen some coal belonging to the London and North Western Railway Company. Edward Jukes, the company's watchman, stated that he saw the accused take the coal from a boat which was moored at the wharf, and walk off with it. The prisoner was employed at the wharf, but was not in the service of the company. The accused had been previously convicted, and was committed for trial at the sessions.

242 February 23 1864 Birmingham Police Court

HOUSEBREAKING IN GREAT LISTER STREET – PROMPT AND CLEVER CAPTURE OF THE THIEVES Three men, named Samuel Baylis, a pearl button maker, **William Burman**, a boatman, and **Edwin Blunt**, also a boatman, who reside in a court in Aston Street, were charged with having broken into the house of Mrs Houldcroft, tobacconist, Great Lister Street, and stolen therefrom several boxes of cigars. At about half past six o'clock on the morning of Saturday, while Police-constables Kelsall, Tomlinson and Presser were leaving duty, they passed the shop of the prosecutrix, the shutters of which they observed had been disturbed. They examined the place more closely, and then found that a shutter had been removed, a pane of glass broken, and several boxes of cigars abstracted from the window. There had been a fall of snow during the night, and on the ground close to the window the officers saw a number of footprints, which they traced over some waste land, through several brickyards, up Primrose Hill, and along the canal side. They lost the prints at a lock; but on crossing the canal the officers found the marks again immediately on landing upon the opposite side of the water, and traced them over some more waste ground into Chester Street, from there into Dartmouth Street, and thence to a door of a house in a court in the Aston Road. The officers entered this house, and found two of the prisoners concealed in the cellar, and the other one lying in bed. The stolen cigars they found hidden under the bed. The prisoners were each committed for trial at the next Sessions.

243 February 26 1854 Smethwick

HIGHWAY ROBBERY About midnight on Saturday, **John Walker**, a boat unloader at the Soho Foundry, was proceeding homewards, and when near the Blue Gates Inn he was set upon and thrown down by three or four men, one of whom, a boatman named **Thomas Smith**, alias "Hoppy", a very bad character, he had known for several years. Whilst on the ground he felt Smith's hand in his pocket, and cried out, "Hoppy, you are robbing me". The fellows then made off, and Walker found that 5s 6d had been abstracted from his pocket. Next morning he apprised Police-constable Hackney of the robbery, and on Monday forenoon that officer arrested Smith in a canal boat, and on the following day took him before Mr T Jesson, at West Bromwich, who remanded the prisoner until tomorrow (Saturday), and refused to admit him to bail.

244 March 2 1864 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING AND RECEIVING HORSE RUGS A woman, named Matilda Gardener, residing in Brearley Street, and **William Goddard**, a boatman, residing in Forge Street, were charged, the former with having stolen, and the latter with having received two horse rugs, the property of Mr Henry Lea, coal merchant, Bath Row. Mr Francis appeared for the male prisoner. From the evidence it appeared that between twelve and one o'clock that morning, Police-constables 215 and 229 went to Goddard's house, and, upon searching, found on two different beds the horse-rugs, which had been stolen from the back of the prosecutor's horse, on the 17th last, whilst it was standing at the corner of Anderton Street, Spring Hill. On being charged with receiving the

property, knowing it to have been stolen, the prisoner said that he had purchased the rugs from a man named Brown, in Dudley Street; but a woman who was in the house at the time Goddard bought the property said that the female prisoner brought the rugs to him on the 18th instant, the day after the robbery, and that he purchased them for 2s each. The woman Gardener was then apprehended, and in answer to the charge of stealing the property, said that she “had the rugs to sell for a party”. They were both committed to the sessions for trial.

245 March 7 1864 West Bromwich

DEATH OF A CHILD IN THE TRAMP WARD AT THE WORKHOUSE On Saturday, Mr E Hooper, District Coroner, opened an enquiry, at the Union Workhouse, into the circumstances under which a child, named Sarah **Marlow**, six months old, the daughter of a tramp from Coventry, had died in the tramp ward on the preceding morning. The body of the infant presented a most emaciated appearance. - Catherine Marlow, the mother of the child, said she was a single woman, and had left Coventry three weeks previously, to go to her mother, who lives at Northwich. The child was so ill that she had been compelled to apply for admission to the Birmingham Workhouse, where she remained a week. She had been in the West Bromwich Workhouse, on Saturday, the 20th ult., but only remained for half an hour, in consequence of not having been able to see the doctor. The nurse offered to procure her medicine, but, after considering for a few minutes, witness went to Birmingham and was admitted to the Workhouse at seven o'clock the same night. She did not ask for the doctor that night, but a medical gentleman saw and prescribed for the child on the following morning. The deceased got better, and witness left Birmingham in a week. She had been confined in Coventry Workhouse, and Mr Horton, the surgeon, told her that her infant was consumptive. She went into the tramp ward at Birmingham on the night of the day she quitted that Workhouse. On the Thursday she came to West Bromwich, and got a ticket for the tramp ward at the police station. Between five and six o'clock on the following morning she heard the child moan, and called up the other inmates of the ward, who recommended her to let it remain still. The infant died in a few minutes. A nurse soon after came into the ward, and told her to do nothing until the Master of the Workhouse came. Witness kept the deceased clean. The father of the child, Thomas Smith, of Foleshill, had gone to Canada before its birth. - In reply to some of the Jurors, the witness stated that her native place was Coventry, and that she had been employed in the silk trade. **Her father was a boatman**, and had taken up his residence at Northwich, in Cheshire. - The Coroner told the young woman that she should not have gone about from workhouse to workhouse whilst her child was in such a state, but remained in one of these establishments, where the deceased would have been taken proper care of. - The witness went on to state, the child had a hearty appetite, which she (the mother) had been unable to satisfy, and she begged some of the food supplied to it. - Mrs Catherine Kershaw, a nurse in the Workhouse, deposed that she saw the deceased and her mother in the house on Saturday, the 20th ult., when the latter said that the child was ill. Witness told her she would fetch some medicine, but when she returned with it, the woman was gone. On Friday morning last witness was called to the tramp ward, and found the deceased dead. The infant did not seem to be in a much worse condition than on the 20th ult., but its body was filthy, and there was soreness, the result of not having been kept clean. The deceased appeared to have been sufficiently clothed, but the clothes stank, and nearly made witness sick. - The Jury, in reply to the Coroner, said they were satisfied, without hearing any medical evidence, and returned a verdict of “Died from cold, exposure and neglect, to which the deceased had been subjected before entering the Union Workhouse”.

246 March 24 1864 Birmingham Police Court

SUSPECTED FELONY A boatman named **Thomas Row**, having no fixed residence, was charged with having in his possession eight pairs of new boots, which are supposed to have been stolen. The prisoner could not give a satisfactory account as to how he came by the property, and was consequently remanded until Saturday.

247 March 28 1864 Birmingham Police Court

BURGLARY AT CRADLEY The man named **Thomas Row**, a boatman, having no settled residence, who was charged the other day before the Magistrates with having in his possession eight pairs of new boots, which were supposed to have been stolen, was again brought up, charged with having burglariously broken into the house of Mr Hingley, a boot maker, at Cradley, and stolen the property. It seems that the prisoner was apprehended on the side of the canal in Birmingham by Police-constable 157, with the boots in his possession; that officer lost no time in making every enquiry, and at length found that the property had been stolen from the prosecutor's house, at Cradley, where a burglary was committed. An application was now made that the prisoner might be remanded to Cradley, and it was granted.

248 April 4 1864 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF STEALING LEAD **Thomas Jackson** (19), boatman, living in Lawley Street, was charged with having in his possession a quantity of lead, supposed to have been stolen. The prisoner was met that morning by Police-constable Copestake on the towing path of the canal, near to Belmont Row Bridge. He was in company with two other men, and they were wheeling a barrow containing a large quantity of sheet lead. On the application of the officer the prisoner was remanded until Tuesday, to enable the police to find an owner for the lead.

249 April 5 1864 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

ROBBERY AT TIPTON **James Doran** (25), boatman, was indicted for stealing four sacks, the property of Enoch Southall, at Tipton. Mr Breynton conducted the prosecution. It appeared that on the night of the 15th of March last the sacks were safe on the premises of the prosecutor, and that the next day they were missing. They were afterwards seen in the possession of the prisoner, who was convicted, and, being an old offender, was sentenced to seven years penal servitude. The prisoner, on leaving the dock, said he hoped the gentlemen on the Bench would sit there until he came back. STEALING COAL AT SEDGELEY **Thomas Coombes** (on bail) was indicted for stealing 15lbs weight of coal, the property of the Earl of Dudley, at Sedgeley. The prosecution was conducted by Mr Brindley. - A night watchman, named Moor, who was in the employ of the prosecutor, stated that he saw the prisoner, who was a boatman, take the coal from the canal side and place it in his boat. - For the defence, the prisoner called as a witness a man who was driving the boat, who stated that the prisoner never took any coal, as alleged by the prosecution. After a lengthened consultation, The Jury convicted the prisoner, accompanying their verdict with a recommendation to mercy. He was sentenced to twenty one days imprisonment.

250 April 6 1864 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING LEAD A man named **Thomas Jackson**, a boatman living in Lawley Street, was brought up on remand charged with having a quantity of lead, which was supposed to have been stolen, in his possession. Since the prisoner was apprehended by Police-constable Copestake, Detective Cotton, of the London and North Western Railway, discovered that the lead was stolen from the roof of some buildings at the Curzon Street Station. The prisoner was, however, further remanded until Friday, for a witness.

251 April 14 1864 Birmingham Borough Sessions

CHARGE OF STEALING HORSE RUGS William Metcalf, a jeweller, and Mary Ann Metcalf, his wife, were indicted for having, on the 17th of February, stolen two horse rugs, the goods of Henry Lea, and a boatman, named **Thomas Goddard**, and a woman named Matilda Gardner, were charged with having received the same, knowing them to have been stolen. Mr Gibbons prosecuted, and Mr Elers defended the prisoners. Mr Gibbons said that although the prisoner Mary Ann Metcalf had pleaded guilty, he should not offer any evidence against her, as the law always presumed that a woman acted under the influence of her husband. The Jury, on hearing the evidence adduced against the other prisoners, were of opinion that there was not sufficient to justify

them in finding the prisoners guilty, and, therefore, returned a verdict of acquittal.

STEALING CIGARS A man, named Samuel Bayliss, a pearl button maker, **William Burman**, a boatman, and **Edwin Blunt**, also a boatman, were indicted for having, on Sunday, the 21st February, feloniously broken into and entered the dwelling house of Hannah Houldcroft, and stolen therefrom 7lbs of cigars and five cigar boxes, the goods of the said Hannah Houldcroft. Mr Kennedy prosecuted. On the morning of the day in question, the house of the prosecutrix, which is situated in Great Lister Street, was broken into, and the above named articles were stolen therefrom. The prisoners, who were seen near the prosecutrix's shop shortly before the robbery was committed, were found in a house some distance off, on the same day, with the stolen property in their possession. They were then taken into custody on the charge of having broken into the house of the prosecutrix. The whole of the prisoners were found guilty. Burman and Blunt were sentenced to four years penal servitude, and Bayliss, who received a good character, to four months hard labour.

252 April 14 1864 Tipton

THEFT BY A BOATMAN Yesterday, before the Stipendiary, at Wednesbury Police Court, **Thomas Lawson**, a Canal Boatman, was brought up in custody charged with stealing timber, the property of Mr Daniel Haden. Evidence was tendered to show that the timber was missed from the prosecutor's yard, and that, a police constable being dispatched after the thief, the missing property was discovered in the prisoner's possession a short distance beyond Stafford. He was remanded until Monday next to give an opportunity for enquiries as to his antecedents.

253 April 15 1864 Birmingham Borough Sessions

STEALING LEAD **Thomas Jackson** (19), boatman, was indicted for having, on the 2nd of April, stolen 133lbs of lead, the property of the London and North Western Railway Company. Mr Kerr prosecuted. On the morning of the 2nd of April, Police-constable Copestake saw the prisoner, with two other men, on the towing path of the canal, near Belmont Row Bridge. They had a wheelbarrow with them, and on the approach of the officer, the other men ran off. In the barrow there was found a quantity of lead, which had on the same morning been cut off a shed on the premises of the company. The accused was convicted, and being a notoriously bad character, was sentenced to five years penal servitude.

STEALING BOOTS **James King** (23), boatman, was indicted for having, on the 19th of March, stolen a pair of boots, the property of Ann Matthews. The Hon E C Leigh conducted the prosecution. The prosecutrix keeps a second hand boot and shoe shop in Newtown Row, and on the night in question the prisoner purchased a pair of old boots, but, on leaving the shop, he was observed to possess himself of another pair. He was pursued and captured, and the property was found in his possession. The Jury found a verdict of guilty, and there were former convictions proved against him. The Recorder sentenced him to hard labour for two years.

254 May 19 1864 Tipton

THE CHARGE OF STEALING £6 At Wednesbury Police Court, on Tuesday, before Messrs., Jesson and Marshall, **Richard Whitehouse**, a boatman, was brought up on remand charged with having stolen £6, the property of his late employer, Henry Hickman, timber dealer. Mr Sheldon, who appeared for the prosecutor, intimated a wish to be allowed to withdraw the charge, with the consent of the Magistrates, the prisoner having undertaken to restore the £6 to Mr Hickman. The Bench acceded to his request, and the prisoner was discharged.

255 May 23 1864 Walsall

DEATH BY DROWNING On Friday evening, a child, about 1 year and 8 months old, a son of **Henry Wall**, a boatman living at the Birchills, accidentally fell into the canal, while playing with its sister, and was drowned before assistance could be rendered.

256 May 23 1864

A WOLVERHAMPTON BOATMAN IN LONDON At the Clerkenwell Police Court yesterday, a rough young fellow – so says the reporter of the Globe – who gave the name of **John Mason**, and described himself as a boatman, residing at Wolverhampton, was charged with causing a disturbance and intimidating the boatmen in the employ of the Grand Junction Canal Company, at Islington. Mr Wontner attended for the prosecution, and said that in the Whitsun week of every year the canal was closed for repairs, and at the end of that week there were a great number of boats ready to proceed up the country. On Saturday night, when all was ready to start, the managers of the canal were apprised that there was a combination amongst the assistant bargemen and fly boatmen, and that they did not intend to start on their voyages. On that night, on Sunday, and again on Monday, the boatmen and their companions assembled around the company's offices, made use of threatening and intimidating language to all that remained in the employ of the company, and also amused themselves by throwing stones and breaking windows. One of the assistants, who was willing to work and had proceeded on his journey, was followed by a mob of these fellows, of whom the prisoner was the ringleader, and was so intimidated that he was compelled to leave the boat. The evidence in the case confirmed this statement. - The prisoner said he was not aware that the strike had commenced until Sunday morning, and then he found that the men had struck to be paid for all the odd work they did. Understanding from some of the men on strike that they were going to fetch some men off the boats, he went too, and he certainly did ask one or two to come off, but that he did so in a “very quiet and gentlemanlike manner”. - Mr Barker said he would do all in his power to remedy the evil by carrying out the law. He should remand the prisoner for a few days for the attendance of the man Heritage, who was struck by the prisoner.

257 May 23 1864 Birmingham Police Court

EXTRAORDINARY ROBBERY IN BIRMINGHAM At the Birmingham Police Court, before Messrs., Kynnersley, Pencle and Phillips, John White, a hardened looking young fellow, of unfavourable antecedents, was charged with stealing a horse, the property of Mr Abraham Timmins, of Oldbury, and with robbing a man of the name of **John Shepherd** of the sum of 2d. The case was of a particularly desperate character. On Thursday last, the prosecutor Shepherd, who is a boatman, started from Oldbury in charge of a horse and boat, belonging to his employer, Mr Timmins, to come to Birmingham. On getting to Smethwick, the boat was “boarded” by the prisoner and another man, who requested to “ride” to Birmingham. The prosecutor allowed them. When they had got on the borough side of Lee Bridge, the prisoner asked the prosecutor for some money to get beer. The prosecutor told him he had only 2d. The prisoner would not believe him, and laid hold of him to search him. A struggle ensued, during which the prosecutor's clothes were literally torn to pieces. His watch pocket, containing the 2d alluded to, was out from his trousers with a knife. When the struggle was over, prisoner tried to throw him into the water, but he landed on the canal bank, and proceeded to put his clothes a little to rights. The prisoners meanwhile went forwards with the boat, and when they had got fifty yards, they untackled the horse, and drove him towards Birmingham. The prosecutor, who thought they might be taking it to the stables, did not attempt to follow, being ashamed of his tattered condition. The prisoners took the horse straight to the fair, and sold him to a horse dealer of the name of John Parkins for 30s. White alone could afterwards be found, the other prisoner having escaped. He was committed to take his trial at the next Borough Sessions.

258 May 26 1864 Rushall

ASSAULT UPON THE POLICE At the Petty Sessions on Tuesday, Thomas Wright was charged with having assaulted Police-constable Astbury while in the execution of his duty. For a similar offence, **Charles Cotteril**, a boatman, of Soho, was also fined 2s and costs, with the alternative of one months imprisonment. In this case, Astbury had locked the defendant up on a charge of drunkenness and disorderly conduct, and subsequently hearing him kicking at the cell door violently, the officer opened it, when the prisoner struck him on the breast.

259 May 28 1864 Birmingham Police Court

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE An old man, named **James Jordan**, a boatman, living in St Vincent Street, was charged with having attempted to commit suicide in the street. Inspector Percy stated that the prisoner was brought to the lock up on Thursday afternoon. He then appeared to be insane, and had been attempting to knock out his brains. A strait waistcoat was put on him, and he was taken into the cells, where he behaved most violently, and again attempted to dash his brains out against the wall. Dr White was sent for, but when he arrived the prisoner was quite quiet. He now said that domestic trouble had caused him to attempt to destroy himself. His wife had run away and left him with a family of eleven, the oldest being twenty. His son appeared in court, and promised to take care of his father, who said he would not offend again. The prisoner was discharged.

260 June 2 1864 Worcester City Quarter Sessions

ROBBING A FELLOW SERVANT **Samuel Marsh** (35), boatman, for stealing a sovereign and two half crowns, the property of and from the person of William Smith, on the 4th May, was sentenced to six months hard labour.

261 June 2 1864

THE WOLVERHAMPTON BOATMAN IN LONDON At the Clerkenwell Police Court, on Tuesday, **John Massen**, who was described as a boatman, residing at Wolverhampton, was charged before Mr Barker, on remand, with intimidating and threatening several workmen on the Grand Junction Canal, and also with committing an assault on **Arthur Heritage**, a boatman in the employ of the Grand Junction Canal Company. Mr Wontner, solicitor, of Bucklersbury, again attended for the prosecution, and said that it would be in the recollection of the Magistrate that last week a strike took place amongst the assistant boatmen in the employ of the Grand Junction Canal Company. The men on strike, not content with throwing themselves out of work, combined together, and with intimidation and violence endeavoured to prevent those who were willing to pursue their usual avocations and quietly to navigate the craft to their distant destinations from going on with their work, and in consequence the present defendant and another man were brought before his Worship, the second man being sent to the House of Correction for one calendar month, whilst the defendant was remanded for the attendance of the man who had been assaulted, and who was on the last occasion unable to attend, he having gone to Birmingham with his fly boat. Since he had been in custody the defendant had written the following letter to the chairman of the company:- "House of Detention, May 27, - Sir, I am extremely sorry that I should have joined in the strike, but I was led into it by the others. I knew nothing about it until Sunday morning, when the captain gave us 14s 6d, and told us when that was gone they would give us more. As to striking the man I am entirely innocent of so doing, and I hope you will look over my folly. I am, sir, your obedient servant, JOHN MASSEN". He (Mr Wontner) might say that, had it not been for that letter, it was his intention to have asked the Magistrate to send the case for trial, under the provisions of the 24th and 25th Vic, chap 100. By the provisions of that Act it was provided that if any person on strike was guilty of violence, or other influence, to prevent a workman from going on with his usual and proper employment he should be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour, and was liable to two years imprisonment with hard labour. But for the fact that the defendant had shown some penitence, and that it had come to the knowledge of the directors that three of the captains of the boats had given money to encourage the discord, he should have asked for the committal of the defendant; but whilst he (Mr Wontner) did not ask for that to be done, he might say that such conduct as the defendant had been guilty of could not be altogether overlooked, and he had to ask that such punishment might be inflicted as would be a warning and a terror to his companions. - Mr Barker said these strikes were a great loss to the working men, and entailed on them great misery and suffering, and all for the benefit of one or two who were disaffected among them. Taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case, and also the recommendation the defendant had received from the chairman of the company that he should be dealt with mercifully, he should only

double the sentence he passed last week, and should direct that the defendant should be imprisoned and kept to hard labour in the House of Correction for two calendar months. The defendant, who seemed surprised at the decision, was then removed in custody.

(Note: name shown as "Mason" in earlier article)

262 June 3 1864 Fazeley

SUDDEN DEATH An inquest was held at the White Lion Inn, Fazeley, on Wednesday last, before E Hooper, Esq., on the body of **Timothy Law**, a boatman, aged seventy seven, who died on Saturday last. The deceased was travelling with an empty boat, accompanied by his wife, aged seventy six, and a boy about twelve years of age, from Tipton to Bedworth. He was taken ill at Tipton, and when he got to Fazeley he became much worse, and died in the course of a few hours. Mr Buxton, surgeon, attended the deceased. After the examination of two or three witnesses, it was proved that the deceased had been ill for a considerable time. A verdict of "Died from natural causes" was returned.

263 June 30 1864 Oldbury

WIFE BEATING **Thomas Chilton**, a boatman, living at Tat Bank, was, on Monday, charged before the presiding Magistrates – Captain Bennitt and Mr W H Dawes – with having brutally assaulted his wife, and was sentenced to two months hard labour, without the alternative of paying a fine. Mr Shakespeare was retained for the prosecution, and by the evidence which he adduced, clearly established the commission of the offence.

264 July 5 1864 Birmingham Borough Sessions

STEALING A HORSE **John White** (23), boatman, was charged with stealing a horse, on the 19th May, the property of Abraham Timmins: and also with stealing from the person of the same, 2d. Mr Elers appeared for the prosecution. - The prisoner, and another man not in custody, asked permission, on the day in question, to ride on prosecutor's boat, which he granted. They had some drink together, and then they cut off the prisoner's fob containing his money, and getting ashore, rode off with the horse, which they afterwards sold for 30s. The prisoner's companion has not yet been apprehended. The Jury found the prisoner guilty on both indictments, and he was sentenced by the learned Recorder, on the first indictment, to be kept in penal servitude for seven years.

COAL STEALING **George Green** (21), boatman, was charged with having, on the 2nd of May, stolen a ton of coal, the property of Mr Francis Woodward, of the Bordesley Coal Wharf. It appeared from the evidence of a man in the employ of Mr Woodward, that on the 1st of May he left a quantity of coal upon the wharf, and an empty boat moored near it. On the following morning a ton of coal was missed and the boat also. The boat was subsequently found at some distance, and traces of a wheelbarrow, which extended from the boat to some cottages, in one of which lived a woman named Ann Rowe, who deposed that she had purchased a portion of the coals from prisoner. The prisoner denied in answer to the charge that he was the man and called witnesses to prove an *alibi*. The Jury found him guilty, and, he being an old offender, was sentenced to fifteen months hard labour.

265 July 21 1864 Stafford Summer Assizes

PLEADED GUILTY **Thomas Rose** (59), boatman, burglariously breaking and entering the dwelling house of Henry Kingsley, at Rowley Regis, on the 22nd of March, and stealing eight pairs of boots, and one odd boot; twelve months imprisonment.

266 July 25 1864 Tipton

IRON STEALING At the West Bromwich Police Court, on Saturday, **William Myson**, a boatman, was brought up on the charge of having stolen 10cwt of pig iron, the property of Messrs., Roberts, Tipton Green Furnaces. Mr Dalby was retained for the accused. - William Hemming, a watchman in the service of the prosecutors, said: Between one and two o'clock on Monday morning last I was

on the wharf attached to the works, and observed the prisoner heaving a loaded coal boat alongside one which was moored to the wharf, and in which there was a cargo of pig iron. He commenced throwing the pigs from my employer's boat into the other craft, and I went off for assistance. On returning with a couple of men, I found the accused on board his own boat. On seeing us, he enquired if that was our iron which was in his boat, and added that if it was he would "heave" it out. He then shoved his boat to the other side of the canal, jumped out, and ran away. - This testimony was corroborated by other witnesses, and the accused pleaded guilty. His employer was called, and gave him a good character, but the Bench committed him for three months to hard labour.

267 July 27 1964 Stourbridge

ACTION BY AN ATTORNEY At an adjourned sitting of the County Court on Monday, before Mr Mills, Deputy-Judge, the case of Burbury v Allport was heard. Some months ago, a case of manslaughter occurred at the Delph, and the accused, **David Allport**, was committed for trial at Stafford. Mr Burbury, solicitor, was employed by Allport's father, who is a boatman, to defend the prisoner. Mr Burbury's bill amounted to £20 12s 6d, and the defendant had paid £10 15s. The defendant did not appear personally, and plaintiff obtained an order for the amount claimed, less £1 1s for the plaintiff's managing clerk's attendance on the Sunday.

268 July 30 1864 Worcester

THE QUARREL AT THE NAVIGATION The man Weaver, who was injured in the quarrel at the Navigation, on Monday week, by a blow from another man named **John Smith** (in custody), was considered yesterday to be in such a precarious state as to render it expedient that his deposition should be taken. Mr Sidebottom, who was sitting in Petty Sessions, at the Guildhall, attended at the Infirmary, where in the presence of the prisoner Smith, Weaver's evidence was taken. The deposition was to the effect that Weaver is a boat owner, and Smith a boatman, and they were drinking together at the Navigation Inn, in the bowling alley, and that some "skylarking" was going on in the alley, in the course of which Smith came up to Weaver, and without any previous intimation struck him a blow on the face and knocked him down. His head struck the stones, and he bled from the nose and the back of the head. He was out the next day, but his nose bled at intervals, and during the day he saw Smith and had some drink with him. His nose continuing to bleed excessively on the Wednesday, he went to the Infirmary, where he has remained ever since in a state of extreme weakness from loss of blood. The case will come before the Magistrates today.

269 August 4 1864

**THE SUSPECTED MURDER OF A CHILD AT COSELEY
APPREHENSION OF ANOTHER PERSON
IMPORTANT ENQUIRY LAST NIGHT**

Last night, at Mr White's, the Spread Eagle Inn, Coseley, Mr Phillips made an enquiry into this matter. A large mass of persons congregated round the house during the time, showing considerable excitement.

Esther Richards, wife of William Richards, of Yew Tree Lane, deposed: I knew the deceased Eliza Silletto. She was my niece, and was the daughter of Mary Silletto before she was married to my brother, Richard Hale. Mary Silletto had the deceased child while her and my brother were cohabiting together before marriage. Since the death of its mother, twelve months ago, Mrs Johnson of Legge Lane, has the care of it, and its father lived there also. A fortnight ago, last Saturday, Richard Hale quarrelled with Mrs Johnson, and they both left. He then went and cohabited with a young woman named Eliza Baker, the woman he was then paying his addresses to. His mother took the child to her home, and she remained there for three days, and I saw her daily, as I live next door to her. I never knew the deceased have fits, and at that time she appeared well and healthy, and could run about and talk plainly. Deceased knew all the district round there and was capable of finding her way as far as Bilston, to which place she took meals. The father saw the child every day up to Wednesday. She was missed a fortnight ago. It was between one and two

o'clock this day fortnight that I last saw her, and she then had in her hand a piece of bread and butter. She told me of a quarrel that my children had had in the gravel hole with her. She afterwards went in the opposite direction, towards the church. I believe her father put her clothes on before she went out. I have not seen the deceased since until today, when I saw her dead body and her clothes, which are the same she wore when I saw her last. I have never heard anyone threaten her. Her father was a very rash man. I mean a wicked man when drunk.

Edward Clark, a boatman, deposed: Yesterday, about two o'clock, I went down the side of the hedge of the gravel field, close to this spot. I went there on necessity, and had a little dog with me. The dog by barking enticed me to follow him, which I did, and I found the dead body of the child lying on the ground on her back, in the midst of some wheat that was growing. Her arms were outstretched, and her bonnet was lying on the right hand side of her head and shoulders. Her shoes lay near her feet with the stockings inside. She was in an awful state, and vermin were eating her. Her clothes were turned up as high as her waist, but were not over her face. They were all turned up under her waist, both those that ought to have covered her and those under her. There appeared to have been a road made to the place she lay, the corn being trodden down as if twenty persons had been that way. The road in the wheat did not go further than the body, and that lay about fifty feet from the regular road. I first informed my wife, and immediately gave information to Police-sergeant Tubman, and when I took that officer to the place the body had not been disturbed.

Henry Green, a puddler of Coseley, deposed: I have known the deceased for three years. This day fortnight I heard Richard Hale, the father, enquiring if anyone had seen the deceased, and at about five o'clock in the afternoon of that day, he came from his home towards me and said, after asking me if I had seen the deceased, "I beat her last night for going to my last lodgings, and if she is gone there again I will kick every bone in her hide", and added some foul language. Hearing yesterday that the child was discovered, I went to the gravel field, and found a dark silk handkerchief not far from where the child was found. I knew it, as I have seen Hale wear it many times. There was considerable blood on it, and I could not open it, as it stuck together. It seemed to be "jelly" blood, and I thought it was blood before speaking to anyone about it. I am sure it is the handkerchief now produced.. (It was crushed up and matted as if soaked in blood).

Mary Johnson deposed that the deceased and her father lived with her as lodgers up to seventeen days ago, and they then left. The child was very intelligent, and capable of taking care of herself. Had frequently seen the child abused by its father, Hale, and had heard him say, "I had as leave be hung for that b--- (meaning the child) as anyone else".

Ann Dudley deposed to hearing Hale say that if his daughter went to Johnson's again, "I will certainly make her as her shall never go again".

Samuel Johnson deposed to hearing Hale say, "I should be all right if I could only get rid of that b----". Hale was then speaking of his child, the deceased. Witness had also heard him utter some fearful threats against the child.

Dr John Smith deposed to being on the spot directly after the deceased was found. As he knew her he easily recognised her. Hale afterwards came and identified it, and said, "Oh my child!" Witness described the very horrible condition in which it was in, being eaten away by vermin. His opinion was that it had died by violence and in great agony. There was blood on the clothes, and the limbs were bare. Did not think that death could possibly occur naturally.

The inquest was then adjourned for a *post mortem* examination to be made.

A woman named Eliza Baker, with whom the prisoner Hale has been cohabiting, has also been arrested on suspicion.

270 August 5 1864

West Bromwich

CAPTURE OF A HORSE STEALER Some time during the night of Friday, the 20th ult., a valuable brown mare, the property of Mr John Hirons, of Church Street, Oldbury, was stolen from a field at the back of the Bridge Inn, close by Messrs., Dawes works. On Tuesday the mare was offered for sale to a person in Birmingham, who, knowing her value, had his suspicion excited by the disproportionate price asked. Information was given to the police, and Detective-sergeant Seal

apprehended the man in possession of the animal. He turns out to be one **Thomas Tilling**, a boatman, living at Swan Village. He was taken before the Birmingham Magistrates and remanded to the West Bromwich Police Court, where he will be brought up tomorrow (Saturday).

271 August 8 1864 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBING AN EMPLOYER Thomas Gilbert, labourer, Norfolk Street, was brought up on remand, charged with stealing a watch and £2 5s from the house of **John Twigg**, boatman, with whom he resided. On Wednesday afternoon the prosecutor went out, leaving the prisoner alone in the house, and on his return the watch and money were missed from a box in a bedroom, and the prisoner had absconded. The prosecutor went in search of him, and found him. It was discovered that the prisoner had pawned the watch and sold the ticket to a young man, but the money was found in his possession. He was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

272 August 8 1864 West Bromwich

CHARGE OF HORSE STEALING On Saturday, **Thomas Tilling**, a boatman from Swan Village, was brought up before Messrs T Kenrick and H Williams by Detective-sergeant Seal, of the Birmingham Police, charged with stealing a valuable brown mare, the property of Mr John Hiron, of Church Street, Oldbury. The animal had been stolen some time during the night of the 29th ult., and a few days subsequently the prisoner offered her for sale, at a price much below her value, to a person in Birmingham, who apprised the police of his suspicions, and the accused was taken into custody by Seal. On the application of that officer, Tilling was further remanded till Saturday next, to enable Seal to complete the evidence against him.

273 August 10 1864

SELLING A WIFE FOR A SHILLING At the Liverpool Assizes, on Monday, Hannah Green was indicted for marrying Samuel Thompson, on the 7th March 1861, her husband, Thomas Parker, puddler, Northampton, then being alive. Another indictment was laid, charging her with marrying Henry New. Considerable amusement was created by the examination of the witnesses in this case. The prisoner had been married to Thompson, from which time it appeared that he lived with her, ill-using her frequently. **Rachel Woodward**, a boatwoman on the canal, proved that Thompson had often threatened to sell her, and did so for a shilling at "Brummagem" Fair, about nine years since, *selling her with a halter round her neck*. Both parties were agreeable to the sale. It was before her last marriage with New. Samuel Thompson bought her. She married New in October, in 1859. New died shortly after she married him, being very ill at the time she married him. When taken into custody, prisoner said she had done what she had done with her first husband's consent. Mr Swetenham urged, for the defence, that the prisoner had not been married to a man named Parker, puddler, of Northampton, but one named **Sparkes**, boatman of Runcorn, and that she had not been legally married, but only lived with him as his wife, and called him "her husband". His Lordship, in summing up, said that the notion that a man could rid himself of his uncomfortable helpmate by taking her to the market with a rope around her neck was formerly very prevalent; but he thought it had fallen out of date before now. It was a notion that the minds of ignorant people should be by all means disabused of. - The jury returned a verdict of "Not guilty".

274 August 19 1864 Aston

MAGISTERIAL **George Knowles**, boatman, of Birmingham, was charged with stealing a jacket worth 10s, and a strap, worth 2s 6d, the property of a boatman living in Alfred Street, Smethwick, on the 18th of July last. The evidence not being complete the case was adjourned until Friday next, to be heard at Erdington.

275 August 27 1864

Redditch: PETTY SESSIONS A boatman giving the name of **Thomas Atterby**, but who is known better by several *nom de plumes*, and who lives near Selly Oak, was brought up and charged with

stealing from the wharf of Mr Thomas Merry, of Alvechurch, a quantity of coals, on Thursday morning last. The charge being proved, the prisoner was sent for trial.

Erdington: MAGISTERIAL **George Knowles**, who had been remanded from the Petty Sessions at Aston, was brought up charged with stealing a jacket, strap and other articles, worth 11s, the property of **Joseph Jones**, a boatman, of Alfred Street, Smethwick, who said he missed the articles out of his boat on the 18th inst., about nine o'clock in the evening. The prisoner, who had no business to be in the boat, was seen there by several persons during the evening, and other persons had seen him with the jacket and strap of the prosecutor, who said that he met the prisoner a few days afterwards, and he acknowledged to having stolen the articles, but he would return them in a few days. However, neither seeing nor hearing anything from him, the prosecutor had him taken into custody. The Magistrates committed him to hard labour for six months.

276 August 29 1864 West Bromwich

CHARGE OF STEALING WATCHES At the West Bromwich Police Court on Saturday, **George Fell**, a boatman, was placed in the dock on a charge of stealing a silver watch, the property of **Thomas Cornwall**. Prisoner had been employed by the prosecutor to assist him in working a boat. On Monday night the boat was stationed at Crock Haye. The prosecutor retired to bed about ten o'clock and the next morning missed his watch and chain and a pair of shoes. The prisoner had decamped. The watch had been pawned at the shop of Mr Kendrick, Dudley, for 15s by prisoner. - Fell was then further charged with stealing, in February last, a German-silver watch from **Allen Wyatt**, another boatman. On the night in question the prisoner went into the cabin of the prosecutor's boat and took the watch from a nail where it hung. The boat was lying at Dudley Port. The prisoner then pawned the watch at Mr Humphries', Great Bridge, and sold the ticket to a boatman named **Avery**, who afterwards went to Humphries's shop to redeem it. Mr Humphries, however, having heard of the robbery, detained Avery, and sent for the police. The prisoner had since been away, but was seen in a railway train at Wednesbury on Friday, and apprehended. He was committed for trial by the Magistrates on both charges.

277 September 19 1864 Wolverhampton

VIOLENCE BY A BOATMAN At the Wolverhampton Petty Sessions, on Saturday, **John Bull** alias "Cockney", was charged before the sitting Magistrates with a series of assaults. The evidence showed that on the previous afternoon Bull, whilst under the influence of drink, kicked a boy who was working with him in his boat at the Top Lock, with so much severity, in the face, as to occasion a wound, from which the blood flowed freely. The boy complained to Inspector Thomas, at the branch Police Station in Berry Street, and an officer was sent with the boy to apprehend the prisoner on a warrant, which was at the same time obtained from the Magistrates. Bull resisted the officer very vigorously by kicking him. Two other officers were afterwards dispatched, and they also met with a similar reception. Inspector Thomas himself then came upon the scene, had the fellow deprived of his boots, his legs tied together, and carried to the Police Station, strapped down upon a stretcher. For the assault on the boy, the Magistrates fined the prisoner 40s and costs, or a month's imprisonment; and for assaulting the three policemen, a combined punishment of two months imprisonment.

278 September 23 1864

ROBBERIES About eleven o'clock on Wednesday night, £3 was stolen from the person of **Alfred James**, boatman, of Tardebigg, whilst drunk and asleep in a brothel, in Little Charles Street.

279 October 1 1864 Oldbury

COUNTY COURT Boden v Sergeant. In this case Mr Glover appeared for the plaintiff, a carrier, at Walsall, and Mr Caddick appeared for the defendant, a timber merchant, of Hill Top, West Bromwich. William Boden, the plaintiff, deposed that he received instructions from a servant in his employ, named Smith, to fetch some timber for defendant from Rugeley. He went and brought back

to Messrs., Lloyd's wharf, at Wednesbury, 300 feet of timber, which, at 3d per foot, amounted, together with sundry charges, to £5 7s. He had asked the defendant several times for the money, and he had objected to pay witness, as he (defendant) had not measured it. Robert Smith, the man mentioned, was called, and stated that on the 23rd of May, the defendant came into Lloyd's wharf, and asked if a man called Dance was there, as he wanted either him or the witness to fetch five trees from Rugeley. Dance was not there, and witness ascertained that he could not fetch it. Witness and plaintiff started on the following Monday, and fetched the timber. On their way back they met a boatman called **Holloway**, who said that Mr Sergeant had sent him for the timber he (witness) and plaintiff had got. Joseph Sergeant, the defendant, deposed that he went to the wharf on the day in question, and asked for Dance. As he was not there, he sent for Holloway, a boatman, and gave him £2 9s 6d to pay the tonnage, and sent him to pay for the timber. As plaintiff had suffered some loss in fetching the timber, and defendant had gained something, he (witness) offered to pay plaintiff the difference between his charge and £2 9s 6d which he had paid to Holloway. This the plaintiff refused. The man Holloway, and a man called Wright, in the employ of Messrs., Lloyd, were called, and corroborated defendant's statement. His Honour was of opinion that there was no order given, but that plaintiff becoming aware that there was a vacant job told his master, who did it. He thought, however, that there had been services done and accepted, which plaintiff had not been paid for. He should therefore, give judgement for the plaintiff for £2 17s 6d, and the Court fees, which is the difference between the amount claimed and the £2 9d 6d paid to Holloway.

280 October 3 1864 Great Bridge

ROBBERY FROM THE LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN COMPANY'S STATION **Joseph Warr**, boatman, was charged, at the West Bromwich Police Court, on Saturday, with stealing three jugs, value 2s 6d, from a crate lying at the Great Bridge Station, in transit from Cobridge to Bath, on the 17th of September. Evidence was given of the prisoner having offered the two jugs for sale at a public house, and the identity of the jugs having been proved by a warehouseman from the manufactory of Mr William Brownfield, Cobridge, and the prisoner having been seen on the night in question loitering suspiciously about the truck on which the crate was placed, he was remanded for a week. Mr Jackson appeared for the prisoner.

281 October 20 1864 Worcester Midsummer Sessions

FELONY AT DUDLEY **John Vickers** (23) boatman, and **Edward Clayton** (25) boatman, pleaded guilty to having, on the 22nd of July last, at Dudley, feloniously stolen 54lb of pig iron from the property of William Roberts. Clayton was sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour, and Vickers to twelve months hard labour.

282 October 22 1864

MAN FOUND IN THE CANAL About three o'clock on Thursday morning, as a boatman named **William Walker** was going along the side of the Worcester canal, near Pritchard's Lane Bridge, he saw the body of a man in the water. He obtained assistance, and the body, which was found to be quite lifeless, was conveyed to the Gun Barrels Inn. The deceased, a man about twenty years of age, with light hair and whiskers, up to last night had not been identified.

283 October 26 1864

MAN FOUND DROWNED An inquest was held at the Gun Barrels Inn, Bristol Road, yesterday afternoon, by Dr Birt Davies, Borough Coroner, on the body of a man, name unknown, who was found drowned in the Worcester Canal, on Thursday afternoon, the 20th inst. A man, named William Young, said that as he was crossing the canal bridge, in Pritchetts Lane, with two other men, on Thursday, he heard a cry of, "There's a man in the water". On going down to the canal side he saw **William Walker**, a boatman; they went together to the place where deceased lay under water. The boatman got him partially out, and laid his head on the side of the bank. A police-officer and surgeon were then sent for. The body, which was still warm, was taken to the Gun Barrels, and

every effort made to restore animation, but without effect. After some evidence had been taken, the case was remanded to Tuesday next.

284 November 3 1864 Wednesbury

AN UNFORTUNATE "FIND" At the Police Court, on Tuesday, a boatman, who gave the name of **John Turner**, was charged with having stolen a coat, worth 5s, the property of Samuel Whitehouse, an engineer, and a shirt, worth 2s, the property of James Endor. The articles were stolen from a hovel at one of Messrs Lloyd's pits, on the 14th of July last, and on the following day they were sold at a second-hand clothes shop in Union Street. The prisoner kept out of the way until recently, when he attempted to dispose of a second coat at the same shop, and was detained, and handed over to the police. The prisoner, who pleaded that he found the clothes on a hedge by the road side, was sentenced to three months imprisonment for the two offences.

285 November 8 1864 Wolverhampton

MAGISTERIAL Yesterday, at the Borough Petty Sessions, **Thomas Davis**, a boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing £2 4s, from the clothes of Samuel Collins, who shared his sleeping apartment in a common lodging house, and he was sent to prison for three months.

286 November 8 1864

ACCIDENTS **John Allen**, aged fifty four, boatman, residing in Dale End, was taken to the Queens Hospital, yesterday morning suffering from a fractured ankle, received during a lark with some companions.

287 November 12 1864 Stoke-on-Trent

ATROCIOUS CRUELTY TO A HORSE At Stoke Police Court, yesterday, a boatman on the Trent and Mersey Canal, named **George Bunn**, was charged with cruelly ill treating a horse, on the 18th of September, at the Etruria lock of the canal. William Waterfall, an Inspector on the canal, stated that on the day in question, he saw the defendant at the lock, holding his horse's head, while he was striking the animal with the lock key (a large angular piece of thick iron) on the back. In addition to which he kicked it on the knees. The defendant, in reply to the charge, said he was very drunk, or he should not have done it. Waterfall said the defendant was drunk. Mr Davis, after strongly commenting on the defendant's barbarity, which, he said, exhibited a very depraved state of mind, ordered him to pay a fine of 50s, and costs 12s. In default of payment the defendant was committed to prison with hard labour for two months.

288 November 17 1864

ACCIDENTS Admitted to the General Hospital yesterday – **William West**, 21, boatman, residing at Droitwich End, suffering from contused legs, occasioned by being kicked by a horse.

289 November 22 1864

MAN FOUND DROWNED An inquest was held yesterday afternoon, at the Gun Barrels Inn, Bristol Road, by Dr Birt Davies, Borough Coroner, touching the death of John Horsley, about 60 years of age, a packer, who resided at No 5 Harford's Buildings, Sherlock Street, and who was found drowned in the Worcester Canal. The deceased left the house, where he had been lodging for the last fortnight, on Monday, the 14th instant, without saying anything or paying for his lodgings. He went away, and nothing further was heard of him till about a quarter past nine o'clock on Wednesday morning last, when a boatman, named **Cutler**, passing along the Worcester Canal side, on his way to Birmingham, discovered the body in the water. On being searched, a piece of paper was discovered, on which was the following:- "John Horsley – Dear Tom, You will find my box at No 5 Harford's Buildings, back of Hop Pole Inn, Sherlock Street." There was also a piece of newspaper containing the same words with the addition of the name of Overfield. It was

subsequently ascertained that the deceased was a widower, his wife having been dead thirteen months. The Jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

290 November 22 1864 Tunstall

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE At the Hanley Police Court, yesterday, before Messrs., J E Davis and W Brownfield, a tall thin poor looking man, between thirty and forty years of age, named Henry Osbourne, who said he was a domestic servant from London, was charged with attempting to commit suicide. **Samuel Mountford**, a boatman on the Trent and Mersey Canal, said he was on his boat, near Harecastle, on Sunday afternoon, when he heard that a man was in the canal, from his daughter, to whom the prisoner had said, "Go and tell your mother I am going to drown myself". Witness went to the side of his boat, and saw the prisoner in the water. He asked him why he had jumped into the water, and prisoner replied he was tired of life. Witness said that was nonsense, and persuaded him to get out of the water, when he offered him some food. Prisoner, however, said he did not want anything to eat, and made another attempt to jump into the canal, first giving witness his coat. Witness prevented him from carrying out his intention, and took him to the police-station, and gave him into custody. In reply to the Bench, prisoner said he had nothing to say to the charge, and he refused to promise not to repeat his attempt upon his life. Superintendent Cole partly identified him as a man who, some time ago, was concerned in a begging letter imposition, in Hanley, and the prisoner was remanded for a week, for enquiries to be made on the subject.

291 December 10 1864 Birmingham Police Court

WORKING HORSES IN AN UNFIT STATE **Joseph Tibbets** (21), boatman, Old Hill, was charged by Mr Choyce with working two horses, that morning, which were not in a fit state. "One horse", said the officer, "was very lame, and the other was going on three legs". The prisoner was on the canal side, near Vincent Street, at the time the offence was committed. He was fined 40s and costs, and in default was committed for twenty days. The Bench ordered that his master, **Wm Bagnall**, boatman, Garrett Lane, Old Hill, should be summoned.

292 December 19 1864 Birmingham Police Court

THE BOAT STEALING CASE **Richard Oakley**, boatman, residing in New Spring Street, was brought up on remand, charged with stealing a canal boat from the Double Arch Bridge. Mr Robinson, who appeared for the prosecution, said it had been ascertained that the prisoner had acted under the instructions of others in taking the boat, and had given such information as had led to its discovery, and he therefore requested the Bench to discharge him. The prisoner was then discharged.

293 December 19 1864 West Bromwich

THEFT FROM A BOATMAN At the Police Court, on Saturday, **George Checkley** and **James Owen**, boatmen, were charged with stealing three chests of tea, and a loaf of sugar, the property of the Grand Junction Canal Company. A boat was sent from London to Wolverhampton in charge of a boatman, named **Woodhouse**, and on the 14th of December they stopped at Dudley to discharge a portion of the cargo. On that night Woodhouse went to bed about nine or ten o'clock, leaving the loaf of sugar and the three chests of tea in the boat amongst the cargo. He heard a noise in the middle of the night, and on getting up saw a fire in the boat of the prisoners, which was lying near. The next morning he missed the articles, and information was given to the police. A sack filled with tea was found in the stable of a public house, which was near, and the landlord stated that the two prisoners brought it there the preceding night. Pieces of charred wood and tea dust were found floating on the water near the boat, and it was supposed that the chests had been burnt. The prisoners were both committed to the Sessions.

294 December 27 1864

ACCIDENTS The following persons were admitted in-patients at the General Hospital yesterday. Two men named J Locksley (27) stonemason, residing at Aston New Town, and **J Brookes**, boatman, no fixed residence, were engaged in unloading a boat at the wharf in Wood Street, yesterday afternoon, of some stone slabs, belonging to Mr Matthews, builder, by whom they were employed, when the boat swerved on one side, and several of the slabs fell on them, causing severe fractures of the arms and internal injuries. They were taken to the Queen's Hospital, where they were carefully attended to, and are in a fair way of recovery.

295 January 4 1865

ACCIDENT **Thomas Shaw** (15), boatman, residing in Bailey Street, was taken to the General Hospital yesterday suffering from severe injuries, occasioned by being kicked whilst engaged in a drunken melee.

296 January 4 1865 Stafford Winter Sessions

BOOT STEALING AT LONGTON **Edward Chesterton** (19), boatman, was convicted of stealing a pair of boots, the property of Ann Hazlehurst, at Longton, on the 1st of December, and was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

BOAT ROBBERY AT TIPTON **George Checkley** (27) and **James Owen** (31), boatmen, were convicted of stealing one loaf of sugar and a quantity of tea, on the 14th of December last, from the boats under their charge, at Tipton, and were each sentenced to twelve months imprisonment.

297 February 1 1865

SERIOUS CHARGE AGAINST A PUBLICAN

At the Police Court, yesterday, before Mr T C S Kynnersley, Stipendiary Magistrate, James Bond, retail-brewer, Palmer Street, and John Haynes, carter, Montague Street, were brought up, pursuant to a remand from Monday, charged with being concerned together in stealing between 4,000 and 5,000 bricks, value about £13, from the Crescent Wharf, the property of Messrs., Branson and Murray, builders, Belmont Row. Mr Kennedy (of the Midland Circuit) instructed by Messrs. Ryland and Martineau, appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Parry again appeared on behalf of the prisoner Bond. Mr Kennedy, in opening the case, said that the two prisoners were charged with stealing between 4,000 and 5,000 bricks, the property of Messrs., Branson and Murray, contractors. Some time ago the prosecutor ordered a large quantity of bricks from Sadler Brothers, of Oldbury, which were delivered at the Crescent Wharf. They were missed about three weeks ago, and a portion of them were afterwards found on the premises of the prisoner Bond, who keeps a public house in Palmer Street, and who had also two houses in course of erection there. The bricks found there corresponded with the description of bricks stolen, Inspector Manton and Detective-sergeant Seal went to the prisoner Bond's house, where Manton saw Bond, and asked him from where he obtained the bricks. He said he had an invoice of them, which, he said, he would produce. He looked for the invoice, but was unable to find it. Manton not being satisfied with his account of the bricks, told him to consider himself under arrest, and shortly afterwards took him into custody. On the way to the station the prisoner told Manton that he had bought the bricks from a man named Groom. Mr Edwin Wright stated that he was manager to Messrs., Branson and Murray, and remembered ordering a quantity of bricks from Sadler Brothers, of Oldbury. They were ordered for the purpose of arching, at the Great Western Hotel, in course of erection, in Snow Hill. The order was given on the 9th of July, and the bricks were delivered at the Crescent Wharf some time in September. The bricks were not missed till the manager had had communication with the police. The manager went to Bond's house on Saturday last, in company with Detective-sergeant Seal, where he saw a large number of bricks, corresponding with the stolen ones. The bricks were of a very peculiar kind, consisting of blue headers, not exactly square, but being about a quarter of an inch lower at one end than the other, on account of their being made for the purpose of arching. Several patterns were produced by Mr Wright, which corresponded with the bricks. They were of a

very unusual shape, and worth about 50s per thousand. - Mr Benjamin Sadler, firm of Sadler Brothers, said he was a brick manufacturer, at Oldbury, and supplied Messrs., Branson and Murray with the bricks. - **William Johnson** said he was a boatman, and delivered about 8,000 bricks from Sadler Brothers, at the wharf, to a man named Minchin. - Inspector Manton said he went to Bond's house, on Sunday, the 29th of January. On going into the yard he observed several stacks of bricks, some of which were placed against the two houses in course of erection. Those against the building were covered with snow, and partially consisted of blue bricks, corresponding with those stolen, and also of the ordinary bricks. Manton asked Bond to account for the possession of the bricks, and on being asked if they belonged to him, he replied, "Yes". He also mentioned several names of persons from whom he had obtained the bricks. After some considerable hesitation, he said he had bought some of the bricks from a Mr Sheppey, of Holt Street; but this statement, on subsequent enquiry, was found to be incorrect. Manton produced several samples of the bricks found near the house of the prisoner, which were clearly identified. Bond whilst being taken to the station said he had bought the bricks from a man named Groom, who was eventually sought but could not be found. Detective-sergeant Seal proved the apprehending of the prisoner Haynes, on Sunday morning last. At the conclusion of the evidence for the prosecution it was found to be very unsatisfactory with regard to Haynes, and he was therefore released from the dock. Mr Parry then addressed the court at considerable length on behalf of Bond, and called the son of the prisoner, who stated that his father bought the bricks from a man named Groom, and paid 30s per thousand for them. In cross-examination by Mr Kennedy, he said he did not know where Groom lived, and he had made no effort to find him. He had known Groom about fifteen years, and said he was a general dealer. At the conclusion of the evidence the prisoner was committed to the Sessions, bail being taken for his reappearance in two sureties of £40 each, and himself in £80.

298 February 23 1865

SUDDEN DEATH OF A MARRIED WOMAN Yesterday, Mr E Hooper, district Coroner, held an inquest at the Britannia Inn, Dial Lane, Hill Top, on the body of a married woman named **Elizabeth Walthoe**, the wife of a canal boatman living in that neighbourhood. About two years ago the deceased sustained an internal injury, for the relief of which she subsequently became an out-patient at the Birmingham Hospital, and was also attended by Mr Butler, surgeon, of Great Bridge, who last saw her about three months ago. About four o'clock on Sunday morning a relapse took place, and as she became very ill, her sister's husband was dispatched to Mr Morris, surgeon, with an urgent message for his immediate attendance. He promised to follow promptly, but did not do so, and at five o'clock the poor woman died, after suffering great agony. At seven Mr Morris was again sent for, and he then attended, and said he had understood that he was merely asked to call at the home while going his usual rounds, to see the deceased's sister. There was no suspicion of foul play, and the Jury, without hesitation, found that death had resulted from the effects of the accident referred to. Both they and the Coroner, however, expressed an opinion that Mr Morris ought to have attended promptly after having promised to do so. One of the Jurors complained that he and the other members of the Jury had been summoned at very short notice, as it seemed this had arisen from a pressure of duties upon Police-constable Walton, the constable in charge of the case, that officer was requested to obtain assistance from West Bromwich if he should at any future time be similarly circumstanced.

299 March 4 1865

A MAN FOUND DROWNED On Wednesday morning, a boatman named **Perry** found the dead body of a man, about fifty years of age, in the Birmingham Canal, near Marsh Lane. The deceased was dressed in a blue pilot suit, a top hat, and a pair of blucher boots, and in his pockets were found a silver watch, a brass chain, a knife, a pair of leather gloves, two keys, and 3s 2 1/2d in money. The body was removed to the White Horse Inn, Wolverhampton Lane, where it now lies waiting identification and a Coroner's enquiry.

300 March 28 1865 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING A DOG **John Sheal** (18), boatman, Forge Street, was charged with stealing a dog from a stable in the Aston Road, the property of Mr David Trevor, coal merchant, and also with assaulting Thomas Shakespeare, in the employment of the prosecutor. On Saturday, the prisoner was caught taking the dog from the premises. He was stopped, and delivered the dog to the prosecutor. He then commenced the assault upon Shakespeare, knocked him down, and kicked him brutally. The man was rescued from his violence, and he was afterwards locked up. He had nothing to say, and was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

301 March 30 1865 Coleshill

PETTY SESSIONS **Joseph Goddard**, a boatman, no fixed residence, was charged by William Hiatt, gamekeeper to the Earl of Aylesford, with having used a dog for unlawfully destroying game, on the 22nd instant. The prosecutor saw the defendant start the dog after the rabbit, and after its capture take it to his boat and hide it. John Gibbs, an under-keeper, corroborated the prosecutor's statement. The prisoner had been convicted three times previously. The magistrates fined the prisoner in the full penalty of £5 and costs, or in default three months imprisonment with hard labour.

302 April 1 1865

CHILD DROWNED As a little girl, about nine years of age, named Alice Ralph, residing with her parents in Glover Street, Great Barr Street, was picking up breezes on the canal side, near to St Andrew's Street, on Thursday evening, about five o'clock, she accidentally fell into the canal. An alarm was raised, and **John Ward**, a boatman, and Police-sergeant Bladon soon succeeded in recovering the body, but life was extinct.

303 April 6 1865 Wednesbury

STEALING HAY FROM THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY At the Police Court, on Tuesday, before Messrs. J Haines and T Jesson, a boatman, named **John Bayne**, was charged with stealing a truss of hay, value 3s 6d, the property of the Great Western Railway Company. Mr Harris attended on behalf of the company. The prisoner was defended by Mr Ebsworth. The evidence was to the effect that Henry Childs, a wagoner in the employ of the company, and Richard Good, a resident near the stable from which the property was stolen, saw the prisoner enter the stable on Monday night, and afterwards go away with a truss of hay, which he took to a public house in the neighbourhood. Information was given to the police, and soon afterwards the prisoner was apprehended by Sergeant Langdon. He was committed for trial at the ensuing Quarter Sessions for the county, the Bench consenting to accept bail, the prisoner in £50, and two sureties in £30 each.

304 April 10 1865 Smethwick

THE CASE OF IRON STEALING At the Police Court, on Saturday, before Messrs. Chance and Adkins, **Thomas White**, boatman, was charged with stealing a quantity of iron, the property of Mr Mathews, Corbyns Hall Ironworks. Mr Travis prosecuted, and Mr Dalby defended. The facts of the case are familiar to our readers. In August of last year, a boat load of pig iron, of a peculiar character, and branded "W M" was sent from Mr Mathews's works to those of Messrs. Page, of Smethwick. Messrs. Page refused to receive the iron, and it lay some time in the boat, and when next examined was found to be considerably diminished in weight. The police were communicated with, and a quantity of the iron was found at the ironworks of Mr Edwards, Icknield Port Road, Birmingham. Mr Edwards stated that he received the iron from three men, called Bates, Emery and White, but had not then paid for it. Bates and Emery were apprehended and convicted, and White absconded. On Tuesday he was apprehended at Smethwick, by Police-constable Hackney. He was committed to the Sessions.

305 April 14 1865 Rowley

THE MAN FOUND DROWNED On Wednesday, Mr Hooper, Coroner, held an inquest, at the Two Furnaces Inn, upon the body of **Thomas Pugh**, aged 32 years. The circumstances detailed in evidence were as follows: - The deceased, who lived at the house where the inquest was held, was a boat unloader. The last time he was seen alive was on the night of Saturday, the 18th ult., at about ten or half past ten o'clock. He then went home and told his wife that he had not any money, and she said to him that he had better give up his job and get a better. He then went out, remarking that he would "make a hole in the water", and never returned. His wife sat up for him until about two o'clock on the following morning, and then information was given to the police. On the following Monday the canal, which runs at the back of the house in which he lived, was dragged, but the body was not found. On Monday last, however, a boatman named **William Southall** discovered the body in an upright position close to the back of deceased's residence. Assistance was at once rendered, the body was got out, and on a search being made of the clothes, a watch and chain, three keys, and five shillings and sixpence in money, and three pocket books were found in the pockets. There was not the slightest suspicion of any foul play having been practised on deceased, nor was any one at all to blame in the matter. It was stated that he was sometimes strange in his manner, and that some years ago he left his wife for a long time, and that she never could ascertain where he had been during the time. He was in a sick club, from which his wife would be entitled to £10, unless it could be shown that he had committed suicide. The Coroner having summed up, the Jury, without any hesitation, returned a verdict of "Found drowned in the canal, but how deceased got there there is no evidence to show". To account for the length of time the body remained under water, it may be stated that at that part of the canal where deceased was found there is a great deal of thick mud just below the surface, and for several feet down.

306 July 12 1865 Warwickshire Summer Assizes

GAROTTE ROBBERY AT BIRMINGHAM James Hanley (21), striker, and Patrick Jennings (21), striker, were charged with robbing **Thomas Smith** of a purse, 15s, and other things, and used personal violence to him. Mr Dugdale prosecuted. Smith is a boatman. Late on the night of the 2nd of June he was walking along Fazeley Street, in company with a man named Fosbrooke. A little distance before them they saw three men on one side of the road and three on the other. Just as he had passed one of these groups one of the men put his arm around his neck, and another struck him a violent blow to the stomach. He then became insensible, the pressure round his throat being so great. When consciousness returned, he found his pockets had been rifled, and his purse with its contents taken. Before he swooned, prosecutor had a fair opportunity of seeing the face of the person who struck him. He now said it was Hanley – Hanley cross-examined the witness at some length, and elicited the fact that he had identified a third party as being one of his assailants, but before the Magistrates an *alibi* was established, and the man discharged. - John Fosbrooke, the person referred to by the last witness, said he was with him when the offence was committed. Three of the men set upon him, and Jennings, who was one of them, struck him a blow on the neck, assisted in getting him down upon the ground, and kneeled upon him while the other men robbed him of a purse and £4 10s. They got away, but a few days after, when shown a number of men, he picked Jennings out as one of the prisoners that assaulted him. Mr Buzzard, who defended Jennings, addressed the Jury on his behalf, and then called Jennings' brother, who said he slept with him that night. They were both in bed at half past ten o'clock, being an hour and a half before the offence was committed. Thomas Coleman, a lodger with Jennings, said he was home that night before ten o'clock. He also lay in the same bed as the prisoner, who retired with him a little after eleven o'clock. To the best of his knowledge Jennings was not out that night at the time when Smith, the prosecutor, was beaten and robbed. - Jane Jennings, the prisoner's mother, also gave corroborative evidence. - Hanley called evidence to prove that he was at home and in bed at the time. The Jury found Hanley guilty. He was sentenced to five years penal servitude. Jennings was acquitted.

307 July 25 1865 Birmingham Police Court

COAL STEALING **Thomas Robinson** (54), boatman, Cleveland Street, was charged with stealing about 1/2cwt of coal from a boat on the canal, near to Loveday Street, belonging to Messrs. Heaton and Dugard. A watchman, named Clulee, saw the prisoner take the coal from the boat yesterday morning, and he gave him into custody. The prisoner pleaded guilty. Mr Kynnersley said coal stealing was very frequent, for the delinquents were not easily caught; but when they were caught they would be punished, and he sentenced the prisoner to seven days imprisonment.

308 July 27 1865 Staffordshire Midsummer Assizes

OUTRAGE ON A FEMALE AT WORDSLEY **John Roberts** (29), boatman, and **Thomas Richards** (30), brewer, were indicted for unlawfully assaulting Sarah Cowhorn, on the 7th of April, at the parish of Kingswinford, with intent to commit a rape. A second count charged the prisoners with an indecent assault. Mr A S Hill conducted the prosecution, and Mr Kenealy defended the prisoners. The prosecutrix stated that she was seventeen years of age and resided with her parents at Wordsley. On the night in question she was going from her father's house to the Swan Inn to fetch some beer. The distance was about 400 yards, and when she had got half way, the prisoner Roberts pounced upon her and took hold of her by the shoulders, at the same time putting his hand over her mouth. The prisoner Richards then advanced towards her with his trousers unfastened, and his person exposed. He then attempted to effect his purpose, using such violence in doing so as to inflict serious injuries, and was only prevented from carrying out his intention by the determined efforts of the prosecutrix, who was unable to make any alarm in consequence of the prisoner Roberts keeping his hand over her mouth. She at last, after being dragged all over the road, succeeded in her attempts to call out, and immediately afterwards made her escape to the Swan Inn, where she was followed by the prisoners, who threatened to "give her more" if she said anything about what had taken place. The prosecutrix then made her way home, and informed her mother of what had taken place. The mother and father of the prosecutrix afterwards accused the prisoners of the outrage upon their daughter, when each protested his own innocence, and accused the other of committing the offence, and Richards offered the girl's father a sovereign to let the matter drop, provided the other prisoner would do the same. Mr Walker, surgeon, of Brierley Hill, deposed to the nature of the injuries received by the prosecutrix. Mr Kenealy having addressed the Jury on behalf of the prisoners, the learned Judge summed up, and the Jury returned a verdict of guilty against both prisoners. His Lordship, in passing sentence, told the prisoners that the prosecutrix had been their best friend by preventing them completing the offence they attempted. Had they done so, they would have had to undergo a long term of penal servitude. The prisoners were then sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment each.

309 August 26 1865 Great Bridge

DEATH OF A BIRMINGHAM YOUTH BY DROWNING An inquest was held yesterday morning, at the Waggon and Horses, before Mr E Hooper, the District Coroner, respecting the death of **Thomas Butler**, a labourer, aged fourteen, and lately residing in Icknield Square, Birmingham. **Thomas Hill**, boatman, residing in the same locality, stated that he knew the deceased, who was in his employ. About eight o'clock on the previous morning, the deceased was crossing the Bridge Lock, to draw up the paddles, when he fell into the water, and disappeared under the boat. Witness ran up and endeavoured to rescue the deceased, and with the assistance of a man named Hall, who was passing, the body was ultimately recovered, and means taken to restore animation. Mr Butler, surgeon, was sent for, and pronounced life to be extinct. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

310 October 2 1865

ROBBERIES Yesterday morning £9 was stolen from the waistcoat pocket of **William Smith**, a boatman, while in bed at the Three Horse Shoes Inn, Broad Street.

311 October 11 1865 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL **Luke Doyle** (19), boatman, Lionel Street, **Edward Smitton** (16), boatman, Fleet Street, **William Woodward** (35), boatman, Great Tindal Street, and **Christopher Wilkins** (27), boatman, Fleet Street, were charged with stealing about 4 cwt of coal from a boat on the canal, the property of the Old Birmingham Gas Company. About half past twelve o'clock on Monday morning Police-constable James Willis was in Fleet Street when he observed the prisoners Woodward and Wilkins in charge of a boat on the canal. As they entered the lock he saw them push off several pieces of coal. The other prisoners then came across from Fleet Street, and picked them up. Other pieces of coal were taken by them in the presence of the prisoners Wilkins and Woodward. Smitton, who had been previously convicted for stealing coal, was sentenced to three months imprisonment; the others were each sentenced to six weeks imprisonment.

312 October 21 1865 Worcester City Quarter Sessions

ROBBERY FROM THE PERSON **Charles Bevan**, a boatman, was sentenced to twelve months hard labour, for stealing a watch and chain from the person of Henry Hooper, while he (Hooper) was drunk in a public house. Several previous convictions were proved against him.

313 October 24 1865 Birmingham Police Court

GROSS CRUELTY TO A CAT **Joseph Simpson** (25), Oldbury, boatman, was charged with cruelly ill-using and torturing a cat. On Saturday night last, the prisoner went to the house of Mr Goose, beerhouse keeper, Sheepcote Street, where he was drinking some time. While he was sitting in the kitchen, a cat, belonging to Mr Goose, went into the kitchen, and the prisoner, seizing it, dashed it several times against the wall violently. The poor creature suffered frightful agony, and died soon afterwards. Police-constable Farrell was sent for, and that officer took the prisoner into custody. He was ordered to pay a fine of 40s and the costs, or, in default of payment, to undergo two months imprisonment.

314 November 18 1865 Bilston

STEALING AND RECEIVING COAL At the Police Court, yesterday, before Messrs., Wood and Perry, **John Burton**, boatman, and Samuel Dolman, puddler, were charged, the former with stealing and the latter with receiving a quantity of coal. Burton was employed by Mr Groucutt to convey coals from his colliery, and he had at various times abstracted small quantities and disposed of them to Dolman. The Magistrates sentenced Burton to a months, and Dolman to fourteen days imprisonment, with hard labour.

315 November 28 1865 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF ROBBERY IN PRINCIP STREET **James Rickus** (25), boatman, Aston Road, was charged with being in company with another, not in custody, and stealing three boat lines and a horse-cloth, value 15s, from a stable in Princip Street, the property of Messrs. Bishop and Smith. On Sunday evening (about eleven o'clock) according to the evidence, the prisoner was discovered in the stable of the prosecutors, with a light. He ran down the yard, towards the canal, and, getting into an empty boat, made his escape. Immediately afterwards a man in the employment of the prosecutors, who was on the premises, found the above mentioned articles, which had been missed from the stable, in the boat. Yesterday morning, Police-constable Woodford apprehended the prisoner, who declared that he was in bed at the time when the robbery was alleged to have been committed. A witness was called, who confirmed his statement. Mr Kynnersley discharged the prisoner.

316 November 30 1865 Birmingham Police Court

THE ALLEGED ROBBERY IN PRINCIP STREET **James Rickus** (25), boatman, Aston Road, was charged with stealing a boat line, horse cloth, and other articles, of the value of 15s, from the premises of Messrs. Bishop and Smith, Britannia Wharf, Princip Street. It will be remembered that

on Monday last the prisoner was charged with the same robbery, when evidence was given to the effect that on Sunday evening he was seen to leave the stable where the articles were kept, and make his escape in an empty boat on seeing that he was pursued; but the Stipendiary discharged the prisoner, because a woman, who lived at the house where he lodged, swore distinctly that he was in bed at the time when the robbery was alleged to have been committed. Since that time additional evidence had been obtained, and the prisoner was apprehended by Detective-sergeant Mountford. A man, named John Morgan, who knew the prisoner, stated that on the evening in question he saw him, with another man, in the stable, where the gas was lighted; and, on his approach, they ran towards the canal, and, getting into a canal boat, made off. Several articles were missed from the stable, which were afterwards found in the boat they escaped by. The prisoner pleaded not guilty, and was committed for trial at the Sessions. Bail was accepted.

317 December 27 1865 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING FOWLS **George Knowles** (46), boatman, having no fixed residence, was charged with having stolen four fowls, value 10s, from the yard at the back of the Saracen's Head Inn, Summer Lane, the property of William Applebee. Late on Saturday night the prisoner was observed to leave the yard where the fowls were kept, carrying something. He was stopped, and the four fowls, which he had killed, were found in his possession. Police-constable Brookes was then sent for, and the prisoner was given into his custody. Committed to the Sessions.

318 December 29 1865 Wolverhampton

A CAREER OF CRIME – STEALING A CHILD Yesterday, at the Wolverhampton Petty Sessions, a young woman, scarcely twenty years of age, was committed for trial at the Borough Quarter Sessions, charged with stealing a child, its clothes, and also some wearing apparel belonging to another person, a boatman. The prisoner's name is **Mary Ann Dyke**; her father is a labourer, and lives at Wednesfield. She has been often in custody, but has not wanted friends. Summarily convicted some time ago, at Willenhall, and sentenced to imprisonment and confinement in a Reformatory, she received the imprisonment, but was too old to be admitted into the Reformatory. She then got into trouble in Wolverhampton, and the Rev. Mr Stephens, the Vicar of Wednesfield, interested himself on her behalf. The rev. gentleman appeared before the Stipendiary, got her leniently dealt with, and received £1 from the poor-box towards the expenses of getting her into a kind of private reformatory or "home" in Birmingham. The conductors of the institution could not, however, keep her long, and her bad conduct resulted in her expulsion. She had some friends in Liverpool, and she went to that port, and got into honourable service. For a time she conducted herself properly, and Mr Stephens was gladdened by receiving letters from her master to that effect. But this steadiness was of only brief duration. She robbed her master, decamped, and entered the service of a boatman, as steerer, in which capacity she had been before employed. Him, too, she robbed; and this was one of the offences proved against her yesterday. Running away from the boat, she commenced work as a banks' girl at Rough Hill, and lodged next door to the house of Thomas Lewis, a labourer, who, on the 8th instant, had a child six weeks old. At about eight at night, Mr Lewis wished to go to market, but did not like to leave her infant alone in the house. Dyke proffered to keep watch over the cradle, and the mother went out. Returning home, both nurse and child were absent. At about half past one o'clock on the morning of the 10th instant, just two days afterwards, an infant, denuded of all but a little flannel, was found to have been placed in one of the streets of Liverpool, and it was taken to the Workhouse. On the very next morning enquiries were received in Liverpool from the police of Wolverhampton for such a child, and Dyke, who there was now reason to conclude had returned to Liverpool. The mother of the infant went over to Liverpool, and pointed out her child from several others, as it lay in the Workhouse: and Dyke was given up by her friends in the same time, with some of the infant's clothing in her possession. When before the Magistrates, yesterday, she had nothing to say in her defence, but added to her previous long list of crimes by suggesting to the boatman, whether, before she stole his property, he had not attempted to grievously wrong her.

319 January 3 1866 Worcestershire Quarter Sessions

ASSAULT ON A WIFE **Henry Bond**, a boatman, charged with assaulting his wife at Ombersley, on the 20th October, pleaded guilty, and, receiving a good character, was ordered to pay a fine of £2 and costs, and to be bound over in £20, to keep the peace for a year.

OLDBURY **Edward Holden**, a boatman, was charged with stealing a gelding, the property of Thomas Peasland, on the 2nd ult. The animal was missed from a field, and the prisoner was afterwards found endeavouring to sell it to a Mr Hodgetts, to whom he said the horse had been given him by his uncle. A previous conviction was proved. Seven years penal servitude.

320 January 10 1866 Birmingham Borough Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **George Knowles** (26), boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing four fowls, the property of William Appleby, and was sentenced to ten years penal servitude.

321 January 19 1866 Wolverhampton

IMPUDENT THEFT OF IRON At the Police Court, yesterday, before Messrs., J C Smith (Mayor), J Ford, E Perry and T S Simkins, a boatman named **James Clarke** was charged with stealing a quantity of rod iron, valued at 9s, the property of Messrs. Bayliss and Co., Monmore Green. It appeared that the prisoner was employed at the works of the prosecutors to load a boat, in the canal, adjoining the forge. At between six and seven o'clock yesterday morning, he was seen by a man to place the iron in his boat, and begin to move away. He was, however, stopped, and he then said that he did not know how the iron came into his boat. He supposed some boys had put it there for a "lark". The Magistrates sent him to gaol for three months, with hard labour.

322 January 22 1866 Local News

DISTRESSING DEATH FROM SCALDING An inquest was held on Saturday afternoon, at the Tindal Arms Inn, King Edward's Road, before Dr Birt Davies, the Borough Coroner, concerning the death of John Henry Elwell, aged eight months, son of **Elijah Elwell**, boatman. The mother of the deceased was nursing him in the cabin of their boat, on Thursday, the 4th, at Stoke-on-Trent, when she accidentally upset a saucepan, containing hot water and peas, and about a pint of water fell into her lap, severely scalding the feet of the deceased. The injuries were dressed, and the deceased was after attended to at different hospitals, but he became worse, and died on Thursday morning last. Verdict, "Accidental death".

323 March 8 1866 Staffordshire Adjourned Quarter Sessions

STEALING A COAT AT ALREWAS **Frederick Hartshorn** (22), boatman, was found guilty of stealing, on the 8th of February, a coat, from Wm, Genders, at Alrewas, and sentenced to four months imprisonment.

324 March 14 1866 Staffordshire Lent Assizes

UNNATURAL OFFENCE AT WOLVERHAMPTON **Wm Mansell** (52), boatman, was indicted for an unnatural offence, at Wolverhampton, on the 18th February, 1866. He was found guilty, and sentenced to ten years penal servitude.

325 March 20 1866 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY OF STEEL **George Nicholas** (25), boatman, having no fixed residence, was charged with having stolen about 5cwt of steel, value £10, the property of the Bridgewater Trustees. On the 12th instant the prisoner left Wolverhampton in charge of a boat loaded with steel, the property of the Bridgewater Trustees, and he arrived in Birmingham on the following day, and unloaded it. Subsequently he left Birmingham with another load of metal of a different description, and went to Selly Oak. In consequence of information which he received, a clerk in the employment of the prosecutor went to Selly Oak, and saw the prisoner, who, with another man, ran away on his

approach. Search was made in the boat, and the steel was found concealed in the cabin. Information was given to the police, and the prisoner was apprehended. He pleaded guilty. Mr Kynnersley said in consideration of the prisoner's good character he should deal leniently with him, and sentenced him to three months imprisonment.

326 April 9 1866 Wolverhampton

FATAL ACCIDENT Mr T M Phillips, Coroner, held an inquest in the Grand Jury-room, on Saturday, on the body of **Joseph Squires**, aged sixty one years, a boatman, in the employ of the Bridgewater Trustees, and who lived at Kidsgrove, in Cheshire. It appeared from the evidence that, on the 20th of March last, the deceased took a boat load of sacks of flour to the Bilston Mill, and that he was in the act of fastening the chain of the pulley that was to lift a sack into the warehouse, when by some means his hand was caught in the chain, and he was drawn up with the sack about fifteen yards. At that elevation there was a trap door, not wide enough, however, for anything else but a sack to pass through. He fell back into the boat, and his shoulder was dislocated, and several of his ribs broken by the fall. The poor fellow was at once conveyed to the South Staffordshire Hospital, where he died on Thursday. In order that the man who had charge of the pulley might be in attendance, the inquest was adjourned until tomorrow (Tuesday).

327 April 12 1866 Atherstone

MAN FINED FOR WORKING ON A SUNDAY At the Town Hall, on Tuesday, before Sir George Chetwynd, Bart., and Messrs., C H Bracebridge and C Allison, **Joseph Gardiner**, a boatman of Atherstone, was charged with unloading his boat at Polesworth Wharf, on the Lord's Day, to wit, on Sunday, the 1st instant. Sir George Chetwynd said he had instigated the present proceedings to be taken. He was going by Polesworth Wharf on Easter Sunday, when he saw defendant and several others helping him to unload his boat. He was very much shocked to see such work going on on a day that ought to be more sacred than any day of the year. He would leave the case in the hands of his brother Magistrates, without himself taking any part in the adjudication. Defendant pleaded as an excuse for unloading on the Sunday that a stoppage was to take place in the canal at Glascott, a few miles distant, on the Monday, and he was anxious to get back with his boat before the stoppage commenced. He was fined 6s and costs 12s.

328 April 12 1866 Birmingham Police Court

VIOLENT ASSAULT **James Pitt**, boatman, was charged with having violently assaulted **William Bevington**, boatman, High Street, Bordesley. On the previous day the prisoner found his daughter and the complainant in the cabin of his boat, at the Worcester Wharf. Being enraged at this he seized a tiller and struck the complainant on the head, inflicting a severe wound. The prisoner was remanded till Monday, bail being accepted.

329 April 27 1866 Aston Police Court

OBSTRUCTING THE CANAL **William Stokes**, boatman, was charged, under a warrant, with causing an obstruction on the canal. Mr Evans, Solicitor to the Birmingham Canal Navigations, prosecuted, and said the information was laid under the 150th section of that Company's Act of 1835. A summons, returnable on the previous Thursday, was issued, but the defendant not appearing to it, the present proceedings were taken. Mr Evans briefly stated the facts of the case, and said he was sorry that proceedings were obliged to be taken against the defendant, who, he believed, was a respectable man. The company did not often appear in Court in that capacity, but were, in this instance, driven to it as an example to others. - John Rymill, engineer to the Company, stated that he was standing by the upper lock at Witton, on the 19th of March, when he saw the defendant, who was leading a horse, drawing a boat filled with coke, and another man named **Higginson**, in charge of an empty boat, racing to get to the lock. They came up to the lock's mouth at full speed, and at the same time. The boats became jammed in the narrow part, and neither would give way. Witness said, "You had better settle it between you, as I shall notice the time". They did

not settle it, however, and remained there impeding the traffic from seven o'clock until after ten. At a quarter past nine, there were thirty three boats waiting to go down. They (the defendant and Higginson) withdrew their boats to allow the up boats to pass, but immediately afterwards resumed their old position. In cross-examination, witness said there were two men to each boat, and another man was steering the boat to which the defendant belonged. The section of the Act directed proceedings against "the person having the care" of the boat, and as the defendant evidently was not in charge of the boat, the Bench had no alternative but to dismiss the summons, intimating to Mr Evans that the wrong man had been summoned.

330 April 16 1866

A very singular accident has occurred at Manchester. A canal boat was being drawn up to the bank, a rope having been cast on shore, and a boy named **William Dibbs** incautiously placed one of his feet within the coil of rope on the boat's deck. Through the action of the boatman the rope was tightened, and the lad sustained a compound fracture of the leg. He was taken to the Royal Infirmary; tetanus ensued, and death occurred.

331 May 16 1866 Dudley

HORSE STEALING **John Smart**, boatman, on remand from Wednesday, was brought up at the Police Court, on Monday, on a charge of stealing a horse, valued at £4, the property of **Isaac Flavell**, boatmaster, Bartley Green. It appeared that the prisoner had been sent with the horse, on the 7th inst., to Dudley Fair, with instructions to await the arrival of the owner, with a view to effect the sale of the animal. The prosecutor arrived at Dudley at 5 p m, and found the prisoner drunk, after having sold the horse. He was then arrested, but no money was found upon him. The prisoner was committed for trial at the ensuing Sessions.

332 June 14 1866

COMMITTAL FOR THE MANSLAUGHTER OF A BROTHER AT BRETTLER LANE At Wordsley Petty Sessions, on Monday, before Messrs., F Evers and B St John Mathews, **Joseph Darby** (20), boatman, was charged with the manslaughter of his brother, **Thomas Darby**, two years his junior. From the evidence of the witnesses called in support of the charge, it seems that the two brothers were together in Mr Bullock's public house, Brettler Lane, on Saturday night week, and they went out about eleven o'clock. They were heard disputing about some money, and prisoner was seen to strike his brother on the chest. Deceased then threw a stone or something of the kind at his assailant, and went away. He was followed by the prisoner, who was again seen to strike him. The effect of the blow brought him to the ground, and he never rose more. The elder brother left the spot, and cries of "murder" being raised several persons came to the spot. A man named Soloman Bate picked the deceased up, but he only breathed twice, and was unable to swallow some water which was offered him. Both the young men were stated to be sober at the time of the sad occurrence, and, up to the time of their leaving the public house, there had not been any display of ill-feeling between them. Mr H Walker, surgeon, Brierley Hill, said he only found one mark on the deceased's body, and that was a scar on the cheek. On opening the body, he found it in a very healthy state. The veins, however, were gorged with blood, and also the right side of the heart. The blood was loosely coagulated. This would indicate that death took place from collapse, which might be brought on by a severe shock to the nervous system, such as violent excitement, or a blow over the region of the stomach. Such violence as had been described would be sufficient to account for death, even in a healthy person. The Bench committed the prisoner for trial, but admitted him to bail. The Coroner's Jury returned a verdict to the effect that death was the result produced by natural causes.

333 July 5 1866 Worcestershire Midsummer Assizes

STEALING FROM THE PERSON **John Twigg**, boatman, was indicted for stealing £15 13s from the person of William Inett, of Oldbury. Mr Streeten prosecuted; the prisoner was undefended.

Prisoner and a man named Lloyd went to assist prosecutor at one of his boats. They all fell asleep, and when prosecutor awoke he missed his money, of which £10 was found under some coverings. Two months hard labour.

334 July 9 1866 Stafford

A BOATMAN DROWNED A boatman named **Henry Winfield**, age thirty three, whose home is at Wordsley, near Brierley Hill, whilst placing a line in front of his boat, fell into the water at Radford, between the Hazlestrine Bridge and Acton, in which parish the accident occurred, and before he could be got out he drowned. His wife, who was with him, says that he was subject to fits, and there can be little doubt that he was seized with one whilst passing along the plank which runs across the top of the boat. The accident happened at noon on Saturday, the 7th inst., and his body was conveyed to the Trumpet Inn, where the inquest is to be held this day (Monday).

335 July 30 1866

ACCIDENTS The following person was admitted in patients at the General Hospital:- **John Day** (31), boatman, Netherton, suffering from burns.

336 August 1 1866

SHOCKING DEATH BY BURNING An inquest was held yesterday afternoon, at the Grand Turk Inn, Ludgate Hill, before Dr Birt Davies, the Borough Coroner, to enquire respecting the death of **John Day** (37), a boatman, lately living at Dudley. Early on Friday morning last the deceased and a boy about nine years of age, named Edward Court, were lying asleep in a coal boat, on the canal, in the parish of Kingsbury, another boy having been in charge of the horse drawing the boat. Suddenly the boy who was lying near the deceased awakened, and looking towards the deceased, saw him lying upon his back with his clothes in flames and his left arm in the "fire bucket" which had been placed in the boat for the purpose of supplying them with warmth. With great presence of mind, he immediately procured a bucket of water from the canal to throw upon the deceased to extinguish the flames, but he was unfortunately prevented from doing this by the deceased waving his hand, which the boy believed to be a sign for him to desist, and he did so. Previous to this he had removed his hand from the "fire bucket", but it fell in again. Without any other assistance the boy then dragged him from the vicinity of the bucket and deceased recovering from the fit walked across the boat. During this time his clothes had continued burning and a few minutes only elapsed before they were completely consumed. The other boy who was some distance in advance saw the flames and returning he went for assistance. Shortly afterwards the poor fellow was conveyed to the General Hospital, where it was found that he was most extensively burned, and his body was charred in some parts. His case was hopeless from the first, and he expired on the same morning. It is conjectured that he was seized with a fit and came in contact with the bucket, in consequence of which his clothes ignited. Verdict "Accidental death".

337 October 1 1866

ACCIDENTS A boatman named **Pimble**, fell from a canal bridge, at Stourport, on Monday, and fractured his collar bone. He was brought to the Infirmary.

338 October 33 1866 Walsall

SAD DEATH BY DROWNING On Saturday afternoon, the lifeless body of Patrick Martin, a blind man, who lived in Short Acre, was found in the canal, near the Gasworks, by **Charles James**, a boatman. The deceased had got his living by playing the violin at various places in the district. On Monday last he left his home for the purpose of going to Bilston, in the exercise of his calling, and nothing more was seen or heard of him until the discovery of his body. Money to the amount of 1s 11 1/2d was found in the pockets of the deceased; and the poor fellow's violin, though much broken, was in one of the hands of the corpse. The body was taken to the Elephant and Castle Inn,

where it awaits an inquest.

339 November 5 1866 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING WEARING APPAREL **William Jones** (21), a boatman, having no fixed residence, was charged with stealing several articles of wearing apparel, of the value of £3, the property of **Samuel Bloore**, boatman, from Wolverhampton. During the absence of the prosecutor on the 15th of October, the prisoner took the articles from the cabin of his boat, and afterwards pledged them. Pleading not guilty, the prisoner was committed for trial at the Sessions.

340 November 12 1866 Tividale

SUPPOSED INFANTICIDE AND SUICIDE Mr E Hooper, District Coroner, held an inquest, on Saturday afternoon, at the Red Lion Inn, New Road, respecting the deaths of Jemima Boylin aged 23, and Henry Boylin, aged 2 years, mother and son, who were found drowned in the canal near Messrs., Bagnall's pits, Tividale, under the following circumstances:- Job Pearson stated that he was a miner, residing in Union Street, Tipton. On the previous day he was going to his work, in company with several others. When near the Old Smoky Pits belonging to Messrs., Bagnall, he saw two boats pass each other on the canal. A child rose to the surface between them. One of the men in charge of the boat seized the child, and laid it on the towing path. After the police had been sent for, witness heard several people say that the body of the woman had been found a little higher up the canal. The child was in a decomposed state, and from its appearance witness thought it must have been in the water eight or nine days. - **Samuel Taylor** deposed that he was a boatman, residing at West Bromwich. On the previous day he had command of a boat bound for the Saltwells Colliery. When near Messrs., Bagnall's Colliery witness and his boy saw the deceased woman floating upright in the water. The deceased had no bonnet or shawl on. The eyes were much swelled. After she had been taken from the water and laid on the path the police were sent for. - John Boylin, a puddler, residing at Hill Top, the husband of the deceased woman, stated that she was twenty three years of age, and the child, which was his, was two years old. The witness also stated that on the 17th October he was thrown out of work at Messrs. Solly's, and in consequence asked his wife to go into the West Bromwich Workhouse whilst he sought employment. She consented, and remained in the house a week, after which she left. Witness obtained work in the Potteries, where he remained a fortnight. He then removed to Hill Top, where he had since resided. Had not heard of his wife and child until the previous day, when he heard from the police that they had been discovered in the canal. In answer to the Jury the witness stated that his wife was a sober woman. He was under the impression his wife had destroyed herself. - Richard Boylin, a miner, residing at Horseley Heath, deposed that he was the uncle of the last witness. On the 29th of October the deceased came to his house and asked for her husband. Witness said he did not know. She returned again, and repeated the question, after which she left. Had heard nothing of her since. - By the Jury: Did not ask her in. Did not offer her anything to eat or drink. They were not good friends, in consequence of an ill-feeling which had previously existed. The deceased was "fresh" at the time she called. She had lived with her husband at his house. Never heard them quarrel. - By the Coroner: Knew her husband had gone into the Potteries. Witness gave all his answers in a very hesitating manner. Police-constable Taylor stated that he was on duty at Tividale. Upon hearing of the discovery of the bodies he proceeded at once to the spot. There were several bruises on the head and face of the woman, and the child was injured in a similar manner. Had made enquiries and could not learn anything of a suspicious nature. At the conclusion of the evidence, the Jury, through their foreman, expressed an opinion that the deceased had destroyed herself and her child, through want. The Coroner intimated that he could not receive any verdict, unless an adjournment took place, except that of "Found drowned". This verdict was accordingly returned.

341 November 24 1866 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING MONEY **Henry Bennett** (45), boatman, was charged with stealing 27s, the moneys of his employer, Wm Overton, Aston, farmer. In October, the prosecutor sent the prisoner with 30s

to purchase some goods. He purchased 3s worth of goods only, and kept the remainder of the money, with which he absconded. Information was given to the police, and he was apprehended on the previous day. Sentenced to six weeks imprisonment.

342 December 20 1866

ASTON POLICE COURT Joseph Dale, Heneage Street, was sent to prison for 28 days, for stealing a coat, value 13s, the property of **Joseph Burns**, boatman, Mill Street, on the 29th of October.

343 December 21 1866 Birmingham Police Court

VIOLENT ASSAULT **George Trueman** (24), boatman, Lichfield Street, was sentenced to one months imprisonment, for having on the previous day violently assaulted Edward Goode, of Cope Street. There had been a slight altercation between the two previously, and as the complainant was going along Suffolk Street, he was followed by the prisoner, who knocked him down and kicked him on the head. The prisoner was sentenced to one months imprisonment,

344 July 2 1867 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

STEALING WEARING APPAREL AT GREAT BRIDGE **George Thomas Clarke** (17), boatman, pleaded guilty to a charge of stealing a silk handkerchief and a silk scarf, the property of Francis Cocks, on the 8th of May. Prisoner had been several times in prison, and the noble Chairman sentenced him to twelve months hard labour, warning him against continuing in his bad courses.

345 July 3 1867 Worcestershire Quarter Sessions

EMBEZZLEMENT AT SEVERN STOKE **Samuel Sidley**, boatman, was charged with embezzling several sums of money, the property of Mr Williams, hay and corn dealer, Severn Stoke. The prisoner had been in the employ of the prosecutor, and was entrusted with boats of hay to sell up and down the canal, and also to fetch loads of coal. In the month of April he took a load of hay, and on the return journey gave in his account, which stated that he had sold the hay at £4 10s a ton, which money he paid away. Mr Kendrick, Bilston, deposed to buying six tons of hay from prisoner at £5 per ton, and paying tonnage. The defence was that the prisoner had made a mistake in his accounts. Six months hard labour.

346 July 10 1867 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY OF £35 Ann Richards (28), prostitute, was charged with stealing £35 from the person of a man named **John Price**, a boatman, while in a brothel in Vale Street, on the 3rd of June last. For the attendance of the prosecutor the prisoner was remanded until Wednesday next.

347 July 10 1867

FATAL ACCIDENTS An inquest was held yesterday, at the Grand Turk, Ludgate Hill, before Dr Birt Davies, the Borough Coroner, touching the death of **Joseph Jukes** (62), West Bromwich, boatman. On the 7th of June, deceased was at Branston, in Buckinghamshire, with his boat, on the Grand Junction Canal. When he had entered one of the locks, he attached a rope to the lock gate, and was proceeding to wrap the rope round a piece of iron fixed on the boat, for the purpose of closing the lock gate after the boat, when one of the fingers on his right hand became entangled between the rope and the iron, and the end was cut off. He bathed it with cold water until he reached Birmingham, when he went to the General Hospital, where he was admitted as an inpatient. He gradually sank, and died on the 5th July from the effects of the injury. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

348 July 13 1867

ACCIDENTS **Thomas Marston** (53), Green Street, boatman, was admitted on Thursday as an inpatient to the General Hospital, suffering from a wound on the head, and immersion in the water.

He was with his boat on Thursday, and had entered a lock, and was pushing the lock gate to after him, when, by some means, it caught him a blow on the head, and knocked him into the canal. He was immediately got out, and was removed to the above institution, where he now lies in a very precarious state.

349 July 23 1867 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF STEALING BASKETS Patrick Carney (17), 5 Court, Hospital Street, metal roller, and **William Smitten** (19), 11 Court, Henley Street, boatman, were charged with stealing eighteen empty baskets belonging to Mr Sides, fishmonger, Hope Street. Police-constable Barrett was on duty on the canal side, at the back of one of Mr Side's warehouses, in Lionel Street, on Sunday, when he saw someone throwing baskets from the warehouse on to the canal side. The two prisoners were afterwards seen to pick the baskets up, place them in an empty boat, and take them across the canal. They were remanded until today (Tuesday) for the production of further evidence.

350 July 24 1867 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF STEALING BASKETS Patrick Cooney (17), 5 Court, Hospital Street, metal roller, and **William Smitten** (19), 11 Court, Henley Street, boatman, were charged on remand with stealing eighteen empty baskets, belonging to Mr Sides, fishmonger, Hope Street, from his warehouse in Lionel Street, under circumstances previously reported in the *Daily Post*. The prisoners were remanded to the Sessions.

(Note: see article above – shown as Carney not Cooney)

351 July 24 1867 Worcestershire Summer Assizes

STEALING COAL **Thomas Holloway**, boatman, was indicted for stealing 1 1/2 cwt of coal, the property of Mr Edmund Lane, on the 4th of July. Mr Motteram prosecuted, and the prisoner was defended by Mr Watkins. Prosecutor was a coal dealer, of Lowesmoor Wharf, and one of his men saw prisoner go to the stable on the wharf, and take some coal. The prisoner, who received a good character from some former employers, was found not guilty, and was discharged, the Jury expressing an opinion that no imputation whatever rested on the watchman, Pope.

352 July 31 1867 Birmingham Police Court

ALLEGED EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF VEGETABLE IVORY NUTS **Robert Jones** (28), Netherton, boatman, was charged on remand with stealing nine bags of vegetable ivory nuts, belonging to the Shropshire Union Canal Company, on the 19th inst., and Thomas Vernon (52), 34 Wharf Street, was charged on remand with receiving the same, knowing them to have been stolen. In consequence of information received by Police-constable Hartshorne, the prisoner Jones and several other men not in custody, who were driving a cart along Summer Row, were followed into Baskerville Place, where they stopped at Vernon's shop, and commenced to unload the cart. Hartshorne then went up, and, with the assistance of another officer, took the prisoners into custody. The vegetable ivory nuts were afterwards identified as being the same sort of nuts as the Shropshire Union Canal Company had been conveying by canal to the works of Mr Thomas Bullock, button manufacturer, Cleveland Street, and a quantity of which were missing. The prisoners were committed to the Sessions. Vernon, for whom Mr Cutler appeared, was allowed bail, in two sureties of £50 each.

353 August 8 1867 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY FROM THE PERSON **William Fowkes** (20), 10 Court, Lionel Street, boatman, was charged with stealing £2 18s 6d, belonging to a boatman named **Peter Duckworth**. Prosecutor was asleep in the cabin of his boat, which was lying near to Tyndal Bridge, on the 30th July, when the prisoner, who had been loitering about the canal side for some time, was seen to enter the boat, and in about ten minutes afterwards he came out. In a short time after the boatman awoke, and upon putting his hand in his pocket he missed his money. Prisoner was afterwards apprehended by

Police-constable Barrett. He pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

354 August 28 1867 Burslem

HIGHWAY ROBBERY WITH VIOLENCE About two o'clock on Sunday morning last, Mr William Kirkham, farmer, Downfield Side, near Mitton, was awakened by kicks at his front door, and the cries of a man, who called out, "Get up; I'm murdered and robbed." Mr Kirkham promptly rose, and proceeding downstairs, found the man who had called for his assistance to be John Grattan, butcher, Cador, who presented a fearful appearance, his face being covered with fast-flowing blood. He assisted him into the house, and sent off immediately for a surgeon and the police, who were both on the spot in about an hour. The surgeon, Mr Shaw, assistant to Mr Norris, of Norton in the Moors, found three of Grattan's ribs broken, and eight more wounds on his head. After Grattan's wounds were dressed, he was taken in a spring cart, attended by a police officer, to the Infirmary, where he now lies in a very critical state, but with a bare possibility of recovery. The police officer who was first at Mr Kirkham's house was Sergeant Bierne, of Smalltown, and to him Grattan said, as he had previously to Mr Kirkham, that he was knocked down, kicked, and robbed of a German silver watch, and 15s 4 1/2d in money. By nine o'clock the same morning, three men, residing at Baddeley Green, an adjacent village, were apprehended on suspicion of being concerned in the murderous outrage. Their names are **Samuel Tomkinson**, boatman, a tall powerful young man; Sampson Bradshaw, labourer; and Thomas Wilshaw, collier, a lodger in Tomkinson's house. These men were brought before Mr Davis, at Hanley Police Court, on Monday, when Mr Tennant watched the proceedings, which were preliminary, on their behalf. The evidence of Mr Kirkham having been taken, a young man named Samuel Slater, a collier, was called, who spoke to seeing the three prisoners together about half past twelve, on the Leek and Newcastle turnpike road, within half a mile of a farm called Holden Farm, and about a mile from Mr Kirkham's house. He had just previously seen and spoken to Grattan, who was sitting down on the road side, on the lower step of the Holden Bridge (a viaduct bridge, about 700 yards from the Holden Farm). Police-constable J Butler spoke to seeing the prisoners together near Baddeley Green, at half past one o'clock. Police-sergeant Bierne said Grattan told him that two men came down the bridge steps from the direction of Hanley, and followed him some distance on the road. One of them, a tall man, attacked him suddenly, and knocked him down, and he was then robbed by the two. Sergeant Bierne then described an appearance of the highway, on Sunday morning, nearly opposite Holden Farm, of a severe struggle having taken place. There was a considerable pool of blood. After a boot of Tomkinson's and another of Wilshaw's, apparently stained with blood, had been produced in court, the prisoners were remanded to Tunstall till Thursday.

355 September 14 1867 West Bromwich

DISTRESSING DEATH FROM DROWNING Mr E Hooper, Coroner, held an inquest, yesterday, at the Turk's Head Inn, Bromford Lane, to enquire into the circumstances connected with the death of a girl, eighteen years of age, named **Mary Ann Grimes**, who lived with her parents at Old End, West Bromwich. On Tuesday last, the father of the deceased, who is a boatman, left his daughter in the boat, which was then in the canal, near to Mr Dawes's works, Bromford Lane. Shortly after, the deceased went to the middle of the boat for the purpose of tightening the deck cloth: and on looking for her soon after, a boy who was in the boat found that she was missing. The string of the cloth was broken, and, concluding that the deceased had fallen into the water while tightening it, the boy gave the alarm, and the canal being dragged near to the boat, the dead body of the deceased was recovered. A medical gentleman was sent for, but his services were of no avail, it being evident that life had been extinct some time. No person saw how deceased came into the water, but it would seem a very probable conjecture that, as her father believed, she must have fallen over through the string breaking when she was standing on the side of the boat. The Jury returned an open verdict, "Found drowned".

SERIOUS CHARGE OF PERJURY AT TIPTON

At a special Sessions, held at the Police Court, yesterday, before the Rev. W Ker, and Messrs., Richard Bagnall and Job Haines, **Mary Ann Jones**, the wife of a boatman, and William Fisher, hay and straw dealer, Factory, were charged with committing wilful and corrupt perjury against Edward Round, pawnbroker, on the 7th August last. Dr Kenealy, instructed by Mr Warmington, of Dudley, prosecuted; and Mr Ebsworth, of Wednesbury defended the prisoners.

It will be remembered by our readers that in the early part of August we reported a case of assault on the wife of a boatman by Mr Edward Round, a gentleman well known in Tipton. It was then attempted to show that the defendant had not only committed the common assault, but had attempted a more serious offence. Mr Round was fined £5, and costs, for the common assault only. Since that time circumstances arose which induced Mr Round to place the prosecutrix and the witness in the dock on the above charge. The woman was first placed in the dock. Previous, however, to the evidence being tendered, the Rev. Chairman said he should like to make a few remarks relative to a part of the speech made by Mr Kenealy on the last occasion when the matter was before the Bench. The rev. gentleman then denied most emphatically that any injustice had been done to Mr Round. In consequence of the excitement in the district, he wished to state that any Bench of Magistrates in England would have convicted Mr Round upon the evidence offered. Dr Kenealy briefly stated that he wished, and said so at the time, to cast no imputation upon the Bench. Mr Ker was satisfied, and the case proceeded. Mr William Watt, a reporter, connected with the *Dudley Herald*, was first examined, and stated that the prisoner swore on the first trial that Mr Round pulled her into the malthouse, turned out his man, and locked the door, and then attempted a criminal assault. Mr Round now said that on the day in question the woman Jones came into his malthouse, and took a ball from a window behind the door. She had a child in her hand. He had placed the ball in that position, because he wished to know who had thrown it into his yard. There was a man in his employ, named Bowen, with him. The woman came in of her own will, and he threatened to give her into custody. Whilst ordering the man to go for a policeman, the husband of the prisoner burst open the door, ran at him, and struck him. It was not true that he committed any indecent or other assault upon the woman. From the time of the occurrence until her appearance in court she never said one word about a criminal assault. Mr Round was cross-examined at great length. Nothing important, however, was elicited. James Bowen, an assistant to Mr Round, gave similar evidence as to the alleged assault. Examined by the chairman, witness said the whole occurrence did not occupy above two minutes. - Rebecca Moore stated that she saw Mr Jones break open the door, and stroke, or attempt to strike, Mr Round. She also saw Bowen in the malthouse. - A son of the last witness stated that he saw Bowen coming down some steps into the room. This was in direct opposition to the statement of Bowen that he never left the room, but remained near a meal bin. - After some discussion, in which Mr Ebsworth said the discrepancy was too great to be overlooked, and Dr Kenealy explained that the statement showed that the witnesses had not agreed to deceive the Bench, the evidence was ultimately withdrawn. - Isaac Moore gave evidence to show that Bowen was present. - Joseph Round Cox stated that he saw Bowen near the prisoner and Mr Round. Other witnesses were examined to the like effect. - Mr Ebsworth then briefly reviewed the whole of the prosecution, and commented on the various discrepancies in the evidence. He afterwards called the following evidence:- William Fisher, one of the prisoners charged – but not upon his trial – and the principal witness in the charge against Mr Round, stated that he saw the whole of the occurrence after the bursting of the door by Jones. At the time this happened, Bowen was not in the malthouse, but near the engine house. When the door opened, Round had the woman by the neck and shoulders. He (witness) saw the woman pulled into the malthouse by Round. - In cross-examination the witness said the whole occurrence lasted but two minutes. - Mary Ann Jones, a girl 10 years old, the daughter of the prisoner, was called, and said the man Bowen was outside the house when her mother was pulled in. - James Clark also gave similar evidence. - Elizabeth Sherwin deposed that she saw Mrs Jones crying and trembling. - Police-sergeant Swift deposed that Round came to him and made a statement. Witness told him that the woman had made a criminal

charge against him. This was the case for the defence. After consulting about ten minutes the Bench decided to dismiss the case against the woman. - Dr Kenealy then asked that Mr Round might be bound over to prosecute the woman at the Assizes. - Mr Ebsworth objected, and wished the second case to be heard before any such course was pursued. The Bench decided in favour of Mr Ebsworth. The learned counsel then opened the case against Fisher, who was charged upon three indictments for perjury. (It was now six o'clock, and the Bench had sat since eleven o'clock). Mr Ebsworth now objected to the case going on that evening. He was "fagged out". (Laughter). - Mr Bagnall was in a similar state. (Laughter). - Mr Ker wished to go on, even until ten o'clock. - After a long consultation between the Magistrates and between the legal gentlemen concerned, Mr Ebsworth said he wished to state that the woman did not believe for one moment that Mr Round ever intended to commit an indecent assault upon her. This was entirely consistent with her actions. She did not apply for a summons for a criminal assault, but when upon oath she merely mentioned that Mr Round had inadvertently acted to make her believe so at the time. - Mr Kenealy briefly replied, stating that the imputation upon his client's character was the only reason which had induced Mr Round to bring the case to that point. He should gladly withdraw from the prosecution. The Chairman said Mr Round would leave the court without the slightest imputation on his character. Mr Haines also expressed a similar opinion. The whole of the parties then left the Court. Great interest was excited by the case, and the Court was crowded during the whole of the proceedings, which lasted seven and a half hours.

357 September 28 1867

RUNNING DOWN CASE – FERN V DARBY This case was heard yesterday, at the County Court, before Mr M A Skinner, Q C, Judge and a special Jury. Mr Shakespeare (firm of Shakespeare and Hartill) appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr Jackson for the defendant. Plaintiff (**John Fern**) was a boatman, living at Smethwick, and the defendant (David Darby) is a grease manufacturer, living at West Bromwich. The action was brought to recover £7, for injury received by a horse belonging to the plaintiff, in consequence of the negligence and improper driving of a horse and cart, by a man in the employment of the defendant. Witnesses were called for the plaintiff, whose evidence went to show that on the evening of the 12th of March, his son, a youth of fourteen years of age, was riding on a horse belonging to him, from Oldbury to Smethwick and had just passed the turnpike, when a horse and cart, driven by a man in the employment of the defendant, and two other horses and carts, were coming from the direction of the railway station towards the turnpike gate. The defendant's horse was galloping beside another wagon and two horses, and they were going at a furious rate. The wagon was on the proper side of the street, the cart of the defendant was on the opposite and wrong side, there being a donkey-cart going between the two. Plaintiff's horse was on the left side of the street, and seeing the defendant's horse approaching at so furious a rate, he had to get the horse upon the footpath, but the horse had not time to get completely on to the footpath before the defendant's horse came into collision with the animal – the driver having been on the wrong side all along – and the wheel caught the horse violently upon the hip, and injured it. Upon the boy following the defendant's man, who, on addressing him, struck him with his whip. Mr Parker, veterinary surgeon, of Birmingham, attended the horse for three weeks, during which time it was unable to work, and his charge amounted to £2, besides which amount plaintiff sued for £3 for the keep of the horse during the time, and £2 for injury done to the horse, which had been very much shaken. When defendant was communicated with in reference to the occurrence, he expressed his great regret at the occurrence, and his willingness to settle the matter, but when the surgeon's bill was sent to him he refused to pay it, defying plaintiff to get it. For the defence it was contended by Mr Jackson that at the time of the occurrence the boy was riding in the middle of the road instead of on the left side, and that it was not caused by the negligence of the defendant's man, who was on his right side, following a wagon, and there was sufficient room for the boy with the horse to have passed without interruption on his right side. The defendant's man was called, and he said he was on his right side, and the boy was in the middle of the street, when the boy hurried his horse, and by that the cart caught the horse. Had

the boy gone straight on there would have been sufficient room. This statement was confirmed by the toll-gate keeper, who saw the occurrence. The question was one of credibility, and considering the contradictory evidence offered by the defendant's man, as compared with that for the plaintiff, the Jury returned a verdict for the latter for £3 10s.

358 September 30 1867 West Bromwich

A PARTIALITY FOR WHEELBARROWS **John Brains**, a labourer, living at Tipton, was charged with having stolen a wheelbarrow and other articles, belonging to **James Arch**, a boatman, living in Tipton. The prisoner had been in the employment of the prosecutor up to August, when he took the wheelbarrow and other goods from a boat of prosecutor's, and afterwards disposed of them. It was stated that the prisoner had been in custody previously, for stealing a wheelbarrow, and other offences. Preferring to be tried by the Magistrates rather than go to the Sessions, he pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

359 October 10 1867 Birmingham Police Court

ATTEMPTING TO PASS COUNTERFEIT BANK NOTE Edward Bryan (54), no fixed residence, labourer, and **Henry Green** (20), no fixed residence, boatman, were charged with attempting to defraud Mr Edwin Bartlett, clothier, 18 High Street, by giving him a note purporting to be for £5. The prisoner Green went into Mr Bartlett's shop on Tuesday, and asked to see some coats. Several coats were shown him, and he picked one out, the price of which was to be 24s 6d. He tendered a note in payment, purporting to be a bank note for £5, and said he wanted change for it. Upon the assistant who showed him the coats looking at the alleged bank note, he found that it was a note which had been issued by Mr George Keal, hatter, Snow Hill, headed "House of Justice", and was as follows:- "Promise to pay any person, on the undermentioned dates, the sum of £5, if he can produce superior hats. April 1st 1867". The note was shown to Mr Bartlett, who sent to the Detective Office, Moor Street, for Inspector Kelly. In answer to questions put by that officer, as to where he got the note from, the prisoner Green gave very contradictory replies. Kelly took him into custody, and upon their arrival at the station Green said he received the note from a man who was standing in High Street. Kelly immediately went into High Street, and found the prisoner Bryan, who admitted having given the note to Green, and stated that he was in a public house in Broad Street, when he picked a purse up which contained the note. Bryan said "You (meaning the prisoner Green) are as guilty as I am, and we are both guilty". Upon the prisoners being called upon for their defence, Green said Bryan called him out of the public house and said he had found a purse, and there was a £5 note in it, and he asked him to go and buy him some clothes with it. He was unable to read himself. Bryan said he had never had the handling of a £5 note before in his life, and did not know that it was not a genuine note. Both prisoners were committed to the Sessions.

360 October 12 1867

EMBEZZLEMENT Yesterday, at Tamworth Petty Session, before Messrs., T Bramall and John Peel M P, **Edward Jennings**, boatman, of Birmingham, was charged with embezzling £1 19s 9d, the moneys of his master, Mr Richard Greenhill, of Cleveland Street, Birmingham, on the 3rd instant. The prosecutor stated that prisoner was employed by him to fetch a boat load of coal and slack from the Amington Colliery, near Tamworth, and that he gave him £2 7s 6d to pay the necessary expenses of tonnage &c. The next that he heard was that the boat had been stopped at Curdworth for tonnage. He went there and found that prisoner had absconded, taking with him £1 19s 9d of money belonging to him. He gave information to the police. **Martin Cassidy**, driver of the boat horse, said they had been to Amington and obtained their load, and were returning, when at Kettlebrook prisoner left him, saying he was going to purchase provisions &c, and he was to go on slowly and he (prisoner) would overtake him, but he never did. When he got to Curdworth he was stopped for tonnage, and left his boat and reported the matter to his master. Thomas Walters (220) of the Birmingham Police force, proved apprehending the prisoner. He was committed for trial at

365 November 29 1867 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF STEALING COAL **Thomas Findon** (19), Summer Lane, boatman, William Taylor (21), Wharf Street, and Samuel Boswell (25), Norfolk Street, labourer, were charged on remand with stealing a quantity of coal from a boat lying at the Worcester Wharf, the property of Mr John Green, coal merchant, 34 Washington Street, and from enquiries made it was ascertained that the prisoner Findon had been selling a quantity of coal like that prosecutor had missed. Findon was given into custody, and from a statement he made, the other two prisoners were apprehended. A portion of the coals was found at Taylor's lodgings. As there was no evidence affecting Boswell, he was discharged, the other two prisoners being committed to the Sessions, bail being allowed in two sureties of £10 each.

366 December 19 1867 Wolverhampton

TRIED AND CONVICTED **William Seymour**, boatman, (22), was arraigned on a charge of stealing £4, on the 25th of September, from the person of **Abraham Webbley**, and Thomas Hayward (32), collier, with receiving the same, knowing it to have been stolen. Both were found guilty, and sent to prison for twelve months each.

367 January 1 1868 Worcestershire Quarter Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **Thomas Fowler** (38), boatman, three months hard labour, for stealing a jacket, the property of Henry Harp, at Dudley, on the 16th of November.

368 January 9 1868 Birmingham Borough Sessions

COAL STEALING **Thomas Findon** (19), boatman, Wm Taylor (21), milkman, and **Archibald Walker** (18), boatman, were indicted for stealing a ton weight of coal, the property of John Green, on the 24th of November. Mr Markham prosecuted, and Mr Buzzard defended Taylor. Prosecutor carries on business as a coal merchant at Worcester Wharf. On Saturday, the 23rd of November, there was a load of coal lying at the wharf, and on the following day a considerable portion of it was missing. Shortly afterwards the prisoners Findon and Walker were found disposing of coal corresponding with that which had been stolen. Part of the coal which was sold to the proprietors of the White Lion, Navigation Street, was covered with slime, as was a portion of the stolen coal. There was also a quantity of coal found at Taylor's house. By direction of the Court, the Jury acquitted Taylor. The other two prisoners were found guilty, and Walker was sentenced to a months imprisonment, and Findon, who had been previously convicted, was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

369 January 22 1868

SHOCKING DEATH FROM BURNING Yesterday, an inquest was held at the Trees Inn, Bath Row, before the Borough Coroner, touching the death of **John Lane** (39), boatman, 46 Communication Row. Deceased, on the 6th inst., left home quite well, in charge of a boat. The following morning he was found lying in a state of intoxication in front of a lime kiln, near to Selly Oak, and his clothes were then burning. Deceased was placed in a boat, and the flames were extinguished. He ultimately walked home, and from thence to the Queen's Hospital, where it was found that he was much burnt about the back, left side and arm. His burns were dressed by Dr Jolly, and he was detained as an in-patient. Congestion of the brain and lungs set in, and deceased died on Saturday. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental Death".

370 January 25 1868

NEWS OF THE DAY Within the past few days great floods have occurred in Berkshire and Oxfordshire. Two children, aged respectively eight and five, grandchildren of **TOM BEESLEY**, the well known Oxford boatman, had a narrow escape on Wednesday. They were in a closet overhanging the river, when it was suddenly blown by the gale into the raging flood, and carried down the stream to Lower Hythe Bridge, where the water mark was some feet higher than the

crown of the arch. Here their screaming brought assistance, and they were rescued.

371 February 7 1868 Dudley

SERIOUS CHARGE OF MALICIOUS SCALDING At the Public Office, on Wednesday, before Messrs., S Rudge, G Bagott and T Price, **Philip Foley**, a boatman, of Dudley, was charged with unlawfully and maliciously throwing boiling water on Jane Hodgetts, wife of a publican, at Darby Hand. Mr G B Lowe defended. On the previous Monday the accused was drinking at the house of the prosecutrix, and in the afternoon he became indecently obtrusive in his conduct towards the landlady. She thrust him away, and threatened to spoil his face, and he in his passion picked up the kettle from the grate and threw it at the prosecutrix, who avoided the blow, but was scalded by the falling water. A man named John Hall, who was present, was badly scalded about the head, face and hands, and incapacitated from work for a time. Mr Lowe pleaded that there was no evidence to show *malice prepense*, and that the affair was the result of a hasty thought whilst defendant was in beer. He never intended to inflict personal injury. He was fined 5s for the assault; and a second charge, preferred by Hall, who was scalded, was adjourned for a week, to enable the question of compensation to be, if possible, settled in the meantime.

372 February 26 1868 Birmingham Borough Sessions

ALLEGED ROBBERY FROM A CANAL BOAT **Charles Upton** (22), boatman and **William Matthews** (17), boatman, were indicted for stealing 8 tons of coal, the property of Richard Greenhill. Mr Dugdale prosecuted. The prisoners were proved to have carried coals from a boat belonging to the prosecutor, about ten o'clock on the 19th of January. The prosecutor missed about 30 cwt of coal from the boat on the following day. An alibi was set up on behalf of the prisoners, and the Jury returned a verdict of not guilty. The prisoners were discharged.

373 February 27 1868 Birmingham Borough Sessions

ROBBERY OF MALT **Joseph Poyner** (28), boatman, and William Brown (42), labourer were indicted for stealing two sacks and eight bushels of malt, the property of William Bellamy, on the 19th of January. The Hon. E C Leigh prosecuted. The prosecutor lives at the Royal Exchange Inn, Summer Lane, and on the day named two bags of malt were stolen from the brewhouse. During the afternoon both prisoners were seen at the prosecutor's house, Brown being tipsy. About half past eight o'clock the same night the prisoners were seen by two men to bring two full bags and place them in an entry. The prisoners were watched and the police communicated with, and the prisoners were apprehended. The Jury found the prisoners guilty. Poyner had previously served a term of four years penal servitude, and was sentenced to seven years penal servitude. Brown was sentenced to eight months imprisonment. Both prisoners protested their innocence.

374 March 5 1868 Worcester City Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **William Davies**, boatman, felony, twelve months.

375 March 6 1868

CHILD FOUND DEAD An inquest was held yesterday afternoon, at the Tindal Arms Inn, King Edward's Road, before the Borough Coroner, upon the body of a female infant, unknown. On Tuesday morning last, **John Macpherson**, a boatman, while proceeding with his boat along the canal, near to the Tindal Bridge, saw the dead body of the deceased, which had been dragged to the top of the water by the boat rope. The body was quite stiff and cold, and wrapped in a piece of brown paper. A brick was tied to it by a piece of string, and there were a number of ligatures around the body. Mr Soloman, surgeon to the police force, said there were no bruises or other marks of violence upon the body, and he was of opinion that the child was dead before she came into the water. He was unable to say whether she was born alive or dead. Under these circumstances the Jury returned a verdict of "Found dead".

376 March 10 1868 Birmingham Police Court

THEFT OF CORN A youth, aged 18, named William Clarke, Norfolk Street, was charged with stealing a large bag of horse corn, the property of a boatman named **Twigg**, living in Norfolk Street. Late on Saturday night Police-constable Sullivan found the prisoner in Bridge Street, Broad Street, with a bag of corn, which he could not give a proper account of. Sullivan arrested the prisoner on suspicion, and afterwards ascertained that the corn had been taken from prosecutor's stable. Mr Kynnersley sentenced the prisoner to three months imprisonment.

377 April 30 1868 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING A COAT **William Foles** (40), boatman, was charged with stealing a coat, belonging to William Hughes. On Tuesday morning complainant, who is a watchman at the Grand Junction Canal Company's wharf, in Fazeley Street, left his coat in the watchbox. Early on Wednesday morning the coat was missed, and prisoner, who had been on the premises a short time previously, was suspected of taking it. Complainant and Police-constable Timmins went into Snow Hill, and met the prisoner coming along the canal side, and in his boat the coat was discovered. Prisoner pleaded guilty of taking the coat, but said he only did it for a "lark". He was sentenced to twenty one days imprisonment.

378 June 4 1868 Pelsall

COOL ROBBERY FROM A WEST BROMWICH BOATMAN At the Rushall Police Court, on Tuesday, **Thomas Arnold** and Benjamin Shirley, the latter a ticket-of-leave man, were placed before Messrs., T E Bealey and B Bloomer, charged with having stolen £6 3s from **Thomas Hall**, boatman and manure dealer, Gold's Hill, West Bromwich. On Friday morning last, the prosecutor was in his boat, between Goscote and Pelsall, and was seated in the cabin. Arnold was driving. Shirley, who had been steering, entered the cabin, and, unbuttoning prosecutor's waistcoat, took six sovereigns, a florin, and a shilling from the pocket. He did not resist, because Shirley had previously threatened to take his life. Prisoner then went off to a public house about half a mile away, and, returning after a time, announced that they would not go any further than Goscote unless money for drink was given to them. The prosecutor supplied them with money, and after they had fetched a bottle of porter they went on with the boat to Walsall Wood, when prosecutor fetched a policeman and had them searched, but nothing was found to justify their detention. They afterwards went back in the boat to Gold's Hill, calling on the way at one public house at least, and then displaying gold and silver money. On reaching home the prosecutor called in Police-constables Evans, Millington and other constables, and had the prisoners searched again. Four sovereigns were found in Arnold's shoe, and £1 16s in Shirley's possession, though neither of them had money when they started in the morning. Their defence consisted rather of an attempt to blacken their employer's character than to justify themselves. They were committed for trial at the next County Quarter Sessions.

379 July 2 1868 Worcestershire Midsummer Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **William Jones** (22), boatman, to stealing a coat, at Stoke Prior, also £1 18s 3d, at Oldbury, and was sentenced to twelve months hard labour.

380 August 29 1868 Birmingham Police Court

TILL ROBBERY **James Ricketts** (33), White Lion, Navigation Street, boatman, and Thomas Ash (23), White Lion, Navigation Street, percussioner, pleaded guilty to being in company with another man, and stealing 15s from the till of Mr Thomas Ross, St George's Inn, Harford Street, on Tuesday evening. Mr Cheston appeared for Ricketts. On the evening named the man not in custody came into the house of the prosecutor, and called for a glass of ale. Shortly afterwards prisoners came into the house, looked into a room, and one said, "Oh, he isn't here", and they then went into the bar where the other man was, and commenced talking to him. The girl who was waiting had occasion to leave the bar for a few minutes, and on her return she saw the man not in custody with his hand

in the till. On seeing her the man ran away, followed by the other prisoners. Mr Ross caught the two prisoners, but the other man escaped. They were each sentenced to one months imprisonment.

381 September 9 1868

FATAL FIGHT An inquest has just been held before the Leicestershire Coroner, Mr J Gregory, on the body of **John Brain**, a boatman, from Henshaw, who lost his life in a fight at Moira, a place noted for its mineral springs, a short distance from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire. It appears that on Wednesday night the deceased and a man named William Butlin, differed, and fought together, and agreed to finally settle matter on the following morning. On Thursday the deceased called upon Butlin, stating that "he was ready". Butlin said he didn't want to fight, and began to cry. Deceased said he could kill the prisoner if he came out, and then stripped. Deceased and the prisoner, together with twelve or fourteen others, went into an old brickfield, where the prisoner also stripped, and the two fought two rounds, and fell, the deceased being underneath, and his head coming in contact with a brick. They were lifted up, and in the course of the third round (during which both received blows on the chest) deceased fell, saying, "I have done; the back of my head is so bad". He never spoke again, and after being removed into the shade, died in the course of a few minutes. The Jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against Butlin, who was committed for trial by the Coroner to the next Assizes, on a charge of manslaughter.

382 September 9 1868

Birmingham Police Court

ROBBING AN EMPLOYER **William Evans** (52), boatman, Icknield Port Road, was charged with stealing £2, the moneys of his employer, Mr Wm Onions, coal merchant, Kingston Wharf, Cambridge Street. Several days ago the prisoner was entrusted with the money for the purpose of paying for the tonnage of a boat, but instead of paying it over he absconded, and spent the money in drink, as it was alleged. In consequence of the non-payment of the money, prosecutor's boat was detained by the canal officers, and great inconvenience resulted, in addition to the loss of the money. The prisoner was not regularly employed by the prosecutor, but was working temporarily in the place of his son, who was at present in the Hospital, in order to retain the situation for him. Sent to prison for six weeks.

383 September 18 1868

Birmingham Police Court

ALLEGED ROBBERY OF A HORSE **Peter Tite** (21), boatman, Lawley Street, was charged with stealing a horse and harness, of the value of £15, the property of Joseph Ebborn. Lawley Street. Mr Cheston appeared for the prosecution, and Mr J W Cutler for the defence. Mr Cheston, in stating the charge, said the prisoner was an adopted son of the prosecutor's, and on the 21st of July, the night before prosecutor intended to sell the horse, the prisoner took it away to Wolverhampton, where he disposed of it for £7 10s. When arrested by the police, the prisoner admitted that he had sold the horse, but beyond this admission the prosecution were in possession of no testimony which could be offered. - Mr Cutler said he held a receipt for the horse, harness, and the business generally, which belonged to the prisoner. Prosecutor's own wife, who was present, was prepared to state that the horse was bought expressly for the prisoner's use, that the horse was taken in his name, and that he altogether carried on the business. The prisoner had been adopted by the prosecutor, who always treated him as a son. There was an absence of proof that the property belonged to the prosecutor, and Mr Cutler having produced the receipt referred to, for the inspection of the Bench, the Stipendiary discharged the prisoner.

384 October 12 1868

Stoke Prior

DEATH BY DROWNING **Henry Baldwin**, fourteen years of age, the son of a boatman, fell into the lock at Stoke Prior, on Friday morning, while engaged in opening the gates, and was drowned. The body was recovered a quarter of an hour afterwards.

385 October 17 1868

LATEST NEWS At Leicester, yesterday, **Charles Mitchell**, a boatman, was committed for trial by the Magistrates, for feloniously shooting at and wounding four children.

386 October 28 1868

LATEST NEWS At the Leicester Quarter Sessions, yesterday, **Charles Mitchell**, boatman, was sentenced to six months imprisonment for maliciously shooting at four children.

387 November 16 1868

Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY FROM A BARGE **George Checkley** (32), Cottage Lane, boatman, and **Philip Curran** (34), Milk Street, boatman, were charged with stealing from a boat at Fazeley Wharf, two coats, a pair of boots, and other articles, the property of Benjamin Wood, engineer, Fazeley Street. The property was missed by the prosecutor, and on search being made by the police it was found on board the boat of which the prisoners had charge. On being apprehended Checkley said he had nothing to say, but Curran, who was leading the horse, made no reply. Prisoner Curran was discharged, but Checkley, who said nothing in defence, was committed for trial, and remanded till Friday, on a charge of stealing a lamb, the property of Mr Wadell, Lodsam Street.

388 December 28 1868

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF IRON NEAR WALSALL

A robbery of 22 tons of pig iron from the Hatherton Furnaces, near Walsall, of Mr W J Fryer, of Tettenhall, has just come to light. Some short time since Mr Fryer was privately informed that the iron had been taken from his stock at the furnaces, and information which he then calculated in the proper quarters has led to the arrest of five men, three of whom are his own servants. Very few circumstances connected with the robbery are yet known, but a general idea of the mode of its perpetration will be gained from evidence given on Saturday night, at a special Police Court held for the hearing of the case, at Bilston, by Mr H D Best. The prisoners' names are; **Benjamin Dallow** (64), boatman, of Wallbrook; **Thomas Thacker** (46), boatman, Toll End; Thomas Simmons (35), steerer at the furnaces; William Watson, manager for Mr Fryer; and William Wildman, stocktaker for the prosecutor. - Police-constable Moffatt deposed that he was fetched to the house of Mr Sheldon, publican and ironfounder, at Ladymoor, near Bilston, and he there found the two prisoners Dallow and Thacker. From what Mr Sheldon told him he took them both into custody, and charged them with stealing the iron from Hatherton Furnaces. In reply, they made statements to the effect that they had been merely tools in the hands of the other three prisoners, who had given them the iron to sell, and had arranged that they should take the proceeds of the sale to them, and then the amount would be divided amongst the five. After hearing this, he arrested the other three prisoners. Watson denied all knowledge of the transaction, and said that he had never seen the other men until that day. They were all remanded until Tuesday, but, upon the application of Mr Bartlett, solicitor, Watson was bailed out on a bond of £400 – himself in £200, a surety in £100, and two others of £50 each.

389 December 30 1868

THE EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF IRON NEAR WALSALL

The five men, **Benjamin Dallow** (64), boatman, of Wallbrook; **Thomas Thacker** (46), boatman of Toll End; Thomas Simmons (35), steerer, of Bloxwich; William Wildman, stocktaker; and William Watson (40), furnace manager, and living at Bloxwich, were brought up at the Bilston Police Court yesterday, before Mr Arthur Sparrow, charged with stealing a boat load of pig iron, weighing about twenty two tons, the property of Mr W F Fryer, of the Hatherton Furnaces, near Walsall. Mr H Underhill was for the prosecution, Mr Bartlett defended Watson, Wildman and Simmons, and Mr Sheldon was engaged on behalf of Thacker. Mr Underhill explained that it had turned out that the person spoken of as the furnace manager was not Watson, but another man not in custody. The charge against Watson would therefore be withdrawn. Mr Fryer believed him to be

free from the slightest blame or complicity in the transaction, and intended to take him back again into his service. He (Mr Underhill) should that morning apply for a remand in order to complete the case, and have the other person taken into custody. He should be able to show that between the hours of four and six o'clock on the morning of yesterday week five men, who would be identified, were seen on the bank of the canal, adjoining Mr Fryer's pig yard. Four of them were loading a boat with pig iron from the prosecutor's yard, and the other was in the boat baling out the water. Two of the men, probably the boatmen, had come to the furnaces either on the previous evening or during the night, and had waited until their confederates arrived early the next morning. The boat was taken away with the pig iron and passed through Forder's lock. Here the usual declaration note as to its tonnage was not given, but the toll was paid by the prisoner Thacker. The iron was then brought on to Coseley, and after it had been offered for sale to two or three marine store dealers, was tendered to a gentleman who has a foundry in the neighbourhood. He was surprised at the price at which it was offered, but thinking he might be mistaken as to the quality, had a pig broken to test it. He declined to purchase the iron, and gave information to the police. They would be able to identify the pigs as belonging to Mr Fryer.

Mr Sparrow said that it must be highly satisfactory both to Mr Fryer, and also to Watson himself, that he could leave the dock with a clear character.

Watson was then discharged.

Michael Lawley, watchman at the Hatherton Furnaces, was called. He said that between four and five o'clock on the morning of Tuesday week he saw Dallow, Thacker, and Wildman loading a wooden boat from the pig wharf. He did not see Simmons. Wildman was throwing pigs off the stack inside the pig yard. Thacker was carrying them out, and Dallow stood by. Between one and two o'clock in the night he saw Dallow and Thacker lying in an engine-house at the furnace.

Mr Bartlett said that as the proceedings were merely for a remand he should not cross-examine the witness, and if the Magistrates would accept bail he should have no objection to the adjournment taking place at that stage of the proceedings.

Mr Underhill had no objection to that course.

Mr Sparrow said that he would accept the recognisances of each defendant in £40 and two sureties each in the same amount, and he should adjourn the case until Tuesday next.

390 December 30 1868

THE FAZELEY STREET METAL ROBBERY

At the Police Court, yesterday, John Jones, Woodcock Street; Thomas Jones (21), caster, Inkerman Street; **William Taylor** (22), boatman, 48 Oxford Street; George Wall (28), labourer, 48 Oxford Street; and William Pursell (39), caster, 26 Ormond Street; were brought up on remand, before Mr T C S Kynnersley, Stipendiary Magistrate, on a charge of stealing 87 cakes of spelter and 6cwt 15lb of tin, from the warehouse of the Grand Junction Canal Company, Lower Fazeley Street. - Mr Cutler prosecuted; Mr Cheston appeared for the two prisoners Jones, and Mr Hemmant for Pursell. - On the morning of the 18th inst. the warehouse of the Grand Junction Canal Company in Lower Fazeley Street was forcibly entered, and tin weighing 6cwt 15lb and 87 cakes of spelter, weighing about 1 ton 8cwt 1qr 9lbs was stolen therefrom, the company being common carriers. On the afternoon of Thursday, the 17th inst., the warehouse was safely locked up by the warehouseman responsible for that duty. The door facing the canal was fastened by lock and by a bar inside and out. At three o'clock the next morning the watchman who was on duty went round to the canal side and saw the door quite secure. At six o'clock he went round again, when he found that the padlock of the outside bar had been taken away, and two panels had been cut or forced out of the door, so that he could get through into the metal warehouse. Upon examining the interior of the warehouse it was found that a quantity of metal had been stolen. One of the cakes of spelter was found about ten o'clock some distance from the warehouse, upon the banks of the canal. At the same spot there were marks of a cart having been brought to the canal side. The metal had evidently been transferred at this spot from a boat on the canal to a cart, and the cake had doubtless been accidentally dropped down. Upon examining the stock at the warehouse it was found that instead

of having 201 cakes of spelter there were only 114. The number of cakes found, including the one on the canal bank, made up, both in respect of number and weight, the amount of spelter in the warehouse before the robbery. The marks upon the spelter found exactly corresponded with that upon the cakes remaining in the warehouse. From information received Detective-sergeants Seal and Mountford went to the house of John Jones, where they found some newly remelted tin, equal in weight to the amount stolen. Jones was taken into custody, and from his statements they proceeded to the house of Jones the younger, where they found the 86 cakes of spelter. The son made a statement from which the other prisoners were apprehended. The son said that Pursell came to him and offered some metal for sale at a price to be agreed upon. Having agreed to purchase it, the younger Jones took a cart down to the canal at about five or six o'clock in the morning, and received the metal at the spot where the cake of spelter was afterwards found. - On the application of the prosecution, John Jones was released that he might be put into the witness box. He stated that he was a metal dealer, and that on the day of the robbery his son, who did not live with him, brought a quantity of tin, and offered it to him for sale. It was left at his house till about five o'clock in the evening, when Wall and Pursell came to his house and asked for his son, who was not there. Pursell said he believed the son was going to do them out of their money. He demanded payment for the metal. He did not pay, and the son coming up the metal was put back into a cart, when the police came up. From the statement of the younger Jones, Taylor was apprehended, and when charged with being concerned with the robbery did not deny it. - Thomas Jones was charged with receiving and the other prisoners with stealing the metal. Wall pleaded guilty, but the rest pleaded not guilty. Taylor was remanded for a week, and the rest were committed for trial at the Sessions. Bail was refused.

391 January 1 1869

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCE At a quarter to three on the morning of the 24th ult., Police-constable Turner, on duty at Etruria, heard that there was a woman who had been in the canal, at the Gasworks, and going to the latter place, found a woman lying insensible, and with very wet clothes. He obtained assistance, and took her to the Infirmary, but it was some time before she regained consciousness. Being asked to explain her condition, she said she was walking along the canal side, and she went to the Etruria forges for shelter and warmth, but when she had been there a little while she was ordered off. She then continued her journey along the canal path, and presently met two men, who took liberties, which she resisted. Finding they could not accomplish their object, the men pushed her into the canal and ran away. A boatman named **Sheldon**, who was in his boat near the Gasworks, heard a voice and splashing in the water, and running to the place found the woman in the water. He took her out, and carried her to the Gasworks. She stayed at the Infirmary until the 25th, when she was sent to the Stoke Workhouse Hospital. Here she died on Wednesday, having previously made statements similar to that at the Infirmary. Particulars of the case have been forwarded to the Coroner, and the police are trying to find a clue to the affair, which is enveloped in mystery beyond what is known by those who have been mentioned in this article. The woman's name was Sarah Malpas, and she was a tramp, having come from Cheshire.

392 January 2 1869

THE EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF IRON NEAR WALSALL

Benjamin Dallow, Thomas Thacker, Thomas Simmons and Wm Wildman, who were charged with stealing 20 tons of pig iron from Mr W F Fryer's, Netherton Furnaces, near Walsall, were again charged at the Bilston Police Court, yesterday, before Captain T J Perry and Mr Wm Hatton. Mr J E Underhill prosecuted; Mr Sheldon appeared for Thacker and Dallow, and Mr Bartlett for Wildman and Simmins.

Mr Underhill, in opening the case, said that Wildman was the pig-weigher for the prosecutor; Thacker was a boatman not employed by Mr Fryer; Simmons was the steerer, who contracted to take out all the iron; and Dallow was a boatman employed by Thacker, Mr Underhill briefly stated the facts, and then called

Michael Lawley, who said that he was the watchman at the Hatherton Furnaces, Bloxwich. On the morning of Tuesday, the 22nd, about five o'clock, he saw Wildman, Thacker and Dallow. Thacker was carrying iron out of the pig-yard into a wooden boat. Dallow stood by in the pig-yard. Wildman was throwing pigs off the stack. He stood close to them.

Cross-examined by Mr Bartlett: Witness said it was dark, in the morning. There was a wall between the pig-yard and the wharf. It was not an unusual thing for a boat to be loaded at that time in the morning. Inside the yard, Wildman was throwing pigs from a stack containing, witness thought, about ten tons. Thacker and Wildman were the only persons he saw. He did not see Simmons.

Cross-examined by Mr Sheldon: He did not know what time the boatmen brought the boat. He saw them lying in the engine-house about one o'clock in the morning. The engine chap told him they were come to load a boat of iron the next morning. It was not unusual for Simmons's men to lie in the engine-house during the night. - Mr Sheldon: Was not a man named Watson there, and didn't you speak to him? - A I did not see him at the pig-wharf. I spoke to him afterwards, but not in reference to the iron. When I saw the stocktaker there that was enough for me. He did not see any ale there. No one but the colliers passed by where the iron was being loaded. The pig-yard was walled in at the front to about 9 feet high. Watson, whom he saw at the court on Tuesday, was the furnace manager. - Mr Sheldon: Have you had any conversation about Watson being there when the iron was being loaded. - Witness: Yes, with the engine chap. I asked him if he had seen Watson there, and he said "no". He asked the boy, because they asked him (witness).

Re-examined: The stack was about 10 feet high.

John Causer said he was filler for the prosecutor. On the morning mentioned he saw Simmons. Wildman was throwing pigs off the stack, and Thacker was carrying them to the boat.

Cross-examined by Mr Bartlett, he said that when he saw Simmons first he was coming from the stables. He next saw him put three tires in the boat. It was his duty to do so. If witness himself had seen a tire out of place he would have put it in as Simmons did.

Enoch Stanley, engine boy, said that Thacker and Dallow stayed in his engine-house all night, and went to load pigs out.

Cross-examined by Mr Sheldon: He said that he asked Dallow where they were going with the pigs, and he said he did not know. It was usual for men to sleep in the engine-room if they came for anything. When asked by the watchman what they came for, he (witness) told him that they had come for a boat load of pig iron.

John Bruce Fawdry deposed that he was lock-keeper at Sneed Stop, near Birchills. On Tuesday week last, Thacker and Dallow came to his lock with a boat load of pig iron. They said that they had brought it from the Birchills, and were going to take it to Wolverhampton. They said that they had no declaration note because the clerks were not at the furnace when they left. They paid the tonnage, amounting to 18s 4d, with the exception of 3d.

Cross-examined by Mr Sheldon, he said that the Hatherton Furnaces were not at Birchills. The Birchills furnaces were called Jones's. Hatherton Furnaces were about a mile from them, and between the Sneed and the Birchills furnaces. Thacker did not say that he should have to go and borrow the money to pay the tonnage. He said he had brought the boat from the Birchills and was going to take it to Wolverhampton.

Edward Aston said that he was cashier at the furnaces. Every boat that went away always had a declaration note. Simmons always took the declaration note from him (witness), and it was his duty to return the "back note", signed. He did not give Simmons a declaration note on Tuesday morning, the 23rd, and therefore if a boat of pigs was taken away it was improperly removed.

John Elwell, scrap dealer, Deepfields, said that he saw Thacker in Mr Sheldon's house. He asked if he (Elwell) would buy them (the pigs). He would not tell him where they came from. He offered to let him have them at £45, but when he told him the weight was twenty one tons he refused to buy them.

Thomas Sheldon, of Ladymoor, ironfounder, deposed that on Wednesday and Thursday last week, he saw Thacker and Dallow at his works. He asked him to go and look at a boat of iron which he

had to sell. He offered it at £2 a ton. He broke a pig; and then Mr Sheldon said it was good gray iron, and it was too good for him. Thacker again asked him to buy it, and offered to let him have it at £35. He twice refused to take it. Thacker said that it was all right. Where he brought it from the managers knew all about it, and they were to have share of the money. He said he had brought it from Hatherton Furnaces. Witness told him he could not have anything to do with it; and he had better see if he could sell it to some one else.

Cross-examined by Mr Sheldon: Thacker did not say that he must see them at the furnaces before he could complete the bargain. Thacker told him openly and plainly where he brought it from, and all about it. Thacker said that if he would give him £20, the remainder could lie till he saw whether it was right. When he had got the £20, he should have to take it to the parties who would be waiting at his house to receive the money. Witness then left the men and gave information to Mr Fryer.

Police-constable John Moffat deposed that he was stationed at Broad Lanes (Lady Moor). On Thursday week he saw Thacker at Mr Sheldon's house. He went with Mr Sheldon and Thacker to the wharf where the boat was lying. He saw Dallow in the boat. He charged Thacker and Dallow with stealing a boat load of iron, the property of Mr Fryer. Thacker said, "Mr Fryer's men helped us to the iron, and we helped to load it". He asked to be taken to Mr Fryer's. He had something to tell him, and "he should suffer for Mr Fryer's men". He said he was to sell the iron for whatever he could, and if he (the policeman) would go to his house he would find two men waiting for their share of the money. Witness took Thacker to Mr Fryer, and from what he told him the other men were taken into custody.

Cross-examined by Mr Sheldon: He said that he could not tell what conversation passed between Thacker and Mr Fryer. When he brought the other men in on Christmas night, Thacker, who was then in the cells, called him to him and said, "You have got the right men".

That was the case for the prosecution.

Mr Bartlett then addressed the Bench on behalf of Simmons, but he reserved his defence of Wildman.

Mr Sheldon reserved the defence of Thacker, but as to Dallow urged the Magistrates to remember that he was merely the servant of Thacker, and there was not, he maintained, any evidence to show complicity between the two in the robbery.

They were then all committed for trial at the Sessions, but were admitted to bail in the same recognisances as before.

393 January 9 1869 West Bromwich

THE BURGLARY ON CHRISTMAS EVE **Robert Price** (30), boatman, and Eutyclus Fisher (24), labourer, were convicted of stealing eighteen yards of velveteen, twenty five yards of drab moleskin, thirty five yards of blue pilot cloth, twenty five yards of another kind of cloth, two turkeys, 10lbs of tobacco, and six pairs of boots, from Parkfield Tommyshop, now kept as a provision warehouse by Mr George Waters, on the night of Christmas Eve. David Billingsley (28), labourer, was also found guilty of receiving a pair of the boots, knowing them to have been stolen. Price was ordered to be imprisoned for six months, Fisher for twelve months, and Billingsley for six months.

394 January 12 1869

A BOATMAN DROWNED An inquest was held yesterday afternoon, before Mr Edwin Hooper, District Coroner, at the Cape Hotel, Spon Lane, concerning the death of **Thomas Tabberner** (25), a boatman, who lived in Monument Lane, Birmingham. On Thursday night last, deceased with another man, named **John Biddle**, were in charge of a boat proceeding along the canal in the direction of Birmingham, and they had arrived near to Messrs Chance's Glassworks, Spon Lane, when the boat line suddenly broke. The deceased who was standing in the boat, went to throw the part of the rope remaining attached to the boat on to the bank, and by some means or other, which the evidence did not tend to explain, he fell over into the water. Biddle heard a splash, but saw nothing of his comrade, and after looking round for him, he saw that the horse was running along

the bank, and followed and secured it. Returning in a few minutes, he found that deceased was missing, and then caused a search to be made. Some hours elapsed before the body was recovered. Deceased and Biddle had been drinking before the occurrence, and it is supposed that deceased struck his head against another boat in falling and was stunned, so that he could not cry for help or save himself. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

395 February 8 1869 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **William Law** (20), boatman, Castle Street, Tipton, was charged with cruelty to a horse, by working it with a sore shoulder. John Barton, officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, stated that on the previous day he saw the prisoner in charge of a boat laden with coke upon the canal in the Parade. The horse flinched from the collar, on removing which he found a large wound of long standing upon the shoulders. The prisoner is employed by Mr James Keeling, of Tipton, who said he was sorry to have to come before the Court. When the wound was pointed out to him he ordered the prisoner to get an easier collar, which he supposed had turned out worse than the first. - In reply to the Bench, Keeling said he was willing to pay the fine. - The Bench inflicted a penalty of 5s and costs, which was paid by the master, the defendant being released.

396 February 27 1869 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY OF IRON **John Cotter** (24), boatman, Thomas Street, was charged with being in company with two others, and stealing a quantity of scrap iron, the property of Messrs., Milner and Co., Mill Street Ironworks; Caroline Owen (48), married, 63 Aston Road; and William Newman (58), shopkeeper, 63 Aston Road, were charged with receiving the iron, knowing it to be stolen. On Monday night, a watchman named Greaves, employed at a neighbouring works, saw the prisoner Cotter and two boys go to prosecutor's works, and one of the boys got over the wall, and handed some iron to the one outside. While Greaves went to give information the robbers disappeared. He saw them again on Wednesday evening, when they took away a piece of iron worth about 5s. The larger piece of iron was found at Newman's house, on Thursday. Cotter denied the charge; and the female prisoner said she bought the iron from two boys, not knowing that it was stolen. Cotter was committed for three months; the other prisoners were discharged.

397 March 8 1869 Wolverhampton

THE DEATH BY DROWNING OF A BOATMAN The inquest on the body of the boatman whose death we recorded on Saturday was held on that day, at the Boat Inn, Cannock Road, before Mr T M Phillips, the Borough Coroner. The deceased was **James Wheatley**, aged 46 years, and he was in the employ of the Shropshire Union Company. He was last seen alive, in charge of his boat, at the Ninth Lock, on Thursday evening. He had sent his helper, a man named **Roberts**, on to the next lock to open it for the boat, but as deceased did not make his appearance with the boat, Roberts returned, and having obtained the help of a lock-keeper, commenced a search, which issued in the body being found floating in the water about ten yards from the lock. The side of his head was much bruised and his trousers torn. The Jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

398 April 21 1869 Wolverhampton

ASSAULTS ON THE POLICE A boatman, named **John Musson**, was charged at the Police Court, on Monday, with having been drunk and riotous, with having assaulted Police-constable Moule, with having assaulted Police-constable Hand, and also with having damaged Hand's uniform. About one o'clock on Saturday night, the prisoner was seen by Police-constable Moule running after a prostitute up and down Lichfield Street. He was drunk, and making a great disturbance, and when asked to go away, refused, and became very abusive. Police-constable Moule at length attempted to take him into custody, but directly he did so the prisoner became very violent, and struck and kicked the officer. Police-constable Hand then came up, but the prisoner

severely assaulted him, and tore his uniform. For the assaults on the police the defendant was fined 40s and costs, or in default two months imprisonment, for damaging the clothes 4s, the value 1s fine and costs, or fourteen days imprisonment, and for being drunk 5s and costs, or another fourteen days imprisonment.

399 April 24 1869

BIRMINGHAM BANKRUPTCY COURT *In re R Lorekin, Birmingham, boat builder.* - Special meeting. Mr Fitter appeared for creditors, Mr Rowlands for Mr Cockshott, the trade assignee, and Mr Harrison for the bankrupt. The object of the meeting was the renewal of a proposal made by Mr Harrison, on the part of the bankrupt, to take the proceedings out of court, under the 110th section, upon the payment of a composition of 5s in the pound. The proposal was resisted by Mr Fitter, on the ground that suspicious circumstances could be proved which would render the creditors unwilling to consent to such an arrangement. In support of this allegation several witnesses were examined. **Edward Evans**, who had been employed by the bankrupt as boatman for five or six years, stated, about the 11th of February last, a few days previous to the bankruptcy, the bankrupt sent for him. On going to the bankrupt's house, the latter told him he had got into a bit of a scrape, and desired witness to remove some of the boats from the arm of the canal in bankrupt's occupation. Witness accordingly removed several of the boats. One of them was taken to a colliery at Bromford Bridge, to be laden with coal in the name of Cockshott, the trade assignee. Witness was also present at a conversation upon the wharf, between the trade assignee and bankrupt's wife. The former suggested that one of the boats should be sent into Warwickshire, but Mrs Lovekin said that would be too far, and it was decided that it should be sent to Wednesfield Colliery, to be laden with hard coal in Cockshott's name. That boat was now in Cockshott's wharf, laden with coal. Witness helped to remove another boat from the arm into the new canal, on the 16th of February. Another boat was taken by witness's son to a place near the Pig and Whistle, Rowley. Witness also deposed to the removal of some carts, horses, harness, and other articles belonging to the bankrupt, to the premises of the trade assignee, during the week of the bankruptcy. William Henry Cockshott, the trade assignee, was also examined. He admitted having purchased two horses for £20, three carts for £8 10s, a boat for £1, and other articles, within a few days of the bankruptcy. He, however, paid the full value, and only bought them that the bankrupt might be enabled to pay the costs of filing his petition. The bankrupt was also examined. He corroborated in some measure the statement of Evans, and some additional facts respecting the offer of the composition. The composition was offered by Mr Hillyard, the bankrupt's brother-in-law, who also appeared to have bought the debt of an adverse creditor as 10s in the pound. He had also some property in Lodsam Street and at Ladywood, of which he had given no account in his list of assets. Mr Rowlands said he should certainly advise the trade assignee not to consent to the composition, and he should also recommend him to resign his office. Mr Fitter applied that Mr Cockshott might be discharged from the assigneeship, on the ground of neglect of duty, but he was opposed by Mr Rowlands. Witnesses were therefore called to show that the trade assignee had been almost passive, and had not investigated matters that had been brought up under his notice as he should have done. The Registrar ordered that he should be removed, and that the estate should be wound up by the official assignee.

400 April 26 1869

West Bromwich

POLICE COURT **Wm Titley**, a boatman, was summoned for cruelly working a horse while in an unfit state. In consequence of information furnished to the police, an officer went after the defendant, and found him working a horse attached to a boat. The animal had a large wound on its shoulder, and was quite unfit for work. Defendant was fined 5s and costs.

401 April 29 1869

Wednesbury

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF IRON At the Police Court, on Tuesday, **Robert Tiger**, a boatman, was charged with having been concerned, with other persons not in custody, in stealing 13cwt of

pig-iron, value 40s, the property of Mr D Rose, Moxley. Mr Slater appeared on behalf of the prosecutor. The prisoner and three other men were, early on the morning of the 10th July last, seen in a boat at Mr Rose's wharf, at Moxley, in the act of dredging the canal. On the watchman, Joseph Hemmings, calling for assistance, they decamped, and have succeeded in keeping out of the way with the exception of the prisoner, who was apprehended at Greet's Green, on Sunday, by Police-constable Cockerell. On the way to the Police Station he remarked to the constable that the Magistrates could not do much to him, as no one saw him but the "old watchman". In the boat in which the prisoners were when detected, 14 pigs of iron were found of similar make to some stacked on the wharf close by. The prisoner was committed for trial at the ensuing Quarter Sessions for the county.

402 May 12 1869 Birmingham Police Court

THEFT OF BEEF Johannah Sheridan (48), laundress, Cheapside, was charged with stealing 12lbs of beef, value 8s, the property of **Robert Harkhill**, boatman, from the Bordesley Park Tavern, Coventry Road, yesterday morning. There was a previous conviction recorded against the prisoner, who was committed to the Sessions.

403 May 17 1869

LARGE ROBBERY OF METAL **Richard Henry Gardner** (22), Hospital Street, boatman, Thomas Rudge, Lichfield Street, gunmaker, and **Charles Upton**, 4 Forge Street, boatman, were charged with breaking into the warehouse of Messrs., Lewis and Co., Pritchett Street, and stealing therefrom a ton of engine metal, of the value of £26, on the morning of the 11th inst. Detective-inspector Kelly said that on Friday evening he saw the three prisoners wheeling some metal up Constitution Hill, and having had some information about them, he apprehended them. - Remanded till Wednesday.

404 May 27 1869 Birmingham Police Court

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF ENGINE METAL **Richard Henry Gardener** (21), boatman, Hospital Street, Thomas Rudge (35), gunmaker, Lichfield Street, **Charles Upton** (24), boatman, 4 Forge Street, and **Joseph Parsons** (28), boatman, Forge Street, were charged with breaking into the warehouse of Messrs., Lewis and Crosby, Pritchett Street, and with stealing therefrom 9cwt of engine metal, value £26, on the morning of the 11th inst. The premises were safely locked up on the evening of the 10th inst., and a watchman was on duty. The watchman, however, fell asleep, and on awaking about four o'clock on the morning of the 11th, found that the premises had been broken into. Mr Edwin Lewis, the son of one of the proprietors was called up, and on search being made, a number of pigs of engine metal, weighing about 9cwt, were missed. The thieves had entered the premises through a small door, and by breaking into the office, gained access to the warehouse. Alfred Burgess, a night soil man, who was at work in Pritchett Street on the night of the robbery, saw the prisoners Upton and Parsons talking together at the large doors of the premises. Parsons had one leg inside a small door. - A boy named Matthews deposed to being sent to hire a handcart by Upton on the 14th inst., and on the evening of that day Gardener, Rudge and Upton were apprehended by Inspector Kelly and Sergeant Kirby, while wheeling a handcart containing a part of the stolen metal in Constitution Hill. Rudge said he knew nothing about the metal, but the others had asked him to help in pushing it. On the same day, two men were seen raking the bottom of the canal near Chester Street, on the side opposite to the towpath. The place was pointed out to Detective-sergeant Seal, who raked up three more of the stolen pigs, bound together with wire. The police then went to a house in Beneage Street, where Parsons lived. On seeing them, he tried to escape by a back door, but was unsuccessful. The prisoners who, except Rudge, had nothing to say, were committed for trial at the Sessions. Bail, of two sureties of £5 each, was accepted for Rudge, and two, of £20 each, for Gardener.

405 June 11 1869 Birmingham Police Court

THEFT OF IRON Charles Belt, alias Walker (20), Cecil Street, coalheaver, and **John Stokes** (70), 42 Cleveland Street, boatman, were charged with stealing a quantity of iron, the property of Messrs., Milner and Company, Lister Street. On the 8th inst., Mr Milner bought some iron and had it loaded at a place near the canal bridge in Lawley Street, into a boat. When brought to his place of business, it was found that several pieces of the iron were missing. Whilst the boat was being loaded, the prisoner Belt was seen loitering near the place. Between three and four o'clock the following morning, Police-constable Lovell was on duty in Lawley Street, when he saw the prisoner dragging the canal. Something was brought up, which Stokes carried to his house which was situated near. The officer followed him, and found a piece of iron which was wet, and another piece dry. Both pieces were recognised by the prosecutor as his property. Prisoners were committed for trial at the Sessions.

406 June 16 1869

A GOOD CABIN BOAT FOR SALE A good cabin boat for sale. Price £18. Can be seen at the top of the Nine Locks. - Apply to **Daniel Shaw**, Boatman.

407 June 16 1869 Birmingham Police Court

BREAKING INTO A WORKSHOP **Joseph Smith** (27), boatman, Icknield Port Road, charged with breaking into a workshop belonging to John Bayliss, boat builder, Norman Street, and stealing an axe and other tools, value 2s 6d, pleaded not guilty, and was committed to the Sessions.

408 June 21 1869 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS **Thomas Cooper**, boatman, Tipton, was charged by the Birmingham Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, with unlawfully beating two donkeys, on the canal side, on the previous day. Superintendent Woodhouse, the society's officer, proved the case. The Superintendent stated that there were two large wounds on the hind parts of each animal caused by the beating. Fined 5s and 11s 6d costs, or fourteen days imprisonment.

409 June 16 1869 Wednesbury

A MAN AND HIS SON CUT TO PIECES ON THE RAILWAY On Friday afternoon Mr E Hooper, District Coroner, opened an inquest at the Plough and Harrow Inn, Lea Brook, on the bodies of **John Mann**, aged about forty five, and his son George, aged about twelve or thirteen, both of whom were killed on the line of the Great Western Railway, on the preceding night. It seems that the elder deceased, who is supposed to have followed the calling of a boatman, and to have lived at Tewkesbury, was at the Bush Inn, on Thursday evening, with his son; and it is conjectured that after having left the house both father and son were making their way across the line, when they were overtaken by the 10.30 train from Wolverhampton, and cut down and killed on the spot. The dead body of the elder deceased, with his head severed from the trunk, was found at about a quarter to twelve o'clock, by a shunter, named Richard Walton, but the corpse of the lad, whose right arm and leg were broken, was not discovered until four o'clock yesterday morning. The bodies of the hapless pair were conveyed to the inn where the inquiry was held. On the elder deceased was found £2 18s 1 3/4d in money, two pieces of gutta percha piping, knife, key and some other small articles. The inquiry was adjourned until two o'clock on Monday, for the attendance of witnesses connected with the railway company.

410 June 29 1869 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **Thos Williams** (27), boatman, to stealing two cwt of pig-iron, the property of William Matthews of Tipton, and to previous convictions; seven years penal servitude.

411 July 15 1869

ATTEMPTED MURDER NEAR HANLEY

A most horrible and determined attempt to murder was perpetrated on Saturday morning at Etruria. The would-be murderer is **Thomas Vaughan**, a boatman, in the employ of Messrs Williamson, coal and ironmasters, Goldenhill, and the victim is his wife Emma, who was but fifteen years of age when he married her, and who is only 29 now. She has two children, who have been living on the boat with their parents; and only three weeks ago her husband, by his ill-treatment brought on a premature confinement. On Friday the boat was at Longport, where Vaughan had been staying on a two day drinking "bout", and was taken on by the children to Etruria. The wife walked on from Longport late on Friday night, and came up with the boat at Etruria locks. The husband, who was in the cabin, on seeing her, declared he would kill her, and took up a windlass handle (an iron key carried in every boat for the purpose of opening the locks) and struck her with it on the head several times. He again declared he would "do" for her, and said if he could have dragged her out of the boat he would have drowned her. She fell upon her knees, and begged him to spare her till morning. He rejoined he would kill her, and put her head into a stove of the cabin, remarking that if there had been any fire in it he would have burnt her to death. As she lay upon the floor he got upon the hatches, and kicked her violently on the throat and lower part of the face. She screamed "Murder", and some one coming up she managed to get away from the boat, and drag herself to the house of Mr Glass, the canal inspector, who had her conveyed to the Infirmary. The injuries she had received were pronounced by the house surgeon (Mr Taylor) to be very dangerous, and it was deemed necessary to take her deposition. On Saturday the Mayor (Mr Ridgway), with the Magistrates' Clerk and Superintendent Baker, went to the Infirmary for that purpose. The poor woman presents a most horrible spectacle. Her eyes were puffed up so as to almost exclude sight, a terrible gash ran across her cheek, and her face and head generally were a mass of bruises. The sight was too much for one of the officials engaged in taking the deposition, and he fainted; while his Worship himself found it necessary to retire for a short time. The husband, who was apprehended at Stoke about eight o'clock on Saturday morning, was present, and appeared utterly indifferent to everything that was going on. In fact on coming into the presence of his wife he gave a sort of chuckle on seeing her. She made a statement, in which besides what is given above, she said after her husband struck her with the windlass he looked about for a grass hook (or hay cutter) and said if he could find it he would cut her head off. She also said that her son was in the cabin while this was taking place, and that he was in great fear of his father, who had ill-treated him. She was married to the prisoner, fourteen years ago, at St Mary's, Wolverhampton. He had but recently returned from seven years penal servitude for horse stealing. She was tried with him, but acquitted. She made a statement against him at the trial, and ever since he had borne her a spite. The poor wretch added that she did not think she should recover, and that she was dying. The prisoner, who put no questions, and said nothing, was remanded to Tuesday on a charge of attempted murder.

412 July 7 1869

Birmingham Borough Sessions

ROBBERY OF BRASS **Richard Henry Gardener** (21), boatman, **Thomas Rudge** (35), gun finisher, **Charles Upton** (24), boatman, and **Joseph Parsons** (28), boatman, were indicted for having, on the 11th of May, at Birmingham, feloniously broken and entered the warehouse of Emma Lewis and another, and stolen therefrom 80 ingots of brass. Mr Bennett prosecuted, and Mr Stubbin defended Gardener. On the night of the day named, the premises of the prosecutrix were broken into, and the property stolen. There was a watchman on the premises, but he would appear to have been asleep at the time. Two men, said to be Upton and Parsons, were seen by a night soil man standing, on the night of the robbery, at the door of Mrs Lewis's premises, and on the following day the same prisoners were seen raking the canal opposite the prosecutrix's premises. On the same day Rudge, Gardener, and Upton were apprehended by the police as they were pushing a hand cart up Constitution Hill, and on the handcart were found 80 ingots, which were satisfactorily identified as having been stolen from the prosecutrix's premises. Several ingots of brass were also found in the canal, at the place where two of the prisoners were seen raking it. The Jury found all the prisoners

guilty. Upton having been previously convicted several times, was sentenced to seven years penal servitude; Parsons, who had also been previously convicted, was sentenced to eight months: and Rudge and Gardener were each sentenced to six months imprisonment.

413 July 8 1869 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

COAL STEALERS John Cartwright (25), labourer, and **Edward Smitton** (22), boatman, were indicted for stealing 7cwt of coal, the property of Henry Lee, from a boat, on the Birmingham Canal at the Crescent Wharf, on the 2nd June last. Both prisoners were convicted. Smitton, who had been five times convicted of felony, was sentenced to seven years penal servitude, The other prisoner was sentenced to eight months imprisonment. Mr Saint prosecuted.

HOUSE BREAKING **Joseph Smith** (27), boatman, was convicted of breaking and entering the house of William Bennett, and stealing therefrom an axe, axe head, and an adze. He pleaded guilty to a previous conviction. The Recorder stated that the prisoner had been six times convicted – once before for housebreaking, when he received four years penal servitude. He was now sentenced to eight years penal servitude. Mr E Smith prosecuted.

COAL ROBBERY **George Steed** (50), boatman, was found guilty of stealing 13cwt of coal, the property of the Birmingham Gas Light and Coal Company, on the 29th June last. Six months imprisonment.

414 July 8 1869 Wolverhampton

GIRL DROWNED **Martha Tilby**, eleven years of age, daughter of a boatman, fell off the boat into the canal, near Coven, on Tuesday afternoon. Her father jumped in after her, but was unable to save her life.

415 July 15 1869 Wolverhampton

A CHILD DROWNED **Caroline Dale**, daughter of a boatman of Wightwick, whilst drawing the “paddle” to fill Spring Lock, near the Stafford Road, slipped, and fell into the canal, and was drawn into the lock. She was taken out dead.

416 July 20 1869 Walsall Borough Quarter Sessions

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF IRON **Eli Smith** (39), boatman, was charged with having stolen 23cwt of iron rails, of the value of £6, the property of Mr Thomas Checkley. Mr Young (instructed by Mr Dale, from the office of Messrs. Dulgnan, Lewis and Lewis) prosecuted; and Mr Underhill (instructed by Mr Glover) defended. The rails, which were of a peculiar make and length, were, on the night of the 2nd June, taken away from the prosecutor's colliery, in the neighbourhood of Bloxwich; and on the following morning the prisoner delivered a large quantity, some of which were identified as forming part of the stolen property, to Mr Crapper, in pursuance of a contract made some time before. The defence was that the prisoner bought the rails at the sale of the goods of a colliery proprietor named Smallman; and the Jury having some doubt as to the identity of the rails, discharged the prisoner.

417 July 22 1869 Staffordshire Summer Assizes

BILLS IGNORED BY THE GRAND JURY The Grand Jury ignored the bills against the following persons accused: **William Beal** (21), boatman, and **Charles Bullock** (21), boatman, charged with rape upon Elizabeth Eades, on the 15th March last, at the parish of Rushall.

418 July 23 1869 Staffordshire Summer Assizes

THE ATTEMPTED MURDER AT ETRURIA **Thomas Vaughan** (40), boatman, was indicted for feloniously wounding Emma Vaughan, on the 3rd of July, at Etruria, with intent to kill and murder her. Mr Loxdale Warren prosecuted; the prisoner was undefended. The facts of the case have so recently appeared in the *Daily Post* that it is unnecessary now to give more than a bare outline. The prisoner and his wife, with their two children, lived in a boat, on the Trent and Mersey Canal, the

prisoner being in the employ, as boatman, of Messrs. Williamson, coal and ironmasters, Goldenhill. The prisoner had been drinking two days at a public house in Longton, and was very drunk when he returned to his boat on the night of the 2nd inst. His wife followed, and when she reached the boat the prisoner rushed at her, struck her with a canal lock windlass on the head and face, then forced her head into the cabin stove, and said if there had been a fire he would have burnt her to death. He afterwards kicked her in the face and head. She crawled to the house of Mr Glass, the canal inspector, who had her taken to the Infirmary, where, in consequence of her life being considered to be in danger, her deposition was taken before a Magistrate. She then made a statement to the above effect; but she gave her evidence today with great reluctance, and denied several of her previous assertions. She said that she and her husband quarrelled about a man of whom he was jealous, and she believed he struck her, but she deserved all she got, for she had nearly broken his heart. She was only ill two days, she said, and when asked as to her deposition at the Infirmary, said she was not so ill as she was represented to be. After she had left the witness-box the Judge suggested to Mr Warren that the prosecutrix should have been a little more pressed, and she was recalled. She refused to admit that the prisoner tried to force her head into the cabin stove, but said the cabin was small, and her head might have been struck against the stove. The deposition taken at the Infirmary was not put in evidence. The prisoner said, in defence, that he saw nothing of his wife on the night in question from the time he left Longport until three o'clock in the morning, when he was awakened from his sleep in the boat by the entrance of his wife, whose face was covered in blood, and who said she had been met and shamefully ill-used by five or six men as she was coming from Longport. The Jury found the prisoner guilty of unlawfully wounding, and he was sentenced to fourteen months hard labour.

[Wolverhampton St Mary's 29/12/1856
Thomas Vaughan, full age, Boatman, father Richard Vaughan, boatman married
Emma Lewis, aged 19, father Richard Lewis, deceased.]

419 July 29 1869 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBING A BROKER'S SHOP Peter Sharpe (20), labourer, Watery Lane, and **James Sharpe** (18), boatman, Fazeley Street, were charged with stealing two dead rabbits, a pipe, steel chain, and nine gilt eardrops, from the premises of Thomas Wheeldon, licensed victualler, Lower Fazeley Street. The prosecutor keeps a broker's shop in Lower Fazeley Street, but no one resides there during the night. On Tuesday evening the premises were left safely locked up. About two o'clock yesterday morning, Police-constable Holt saw through the fanlight over the door a flash of light, as of the striking of a match, and heard footsteps of persons inside the premises. Having placed two other men to watch the back of the premises, he shook at the door, and asked if there was anyone inside, but received no reply. The prisoners were seen to make their escape by the back yard, but Peter Sharpe was followed and caught. The shop was found in the greatest disorder; the rabbits had been removed from their place, and one of them was discovered in the back yard. When taken into custody, a broken piece of candle and some matches were dropped by Peter Sharpe. The other prisoner was apprehended later in the morning, his hat having been found in the yard. Prisoners were committed for trial at the Sessions.

420 July 30 1869

GUN ACCIDENT **William Pugh**, a boatman residing at Bristol, met with a serious accident yesterday, near to Redditch. A boy in a boat was handing him a gun loaded with shot, and he had caught hold of the muzzle with his right hand when it was accidentally discharged, and the charge lodged in his right side. He was brought to Birmingham and conveyed to the General Hospital, where the shot and wadding were extracted from the wound by Mr May, surgeon. Last night he was in a dangerous condition, but it was hoped that a fatal result might be averted.

421 August 7 1869 Evesham

DROWNED On Wednesday evening, a man named **Berrington**, was drowned in the Avon.

Deceased was a boatman, and it is supposed that after completing his day's work, he sat down upon the side of his boat to smoke (as was his custom), and falling asleep, tumbled into the river.

422 August 17 1869

BOY DROWNED AT SALTLEY An inquest was held yesterday, at Saltley, by Mr W S Poole, Coroner, concerning the death of a little boy, eight years of age, named **Alfred Griffin**, the son of a boatman. On Saturday evening, about half past seven o'clock, the deceased was in the Nine Fields, Saltley, trying to reach a turnip in the canal, when he overbalanced, fell into the water, and was drowned. A man named Michael Daley, who lives at the Nine Fields, was standing on the bridge near, and witnessed the occurrence, but he rendered no assistance, although the water there was not above three feet deep, and it would have been an easy matter for him to have saved the boy. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death", and added an expression of their disapprobation of the conduct of Daley for making no attempt to save the deceased.

423 September 14 1869 Birmingham Police Court

TILL ROBBERY James Matthews (15), boatman, 1 Forge Street, was charged with stealing 2s 5d from a till in the shop of John Brindley, broker, 71 Dartmouth Street. On Tuesday last the prosecutor left his shop in charge of a boy. The prisoner and another boy came to the shop and held the prosecutor's boy while a third companion took possession of the contents of the till. A description of the prisoner was given to the police, and on Saturday he was apprehended by Police-constable Miller. He was sent to gaol for three months.

424 December 1 1869 Birmingham Police Court

DISORDERLY AND ASSAULT George Edmonds (25), boatman, having no fixed residence, was charged with being drunk, in Great Brook Street, on Monday night, and assaulting Police-constable John Green. The prisoner, who had been thirteen times previously in custody, was committed to prison for a month.

425 December 3 1869 Hanley

RAPE At the Borough Police Court, yesterday, before the Mayor (Mr J Stevenson) and Messrs., Clementson and Yates, Richard Moody, collier, a single young man, was charged with a rape on Mary Wilshaw, a girl 10 years and 3 months old, the daughter of **John Wilshaw**, a boatman living at Etruria Vale. It appeared the girl, on Monday afternoon, went into the house of Mrs Randle, a neighbour, who was absent. Moody, the prisoner, who lodges at Mrs Randle's, was however in the kitchen, and followed the girl Wilshaw upstairs, she having gone thither to attend to an infant of Mrs Randle's which was crying. In the room upstairs he threw the poor girl on the bed, and committed the offence charged. The girl's mother was from home at the time of the outrage, but discovered what had occurred on her return in an hour or two, and prisoner was apprehended the following evening, at Hanley, having meanwhile been absent from his lodgings. The evidence of Mr Charlesworth, surgeon, Hanley, showed that the prisoner had used gross violence, and that the girl had sustained painful injuries. The prisoner, who it was stated had been previously convicted of a similar offence at Shrewsbury, was committed for trial at the Assizes.

426 December 3 1869 Staffordshire Winter Sessions

BURGLARY AT SMETHWICK Samuel Storer (60), boatman, Thomas Summerfield (24), labourer, and Charles Gilbert (23), sawyer, were indicted for burglariously entering the premises of Mr Charles Griffin, pawnbroker, Smethwick, and stealing therefrom clothing to the value of £30. Mr Motteram prosecuted; and Mr C Smith defended Summerfield. On the night of the 1st of July, or early on the morning of the 2nd, the premises of the prosecutor were entered, and the property named stolen. About four o'clock the same morning five men were seen in charge of a boat, which was going in the direction from the place of the robbery. In the boat were five bundles which were taken out opposite to the house of a man named Keene, and carried into the house. Afterwards, the

whole of the property was found there, and one of the prisoners was apprehended in the house. Evidence was given proving that the prisoners were three of five men who were in the boat. The Jury found all of the prisoners guilty on the second count of the indictment – that of receiving the goods. Gilbert had been previously convicted of burglary, and was consequently sentenced to seven years penal servitude. Summerfield had been previously convicted of larceny, and was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment, and Storer was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

427 December 13 1869 Birmingham Police Court

ASSAULTING A WIFE **William Haynes** (42), boatman, 4 Mill Street, was charged with assaulting his wife. It appeared from the wife's statement that her husband had drawn a knife across her throat three times as she lay in bed, without cutting her, however. He had ill-used her on former occasions, and this last intimation of his intentions towards her, with the statement that when he had had her life he should be satisfied so frightened her that she left him. She took out a warrant against him, and went with a policeman to the Fountain beerhouse, Victoria Road, Aston, to point him out. He was drunk and asleep, and on being waked up, and seeing his wife, he made another attempt to assault her. Committed for two months.

428 December 14 1869

THE ALLEGED CASE OF MANSLAUGHTER AT SMETHWICK

Mr E Hooper, District Coroner, held an inquest, at the Great Western Inn, Smethwick, yesterday, on the body of Thomas Allmark, for causing whose death, by violence, a boatman, named **Thomas Jones alias Lippiet**, was committed for trial by the West Bromwich magistrates, on Saturday. The accused was present in custody of Police Superintendent Woolaston and Sergeant Richards.

The witnesses examined before the Magistrates on Saturday were re-examined, and some additional evidence was given.

Emma Ziller, wife of the landlord of the Great Western Inn, corroborated the evidence of the other witnesses as to the violence used by Jones towards the deceased. She endeavoured, without avail, to pull Jones off Allmark.

Mr Shaw, surgeon, Handsworth, proved that under the precept of the Coroner he made a *post mortem* examination of the body of the deceased. He found a dislocation of the upper part of the vertebrae, an abrasion on the left elbow, and a slight discolouration of the forehead. The other parts of the body were all healthy. The cause of death was the injury to the vertebrae.

The Coroner summed up, and after a short consultation, the Jury returned a verdict of "Manslaughter against Thomas Jones".

The Coroner committed the accused for trial.

429 January 11 1870 Tunstall

BOAT THEFT **Cornelius Wood**, boatman, and **John Walker**, his boy, were charged at yesterday's Hanley Police Court, with having stolen 29 pieces of earthenware, the property of the Anderton Carrying Company. Two crates from Mr Wood's manufactory had been shipped in the boat of Thomas Ible at the company's wharf. The next morning Ible found that one of the crates had been opened, and some earthenware taken out of it. Earthenware of Mr Wood's make, and about corresponding to the quantity abstracted, was found in the boat of the prisoner Wood. Walker was discharged, and Wood was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

430 January 27 1870

SHOCKING BRUTALITY TO A WIFE

Yesterday, in the Wolverhampton Police Court, before the Stipendiary, a boatman named **Joseph Mincher** (44) was charged with assaulting and threatening his wife, Martha, a woman about 30 years of age, who was married in Shropshire when she was 16 years old, and who has had ten children, five of whom are still living. The woman's face had been shockingly disfigured by her husband in beating her on the previous evening, but she now said that not her husband but herself

was to blame.

The Stipendiary (to the prisoner) : Look at your wife, and see what you have done to her.

Witness : It was my own fault.

The Stipendiary : What have you got to say for making your wife such a figure?

The Prisoner: She was drinking and tipsy all day, and the children were undressed.

The Stipendiary, to the complainant : Were you tipsy?

Witness : Yes, sir.

The Stipendiary, to the prisoner : Go on, have you anything else to say?

The Prisoner: No, sir.

Police-constable Thomas Smith was called, and deposed as follows:- Last night, about eight o'clock, I was on duty in Southampton Street, near the locks. I heard cries of "Murder" and "Police". I went down to the lockside. The prisoner's boat was in the pound. Mincher and his wife had just come out of the cabin. There was a rope around her neck.

Prisoner : No such thing.

The constable produced the rope, which was a piece of a boat line, of the ordinary size.

Continuing his evidence, witness said that the prisoner with one hand held his wife by the hair of the head, and with the other he attempted to lift her over the side of the boat. He said, "I'll drown her like a ---- dog". I pulled him on to the wharf.

The Stipendiary : Were the woman's eyes like they now are?

Witness : Yes.

The Stipendiary : Was she drunk?

Witness : Yes.

The Stipendiary : Was the rope tight?

Witness : No, sir, Part of it was wrapped up in the hand with which he held her hair.

The Stipendiary : Now, what have you got to say, Mincher?

The Prisoner : Nothing.

The Stipendiary : Joseph Mincher, the tale that has been told is as bad as it can be. I need not repeat it. It must have struck everyone who has heard it as a most terrible tale. The policeman interrupted you, and saved you from probably committing murder. What your intention was is perfectly clear from your words. You were going to put your wife into the canal, and even if you did not intend to drown her, it would have been almost impossible for her to escape in her drunken condition. When a woman is helpless is the time when, above all others, a man is called upon to withhold his hand. Your wife, no doubt, ought not to have got drunk; but that's not the smallest excuse for your conduct. The sentence of the Court is that you be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for six months, and when you leave prison to find two sureties in £25 each, and to enter into your own recognisances for £50, to keep the peace for a year.

431 March 7 1870

West Bromwich

FRAUD At the Police Court, on Saturday, before Messrs J A Kendrick, H Williams and T Davis, Charles Griffin was charged with obtaining the sum of £12 10s by false pretences, from Thomas Davis. **Henry Griffin**, a boatman, had employed the prisoner to do some work for him whilst he was ill. On Monday, the 28th of February, prosecutor sent prisoner with a load of hay to Mr Davis, corn factor, Great Bridge. He delivered the hay, and a few days afterwards called and said the prosecutor had sent him for the money. Mr Davis thereupon paid him. In a similar manner prisoner obtained 22s from Mr Dimmack, Wolverhampton. Prisoner had given £10 to Mr Lee, a licensed victualler, to take care of. This was delivered up to the police. Prisoner was committed to the Sessions.

432 March 9 1870

Birmingham Police Court

COAL STEALING **William Emery** (59), boatman, Vincent Street, able neither to read nor write, and **Samuel Marsh** (40), boatman, able to read imperfectly, were charged with stealing half a ton of coal, from a boat on the Crescent Wharf, the property of Mr Henry Lee, on Thursday last. Mr

Michael Maber prosecuted on behalf of the Birmingham Coal Dealers' Protection Society. Mr Cheston defended Marsh and Mr Francis defended Emery. Both prisoners were committed for trial at the Sessions, and Marsh was admitted to bail. It was stated that Emery had been several times previously convicted for felony.

433 March 18 1870 Walsall

THE ALLEGED MANSLAUGHTER The case of **William Parker**, boatman, who stands charged with the manslaughter of **John Goodman**, aged 16, boat-boy, again came under the notice of the Magistrates, at the Guildhall, yesterday, by adjournment from a previous court. The defendant did not appear. On the application of his solicitor, the case was further adjourned for a week, and Parker's bail enlarged.

434 March 30 1870 Birmingham Police Court

VIOLENT ASSAULT **John Guest** (30), boatman, Court, Sheepcote Street, unable to write, and only able to read imperfectly, was charged with violently assaulting **Thomas Bowell**, boatman, back of 34 King Edward's Road. Mr Cheston appeared for the prisoner. The prosecutor stated that he and the prisoner worked upon the same boat. At three o'clock on the morning of the 15th instant they were about starting on a journey from a wharf in Nile Street, when they had some words concerning their work. The prisoner used an offensive epithet to the prosecutor, and on the latter asking him what he meant by it, he picked up the tiller of the boat, and struck the prosecutor with it three times. He was badly cut about the head, and had to go to the Queen's Hospital, where he remained as an in-patient till Monday. In defence, the prisoner said the prosecutor was continually threatening to put him into the water, and on his repeating the threat on the day in question, he was obliged to strike him with the tiller for his own protection. The prosecutor admitted that on a previous occasion he threatened to put the prisoner in the canal for using bad language; but he denied repeating the threat in the present instance. Prisoner was ordered to pay 40s and costs, or go to prison for a month.

435 March 30 1870 Wednesbury

ASSAULT At the Police Court, yesterday, **Joseph Evans**, boatman, appeared before Messrs., J Marshall and T Jesson, charged with having assaulted Mary Talbot, High Street. The complainant's sons had been in the defendant's employ, and, as she alleged, wages were due to them. On the 5th of January she went to the Royal Exchange Inn, High Street, to endeavour to effect a settlement, and a quarrel arose, which ended in defendant striking the complainant on the head with a stick, and drawing blood. Since the assault, the defendant had been away with his boat. Fines 20s and costs, or fourteen days imprisonment.

436 March 31 1870 Dudley

BRUTAL ASSAULT At the Police Court yesterday, before Messrs., G Bagott, S Price and S Rudge, **James Foster**, boatman, Darby End, was charged with assaulting his wife Agnes. The poor woman, who was very thin and had a half starved appearance, appeared in the box with two black eyes, eight or nine bruises on her face, and a wound in her forehead. She deposed that her husband had ill-treated her for more than six months past, and that on the 24th inst., he quarrelled with her upon some trivial matter beyond her control. Notwithstanding the fact that she had a child in her arms, the defendant struck her twice in the house, and twice in the yard whither she had escaped. The last blows knocked her down. The Bench fined the defendant 40s and costs, or in default two months imprisonment, with hard labour.

437 April 5 1870 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL **William Matthews** (19), boatman, Mill Street, Aston, unable to read and write, was charged with being in company with others, and stealing 16cwt of coals, value 12s, from the wharf of William Egginson, Chester Street. Police-constable Fallon stated that on the night of the

27th ultimo, he heard the barking of a dog at the Chester Street wharf. On looking over a wall, he saw three boys taking coal from the prosecutor's wharf, and throwing it to the prisoner and another man, who carried it over the locks, and piled it up on the towing-path of the canal. The prisoner caught sight of witness, and the party, with the exception of one of the boys, ran away. The prisoner, however, was apprehended at midnight on Saturday by Police-constable Philips. He pleaded not guilty, and was committed to the Sessions.

438 April 12 1870 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

CHARGE OF STEALING A BOAT LINE &c **Thomas Rose** (52), boatman, of imperfect education, pleaded not guilty of stealing, at the borough of Birmingham, on the 6th of January, a boat line, a strap, a basket and a flannel frock, the goods of **William Monk**. Mr Dalby was for the prosecution; the prisoner was undefended. The articles in question were left by a boatman in the prosecutor's employment with his boat, and were stolen. The prisoner was afterwards found with them in his possession; he said he had bought them. The Jury acquitted the prisoner.

439 April 13 1870 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

STEALING COAL **William Emery** (61), boatman, uneducated, and **Samuel Marsh** (40), on bail, boatman, were indicted for stealing 10cwts of coal, the property of Henry Lee, on the 3rd of March. Mr Saint prosecuted; the prisoners were undefended. A boat containing coal, and belonging to the prosecutor, was lying at the Crescent Wharf, and about half past six, on the 3rd of March, the suspicion of two police officers was excited by seeing the prisoners with a boat upon the canal. Later in the day they saw them return with a different boat, in which there was a quantity of coal. The prisoners were subsequently charged with stealing the coal, which was identified by the prosecutor from certain pit marks upon it. Emery said he was guilty of having possession of the coal, but that he was totally ignorant as to how Marsh, by whom he was employed, had obtained it. The Jury found the prisoners guilty, with a recommendation to mercy; the prosecutor also recommended Marsh to mercy, and he was sentenced to ten days hard labour. Emery, who had been four times previously convicted in Staffordshire, was sentenced to twelve months hard labour.

440 May 10 1870 West Bromwich

POLICE COURT Two boatmen, named **James Phillpott** and **John Herbert**, were charged with stealing a log of American pine timber, value £10, the property of Messrs. Lees, timber merchants, Swan Village. Mr Lewis (firm of Daignan and Lewis, Walsall) appeared for the prosecution. On Friday morning, a log of timber was missed from the wharf of Messrs. Lees, which adjoins the canal. It was subsequently ascertained that the log had been sold to Mr Joseph Smith, boat builder, whose place of business was on the canal side, about three miles from prosecutor's wharf. The evidence of **John Dodd**, a boatman, went to show that about midnight on Wednesday he observed the two prisoners in the act of conveying the log from the wharf. They towed it alongside a boat. They perceived that Dodd had knowledge of the proceedings, and on the following day Phillpott saw him, and promised that if he would not reveal what he had seen he should have a share of the money. Phillpott added that he and Herbert had taken the timber to Mr Smith, Tipton, and received £1 each. They were to have £7 on the Sunday morning, and would he meet them to go and receive a share of the money. Dodd met them, as suggested, and after having some drink, the prisoners took him to Mr Smith's yard, and pointed out the timber, which had been cut up. They also sought Mr Smith, but could not find him. After their arrest the prisoners admitted stealing the timber. At the conclusion of the evidence against the prisoners a charge was preferred against Mr Smith for receiving the property, knowing it to have been stolen. Mr Jackson watched the proceedings on his behalf. Witnesses were called to prove that the timber when found in Mr Smith's possession was cut up into planks of various lengths – not at all in the usual way. All the marks upon it had been carefully removed and cut with an adze, another very unusual thing with timber of that description. When Sergeant E Smith took the timber from Mr Smith's yard, the accused said he had bought the timber without seeing it, and paid some of the money on account. The prisoners were remanded for

a week to enable them to call witnesses in defence. Mr Smith was admitted to bail.

441 May 18 1870 Swan Village

THE EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF TIMBER Yesterday, at the Wednesbury Police Court, before Mr L Spooner, Stipendiary, **John Herbert** and **James Philpott**, boatmen, Greet's Green, were brought up on remand, charged with having stolen a baulk of timber, value £10, the property of Messrs., Lees, timber merchants. Josiah Smith, boat builder, Tipton, was charged with receiving the same, knowing it to have been stolen. The particulars of the case have already appeared in the *Post*. The depositions having been read over. Mr H Jackson addressed the Bench on behalf of the prisoner Smith. He said it was very common in the district for boat builders to buy timber from boatmen who came from Herefordshire and other distant places; and his client bought in accordance with this practice, and quite openly. He gave the men £1 each on agreeing to buy the timber of them, telling them that, if it turned out as they described, he would give them £7 more, or £9 in all, which, it would be shown, was really the full value of the timber. Mr Smith had carried on business in the district for many years, and had uniformly borne a good character. On being charged Herbert said, "Mr Smith agreed with us to fetch the timber, and was to give us £3 for it when we got it there". Philpott said, "I wish to say the same, that Mr Smith employed us to fetch the baulk, and he said as soon as we got it there, he did not care how, he would give us £3". Smith pleaded not guilty. A witness on the latter's behalf having been heard, the prisoners were committed for trial, Smith being admitted to bail, himself in £300, and two sureties in £150 each.

442 May 21 1870 Birmingham Police Court

BURGLARY IN ICKNIELD SQUARE **Thomas Shaw** (19), 25 Fazeley Street, boatman, able neither to read nor write, and **William Jones** (19), 25 Thomas Street, imperfectly educated, were charged with burglariously entering the house of James Ball, Icknield Square, and stealing three pairs of boots, a jacket, a dress, and a key. During Monday night prosecutor's house was broken into and the articles named were stolen. About a quarter past three o'clock on Tuesday morning Police-constable Tomlinson was on duty in Thomas Street, when he met the prisoners together. They looked rather bulky, and he stopped them. Finding property concealed about them, he took them to the police station, and the property was subsequently identified by the prosecutor. Prisoners pleaded guilty, and were committed for trial at the Assizes.

443 June 4 1870

KINGS HEATH POLICE COURT At this Court, yesterday, before Messrs. W H Dawes and S Thornton, **William Jones** (22), boatman, Selly Oak, able to read and write, was charged on remand with stealing £5, the property of his master, Edward Boylin, coal dealer, Selly Oak. On the 2nd of November, the prisoner was going with a boat to Old Hill, and prosecutor entrusted him with £5, to pay to a person there to whom it was due. The boy who accompanied the prisoner afterwards returned with the horse, but the prisoner did not come back. It was discovered that the prisoner had gone to Gloucester and joined the militia. On the 24th instant, Police-constable Spiers went to Gloucester and apprehended the prisoner at the barracks. Prisoner pleaded guilty; his previous master gave him an excellent character, and as he had already been in custody eleven days, he was committed for six weeks only.

444 June 8 1870 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY FROM A CANAL WHARF **John Benjamin Wood** (30), boatman, Brierley Hill, able to read and write imperfectly, and **James Fleetwood** (34), boatman, Limehouse, able to read and write imperfectly, were charged with stealing a quantity of coal and timber, value 15s, from the wharf of the Birmingham Canal Company in Fazeley Street. About midnight, on Thursday, a watchman named George Harris, was concealed on the wharf, and saw the prisoners on the canal in a boat. They took a quantity of coal from a stack belonging to Messrs. Breedon and Son, and a piece of timber belonging to Mr Norman Adams. When they had placed the coal and wood on the

boat they moved on. Prosecutor afterwards followed, and came up with the boat at Camp Hill. He there fetched two constables, who took the prisoners into custody. During their journey they had disposed of the coal and timber, which had not since been found. The prisoners, who changed their pleas several times, ultimately pleaded not guilty, and were committed to the Sessions.

445 June 21 1870

HOUSEBREAKING At the Walsall Guildhall, yesterday, **Matthew Solvey**, a boatman, was charged with having, on Friday night, burglariously entered the house of Geo. Mason, beerhouse keeper, and stolen therefrom 16s in silver and copper money. There being a doubt in the case, the prisoner got the benefit of it, and was discharged. He was, however, convicted of having broken into the dwelling house of Thomas Somerfield, awl blade maker, during the night of Saturday week, and stolen therefrom a pair of boots, which he was wearing when apprehended by Sergeant Martin. He was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

446 July 6 1870

THEFT FROM A BIRMINGHAM COAL DEALER At the Wednesbury Police Court, yesterday, before Messrs. T Davis and H Williams, **Thomas Grundy**, a boatman, was convicted of having, while conducting a boat from Brownhills to Birmingham, stolen 3cwt of coal, the property of his employer, Thomas Billson, coal dealer, Birmingham, and the prosecutor interceding on his behalf, he was sentenced to one months imprisonment, with hard labour. Mr M Maher appeared to prosecute on behalf of the Coal Dealers' Protection Society.

447 July 11 1870 West Bromwich

THEFT OF IRON At the Police Court, on Saturday, before Messrs Henry Williams, C Ratcliff and J W Williams, **Henry Wilkins**, boatman, was charged with stealing 2 tons 16cwt of iron, the property of Mr Henry Firmstone, Cockhay Ironworks, Hill Top, on the night of the 9th of December 1868. Police-constable Morris and two other officers saw the prisoner and a man named Beaumont unloading iron from a boat, on Millership's basin of the canal. They left the iron on the bank, and about half past five o'clock the next morning the officers saw Beaumont and two other men come with a wagon, and commence loading the iron into it. The officers allowed the men to load half the iron, and then took them into custody. They were afterwards convicted. Wilkins absconded, and was not seen till he was apprehended on Thursday last, at Barrow-in-Furness. Prisoner was committed for trial at the Sessions.

448 July 26 1870 Birmingham Police Court

SHAMEFUL ASSAULT ON A BOY **Richard Gosling** (34), boatman, George Street, Smethwick, unable to read or write, was charged with violently assaulting a boy, named John Wilkinson, residing at 3 Court, 3 house, Sherborne Street; and also with assaulting Police-constable Daniels. On Saturday afternoon a gentleman brought the boy to Police-constable Daniels. The prisoner had kicked him several times on the thigh. The injury was so great that the boy would always walk lame. The constable went to the prisoner, whom he found in charge of a boat. On taking him into custody Daniels was also kicked by the prisoner. In answer to the charge, prisoner said that the boy first threw at his horse. He was ordered to pay the boy £10 compensation and the costs.

449 August 4 1870 Birmingham Police Court

SHOCKING CRUELTY TO A DONKEY **Isabella Dollar**, Tipton, neither able to read nor write, was charged with cruelty to a donkey, by working it on the canal side when it was in an unfit state. Mr Sell (an officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) and Police-constable Parry brought the case forward. It appeared that the prisoner and a younger sister were in charge of the donkey and an empty boat, which had come from Tipton. The prisoner said the donkey, but not the boat, belonged to her father-in-law, who was a boatman. The donkey was described as being in a dreadful state. It had a sore on the left shoulder, caused by the collar, as large as a five shilling

piece, a sore on the right side, a large wound on the top of the withers, two large wounds on one hind-quarter, and a wound on the other hind-quarter. The collar was so thin as to cut the poor animal, was quite hard, and was in contact with one of the raw wounds. One of the Magistrates asked the girl her age, and she said she did not know. Was she fifteen? "No", she replied, "I isn't fifteen". Inspector Percy : They don't know their age at Tipton, sir. - As it did not seem that the prisoner was primarily responsible, she was discharged, and the Bench ordered that the donkey should remain in the custody of the police.

450 August 8 1870 Birmingham Police Court

ASSAULT UPON A BOY **Henry Green** (19), of no fixed residence, was charged with assaulting James Kingston, a boy about thirteen years of age, living in a court in New Thomas Street. It appeared that the complainant and other boys were bathing in the canal, and interfered with a boat of which the prisoner had charge. He requested the boys to discontinue their tricks, and then struck the complainant upon the head with the tiller, which inflicted a scalp wound. The Bench imposed a fine of 5s and costs, or in default fourteen days imprisonment, the fine to be remitted on prisoner paying the boy 10s, as compensation for his injury.

451 August 9 1870 Brierley Hill

ALLOWING DRUNKENNESS **Thomas Harris**, a boatman and publican, of the Bull's Head, Brockmoor, was fined 10s and costs, for allowing five drunken men to remain on his premises. Police-sergeant Breton, who gave evidence in the case, affirmed that one of the men was so drunk that he lay in the empty fireplace, with his head up the chimney.

452 October 19 1870 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

BROUGHT UP FOR SENTENCE **Richard Clarke** (21), boatman, **Henry Albert Baker** (17), boatman and Henry Brown (17), thimble maker, who had pleaded guilty to an indictment charging them with stealing 26 fowls, the property of Joseph Cooper, at Pelsall, on the 16th September, were sentenced, Clarke to one months, and Baker and Brown to four months imprisonment each.

453 October 20 1870 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

STEALING IRON **Thomas Vaughan** (45), boatman, was indicted for stealing a quantity of pig iron, the property of Messrs. Williamson Brothers, of Wolstanton. Mr Motteram (for Mr Young) conducted the case on behalf of the prosecution. The prisoner was found guilty, and having been several times previously convicted, and once sentenced to six years penal servitude, he was sentenced to a term of seven years penal servitude.

454 October 21 1870 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

STEALING BACON AT NORTON CANES **Robert Riley** (34), boatman, and James Ballinger (on bail), were indicted for stealing 3lbs of bacon, the property of William Reynolds, at Norton Canes, on the 27th of July. The prisoner Riley pleaded guilty, and Mr Holroyd, on the part of the prosecution, offered no evidence against Ballinger, who was thereupon discharged. There was a second indictment against Riley, who had been previously convicted on several occasions, but it was not proceeded with, and he was sentenced to seven years penal servitude.

455 October 22 1870 Worcester City Sessions

ROBBERY FROM AN EATING HOUSE **William Mann** (23), a boatman, was found guilty of stealing a macintosh coat from Elizabeth Clay's eating house, in New Street. Prisoner and a companion called at prosecutor's house on the 4th of July last, and had some refreshment. After they had gone Mrs Clay missed her husband's macintosh from the room where the two men had been, and the police apprehended the prisoner with the missing coat in his possession. Guilty. Four months imprisonment.

456 November 4 1870 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF STEALING A DONKEY Frederick Perks (33), labourer, Communication Row, was charged with being in company with another man named George Mucklow, and stealing a donkey, valued at £5, the property of John Buck, Islington; and **Thomas Dearn**, boatman, Droitwich, was charged with receiving the animal, knowing it to have been stolen. The donkey was stolen early on Sunday morning from a stable in Stoke Street, led into Communication Row, and its legs having been secured by means of a rope, it was handed over a wall on to the canal side, a distance of forty feet. Police-constable Painter apprehended the prisoner Dearn at Droitwich on Wednesday night, and learned that he bought the donkey for 25s. The prisoners were remanded until Wednesday next, for the production of further evidence.

November 4 1870 Worcester

MAN DROWNED On Tuesday, a boatman, named **James Steward**, of Upton-on-Severn, in the employ of Mr Dripsill, fell off a plank whilst steering a boat in the Severn, near the Grand Stand, and was drowned. His body has not yet been recovered.

457 November 10 1870 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF STEALING AND RECEIVING A DONKEY Frederick Parkes (33), labourer, Communication Row, and **Benjamin Ballinger** (38), boatman, were charged with stealing a donkey from the premises of John Buck, earthenware dealer, Stoke Street; and **Thomas Dearn** (47), boatman, Droitwich, was charged with receiving the donkey, knowing it to have been stolen. Mr Francis defended Dearn. No evidence was offered against Ballinger, and he was discharged. On the evening of the 29th ult., the donkey was put in the stable by a lad in the prosecutor's employment. The door of the stable was only fastened with a peg and staple. Early the next morning the stable door was found open, and the donkey missing. From information received, Police-constable Painter apprehended Parkes at his house, and charged him with stealing the donkey. He replied that he did not steal it, but bought it for sixpence. Painter afterwards apprehended Dearn, in whose possession he found the donkey, at Droitwich. Dearn said he gave 25s for it to a boatman. The Bench thought the evidence was not sufficient, and discharged the prisoners.

458 November 12 1870

GENERAL NEWS **George Harding**, a Cardiff boatman, who lately pushed a man, with whom he had been quarrelling, into a canal, and drowned him, has been committed for wilful murder.

459 November 14 1870

CHARGE OF MURDER AT CARDIFF At the Cardiff Police Court, on Friday, **George Harding** and Margaret Rimron were charged, on suspicion, with causing the death of **Edward Daley**, a boatman. The charge against Rimron was withdrawn, in order that she might be placed in the witness-box. From the evidence it appeared that prisoner and deceased quarrelled about the woman Rimron on the canal bank. A fight ensued, and in the scuffle Harding pushed the deceased into the canal, and then said to the woman, "The b--- is gone, and now I am sure I shall have you". He afterwards told Rimron that if she said anything about it, he would kill her too. The prisoner was committed for trial at the next Glamorganshire Assizes, on the charge of wilful murder.

460 December 12 1870 Worcester

FOUND DROWNED An inquest was held yesterday, on the body of a boatman named **James Stewart**, who accidentally fell out of his boat in the river Severn, opposite the Grand Stand Hotel, nearly three months since, and whose body was not recovered until Wednesday last, near the Diglis lock. A verdict of "accidental death" was returned.

461 January 3 1871 Staffordshire Epiphany Sessions

SHEEP STEALING AT EASINGTON **James Norton** (32), boatman, and **James Farrington** (36),

boatman, were indicted for stealing, on the 14th October, 1870, at Easington, one ewe sheep, the property of Josiah Hemingsley. Mr Motteram appeared for the prosecution, for which the most conclusive evidence was called, and the prisoners being found guilty were sentenced – Farrington to six months imprisonment, and Norton (who had been previously convicted) to seven years penal servitude.

462 January 4 1871 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY FROM A BOAT **James Vaughan** (30), boatman, King Edward's Road, was charged with stealing four tar sheets, the property of **Thomas Smith**, boatman, Worcester Wharf. On the night of the 4th of December the prosecutor slept in his boat, which was lying on the canal near Tyndal Bridge, a short distance from the prisoner's house. The next day he missed four tar sheets, which he had seen safe in the boat the night previous. He communicated with the police, and Thursday last Detective Mountford searched the prisoner's house, in the cellar of which he found two of the stolen tar sheets lying upon some casks. On Monday another of the sheets was brought to the prosecutor by a man, who said he stole it. The prisoner stated in defence that on the 28th of December there was a stoppage at the locks, and several boatmen asked him to take care of things for them. Among them a man asked him to take care of the tar sheets seized by the detective, until either he or Mody Smith called for them. Prisoner was committed to the Sessions.

463 January 5 1871 Birmingham Police Court

UTTERING COUNTERFEIT COIN **George Checkley** (34), imperfectly educated, boatman, Sheepcote Street, was charged with passing a counterfeit coin, and having two others in his possession. On Saturday evening the prisoner went into the house of Mary Lear, Summer Hill Tavern, and paid for some ale with a bad florin, receiving change out of it. It was discovered that the florin was bad, before the prisoner left the house, and a policeman was called in. Police-constable Rogers found two more bad florins, wrapped in tissue paper, in the prisoner's right-hand trousers' pocket, and 15s 6 1/2d in good money in the left-hand pocket. He was committed to the Sessions.

464 January 11 1871 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **George Checkley** (34), boatman, able to read and write imperfectly, pleaded guilty to a charge of having, on Saturday, the 31st of December 1870, unlawfully and knowingly uttered one counterfeit florin, and with having had in his possession at the time of such uttering three other counterfeit coins. Sentenced to twelve months imprisonment with hard labour.

465 February 1 1871 Bilston

MAGISTERIAL Yesterday, at the Petty Sessions, before the Stipendiary, **Isaiah Clark**, boatman, Ladymoor, was fined £2 and costs, or to go to prison for six weeks, for striking Elizabeth Langstone on the face, in her house, on Saturday. He was further ordered to find sureties for good behaviour for six months.

466 February 13 1871 Walsall

FOUND DROWNED On Saturday morning, the lifeless body of **Jacob Twigg**, aged 13, the son of a boatman, living in Birchills Street, was found in the canal by the wharf at the Birchills Furnaces. The poor little fellow was last seen on Friday afternoon, when he took his father's tea to the Birchills Works.

467 March 1 1871 Worcestershire Adjourned Sessions

HOUSEBREAKING AT OMBERSLEY **Frank Stobie** (16), boatman pleaded guilty to breaking and entering the dwelling house of John Reynolds, at Ombersley, on the 22nd February, and stealing money to the amount of £14. Sentence twelve months hard labour.

468 March 2 1871 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN **Thomas Grundy** (45), 5 Court, 1 house, Staniforth Street, boatman, was charged with having stolen £1 12s 2d, the moneys of Mary Farnsworth, who resides at the same place, and in whose employ the prisoner is. On the 23rd inst., prisoner had the amount entrusted to him for certain purposes, stated to him by his mistress. Instead of carrying out his instructions, he appropriated the money to his own personal use and behoof, and got drunk therewith. He had no defence to offer, and he was committed for three months.

469 March 21 1871 Birmingham Police Court

PETTY THEFTS **William Buckingham** (20), Windsor Street, boatman, for stealing a sealskin cap, from the house of Louis Smith, the Red Lion Beerhouse, Windsor Street, was committed for trial at the Sessions.

470 March 27 1871 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL FROM A CANAL BOAT **Henry Shuter** (26), of a court in Adam Street, and **Reuben Smith** (40), boatmen, were charged with stealing coal from a canal boat, at the Dartmouth Street bridge. The prisoners were in charge of the boat. Shuter was seen by John Ashby to load a barrow with about a cwt and a half of coal out of the boat, Smith looking on the while. Witness asked Shuter if his master allowed it, and he said, "Yes". William Appleby, the prisoners' employer, and the owner of the coal, said Shuter had no right to take it. - Smith: He (Shuter) isn't like a child; I could not stop him from taking it. - Mr Appleby said Smith was the captain of the boat. - Smith: I am not in charge of it any more than he is. I get 15s a voyage, and he has half. - The Clerk said a Jury must decide the question of Smith's guilty connivance. Hearing this, Smith pleaded guilty; Shuter did so as a matter of course; and the prisoners were sentenced to fourteen days imprisonment each.

471 March 29 1871 Wolverhampton

MAGISTERIAL On Monday, at the Police Court, **Wm Cox**, a boatman, was sent to prison for a month for violently resisting a policeman named Parker, who took him in charge in Canal Street, on Saturday night, for disorderly conduct.

472 April 17 1871 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE AGAINST A BOATMAN **Joseph Thay** (37), of 5 Court, 1 House, Loveday Street, boatman, was charged with having, in company with another man not in custody, stolen 5cwt of coal from a boat on the canal near Lichfield Road, the property of Mr Lewis, Portland Street, Aston Park. The coal was found on the prisoner's boat, but the prisoner defended himself by saying that he knew nothing about it, having been on the towing-path, and that the man not in custody was in the boat. Remanded for a week for the other man to be found.

473 April 17 1871 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

A SLIGHT CHARGE **William Buckingham** (20), boatman, was indicted for stealing a cap, the property of Louis Smith. The evidence was very slight against the prisoner, who was acquitted.

474 April 28 1871

HANLEY Yesterday, at the Bow Police Court, James Tomlinson and Wm Yarnall were charged with stealing £3 10s 0d from **Wm Bradshaw**, boatman of Bolton. Prosecutor and prisoners were drinking together in a beerhouse at Etruria, and the former falling to sleep, the prisoners picked his pocket. They were committed for trial. It is a strange thing that, on the night of the robbery, Bradshaw's horse was found dead, in a stable at Etruria, with a halter drawn very tightly round its neck.

475 May 6 1871 Hanley

STEALING PIG IRON At the Bilston Police Court, yesterday, before Mr W Hatton, a woman, of Prince's End, named Sarah Moss, was committed to the Sessions for stealing, on Monday last, from the wharf of Mr Isaac Bradley, ironmaster, Bilston, a quantity of pig iron, out of a boat in charge of **Joseph Hawthorne**, a boatman in the employ of Mr Bradley. The load was 3cwt short.

476 May 11 1871 Birmingham Police Court

LARCENY John Price (33), labourer, 6 Potter Street, and **Richard Clark** (22), boatman, of the same address, were sent to gaol for three months for stealing a coat, the property of one **Samuel Glenn**, boatman, 12 Adderley Road.

477 May 11 1871

MUCH TOO SMART While a boatman's wife, named **Martha Wood**, was commiserating with a woman on the loss of her nephew, lately drowned at Manchester, the woman picked her pocket of £4 10s. The thief has been sent to gaol for three months.

478 May 27 1871 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL **William Haynes** (33), boatman, 3 William Street, and **Thomas Robinson** (23), boatman, 45 Lower Trinity Street, were charged with stealing about one cwt of coal, the property of Samuel Lowe, coal dealer, Wellington Terrace, Camp Hill, from a boat on the canal, near Chester Street. Mr M Maher appeared to prosecute. The prisoner Haynes did not deny taking the coal, but said he simply took it for fire on the return journey, and this he was allowed to do. The prosecutor said the prisoners were not allowed to take the coal. They had been cautioned. Haynes was sentenced to fourteen days imprisonment, with hard labour. Robinson was discharged.

479 June 10 1871 Wolverhampton Quarter Sessions

FELONIES Emma Foster (20), prostitute, was acquitted of the charge of stealing £2 17s 6d belonging to **George Rollings**, boatman.

480 June 15 1871 Rushall

THEFT BY A BIRMINGHAM BOATMAN At the Police Court, on Tuesday, before Messrs. J K Bealey and J Harrison, **Edward Barstone**, a boatman, living generally in Birmingham, was charged with having stolen 3s 6d, the property of Mr Thomas Holder, Pelsall. On the 26th May, the prosecutor sent the prisoner to Wolverhampton with a load of ironstone, and gave him 3s 6d to buy some hay with at the end of the journey. The prisoner took the boat as far as the Birchills, and having unfastened the horse went off with the 3s 6d, and was not seen again until Police-constable Ellis apprehended him in Birmingham on the 8th inst. Sentenced to seven days imprisonment.

481 June 28 1871 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

ROBBERY AT CANNOCK Job Castildine (45), labourer, was charged with stealing, whilst servant to **Charles Smith**, on the 18th May, at Cannock, a purse containing £6 2s 8 1/2d, the property of his master. Mr Plant was for the prosecution, and the prisoner was undefended. Prosecutor was a boatman, and on the night when the robbery was committed he went to sleep in the cabin, having the purse and money in his trousers pocket. He went to sleep, as usual, with his clothes on. He awoke near morning, and his money was then all right; but after a second sleep, his purse and money were gone, and so was the prisoner, who was apprehended at a public house, and the bulk of the stolen money found upon him. He now wanted the Court to believe that he had picked the money up from off the cabin floor, and was taking care of it. Prosecutor retorted, and said the prisoner couldn't take care of his own money. Found guilty, and sentenced to nine months imprisonment.

482 July 5 1871 Bilston

A GIRL DROWNED Mary Marklower (8), under the care of her grandfather, Thomas **Pheasant**, boatman, was found, about nine o'clock on Monday night, dead in the canal, near to the Pothouse Bridge, Bradley, by a son of her guardian. About a quarter of an hour before she had been seen standing near to the tow-path, and upon being missed search was made, with the result already made known. It is generally supposed that she must have accidentally fallen into the water.

483 July 19 1871

THE SCRAMBLE FOR PROPERTY AT THE LANESFIELD IRONWORKS

Arising out of the extraordinary proceedings at the Lanesfield Ironworks, reported in the *Daily Post* on Monday, some proceedings were brought before the Stipendiary in the Bilston Police Court, yesterday, when a boatman named **Henry Cox** was charged by Benjamin Stevenson, watchman for the Coal and Iron Company, Millfields, with illegally attempting to remove a boat from the company's wharf on Sunday morning. Mr Fellows, solicitor, attended to watch the case on behalf of Mr de Simencourt, who originally owned the iron bars which the boat contained; he, however, made no charge. The facts of the case are given in the remarks made by Mr William Hall, who appeared for the defence. Mr Hall stated that it was well known on Saturday a stoppage occurred at the Lanesfield Ironworks of Mr de Simencourt, and there had followed a rush on the part of some of the creditors to obtain possession of the stock, a considerable portion of which was removed. The defendant's employer, named Joseph Turley, who claimed the boat as his property, ascertaining that Mr Firmstone, ironmaster, whom he knew, was a creditor, ordered Cox to seize the boat, in order that it might be made available for the creditors at large. The man did as he was told. As for Mr Firmstone, Mr Hall affirmed that he was no party to the transaction; indeed, he had no cognisance of the matter. Mr Spooner said the case was one over which he had no jurisdiction.

484 July 25 1871 Wolverhampton

SAD DEATH OF A GERMAN GENTLEMAN On Saturday an enquiry was made at the Swan Inn, Compton, before the Borough Coroner, respecting the death of Mr C J Voss, the German master at the Wolverhampton Grammar School, who on Friday morning was found drowned in the Staffordshire Canal, at Whitewick. From the evidence it appeared that the deceased went to Compton with the expressed intention of having "half a day's fishing". He visited the Mermaid Inn, there, in the afternoon, and again in the evening, partaking of some refreshments served to him by a witness named Sarah Howells, who stated that on both occasions the deceased was in pretty good spirits. He left the house about nine o'clock at night, quite sober, taking the direction of the canal. Three parts of an hour afterwards he was observed walking along the tow-path by a boatman named **Henry Hodgkiss**, whom he wished good night. His body was found about five o'clock the next morning. Hodgkiss affirmed that if any cry had been raised by the deceased he must have heard him, as he remained in the boat all night, within 250 yards of the spot where he fell in. - Sergeant Billett said that the deceased had in his possession 2s 9d in money and a gold ring, besides a roll of letters. - The evidence of Mr John Steward, physician, of Church Street, Wolverhampton, was to the effect that there were no external marks of violence about the body, and the appearances were such as to lead to the deceased had been affected with congestion of the brain, produced by an apoplectic fit, and in this state had fallen into the water. The Jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned". It transpired that no clue had been obtained as to the family of the deceased, who are residents in Germany,

NEGLECTING HIS WORK Yesterday, at the County Police Court, before Sir John Morris and Mr Sidney Cartwright, **John Williams**, boatman, in the employ of the Shropshire Union Canal Company, was charged with neglecting his work. On the 5th inst., prisoner was sent from Wolverhampton to Ellesmere Port, in charge of a boat. Having proceeded about two miles out, prisoner deserted the boat, and went out and got drunk at a neighbouring public house. He was arrested in Manchester last week. Prisoner was sentenced to two months imprisonment.

485 August 14 1871 Birmingham Police Court

AN UNFAITHFUL SERVANT **George Trueman** (30), Nelson Street West, boatman, was charged with stealing 14s 2d, the money of Mr Barnett, coal dealer, Vauxhall Street, on the 12th of January last. The prisoner was in the employ of the prosecutor as boatman, and the money was given him by Mrs Barnett, to purchase coals. He absconded immediately afterwards, and was only apprehended on Friday. The prisoner admitted spending the money, and was sentenced to one month hard labour.

486 August 21 1871 Tamworth

ATTEMPTING TO RIDE ON THE BUFFER OF A RAILWAY CARRIAGE **William Fox**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged at the Petty Sessions on Friday, by Detective-inspector Sawtell, with attempting to get on a train while in motion, at the Tamworth Station, on the Midland Railway, on the 16th inst. It appears that, when the train started, the porter saw the prisoner running behind the train, and trying to get on one of the buffers of the last carriage. He was given into custody. The case was not pressed, and he was fined 5s and 13s 6d costs.

487 August 23 1871 Birmingham Police Court

THEFT **Samuel Painter** (19), boatman, 1 Court, Horse Fair, and **William Douse** (20), boatman, no fixed residence, were charged with stealing about sixty yards of cotton check shirting, from the shop of Mr W L Lees, draper, Cregoe Street. Rebecca Painter, married woman, 1 Court, Horse Fair, was charged with receiving the shirting knowing it to have been stolen. The male prisoners pleaded guilty, and were sent to gaol for three months imprisonment, with hard labour. The female prisoner was dismissed.

488 August 29 1871 Birmingham Police Court

INTERFERENCE WITH A WATCHMAN **John Davies**, boatman, Sherborne Street, was charged with assaulting Jeremiah Brearley, on the 13th inst. Mr Soar appeared to prosecute. Brearley was a watchman employed on the Stour Valley Railway. On the 13th a large number of boys and young men were bathing in the canal, between Winson Green Bridge and Edgbaston Station. Some of the boys got on to the line, and threw stones. Brearley captured one of them. The prisoner, who was bathing, then got out of the water, went up to Brearley, struck him, and rescued the boy from his custody, threatening the prosecutor that if he did not let the boy go, he would put him into the canal. Fined 40s and the costs, or, in default, six weeks imprisonment.

489 August 30 1871 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING OLD IRON **Samuel Miles** (22), labourer, Cherry Lane, and **Richard Mumford** (21), boatman, Cherry Lane, were charged with stealing a quantity of old iron belonging to Mr Samuel Walker, Fazeley Street. The iron was taken from a wharf near the canal. It was traced to a marine store dealers by Detectives Beckley and Clarke, where it had been sold by the prisoners. The prisoners, who pleaded guilty, were sent to gaol for a month.

490 September 26 1871 Wolverhampton

REFUSING TO HAVE A BOAT GAUGED At the Police Court, yesterday, **John Thacker**, boatman, was charged with refusing to have his boat gauged, in accordance with the regulations of the Birmingham Canal Company. William Stevens, appointed by the company to gauge the boats passing through the Horseley Fields stop-lock, stated that on the 1st inst., the defendant passed through the stop with an empty boat, which he refused to have gauged, in contravention of the Act of Parliament respecting the Birmingham Canal. Corroborative evidence was given by another official of the company, named Hardyman, and the defendant was fined 5s and costs.

491 October 2 1871

FATAL ACCIDENT On Saturday afternoon the Borough Coroner held an inquest at the Bell,

Suffolk Street, upon the body of **Thomas Curley** (7), the son of a boatman residing in Norfolk Street. On Thursday afternoon the deceased took his father's dinner to him at the Worcester Wharf. After he had had dinner, the father of the deceased went on an errand, leaving the deceased in charge of his tools. On his return, the deceased was missing. The next day the water was let out of the wharf for the purpose of its being cleaned, and the body of deceased was found at the bottom, near where his father's boat was. It was supposed that he had fallen in when trying to push an empty boat from the side of the wharf. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

492 October 11 1871 Oldbury

CRUELTY TO AN ASS A boatman, named **William Smith**, of Spon Lane, was convicted upon the evidence of Police-constable Jones, of ill-treating a donkey, on the 6th instant, and was fined 5s and costs.

493 October 13 1871

MOXLEY A melancholy accident happened at Moxley on Wednesday evening, whereby Sophia Bunn, wife of **Herbert Bunn**, boatman, lost her life. Deceased was in the act of tying a line on the deck, when in passing through a bridge the boat, which was returning to Wolverhampton empty, dashed against one loaded with coal, causing her to fall headlong into the water. On coming to the surface she was wedged so tightly between the kerb stones and boat that she expired in about fifteen minutes, the services of Mr G H Pickburn, chemist, who was called to the spot, being of no avail. Deceased leaves three young children.

494 October 17 1871 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

FALSE PRETENCES AT ROWLEY REGIS **Benjamin Bate** (38), boatman, was charged with obtaining by false pretences, from William Robinson, on the 22nd July 1871, the sum of one pound ten shillings, with intent to defraud. Found guilty and sentenced to six months imprisonment.

495 October 20 1871 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY OF LEAD Eli Jones (18), Ormond Street, gun-action filler, and **Richard Clarke** (22), boatman, Richard Street, were charged with stealing a large quantity of sheet lead from the premises of Mr John Scholefield, Blews Street, on the 6th inst. The prisoners were apprehended at Wednesfield, and were committed for trial at the Sessions.

496 November 14 1871 Walsall

EXTENSIVE PECULATIONS BY A BOATMAN At the Guildhall, yesterday, before Messrs E T Holden (Mayor), J W Newman, J B Anderson, J Brewer and H Highway, **Samuel Micklewright**, a boatman, and an old man named **Edward Bevan**, were charged with having stolen 10cwt of coal, the property of Messrs Bissell and Son, the Birchills. Mr Gillespie (of the firm of Messrs Wilkinson and Gillespie) appeared in support of the charge: and Mr Dale (from the offices of Messrs Duigan, Lewis and Lewis) for Micklewright. It appeared that on Thursday last the prisoner was sent with a boatload of coal from the Fishley Colliery to Messrs Bissell's works, and some suspicion as to his probity being entertained, a man named James Holt was sent to follow him. About half a mile from the colliery he threw several lumps of coal into an empty boat on the canal, and about a mile further on he threw some more coal into another empty boat. Still further on, viz. by Canal Pool Bridge, he threw a lump of coal over the hedge, and Bevan picked it up and went away with it. In all, between 10 and 12 cwt of coal were taken from the boat. Previously, Holt had asked if he could have a barrowful of coal, which was answered in the affirmative. The defence was that it was a commonplace practice on the part of boatmen to supply coal to men in charge of empty boats, and that Micklewright had done no more than this, except in the case of the lumps given to Bevan, which were given in exchange for a "bit of bacca". They were both said to have been of good character previously. Micklewright was sentenced to two months imprisonment, with hard labour; and Bevan to fourteen days imprisonment.

497 November 21 1871 Old Hill

DEATH FROM FIRE On Sunday, Unice Mullett, aged 5 years, daughter of **Ezekiel Mullett**, a boatman, met with her death by fire. The deceased came downstairs with her sister, and commenced playing with the pot-hooks over the fire, when her night dress became ignited. She screamed out, and her mother threw the hearth rug round the deceased and thus put out the flames. The child was dreadfully burnt.

498 December 20 1871 Warwickshire Winter Assizes

ACQUITTAL **Thomas Bromwich** (18), boatman, was indicted for having, at Long Itchington, on the 30th of September, committed a felonious assault on Harriet Bland, a girl nine years of age. Mr Chamberlayne prosecuted, and the Hon E C Leigh defended. The Jury found the prisoner not guilty.

499 January 5 1872 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING BUTTER **Thomas Carey** (18), boatman, 14 Court, Suffolk Street, was charged with stealing a tub of butter, 28lbs in weight, value £1 10s 4d from the warehouse of Thomas Scott, Ann Street. In consequence of the prosecutor having on several occasions missed a quantity of goods from his warehouse, he gave information to the police, and on Wednesday morning Detective-sergeants Cooper and Black watched the premises, and saw the prisoner enter the warehouse, from which he brought a tub of butter. He was followed by the detectives and apprehended. Pleading guilty, he was sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour.

500 February 3 1872

ANOTHER MURDEROUS ASSAULT ON A POLICEMAN At the Birmingham Police Court, yesterday, before Messrs T C S Kynnersley (Stipendiary) and C Sturge, John Nolan (19), 33 Cleveland Street, iron-plate worker; Wm Fury (24), Cleveland Street, gun-action filler; Fred Newey (43), 40 Hanley Street, electro-plate finisher; **Edward Jennings** (34), 50 Cleveland Street, boatman; Caroline Malvin (20), 30 Cleveland Street, gun-nipper driller; and Arthur Lines (27) alias Malvin, Cleveland Street, bricklayer, were all charged with violently assaulting Police-constable William Fletcher, whilst in the execution of his duty, in Cleveland Street, on the 29th ult, in company with several others aiding and assisting. Mr Cheston appeared for Nolan, Caroline Malvin and Newey; and Mr Bullen for Fury. The police-constable, who appeared in Court with his head covered up in bandages, said that on Monday night, about twelve o'clock, he found all the prisoners engaged in a row in Cleveland Street. One of two of them when they saw him began to spar, and, after making use of some obscene language, he took Nolan in custody. He had only taken him a few yards when he was told to loose him. The prisoner "Malvin" then struck him, and he loosed Nolan, and took him into custody. Upon taking him a short distance, Nolan came up with him, and gave him a kick on his thigh. He then drew his staff, and was immediately knocked down in a scuffle. The prisoner Jennings followed, giving him a violent kick on the ribs, and said, "Let the b--- sod have it; we will make a Brookfields job of him". The prisoner Fury then tried to take his staff from him. Whilst he lay on the ground he was beaten with sticks and table legs which he produced, and were covered with blood and hair. He soon after became insensible, and recollected nothing until he saw Police-constable Nicholls. In reply to the prisoner Fury, the officer said that he was quite certain that he tried to take his staff. Several witnesses were called, and gave corroborative evidence. The Stipendiary said there was but very little evidence against Caroline Malvin, and she would therefore be discharged. A woman named Annie Connor was called on behalf of John Nolan, with the view of proving that he was in bed at the time. She said he went to bed at a quarter past ten, and did not leave the house afterwards. Several of the prisoners had been previously convicted. Mr Kynnersley committed Nolan and Jennings for three months hard labour, and Fury, Newey and Malvin were fined 40s each, or in default six weeks imprisonment.

501 February 10 1872

Bilston

VIOLENT ASSAULT UPON A POLICE CONSTABLE Yesterday, at the Petty Sessions, **William Daley alias Law**, a boatman, in the employ of Messrs Fowler, was charged with violently assaulting Policeman Wyley. From the evidence it appeared that on Wednesday afternoon the officer was on duty by the canal side at Deep fields, when he saw two boys pick up some timber belonging to the Chillington Iron Company, and run away with it. He called to them, and forced them to drop it. Directly afterwards the prisoner came up with a boat, and threw the timber into it. The constable remonstrated with him, and ordered him to take it out again. As the prisoner refused, the policeman stopped the horse, and would not allow the boat to proceed. Upon this Daley attacked the officer with great brutality; struck him three times in the face, and disabled his left arm with a blow from a brick-bat. He also tried to throw the officer into the canal, and would have succeeded but for the approach of a watchman. The prisoner was arrested on a warrant the same night. The prisoner was fined £5 and costs, or to go to prison for three months.

502 February 15 1872

A novel and rather serious addition to our local canal tolls was brought to light at the Public Office, yesterday; and though the only sufferers by this new impost at present are the Canal Company and the boatmen, we do not think it is likely to commend itself any more to public than to magisterial opinion. It seems that the boatmen who struck work a few weeks ago for an advance of wages, failing to gain their objective by passive blockade, have lately been trying active assault, and adapting the tactics of "rattening" to the boating business. Forming themselves into small gangs of eight or ten each, they have assumed a kind of military occupation of the canal, patrolling the banks, impeding the roadways, and otherwise molesting the traffic with the evident intention of intimidating the boatmen who continue work, and compelling their employers to surrender. Within the last few days they have resorted to yet bolder expedients, and, taking a leaf out of feudal history, have attempted to enforce seigniorial rights of toll over the passing traffic, after the manner of those bold barons of old whose castled crags still frown upon the German Rhine. On Tuesday several boats were stopped by these amateur highwaymen, and deprived of their shafts, cordage and other movables. It was suggested at first that the motive of this seizure was simply to prevent the towage of the boats, but it presently appeared that the object was a more mercenary one, and that the apparatus was taken chiefly for what it would fetch over the broker's counter. In some cases personal violence was added to robbery, and two charges investigated by the police magistrates yesterday were both of this character. In the first, a boatman, named **HENRY SMITH**, in charge of a boatload of gas tar, was stopped on the towing-path, near Farmer's Bridge, by a gang of about ten men, who demanded of him money. On being informed that he had none to give them, one of the gang, named **GOSLING** leaped into the boat and took a shaft and windlass, with the remark that the articles would be kept until money was forthcoming. By way of reconciling Smith to this high-handed proceeding, Gosling politely threatened to pitch him into the gas tar with which the boat was laden, and attempted, fortunately in vain, to suit the notion to the word. Emboldened by the success of this proceeding, the same gang shortly afterwards stopped another boat in charge of a man named **DRAYCOTT**, and treated it in a similar manner. In order to impart variety to the performance, however, they did not stop short with personal threats in this instance, but coolly tumbled the boatman into the canal in five feet of water, with a promise to repeat the dose when he came out if he dared say a word about it. Draycott fortunately did get out, and undeterred by the threats of his assailants said yesterday not one, but many words about it; sufficient, in short, to convict the principal delinquent, a man named **STEPHENS**. The Canal Company, who were the prosecutors in both cases, taking a merciful view of the circumstances, decided not to press the charges of robbery, but to leave the Bench to adjudicate simply upon the assaults. These, however, were serious enough, as the Stipendiary explained, to warrant him in committing the offenders for trial to the Assizes, where they would be liable to imprisonment for five years with flogging; but as it was intended rather to warn others than to punish them, they would be let off with the comparatively light sentences of two months imprisonment with hard labour for Gosling, and one

months hard labour for Stephens, for each assault. Boatmen “on strike” will please accept this notice.

503 February 15 1872

THE STRIKE OF BOATMEN – MAGISTERIAL PROCEEDINGS At the Birmingham Police Court, yesterday, before Mr T C S Kynnersley, **William Gosling** (25), boatman, Mill Street, Aston Road, was charged with assaulting **Henry Smith**, boatman, on the canal side, and stealing from a boat in his charge a shaft, a windlass, and a boat-line, the property of Samuel Turner, of West Bromwich, also with intimidating the complainant; and **William Stephens** (28), boatman, court, Bagot Street, was charged with assaulting **Henry Draycott**, boatman, on the canal side and stealing from a boat in his charge a pulley block and a boat-line. Mr Evans (of the firm of Ingleby, Wragge and Evans) prosecuted on behalf of the Birmingham Canal Company, and said that for the past two or three weeks great disturbance had been caused by the boatmen in consequence of their being on strike, and it had been necessary to get the assistance of the police. On Tuesday, several boats were stopped and deprived of their lines and shafts by gangs of these men on strike, and it was at first thought that it was simply their desire to impede the traffic. It seemed, however, that it was their practice to steal these articles for the purpose of selling them, and the company felt it was their duty to press the case. - The complainant, Henry Smith, stated that between seven and eight o'clock on Tuesday evening he was in charge of a boat in the second lock, near the Farmer's Bridge. Whilst he was on the towing-path, a gang of about ten men came up, among whom were the two prisoners. Gosling first demanded money from him, and on replying that he had none, he leaped into the boat and took a shaft and windlass, at the same time unfastening the line, both from the boat and horse, saying they should keep the articles until they had some money. Gosling also threatened to throw him into the gas tar with which his boat was loaded, and tried to do so, but failed. Afterwards they went away, taking with them the stolen articles. - According to the statement of Draycott, the same gang met his boat soon afterwards, and acted in a similar manner. Whilst he was on the towing-path, one of the men went behind him and pushed him into the canal, in a place where the water was five feet in depth. Stephens said if he said a word he would kick him into the canal again. - Other evidence having been given, Mr Kynnersley told the prisoners that the Canal Company had decided not to press the charge of robbery, in order that the assaults might be dealt with, and a good effect produced on their companions. - Mr Evans said he felt it his duty to state that any further cases would be pressed. - Mr Kynnersley said the prisoners had made themselves liable to be committed for trial at the Assizes, and to be imprisoned for five years, with a flogging. They ought to be much obliged to the prosecutors for not pressing the charge. He sentenced Gosling to two months imprisonment, with hard labour; and Stephens to one months hard labour.

504 March 11 1872

Staffordshire Adjourned Quarter Sessions

THEFT OF IRON AT WALSALL **Charles Turner** (29), boatman, and **Jeremiah Blakeman** (30), boatman, were charged with stealing on the 15th February 1872, at Walsall, a quantity of iron, the property of James Bissell and another. Mr Bosanquet prosecuted, and Mr Young defended the prisoner Turner. The case was clearly proved, and they were both sentenced to six months imprisonment, with hard labour.

505 April 17 1872

Birmingham Quarter Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **Edward Millward** (20), boatman, for stealing, on the 21st of February, three tame pigeons, the goods of William Kempster, of Duddeston Mill Road, was sentenced to seven years penal servitude, and five years police supervision. He had been several times previously convicted.

506 April 18 1872

Birmingham Quarter Sessions

ALLEGED ROBBERY FROM THE PERSON **John Searle** (19), boatman, was indicted for stealing a bag, containing 27s from the person of John Weston. Mr Clifford prosecuted, and Mr

Harris defended. It was alleged that on the 14th of February, the prosecutor, prisoner, and other persons were in a public house in Vincent Street. While in the house prosecutor felt someone at his pocket, where he had a few minutes previously placed his purse. A boy named Jackson called the prosecutor out of the house and asked him whether he had lost his purse. Prosecutor felt in his pocket, and found that it was gone. Jackson then said he saw the prisoner take it, and the latter was given into custody. There was considerable doubt in the case, and the Jury found the prisoner not guilty.

507 May 1 1872 Birmingham Police Court

PASSING COUNTERFEIT COIN Joseph Holden (32), boatman, back of No 10 Mill Street, was charged with passing base coin. The prisoner, on the evening of Wednesday last, went to the public house kept by Mr James Dale, Summer Hill Street, and having been supplied with a small jug of ale, tendered in payment a florin, which was subsequently found to be base. The prisoner left the house hurriedly, but called again on Saturday last, and tendered a counterfeit shilling in payment for some ale. The prisoner was remanded for further evidence.

508 May 10 1872

ENDANGERING THE LIFE OF A WIFE At the Brierley Hill Police Court, yesterday, before Mr Isaac Spooner, **Richard Whitehouse**, a boatman, was charged with assaulting his wife. On the previous evening Police-constable Grady heard cries from a female whilst standing on the canal side near Mill Street. He ran towards a boat moored near, and found the defendant savagely beating his wife. Whitehouse had his left hand twisted in his wife's hair, and with his other he was "punching" her heartily on the face and body. Witness endeavoured to part them, but the defendant using his extraordinary strength heaved his wife over the side of the boat into the canal before the officer could prevent the act. With some difficulty she was rescued. Defendant was sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour, and the Stipendiary ordered him to find sureties for his good behaviour, after leaving gaol, for twelve months. Mrs Whitehouse, who sat anxiously watching the case, was entirely overcome when the sentence was pronounced.

509 May 15 1872 Tipton

THE CHARGE OF CRUELTY TO A HORSE At the Wednesbury Police Court, yesterday, before Mr I Spooner, Stipendiary, **John Sheldon**, boatman, came up on adjournment from a previous court, charged with having worked a horse while it was in an unsound condition; and Joseph Harris, contractor (who had been summoned at the instance of the Stipendiary) was charged with causing the horse to be used, he being its owner. Mr Ebsworth appeared for Harris, and Mr Sheldon for the defendant of the same name. When the case was last before the court, Sheldon pleaded that, against his own wish and by the direction of his master, Harris, he took the horse out; and he now repeated the statement. On behalf of Harris, it was stated that the hairless condition of the horse was due to its having been treated with bacon fat, containing salt and saltpetre, for the removal of vermin, and that this had caused the hair to fall off. Thomas Gough, farrier, Walsall, deposed that the horse was fit to draw in a manure cart, which it was doing at the time Police-constable Hobbs saw it; and Charles Harris deposed to treating the horse with bacon fat. The Stipendiary fined Harris £2 and costs, and Sheldon 10s and costs.

510 May 18 1872

KINGS HEATH POLICE COURT At the Kings Heath Police Court, yesterday, before Messrs T Lane, F Elkington, and J F Swinburne, **John Flavell**, labourer and boatman, of Northfield, was summoned for creating a disturbance, during divine service, in a chapel at Bartley Green. Mr Warne, schoolmaster, said that on the 30th of April the defendant entered the chapel while Mr Wild, the minister, was preaching. He made several loud remarks in answer to the preacher's statements, and also told his wife, who was sitting by him, in very offensive language, to go home and get his supper. Mr Wild discontinued his discourse, and persuaded the defendant to leave, which he did.

Defendant did not appear, but the service of the summons having been proved, the Bench imposed a fine of 20s and costs, or in default a month's imprisonment.

511 June 7 1872 Wolverhampton

CHARGED WITH MANSLAUGHTER On Wednesday, a boatman was sent on from Wolverhampton to Chester, charged with manslaughter. He is one **Matthew Edwards**, alias "Big Mat", aged 28, who works for the Shropshire Union Railway and Canal Company, and has been lately residing at Bridgford. In August last he was, with others, in a public house in Queen Street, Chester, when a dispute arose, and outside the house one Thomas Simpson, a blacksmith, was kicked to death. At the inquest a verdict of manslaughter was returned against the prisoner, who is alleged to have been one of the assailants. He was arrested in a public house in Canal Street late on Tuesday night.

512 June 22 1872 Birmingham Police Court

THE RECENT HIGHWAY ROBBERY AT THE HORSE FAIR John Shuttleworth (17), gas burner turner, court, 5 house, Bow Street, was charged, on remand, with stealing £37 10s from the person of **William Woodfield**, boatman, Selly Oak, on the 23rd May, in company with three others not in custody. Mr Cheston defended. On the Whitsuntide Fair Thursday, the prosecutor was in the Horse Fair, between six and seven o'clock, and when he was near to the top of Essex Street, four men seized him. One of them put his hand in prosecutor's pocket, and on the hand being withdrawn, the prosecutor caught hold of a portion of the purse and his assailant the other end. The prisoner then took hold of the prosecutor by the throat and made him loose the purse, and all four of the men ran away. Whilst the man who had the purse was getting away, the prosecutor tore his coat. The four men each took different directions, and so escaped. After the men had gone, prosecutor missed £37 10s. Previous to being seized prosecutor did not see either of the men. He knew the prisoner well by sight, having met him many times in the market. In cross-examination the prosecutor said he had but little to drink during the day. He had not shown his money to anyone whilst in the Fair. He saw the prisoner in the middle of a crowd in Bromsgrove Street, but he could not get near to him, and the prisoner ultimately escaped over a wall. William Green said he saw the prosecutor seized by the four men, and the prisoner throw him on to the ground. Detective-sergeant Mountford said he received the prisoner into custody on Wednesday last, and, on charging him with robbing Woodfield in the Horse Fair, the prisoner said he knew nothing about it. He also said he ran after those who robbed the prosecutor and shouted, "Stop thief!" Mr Cheston then addressed the court for the defence. Emma Shuttleworth, mother of the prisoner was called. She said that her son was carrying a stall for her in the Horse Fair, Thursday, when they heard someone shout, "Stop thief!" He gave her the things he was carrying, and went to see what was the matter. She next saw him at home in the course of an hour, and he continued at his work since that day up to when he was arrested. Ann Audley said after one of the men had been chased and escaped, the prisoner met her and the prosecutor in Bromsgrove Street, when the prisoner said, "They have gone, safe enough; what have you lost, old man?" The prosecutor then said to prisoner, "You are one of them," and laid hold of him. Two persons then came up and told the prosecutor that the prisoner was not the man, and then the prosecutor loosed him and let him go about his business. Rebecca Bannister gave corroborative evidence. The prisoner was committed for trial at the next Warwick Assizes.

513 July 1 1872 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

ISSUING COUNTERFEIT COIN **Joseph Holden** (34), boatman, was indicted for having, on the 24th April, unlawfully and knowingly uttered counterfeit coins. Mr Saint prosecuted. On the evening of the 24th April the prisoner went to the prosecutor's public house in Summer Hill Street, called for a jug of ale, and when it was supplied tendered in payment a florin. The change was handed to the prisoner, and directly afterwards a woman came in. The prisoner asked her to drink, and she then left. The prisoner followed her out, leaving part of the ale in the jug. Witness then examined the florin, and discovered that it was a base coin. The prisoner entered the house a

second time, was supplied with more ale, and tendered a shilling, which was also bad. A policeman was then called and the prisoner was given into custody. The prisoner was further charged with passing a counterfeit shilling on the 20th April, at the Barley Mow, Latimer Street South, and also with uttering a bad coin to a butcher, named Paste, in Hope Street. The Jury found the prisoner guilty, but recommended him to mercy on account of his previous good character. Sentence three months imprisonment. Mr Harris defended the prisoner.

514 July 5 1872 Wolverhampton

MAGISTERIAL At the Police Court, on Wednesday, a boatman named **Charles Cresswell**, living at Tettenhall, was sent to prison for three months for striking his wife Elizabeth, in the cabin of his boat, at Tettenhall, on Monday, in the presence of a policeman, who preferred the information.

515 July 23 1872 Birmingham Police Court

THEFT OF COAL **James Stafford** (30), boatman, Summer Row, was charged with stealing a lump of coal from a boat, the property of Messrs Everitt and Sons, Kingston Metal Works, Adderley Street. The offence was proved by Police-constable Withers, an officer in the service of the Birmingham Coal Merchants' and Consumers' Protection Society, and the prisoner, who had been previously convicted, was sent to gaol for three months.

516 July 24 1872

THE FATAL ACCIDENT IN THE CORPORATION YARD

Last evening, Dr Birt Davies, the Borough Coroner, held an inquest at the Glassmakers' Arms, Granville Street, on the bodies of **John Payne** (33), boatman, and **John Payne jun** (11), father and son, who were killed by a fall of manure in the Corporation yard, on Saturday evening last. - George Jakeman, residing at 11 Court, Holliday Street, stated that about six o'clock on Saturday evening, he, with the elder Payne, and another man, named John Underhill, were engaged in removing night-soil from a heap about 15 feet in height, lying on the wharf in the Corporation yard. The manure was very adhesive stuff, and it projected about two feet over the top. The elder Payne was excavating the soil at the bottom of the heap, to be shovelled into barrows, and his son was standing near him. Witness was shovelling night-soil into a barrow, when about ten tons of the soil fell from the top of the heap, and he narrowly escaped being buried. The Paynes and Underhill were completely buried. He shovelled near to where he heard groans, and with the assistance of a number of other men Underhill was got out. His right leg was broken, and one of his arms was badly crushed. He was conveyed to the Queens Hospital. In the course of ten minutes the two Paynes were got out. They were quite dead. The medical evidence proved that death was caused by suffocation. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned by the Jury.

517 July 27 1872 Wolverhampton

THE STORM A boatman, named **Benjamin Foster**, residing in Sloppy Lane, Wolverhampton, was in charge of his horse and boat travelling between Coseley and Wolverhampton, when he was knocked down and rendered insensible by lightning. The horse, affrighted, leaped into the canal, and was rescued with difficulty. Foster was picked up by the occupants of the boat, and conveyed home. His injuries are not serious.

518 August 31 1872

HANLEY On Thursday an inquest was held on the body of **Wm Foster**, a boatman, 60 years of age, from Wolverhampton. The deceased was navigating his boat from Stoke to Longport on Tuesday, and when in the Etruria Locks he fell into the water and was drowned. A verdict of "Death from drowning" was returned.

519 September 3 1872 Birmingham Police Court

POSSESSING BAD MONEY **Joseph Morrell** (54), boatman, No 1 Mill Street, was charged with

having several counterfeit florins in his possession, with intent to utter them; and **James Matthews** (18), boatman, William Street North, was charged with being in company with Morrell for a similar purpose. Mr G S Gam prosecuted, and Mr Hemmant defended. A short time ago the prisoner Matthews passed some base half crowns at Cannock. Information was given to the police in that town, and Police-sergeant Caleb Hackney, Muckley Corner, traced Matthews to Birmingham. On Thursday last, Hackney and Police-constables Kibler and Baker went to the house of Morrell, and there found the two prisoners in bed. A waistcoat was hanging over the bedstead rail, and on the pockets being searched two base half crowns and a portion of a leaf of the New Testament were found. The room was searched, and a piece of paper which corresponded with that found in the waistcoat was found. Nine base florins were afterwards found hidden on the premises. The waistcoat was proved to be the property of Matthews. It was stated that Morrell was seen to hide the florins on the part of the premises where they were found. After the prisoners were charged, Matthews stated to the court, "The old man knows nothing about it, I put them there myself". The prisoners were remanded for a week, in order that the Mint might be communicated with, in reference to the matter.

520 September 3 1872 Wolverhampton

SERIOUS ASSAULT At the Borough Police Court, yesterday, a boatman named **Edward Beddows**, and a woman named Wallbanks, were charged with cutting and wounding Harriet Robbins, the wife of a militiaman, now at Aldershot. The prosecutrix stated that on Sunday night she was going to her home in Old Mill Street, when the prisoners, who are neighbours, began to use abusive language to her, and called her "Pottery Harriet". The prosecutrix sought to avoid them, but the woman first struck her, and then the man knocked her into the gutter. Beddows, she said, afterwards struck her over the eye and nose with a black hafted knife, and would have killed her, but that a bystander pulled him away. The prosecutrix was attended by Dr Lowe, who yesterday stated that the wound in the face was inflicted with a knife, or some sharp instrument, and that the blow might have proved fatal. The evidence of the prosecutrix, however, was scarcely reliable; and the prisoners having sworn that no knife was used, the Magistrates dealt with the case as a common assault, and sent them to prison for three months.

521 September 26 1872 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A BOAT HORSE **Joseph Hewitt** (32), boatman, Selly Oak, was charged with working a horse while in an unfit state. Mr Francis, officer for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, stated that from information received he went on to the banks of the Grand Junction Canal, about eleven o'clock on Wednesday morning, and found the prisoner in charge of a horse which was drawing a boat heavily laden with gas ashes. The animal was very badly spavined and could scarcely put its feet to the ground. Prisoner said he was willing to have the horse destroyed, and on this condition he was discharged.

522 October 15 1872 Birmingham Police Court

THE MURDEROUS ASSAULT IN CONSTITUTION HILL John Hunt (20), jewellers' stamper, back 41 Ashton Road, and **John Higgins** (27), boatman, back 31 Constitution Hill, were charged with committing a violent assault on Henry Mason, gun-action filer, 14 Brearley Street West, on Saturday night, the 5th inst. Mr Fallows appeared to prosecute; Mr Cheston defended. The complainant, whose head was enveloped in bandages, stated that about eleven o'clock on Saturday night, the 5th inst, after leaving a public house, he and several others were invited to the house of Mr Flowers, back 131 Constitution Hill. They took some beer with them. He was there about a quarter of an hour, when the prisoners came in and asked for some beer. The glass was in use, and Higgins said he would drink out of the bottle. Higgins's wife subsequently came in and asked her husband to go home. Witness remarked it was time all good men were at home. Higgins then commenced a row, and knocked witness down. The lights were extinguished, and witness was kicked and struck on the head with some sharp instrument. He became unconscious. He was taken to the General

Hospital, where he remained until Friday. Several witnesses were called for the prosecution, and their evidence proved the assault by the prisoners; but in cross-examination by Mr Cheston they admitted certain facts in favour of Higgins. One of them said that “the man who had done the most damage had escaped”. Mr Cheston contended that the prosecutor had provoked the assault by his sarcastic remark to Higgins. The employer of Higgins gave him a very good character; and under these extenuating circumstances the Magistrates acquitted Higgins. Hunt was ordered to pay 40s and costs, or in default two months imprisonment.

523 October 29 1872 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

INCITING TO STEAL Samuel Bishop (16), boatman, was indicted for having solicited and incited William Harvey to steal a wooden box, the property of Michael Sadler, his master. Mr Soden prosecuted. The lad Harvey is an inmate of the Gun Street Industrial School, and is in the employ of Mr Sadler, optician and electrician. On the 6th of July he met the prisoner, who was formerly an inmate of the school, and he asked him (witness) to allow him to sell a small mahogany box, which he had with him, as he had had no breakfast, and would give him half the money. Witness said the box belonged to his master, and refused to give it to him. He met the prisoner a second time on the same day, and he again asked him to let him sell the box. The prisoner admitted asking the boy to let him sell the box, but said that he was not then aware that it belonged to his master. The Jury found the prisoner guilty, and he was sentenced to eight months imprisonment. There was a long list of previous convictions against the prisoner.

524 October 30 1872 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

CHARGE OF HAVING COUNTERFEIT COINS James Matthews (18), boatman and **Joseph Morral** (54), labourer, were charged with having, on the 29th of August, unlawfully and knowingly had in their possession two counterfeit half crowns and nine counterfeit florins, with intent to utter the same. Mr Carter prosecuted; the prisoner Morral was defended by Mr Buzzard. On the 29th of August Police-sergeant Hackney, Staffordshire Constabulary, went with other constables, to Morral's house for the purpose of apprehending Matthews on a charge of uttering counterfeit coin at Cannock Chase. Morral kept a lodging-house in Mill Street. Matthews was taken in charge, and witness left Police-constable Beckett behind. He returned and took Morral into custody, Police-constable Baker and Police-constable Beckett stated that, in a waistcoat belonging to Morral, which was in the room in which they found Matthews in bed, there were two counterfeit half crowns. The witness stated that while Matthews was being taken to the police station he heard the voices of a man and woman. The woman came out, followed by Morral, who had a small paper parcel in his hand. The female said, “You can put it behind there”. In the parcel, which was put behind some poles in the yard, Beckett found nine bad florins. The learned Recorder pointed out that both the prisoners were in one indictment. Mr Buzzard contended that there was no evidence that the prisoners acted in concert, and that the indictment could not be sustained. The prisoners could not be jointly indicted upon evidence of the nature given. Mr Carter said there was evidence it was a joint affair. Mr Buzzard said if the prosecution had proved anything, they had proved two offences. There was no evidence of a joint offence. The learned Recorder said that he had come to the conclusion that the objection must be sustained. If A trespassed in a field on the 1st of the month, and B on the 2nd, it was clear that A and B could not be convicted on the same count. He was of opinion that only one person could be convicted on the indictment. He thought that the indictment was good against either of the prisoners but not against both. He would not tell the learned counsel for the prosecution which prisoner he should select to proceed against, but he thought Mr Carter should tell him whether he would proceed against Morral or Matthews. Mr Carter said he would abandon the case against Matthews. The prisoner Matthews was then discharged. Mr Buzzard, for the defence, contended that an extraordinary selection had been made, Matthews having actually admitted before the Magistrates that the coins were his. Several witnesses gave Morral a good character.

525 December 21 1872 Warwickshire Winter Assizes

ANOTHER COUNTERFEIT COIN CASE **Joseph Holden** (37), boatman, was charged with passing a counterfeit shilling at Birmingham, on the 6th of November, and a counterfeit florin on the same day. Mr Carter prosecuted. Prisoner went to two public houses, called for a glass of port wine at one, and a glass of porter, in payment for which he tendered the coins mentioned. The prisoner said that the bad money was placed in his pocket by his wife's paramour, who desired to get rid of him. Mr Meadon, governor of the Birmingham Borough Gaol, said prisoner was a man of weak intellect. The Judge said he appeared such a person as would be likely to be imposed upon. The Jury acquitted him, and the Judge said it would be a good thing if he could be placed under surveillance.

526 January 1 1873 Staffordshire Epiphany Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **Arthur Smith** (37), boatman, stealing on the 13th September 1872, at Pelsall, one iron block, 33 yards of boatline, and other articles, the property of Thomas Holder; six months imprisonment.

527 January 18 1873 Stoke

PUSHING A WOMAN IN THE CANAL **Joseph Hill**, boatman, was charged at the Tunstall Police Court, on Thursday, with having assaulted a woman, named Sarah Brabin. On the previous afternoon the prisoner was in a boat on the canal, near Messrs Copeland's works, at Stoke, and he was seen by Mr Bailey, the relieving officer, to push the complainant, who lived with him in the boat, into the canal. She went under water, and when she rose to the surface again prisoner seized her by the hair and struck her several times. The complainant was assisted out of the water by another woman. Prisoner was sent to gaol for two months.

528 January 28 1873 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBING THE BIRMINGHAM GAS COMPANY **William Bustin** (21), boatman, Icknield Street West, James Coton (18), Duke Street, brassfounder, and Edward Timms (14), Loveday Street, iron caster, were charged with stealing 3cwt of coal from a boat on the canal, near the Aston Road Bridge. The coal belonged to the Birmingham Gas Company. Mr Cheston defended Bustin. Coton was sent to prison for six weeks, and Timms for twenty one days, and five years in a Reformatory. Bustin received a good character, and was discharged. Coton and Timms had been previously convicted.

529 February 6 1873

RAILWAY FATALITY NEAR TIPTON A boatman, named **William Whitehouse**, of Bilston, was crossing the London and North-Western Railway, at Bloomfield, when he was knocked down by the 10.55 express train from Wolverhampton, and instantly killed. The body of deceased was horribly mutilated, different parts having been severed and scattered about the line. The remains were taken to the Violin Inn, where an inquest will be held in due course.

530 February 14 1873 Walsall

GROSS CASE OF NEGLECT OF WORK At the Guildhall, yesterday, **John Dyass**, boatman, was charged with neglect of work. On Friday last the defendant was sent by James Pumphery, steerer to the Walsall Iron Company, to fetch a boat load of coal from the Rowley Park Colliery, 10s being given to him to pay the canal dues. On Saturday afternoon he returned without the boat, which he had abandoned, and demanded his wages, at the same time offering 7s 6d in lieu of the 10s, which he had spent. In consequence of his leaving the boat unprotected some two tons of coal were stolen from it. He was ordered to pay 20s and costs, the alternative being one months imprisonment.

531 February 17 1873 Birmingham Police Court

THE VIOLENT ASSAULT ON THE POLICE **Philip Matthews** (24), boatman, Forge Street, was charged with being concerned with others (sentenced on Thursday to four months imprisonment) with assaulting Police-constables Gardner and Bodrish, at Holt Street wharf. Mr Kynnersley said he did not see any reason for making any difference in the sentences, and therefore ordered Matthews to be imprisoned four months.

COWARDLY ATTACK ON A WOMAN Thomas Donahoe (19), galvaniser, 4 Thomas Street, and **George Truman** (21) boatman, 11 Thomas Street, were charged with being drunk and assaulting Sarah Thornwell and Police-constables Castle and Seethons. Mrs Thornwell met the prisoners on Friday afternoon in Lichfield Street. They appeared to be drunk, and Donahoe purposely knocked against her. She asked for an explanation, and said that if she could see a policeman she would give him into custody. He then struck her a violent blow upon the mouth, and then he and his companion ran away. Police-constable Seethons took Donahoe into custody, and Truman attempted to rescue him, saying that he would not let a "pal" of his be arrested. Both prisoners had been previously convicted. Donahoe was sentenced to six weeks imprisonment, and Truman was fined 20s and costs, with the alternative of one months imprisonment with hard labour.

532 February 28 1873 Warwickshire Spring Assizes

SHIRT STEALING AT COVENTRY **Richard Hunter** (54), boatman, was convicted of stealing two shirts, at Coventry, the property of William Schofield. The shirts were taken from a line in a garden in the Drapers' Fields, and afterwards pledged. The Jury found prisoner guilty. The Clerk of Arraignment asked if he had not been previously convicted? Prisoner: Yes, but not before a Lord. [Laughter]. Sentence six months imprisonment with hard labour.

533 March 8 1873 Wolverhampton Quarter Sessions

ROBBERY FROM A BEERHOUSE **Joseph Beddows** (26), boatman, was convicted of stealing a woollen shirt, on the 31st December, the property of John Hammond. Mr A Underhill prosecuted. The shirt had been left in a back room of the prosecutor's house, which is called the Brewery Stores, and situate in Horsley Fields. Shortly after the prisoner's departure from the house the shirt was missed, and it was subsequently found in the possession of his paramour, who was endeavouring to pledge it at Simon Aaron's, in Berry Street. Sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour, and afterwards to be under the supervision of the police for five years.

534 March 13 1873 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL **John Wood** (38), boatman, New Road, Wordsley, was sentenced to fourteen days hard labour for stealing about one cwt of coal from a boat on the canal, near Dartmouth Street, the property of Mr Councillor Stone. Mr Stone did not press the case, but prosecuted as a warning to others, as some tons of coal per week were stolen.

535 April 1 1873 Birmingham Police Court

AN IMPUDENT ROBBERY FROM THE THEATRE ROYAL **Thomas Carey** (18), boatman, Suffolk Street, was charged with being in company with two others, and stealing £5 from John Jones, the money-taker at the Theatre Royal. The prisoners were remanded till today, when the other two prisoners will be brought up.

536 May 23 1873 Wolverhampton

A verdict of "Found drowned" was yesterday recorded by the Coroner's Jury who investigated the circumstances attending the death of the boatman **Wood**, whose corpse had been taken from the canal, under the circumstances mentioned in the *Post*.

537 May 23 1873 Wolverhampton Quarter Sessions

STEALING £21 **Thomas Aden** (50), boatman, was indicted for stealing £21, on the 20th March,

the money of William Bellis, coal merchant, Little Moor Street. Mr Smith prosecuted, and Mr J Underhill defended, The prisoner was employed by the prosecutor to convey coal, per the Birmingham Canal, from Cannock Chase, and the money required for the purpose was always advanced to the prisoner prior to his starting on his journey. On the day in question, the prosecutor handed over to Aden the £21 for this purpose. The prisoner went to the colliery, paid a debt amounting to £12 19s 9d due on his own account, but did not return with the boat of coal for which he had received the money from his employer. Prisoner's excuse was that he had been robbed. Mr Underhill contended, firstly that the prisoner was no servant of the prosecutor, and that therefore he could not be convicted on account of the indictment charging him with larceny as a servant; secondly, that the prisoner could not be convicted as a bailee, because the breach of contract took place at Cannock; and thirdly, that the contract of bailment was to purchase coal, and not bring back the money, and consequently the prisoner could not be convicted of larceny as a bailee, because the prisoner was not bound to return the money but to give the value in coal, and that the bailment was not in force until the coal was obtained. In summing up, the Recorder said that the Jury were required only to give a substantial affirmative or negative as to whether they believed the story of the robbery, If they should doubt the truthfulness of the story about the robbery, he should direct them to return a verdict of guilty, and reserve all the points of law that had been so ably and properly urged for decision by a higher court. After a short consultation The Jury returned a verdict of guilty, and the Recorder granted a "case" on the points of law, and reserved the sentence.

538 June 11 1873

THROWING BOYS INTO A CANAL

Yesterday, at the Salford Borough Court, a boatman named **Richard Walker**, in the employ of Mr Wilson, manufacturing chemist, near Bolton, was charged with throwing two lads, named John Yates and Henry Baker, into the Bury and Bolton Canal, with intention to drown them. The evidence showed that the lads were in a boat, near Ordsall Lane, fishing with their caps. Whilst there, the prisoner jumped into the boat, and pushed them both in the canal. One of the boys was taken out by a man who jumped into the water after him, and when he reached the towing-path he began to vomit blood. The water was seven feet deep. Yates, another of the boys, was sinking for the third time when rescued, and appeared as if he had been thrown against the side of the lock. The prisoner, when remonstrated with, said, "Let the young hounds drown; I am plagued out of my life by their throwing stones". He was committed for trial, but admitted to bail.

539 July 1 1873

Staffordshire Midsummer Sessions

THEFT AT CHASETOWN **Henry Baker** (20), boatman, found guilty of stealing a shirt on the 10th April 1873, at Chasetown, was sentenced to six months imprisonment, and two years police supervision.

540 July 4 1873

FATAL ACCIDENT At about twenty minutes past nine o'clock on Wednesday night, as **Thomas Friend** (22), boatman, Heathmill Lane, Birmingham, was assisting his father in passing a boat through the canal locks at the Five Ways, he fell into the water and was drowned.

541 July 7 1873

Birmingham Borough Quarter Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **Henry Carey** (19), boatman, for embezzling 2s 8d, the moneys of John Firkins, his master, was sentenced to eight months imprisonment, with one years police supervision.

542 July 14 1873

AFFRAY BETWEEN BOATMEN AND POLICEMEN

About one o'clock yesterday morning, Police-constable John Blood, of the fifth division of Birmingham Police, and Police-constable Henry French, of the second division, with a prisoner, **Abraham Smart** (24), boatman, of Dogdale Street, Dudley Road, went to the General Hospital

suffering from wounds received in an affray which had taken place an hour previous in the Dudley Road. Blood had an ugly wound on the left eye, and other facial injuries. French had a wound on one of his fingers, and contusions on his legs and body. Their prisoner's injuries were of a more serious nature. He had an extensive scalp wound and an incised wound on the elbow joint of the right arm. From the statements of the constables it appears that about half past eleven o'clock Smart was in the Dudley Road, using obscene language to his wife. Police-constable French, who was passing on his beat, remonstrated with him, and requested him to "move on". Smart refused to go away, and swore at the constable. An altercation then ensued, and Smart, without any provocation, struck French a blow in the face with his clenched fist. The latter drew his staff, and struck Smart on the head. They closed, and a hard struggle took place. A large and demonstrative crowd congregated, and Smart's brother, Absolom, attempted a rescue. He savagely attacked French, who, but for the arrival of Police-constables Vale and Blood would have been overpowered. The mob aided the brothers by pelting the constables with mud and stones. Absolom Smart effected his escape, and Abraham Smart was not secured until after he had violently assaulted Police-constable Blood. As he was being taken to the Kenion Street Police Station, Police-constable Vale again noticed **Absolom Smart** in the crowd, and at once apprehended him. His brother and Police-constables Blood and French were so severely injured that they were obliged to go to the Hospital. Abraham Smart was detained in the institution, but the constables, after their wounds were dressed, were able to leave. The case will be investigated by the Magistrates today. Abraham Smart alleges that he was first assaulted by Police-constable French, without any provocation, and that afterwards Police-constable Blood stabbed him in the arm with his cutlass.

543 July 15 1873 Birmingham Police Court

THE AFFRAY IN DUDLEY ROAD **Absolom Smart**, boatman, Dugdale Street, Dudley Road, was charged with assaulting Police-constable Henry French, and attempting to rescue a prisoner from his custody. Prisoner took a prominent part in an affray which occurred in the Dudley Road on Saturday night, reported in yesterday's *Post*. His brother, whilst resisting the police, received injuries which necessitated his removal to the General Hospital, where he now remains. It was proved that prisoner incited a crowd to throw stones, which injured the police, and attempted to rescue his brother from Police-constable French, whom he also assaulted. Prisoner was committed to gaol for one month.

544 July 16 1873 Birmingham Police Court

PASSING BASE COIN **George Rivers** (25), Adam Street, boatman, was charged on remand with passing two counterfeit half crowns, at the Glasscutters' Arms, Princip Street, on the 4th instant, under circumstances already reported. The prisoner, for whom Mr Cheston appeared, pleaded not guilty, and was remanded till Monday.

545 July 21 1873 Staffordshire Adjourned Sessions

IRON ROBBERY AT BILSTON **Edward Turner** (22), boatman, and **Samuel Hillman** (26), boatman, both pleaded guilty to a charge of stealing a quantity of pig iron at Bilston, the property of William Molyneux and others, and were sentenced each to six months imprisonment. Another indictment, charging them with stealing a quantity of iron, the property of the Midland Railway Company, was preferred, and to this also they pleaded guilty, and were further sentenced to one months imprisonment with hard labour.

546 July 21 1873 Worcestershire Assizes

ROBBERY OF COPPER INGOTS AT SPON LANE **James Jordan** (29), boatman, was indicted for stealing 120lbs of copper, the property of the London and North Western Railway Company, at Spon Lane. Mr Amphlett appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Underhill defended the prisoner. The Jury found the prisoner guilty, and he was sent to gaol for six months, with hard labour.

547 August 16 1873 Kingswinford

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS At the same Court [Brierley Hill Police Court], **Samuel Merchant**, boatman, was fined 40s and costs, for beating and kicking a donkey. The defendant heavily belaboured the animal with a rope having upon it several knots, and when tired of this savagely kicked the animal.

548 September 11 1873 Birmingham Police Court

COAL STEALING **William Vann** (24), boatman, Forge Street, Aston Road, was charged with stealing about 3/4cwt of coal from a boat, the property of his master, Mr Charles Williams, of Bordesley Street Wharf. The prisoner pleaded guilty. It was stated that he had previously borne a good character. He was sentenced to fourteen days imprisonment, Mr Maunder defended the prisoner.

549 September 13 1873 Birmingham Police Court

JUVENILE THIEVES James Peters (16), brasscaster, Summer Hill Street; **William Pevey** (15), boatman, Pope Street; John Macdonald (12), brassfiler, Barr Street; and Benjamin Briggs (15), tube worker, Summer Hill Street, were found guilty of stealing a quantity of old iron, value 10s, the property of John Doody. Briggs and Peters were sent to gaol for three months each; Pevey was sent to prison for fourteen days, and five years to a reformatory school; and Macdonald was ordered to have a whipping and four days imprisonment.

550 October 1 1873 Warwick

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE At the Court House, yesterday, a man named **Robert Harkell**, boatman, residing in Saltisford, was brought up in custody, before Mr E Dodd, charged with attempting to destroy himself, by shooting, on the previous evening. It appeared that between seven and eight o'clock on Monday night a woman, passing near the Cape of Good Hope public house, heard the report of a gun, and, on going towards the stables, saw a man extended along the ground, with a gun lying across him. She raised an alarm, when several persons came up and picked up the prisoner. An examination of his person showed that the only injury he had sustained was a gunshot wound in one of his cheeks, from which blood was flowing freely. The charge, having taken an upwards direction, had, fortunately, caused but little mischief. Prisoner was remanded.

551 October 1 1873 Willenhall

MAGISTERIAL At the Police Court, on Monday, before Messrs Gough and Wilson Lloyd, a boatman named **Wm Tonks**, was charged by another boatman, named **Wm Tombs**, with stealing £28 in gold. On Saturday last Tonks, who lives at Gloucester, was loading his boat with coal, at Essington Wood. Whilst he went to Wednesbury and Tipton he left the prisoner in charge of the boat. Upon returning, on the following day, he found that a cupboard in the cabin of the boat had been broken open, and the amount in question taken out. The prisoner was near the boat at the time of the discovery of the theft, and upon being charged with the robbery denied the charge; and upon being apprehended by Police-constable Titterton, he reiterated his innocence. The police applied for a remand, which was granted.

552 October 6 1873

SHOCKING DISCOVERY AT BIRMINGHAM

Late on Friday night, whilst two night-soil men were engaged in emptying a midden, in No 6 Court, Oxford Street, Birmingham, they discovered the body of a man in an advanced state of decomposition. The stench was so great that the man who was in the midden at the time was taken away in a fainting state. The body was subsequently removed to an out-house at the Acorn Inn, and after it had been partly cleansed and disinfectants applied it was identified as that of **Thomas Bishop**, son of Mrs Bishop, corn dealer, Cheapside, more familiarly known amongst his companions as "Tommy Don't Care". It was dressed in a loose shirt, cord trousers, which were

fastened up by a strap, and a worn jacket and coat. The feet were encased in clogs, but one of these was broken off at the ankle joint by the fork of the labourer who discovered the body. There appears to be some injury to the right temple and nose, but whether this was caused by the night-soil man or is the result of violence is entirely a matter of conjecture. There is, however, a stain resembling blood on the shirt. The deceased was a boatman, and is said to have been much addicted to drinking. He lodged in Bordesley Street, with a man who was generally known as "German John". About six weeks ago deceased was drinking in the Black Horse public house, at the back of which the midden is situated, and went out about two o'clock in the afternoon, in company with another coalheaver, nicknamed "Collier", nothing having since been heard of either of them. It was generally supposed by the friends of the deceased that he had gone to Liverpool, and as he was often away for several weeks at a time with boats, in different parts of the country, no anxiety was felt about him. "Collier", however, has likewise been absent from Birmingham since the day when the two were drinking together, but it is believed that he is now engaged in loading boats in the Cannock Chase district. It was at first thought that the deceased had been murdered, but it is more than probable that, being in drink, he fell over the midden wall, which is only about two feet high, and was suffocated in the night-soil. The midden is situated in a close, crowded court, and emits a stench which fills the atmosphere. It has no covering of any sort, and any stranger going into the foul den in the dark would probably plunge head foremost into a bed of night-soil six or eight feet deep; while a drunken man would be equally liable to share the same fate in the day time. It is stated that a drunken person did fall into the place some time ago, and was rescued in a deplorable state. The last time it was emptied the stench was so pungent that one man was carried home senseless. The Sewage Committee have plenty of work on their hands in removing these filthy abominations from the town, and the sooner they are abolished the better. On Saturday morning the body was identified by the deceased's mother and two brothers. The police are making enquiries into the case, but there is every reason to believe that the occurrence was accidental.

553 October 13 1873

SEVERE ASSAULT IN A PUBLIC HOUSE On Saturday a brutal assault was committed on a boatman, named **Elijah Brewington**, aged twenty three, belonging to Abingdon. He arrived in Birmingham in charge of a boat, and went to the Vaughton Arms, Fazeley Street, where a man provoked a quarrel with him, and on going outside he was knocked down, savagely kicked, and otherwise maltreated. He was removed to the General Hospital, where it was found that he was injured internally, in addition to having sustained a fracture of the shoulder blade.

554 October 25 1873 Birmingham Police Court

NEGLECT OF FAMILIES **William Day**, boatman, Kenion Street, was charged with neglecting his wife and family, on the 6th of October last. He was sentenced to six months hard labour. Enoch Gadd, a button-turner, was also sent to gaol for a similar offence.

555 October 30 1873 Birmingham Police Court

"A TERROR TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD" **James Parker** (17), boatman, 4 Scotland Yard, and **John Davie** (25), boatman, 146 Great Tindal Street, were charged with assaulting Police-constables Newman and Henry Horton; Davie was also charged with attempting to rescue a prisoner. About eight o'clock on Tuesday night Police-constable Newman took a prisoner into custody in Great Tindal Street, when the prisoners, in company with a number of others, attempted to rescue him. Horton went to the assistance of the other officer, and Davie threw a brick-bat at him, which struck him on the head, causing the blood to flow freely. Davie, it appeared, has an iron arm, and he belaboured both officers with this whilst the other roughs showered upon them stones and brickbats. The constables were compelled to retire into a public house to escape further violence. Superintendent Buckler said prisoners were two of a gang of roughs who were a terror to the neighbourhood of Great Tindal Street. It was only the other day that a policeman was violently

assaulted there. The man with the iron arm especially distinguished himself. Prisoners were each sent to gaol for six months for the assault on Newman, and three months each for assaulting Horton.

556 October 31 1873 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **John Hall** (17), boatman, Rich Green, was sentenced to a months hard labour for cruelty to a horse on the canal, on Wednesday. The prisoner struck the animal across the head with an iron key used in unlocking the "locks".

557 November 13 1873 Aston Petty Sessions

ROBBING AN EMPLOYER **George Hall** (17), boatman, was charged with stealing a slop and a jacket, the property of Edwin Price, his master. It appeared that prisoner had been with a boat for six weeks, and yesterday morning he decamped, taking with him the articles named. He was subsequently apprehended by Police-constable Wood, wearing the slop and jacket. He was summarily committed to gaol for three months.

558 November 21 1873 Walsall

NARROW ESCAPE OF A DRUNKARD On Wednesday, at the Guildhall, Thomas Humpage, gun-lock forger, Darlaston, was charged with drunkenness. On Monday night the prisoner was on his way home, "very particularly drunk", when he fell into the canal at the Pleck, and would in all probability have lost his life had not a boatman, named **John Mann**, of Upton-on-Severn, who was sleeping in his cabin close by, gone to his rescue. He was admonished and discharged.

559 November 25 1873 Oldbury County Court

CLAIM FOR THE ALLEGED SINKING OF A BOAT **Richard Biddle**, boatman, West Bromwich, sued Charles Smith and Thomas Greenway, scrap iron dealers, Gornal, to recover £30, the value of a boat alleged to have been damaged and sunk by the defendants. Mr Shakespeare appeared for the plaintiff; and Mr Young, barrister, instructed by Mr Stokes, of Dudley, for the defendants. Mr Shakespeare stated that, some time in November, the plaintiff's boat was hired by the defendants, to remove a quantity of iron from the Oldbury furnaces to the defendants' place of business at Tipton. The plaintiff was to receive £1 a journey. The boat was loaded by the defendants' workmen, but, owing to their carelessness and negligence in loading, the boat was damaged and sunk in the basin of the canal with the furnaces. The plaintiff said that he bought the boat about four years ago for £70, and about a month before it had sunk he had refused an offer of £30 for the boat. He considered that the boat had been broken through the middle by the workmen in attempting to raise it out of the water, having only used "baulks" at each end. In cross-examination, plaintiff said that the weight of the iron in the bottom of the boat had contracted the sides. The loaders had neglected to insert the beams which are used to keep up the sides of the boat. A witness named John Parks said that he saw the defendant's men emptying iron into the boat from a cart, which he believed would be sufficient to cause a leakage. He had used the plaintiff's boat for conveying bricks, and had conveyed as many as thirty tons at a time. He was of opinion that the boat was sound. Other witnesses were called to speak as to the condition of the boat. The evidence on the other side was that the boat was rotten and leaked. Several witnesses swore that they saw water, eight or nine inches deep, in the boat while it was being loaded. The witnesses denied that the iron was emptied out of a cart into the boat, but merely upon the towing-path, and was afterwards carefully placed in the boat. Only about twenty tons of iron was put in the boat, whilst the plaintiff represented that it would carry thirty five tons. His Honour said that it was a case in which it was very difficult to come to a satisfactory decision. The strongest evidence for the plaintiff was that of Parks, but he could not implicitly rely upon his evidence, because it was possible he might have been mistaken as to whether the iron was emptied into the boat or upon the towing-path, as alleged by the other side. He should, therefore, non-suit the parties; plaintiff to pay the costs of the case.

560 December 16 1873 Leamington

ROBBERY OF £45 On Sunday afternoon, a boatman, named **Webb**, who was passing through Leamington, had a purse, containing £45, stolen from his cabin, while he was absent posting a letter. **Edward Smart**, a native of Ledbury, who was left in charge of the boat, could not be found when Webb returned, and he is suspected of the robbery.

561 January 7 1874 Staffordshire Epiphany Sessions

WOUNDING AT MILTON John Whitton (30), miner, Charles Nicklin (19), miner, **Joseph Mountford** (31), boatman and **George Tomkinson** (22), boatman, were indicted for unlawfully wounding and inflicting grievous bodily harm on Samuel Bennet, on December 20 1873, at Milton, near Stoke. Mr Bosanquet prosecuted, and Mr J R Rose defended the accused, who with the prosecutor were drinking at the New Inn. Prosecutor missed thirteen or fourteen shillings, and said so, on which the four prisoners assaulted him. The defence was that Bennet was the aggressor. Mountford was acquitted, and the others, being found guilty of a common assault, were sentenced to nine months imprisonment.

562 January 9 1874 Wolverhampton Quarter Sessions

DEFERRED SENTENCE ON A BOATMAN **Thomas Aden** (50), boatman, was brought up for sentence, indicted for stealing, on the 20th March 1873, £21, the money of his employer, William Bellis. The learned Recorder said that the prisoner was tried in that court, in May last, for robbing his master, under circumstances of great aggravation. He had been entrusted by the prosecutor with the amount in question, and, after fraudulently appropriating the money, had falsely represented that he had been attacked and the money forcibly taken from him. The counsel who defended the prisoner had raised several legal objections, which had been decided in a superior court against Aden, and he should now sentence him to twelve months hard labour, the sentence, owing to the prisoner having been in gaol since his commitment, to date from May 22 1873.

563 January 19 1874 Birmingham Police Court

SUSPICIOUS CASE **Henry Tipper** (20), boatman, court, St Vincent Street, was charged with being in company with another man, not arrested, and having in his possession 3cwt of old iron, supposed to have been stolen. Mr Cheston appeared on behalf of the prisoner. The officer in charge of the case said it was supposed that the iron had been stolen from Edgbaston Railway Station. The prisoner was remanded.

564 February 19 1874 Tipton

SAVAGE ASSAULT ON A POLICEMAN At the Police Court yesterday, **Isaac Davis**, boatman, Gloucester, was fined 40s and costs for an assault on Police-constable Bird. The defendant knocked the officer down, and then bumped his head on the ground several times.

565 March 21 1874 Birmingham Police Court

SAVAGE ASSAULT **John Hurt** (23), a boatman, residing in Bagot Street, was charged with violently assaulting Ann Haynes with a strap and buckle, and also with assaulting Fanny Haynes, a little child. It was proved that the prisoner had struck the child, and when the other complainant went to his house to expostulate with him for so doing he hit her with the buckle end of a belt, causing the blood to flow from her forehead. He also struck her a severe blow with his fist. The prisoner said that the woman Haynes had called him foul names, but he was sentenced to two months hard labour.

566 May 11 1874 West Bromwich Police Court

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF PIG IRON Thomas Evans, and his sister, Elizabeth Raybone, a married woman, living at Great Bridge, were charged with stealing and receiving between four and five tons of pig iron, belonging to the London and North Western and the Shropshire Union Railway

and Canal Company. **Edward Barnett**, a boatman in the employ of the company, stated that on the previous Wednesday he loaded about eleven tons of Ferry Hill pig iron into a boat in an arm of the canal near Albion railway station. On the following morning, about seven o'clock, he found the boat in the main channel of the canal, and that several tons of iron had been removed. Afterwards, witness went with Police-sergeant Smith to a ruined place called the Old Mill, at Great Bridge. The prisoners occupied a house adjoining the ruins, and the premises extended to the canal. Witness and the officer entered the house of the prisoners, and the officer told the woman that they wanted to see what pig iron they had got on the premises. She replied that they had not got any. Barnett and the officer searched the premises, and first found a cart, which had apparently conveyed pig iron only a short time previously. Having procured a lighted candle, they searched the old mill, and found fourteen or twenty pigs behind some bags in a place where the scrap iron and rags and bones were kept. In another place they found nearly two tons of pigs that had been broken up. A heavy iron hammer was produced, as being the probable instrument with which the pigs were broken. Mr Stokes, of Dudley, who defended, said that the prisoners were neither the owners nor the tenants of the property, and, as there was nothing to connect them with the robbery, he submitted that there was no case made out by the prosecution. Eventually, the Magistrates decided to adjourn the case for a week, for the landlord to be called to give evidence as to by whom the house is tenanted.

567 June 12 1874

NEWS OF THE DAY For every personal wrong the law provides, in theory, at least, a possible remedy, but an exception must apparently be made to this general rule in the case of an admitted grievance which formed the subject of investigation, yesterday, at the Birmingham County Court, A canal boatman of the name of **Cox** brought an action against another boatman named **Twigg**, to recover the sum of £1 damages, incurred through the “wrongful representations” of the latter, under the following novel circumstances. A short time since, Cox and Twigg, who are in the employment of the same coal merchant, took their boats to a wharf in the vicinity of the Danby Hall Company's colliery for the purpose of loading them with coal. In due course, Cox, as the first arrival, was entitled, according to local rule, to have his boat loaded first – a right of no small importance to boatmen who work “by the job”, in times of strike and scarcity like the present; but the artful Twigg conceived a plan by which to secure the coveted precedence for himself, and by means of this device succeeded in playing Jacob to the Esau of his comrade without even affording the latter the consolation of a mess of pottage. Like all brilliant ideas, that of Twigg was a very simple one, and easy of execution – easy, in fact, as lying. He proceeded to interview the clerk in charge of the wharf, and delivered a plausible message purporting to come from his master, to the effect that his (Twigg's) boat should, for special reasons, be loaded first. The clerk, believing in the genuineness of the order, gave the necessary directions for loading and dispatching the second boat first, the effect of which was to delay Cox at the wharf for an entire day, during which he was losing not only his own time, but that of his horse. For the injury caused him by this bit of sharp practice, which was modestly estimated at 20s, Cox now sued his cunning comrade. The offence was not denied, but it was contended on the part of Twigg that the misrepresentation by means of which he secured precedence did not constitute any legal fraud. Unfortunately, Mr Parry, who appeared for the plaintiff, was not prepared there and then to cite any particular case or statute directly bearing upon the point – possibly because there is none – and, as the Judge did not feel justified in adjourning the case in order that precedents might be sought, he had no alternative but to dismiss the claim and enter a verdict for the defendant. As the judgement stands, it would seem that a man may dispossess another by misrepresentation of a recognised right, representing, as in this case, substantial pecuniary value, and yet escape all legal consequences.

568 June 15 1874

Birmingham Police Court

STEALING BREAD **David Kirwan** (14), “boatman”, Wharf Street, was charged with stealing a loaf of bread from a perambulator, the property of Alexander Cooper, labourer, Bridge Street. Prisoner had been previously convicted, and he was sentenced to three months hard labour.

569 June 19 1874 Wolverhampton

DROWNED IN A CANAL At about eight o'clock yesterday morning, the body of Alfred Henry Lewis, aged ten years, and son of a Gloucester boatman, named **Levi Lewis**, was found in the Birmingham Canal, on the North Road. An inquest will be held today.

570 June 30 1874 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL **John Stokes** (70), boatman, Cliveland Street, was charged with stealing 12lbs of coal from a boat on the canal, near Snow Hill, the property of Mr Dixon. Police-constable Barratt proved the case; and the prisoner, having been previously convicted, was sentenced to one month's hard labour.

571 July 3 1874 Stoke

CRUELTY TO A HORSE At the Longton Police Court, on Tuesday, **Edward Dixon**, a boatman in the employ of the Anderton Company, was charged with cruelty to a horse, by working it while in an unfit state. Mr Scoboric (?), an officer of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, stated that he saw the defendant on the canal side at Stoke with an old black horse drawing a heavily laden barge. The horse was in wretchedly poor condition, a perfect cripple, and utterly unfit for work. It had travelled about twenty miles that day, and was quite exhausted, reeling like a drunken man. Defendant promised to have the horse destroyed, and, in consideration of this promise, he was fined 20s and costs only.

572 July 9 1874 Birmingham Police Court

COWARDLY ASSAULT ON AN OLD MAN **Samuel Brookes** (43), Digby Street, boatman, was brought up on a charge of being drunk, and assaulting T Cooper, clerk, Snow Hill Wharf. Prosecutor stated that on Tuesday night, about half past five o'clock, he was in his office at Snow Hill Wharf, when the prisoner appeared with a "stand" on his shoulder. (The stand was produced. It was a formidable weapon, as thick as a man's arm, and three or four feet long.) He went out to see where the stand had been placed, and was met by the prisoner, who struck him with it with all his force across the arm. He was quite disabled, and it was feared that his arm was broken. Although not broken, it was, however, seriously injured, and he was treated at the hospital. In reply to the Bench, prosecutor, who appeared with his arm in a sling, said that on Tuesday he had not spoken to the prisoner prior to the assault, but on the 2nd of January he gave him into custody for "raking the wharf". On that occasion the magistrates discharged him, and since then the prisoner had been very abusive towards him. The prisoner was sentenced to two months imprisonment, and ordered at the expiration of that term to find two sureties in £10, to keep the peace for three months, or to be further imprisoned for three months.

573 July 28 1874 West Bromwich

POLICE COURT **Henry Holyoake**, of the New Town, Wednesbury, boatman, was sent to prison for three months for stealing two coats belonging to **Thomas Forrester**, boatman, of Moxley, from the prosecutor's boat, on Tuesday last.

574 August 10 1874 Birmingham Police Court

CURIOUS CASE OF BREACH OF CONTRACT **William Gosling** (25), boatman, Dartmouth Street, was charged with stealing 2s belonging to Abraham Aindfall, coal merchant, Cherry Street. The prosecutor stated that on Tuesday he gave the prisoner 2s to pay his expenses, and supplied him with some clothes in order to make his appearance more respectable, and sent him to a colliery for the purpose of examining some coal and slack. He had since discovered that the prisoner did not go to the colliery, neither had he returned the change out of the 2s. Prosecutor was informed that the case was not one for the Police Court, and the prisoner was discharged.

575 August 24 1874 West Bromwich Police Court

THE ATTACK ON A GIPSIES CAMP AT SMETHWICK **Joseph Wilson**, boatman, was charged with assaulting Police-constable Johnson on the occasion of the attack on gipsies at Smethwick about a fortnight ago, the particulars of which have already appeared in the Daily Post. It was proved that Wilson was the ringleader of the roughs who assaulted the police and endeavoured to rescue one of their comrades. Wilson threw a brick at Johnson, and the missile struck him on the right eye, causing a somewhat serious wound. He was fined £2 and costs.

576 September 8 1874

SERIOUS AFFRAY BETWEEN BOATMEN Last evening a boatman, named **Edward Lodwick**, was seen walking along Howard Street, followed by a large crowd, and bleeding profusely from wounds on his face and head. He appeared to have met with some very rough usage, and he stated that he had been having a "row" with another boatman named "Tom" on the side of the Birmingham Canal, near Howard Street. "Tom" had a wooden arm, with an iron hook attached to the end of it. They fought, and "Tom" brought his hook into action, striking Lodwick with it on his head and face, and inflicting severe scalp wounds, blackening his eyes, and cutting open his nose. Lodwick, finding that he was injured, made his escape, and went to the nearest surgery, whilst his opponent decamped. The latter had not been arrested at a late hour last night.

577 September 14 1874 West Bromwich Police Court

COAL STEALING **John Guest**, boatman, was charged with stealing 17cwt of coal, the property of Henry O Firmstone, Crookhay Ironworks, West Bromwich. The coal in question was found in the prisoner's boat on Tuesday. Prisoner admitted that a portion of the coal belonged to Mr Firmstone. He was sent to gaol for six weeks.

578 September 2 1874 Birmingham Police Court

ATTEMPTED ROBBERY FROM A LADY **William Burns** (18), packer, Hurst Street, and **William Colledge** (17), boatman, Park Street, were charged with attempting to rob ladies' satchels in Bull Street. Detective-sergeant Black stated that shortly after nine o'clock on Saturday night he was going up Bull Street, when he saw the two prisoners and two others following a lady who carried a satchel on her arm. She looked in at Benson's window, and they all four closed round her. She afterwards went into a shop, and they waited outside five minutes until she came out. She proceeded up Bull Street, and the prisoners and their two companions followed her. Colledge and one of the others tried to open the lady's satchel, and a similar attempt was made by another of the four, but in both cases they were unsuccessful. Attempts to rob another lady were subsequently made, and then he (Black) arrested the prisoners. Colledge was sentenced to three months hard labour, and Burns to two months, the former having been previously convicted.

579 September 22 1874 Brierley Hill

WASTING CANAL WATER At the Police Court, yesterday, **Stephen Lambert**, boatman, was fined 20s and costs for neglecting to close a lock, whereby a large quantity of water was wasted.

580 October 19 1874 Wolverhampton

A VIOLENT CHARACTER On Friday, at the Petty Sessions, before Messrs G Hartley and F Walton, a boatman named **Matthew Edwards** was charged with having been drunk and disorderly, having refused to quit the Star Liquor Vaults, Horseley Fields, and with having assaulted a woman whose name is unknown. The latter charge was substantiated by the Rev H Bolland, vicar of St James's Church, who last Thursday saw the prisoner kick a drunken woman in Corn Hill. The other charges having been proved, the Bench convicted only for the assault, sentencing the prisoner to three months imprisonment.

581 October 20 1874

NEWS OF THE DAY The Hanley Magistrates sentenced a boatman named **Hall** to two months imprisonment for assaulting his wife. He knocked her down senseless with a blow from the tiller of the boat, inflicting a terrible wound upon her head.

582 October 24 1874 Aston Police Court

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Joseph Jones**, boatman, Lichfield Road, was summoned for causing a horse to be worked in an unfit condition; and **Samuel Jones** and **William Beal** were summoned for working the horse, and thereby torturing it. On Wednesday last the horse was seen by Police-constable Hall, drawing a loaded coal boat on the canal, at Witton. The animal was in a very emaciated condition, and was scarcely able to sustain its own weight. The defendants were in charge of the boat. Hall took the horse to the Aston Police Station. Joseph Jones was fined £1 14s 6d, including costs, or one months imprisonment, and the summonses against the other defendants were dismissed.

583 October 27 1874 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY BY A BOATMAN **Richard Robinson** (35), boatman, was charged with breaking into the cabin of a boat lying in the Worcester Wharf, and stealing therefrom two shirts, a silk handkerchief and a wrapper. The boat lay near Gas Street, and on the 21st inst., the prosecutor, **William Court** saw his shirts &c safe in his cabin, and he missed them the next morning. The prisoner was seen by Police-constable Marriott with the articles in his possession, and he told the officer that he had found them in Gas Street. The prisoner now pleaded guilty, and was sent to gaol for six weeks.

584 October 27 1874 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

CHARGE OF UTTERING COUNTERFEIT COIN **Samuel Painter** (22), boatman, was indicted for uttering counterfeit coin on the 22nd of June last, and the 1st of July. Mr Carter prosecuted, and Mr Harris appeared for the prisoner. For the defence, Mr Harris raised the question of mistaken identity, and the jury acquitted the prisoner.

585 November 16 1874 West Bromwich Petty Sessions

THEFT OF A SOVEREIGN **William Merchant**, boatman, Greet's Green, was sent to prison for two months, for stealing a sovereign, belonging to Thomas Letsemore, of Greet's Green, on Wednesday.

586 December 18 1874

THE FATAL ACCIDENT TO A BOATMAN The boatman, **John Sampson Jones**, of Blews Street, who died from the effect of injuries received by falling into the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, was not in the employment of the company, as stated in yesterday's *Post*. He was in the service of Mr G F Rowlinson, of Blews Street, and was merely in charge of a boat on the canal.

587 December 28 1874 Wolverhampton

FOUND DROWNED A boy of thirteen, named **Charles Beckett**, living with his father, a boatman employed by the landlord of the Newbridge Inn, Tettenhall, was found drowned in the canal in the neighbourhood, at about one o'clock on Christmas Day. How the deceased got into the water is not at present known. A Coroner's inquest will be held today.

588 December 28 1874

FATAL ACCIDENT IN BRIDGE STREET On Saturday morning, about half past ten o'clock, a shocking accident, which terminated fatally, occurred to a boatman named **William Lindon**, aged about 50 years and who resided in No 2 Court, Holliday Street. Deceased was employed at the Worcester Wharf. At the time stated a railway waggon, drawn by two horses, was proceeding down

Bridge Street from Broad Street, in order to get to Messrs Pickford and Co's portion of the Birmingham and Worcester Wharf, when, on descending down a rather steep hill from the canal bridge, the horses appeared to be overpowered by the weight of the wagon in consequence of the slippery state of the road. The deceased, seeing the difficulty in which the driver of the horses was placed, ran to his assistance. He reached the horses just before they arrived at the gateway leading to Messrs Pickford's premises. Someone shouted to deceased and warned him that he was in danger, and he endeavoured to get out of the way. Before he could do so the horses turned into the gateway suddenly, and the back part of the van dashed round and jammed the deceased between one of the wheels and the wall adjoining the gateway. The poor fellow, who was frightfully crushed, was extricated, and at once taken by Police-constables Fletcher and Goodman to the Queen's Hospital in a cab, but he died before reaching the institution. An inquest will be held in due course.

589 December 29 1874 Birmingham Police Court

GROSS CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Edward Darows** (21), Love Lane, boatman, was charged with cruelly ill treating a pony. Inspector Woodhouse, of the Staffordshire and District Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, said that whilst on duty at the canal side, on Sunday afternoon, he saw the defendant in charge of a pony drawing a boat load of coal. He witnessed him kick the animal most violently three times. He obtained a police officer, and the defendant and the pony were detained. The animal was found to be suffering from an enlarged knee joint, and was in a very weak state. Defendant, who admitted striking the pony with his knee, was sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour, without the option of a fine. The pony was left in the hands of the inspector, to be examined by a veterinary surgeon, in case further proceedings should be taken against the owner, Mrs Mayes, Love Lane.

590 January 1 1875

THE FATAL ACCIDENT IN BRIDGE STREET Last evening, Dr Birt Davies (borough coroner) held an inquest at the Queen's Hospital on the body of a boatman, named **William Lindon** (52), of Holliday Street. On the morning of the 20th ult, deceased went to assist a wagoner in getting a team and a loaded wagon into the yard of Messrs Pickford and Co, Bridge Street. Whilst the wagon was just entering the gateway deceased attempted to pass into the street, and he got wedged between one of the wheels of the vehicle and the wall. He was killed instantaneously, his body being shockingly crushed. The wagon was obliged to be moved before the body could be extricated. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

591 January 4 1875 Birmingham Police Court

CAUGHT AT LAST **George Edmunds** (31), boatman, of Howe Street, was charged on a warrant with violently assaulting Thomas Smithyman, publican, of Dartmouth Street. Mr Anson prosecuted, and stated that the assault complained of was committed on the 15th October 1873, but the prisoner had successfully managed to elude the police, until a few days since. There was a dispute in the prosecutor's house on the day mentioned, and the prisoner, without any provocation being given, struck the landlord a severe blow upon the face. A fine of 20s and costs was imposed, the prisoner having been before the Magistrates some fourteen or fifteen times previously.

592 January 26 1875 Walsall

EXTENSIVE ROBBERY OF COAL Yesterday, at the Guildhall, **Joseph Twigg**, a boatman, was charged with having stolen upwards of four tons of coal, the property of the Walsall Iron Company. The defendant pleaded guilty. Mr Williams (of the firm of Messrs Duignan, Lewis and Williams) appeared for the prosecutors, and said they suffered to a very great extent from robberies of this kind. In this case the prisoner, between three and four o'clock in the morning, took a loaded boat some distance up the canal, and, with the assistance of another man, put about four tons of coal into an empty boat. He then returned with his own boat and moored it, so that, under ordinary circumstances, the theft would not have been known. The prisoner was sentenced to three months

imprisonment with hard labour.

593 February 15 1875 West Bromwich Police Court

William Smith, boatman, Greet's Green, was charged with having wasted water belonging to the Canal Company. Mr Jesson, of Birmingham, prosecuted. It appeared that the defendant, after having taken his boat through the locks at Ryder's Green, neglected to relock the paddles, so that the water continued to flow into the lower channel, and necessitated considerable labour to pump it back again. The defendant was fined 5s and costs.

594 May 26 1875 Birmingham Police Court

POCKET PICKING **William Lindon** (22), boatman, Court, Holliday Street, was charged with stealing a purse, containing about 15s, from the person of Charlotte Wilkinson, Paviour's Arms, Granville Street. On Monday night prosecutrix was walking along Holliday Street, near to her home, when the prisoner ran across the street to her, stole her purse from her satchel, and ran off. He was subsequently arrested. The Magistrates summarily committed him to prison for six weeks, with hard labour.

595 June 8 1875 Birmingham Police Court

THEFT BY A BOATMAN **William Smith** (52), boatman, Monmore Green, Wolverhampton, pleaded guilty to stealing about 30lbs of leaden piping, valued at 8s, from the premises of Mr James Armitage, of Love Lane, and was committed for two calendar months.

596 June 29 1875 Birmingham Police Court

THEFT BY A BOATMAN **William Clarke** (20), no fixed residence, boatman, was charged with stealing one pound and a half of sugar candy, on Sunday afternoon, from one of the warehouses belonging to the Grand Junction Canal Company, Fazeley Street. Prisoner was caught committing the robbery by a warehouseman named Jackson, for whom he offered to stand a pint of ale not to mention the matter. Prisoner, who pleaded guilty, said he thought it was no harm to take the candy. He was ordered to be imprisoned for twenty one days with hard labour.

597 July 1 1875 Worcestershire Midsummer Sessions

STEALING A JACKET AT OLDBURY **Job Flavell** (19), boatman, charged with stealing a flannel jacket, the property of Frederick Brain, on the 12th April, was sentenced to four months hard labour.

598 July 12 1875 West Bromwich Police Court

STEALING PIG IRON **Richard Hall**, boatman, his daughter Fanny, aged 13, and three married women, Mary Ann Blakemore, Harriet Erridge, and Sarah Ann Stanton, all of Spon Lane, were charged with stealing 3cwt of pig iron and scraps, belonging to the Smethwick Iron and Steel Company. On the 5th inst, the women took the iron in a barrow to the marine store shop of Geo Slater, at Spon Lane, and offered it for sale. While it was being weighed Sergeant Turner and Police-constable Woodward arrived, and questioned the women as to whom they had obtained the iron from. They replied that a boatman named Hall had sold it to them for 3s. The officers found Hall, who admitted that he had sold the iron to the women, and that it had been picked up at different times by his daughter. It was proved that the iron had been stolen from the prosecutor's ironworks, and they were all committed to the sessions for trial, with the exception of the girl, who was discharged.

599 October 8 1875 Aston Petty Sessions

PROSECUTOR WANTED **Robert Jones**, boatman, and William Tuckley, sawyer, were brought up charged with having in their possession more than £5 worth of timber, which, it was suspected, they had stolen. Sergeant Matthews and Police-constable Ridley saw these two men loitering about Aston Cross, and, suspecting something wrong, followed them, and saw them offering the timber

for sale at a cooper's very much under its real value. On being asked how they had become possessed of the timber, they stated that they had bought it from Price's timber yard, at Gloucester, for 30s, and brought it to Birmingham by the canal. The timber, consisting of Russian oak staves marked S T P, being worth four times that amount, the officers arrested them. Waiting information from Gloucester, the case was remanded.

600 October 23 1875

NEWS OF THE DAY **John McVee**, who is in custody on the charge of causing the death of Ann Buckley by throwing her into the canal, in Fazeley Street, was brought before Mr Kynnersley, on remand, yesterday. A boatman named **Edward Griffiths** gave evidence that, as he was passing over the canal bridge, he heard a woman screaming from the canal. He looked over the parapet, and called out "Missus" twice, when a man answered that a woman was in the canal. He went to fetch a prop to rescue her, but meanwhile the woman was got out of the water by the police. A woman named Ann Kettle deposed to seeing the prisoner and the deceased walking along the canal side some time before the woman was found in the water. On the application of the solicitor of the accused, a further remand till next Wednesday was granted.

601 November 19 1875 Birmingham Police Court

SINGULAR CASE OF WILFUL DAMAGE **Ambrose Clarke** (28), boatman, St Vincent Street, was charged with wilfully damaging a boat belonging to Mr Lloyd, coal dealer, Crescent Wharf. Detective constable Marriott stated that on the morning of the 24th ult the prosecutor's boat was seen safely tied up at the wharf on the Birmingham Canal. On the morning of the 25th ult prisoner took a contract from Mr Thurton, Tindal Street, to take a boat load of ashes away, and for which he received 25s. Without permission he made use of the prosecutor's boat, and afterwards allowed it to drift away, until ultimately it got sunk beneath the water, and lost to the owner. Witness apprehended prisoner in Tindal Street, when he admitted the offence, and said that if allowed he would obtain possession of the boat, and compensate prosecutor for the injury he had sustained. A term of two months imprisonment was imposed.

602 November 26 1875

ALLEGED ATTEMPTED MURDER BY BOATMAN

Abel Jones, 38, the captain of a barge trading on the London and Grand Junction Canal, and residing at 24 Barnes Street, Birmingham, was charged, before Mr Barstow, at the Clerkenwell Police Court on Wednesday, with attempting to murder **Edward Hibbert**, on the 28th ult. Mr Abbott, solicitor, prosecuted on behalf of the Grand Junction Canal Company.

The prosecutor, lock-keeper at the City Road Basin, on the night of the 29th of October, was on duty at the lock, when there were several barges in the basin waiting to go through. The prisoner, who was the captain of the Ouse barge, tried – or if he did not, the person who was in charge of it tried – to pass through the lock out of his turn. He ordered him to go back, and he and the barge did so, and were lying in the canal between the hours of twelve and one o'clock. At that time he was the only person on duty there. The prisoner came down the towing-path with a woman and crossed the gates. His boat was about a foot's length away from the lock, and he called out to someone in the barge, "Won't the --- let you through?" Before he was answered he called to a woman to let the barge through, which she did by opening the lock gate. Witness told Jones that he had no right to pull into the lock without asking him. Upon this the prisoner used abusive language, said he did not care for him or his master, and threw a rope over him, at the same time giving him a violent blow on the back of the neck, when he fell into the waters of the lock, which were about eight feet deep. As he rose to the surface he caught hold of a rope belonging to the boat, and called out for help. The prisoner, then on the lock side, called him foul names, and said that if he did not make less noise he would shake him off. At that time the prisoner did not attempt to help him. After a time assistance arrived, and he was got out and put to bed. He remained under medical care for more than a week. At present he was not able to resume his duty, or to work, and the surgeon was still attending him.

Daniel Edwards, keeper of the lock in question, said at a little past twelve on the night of the 28th ult, he heard a great noise and saw the complainant in the water, holding on by the side of the boat. The prisoner ran round and jumped on to his barge. So dangerous was the case that the water in the lock had to be raised for five minutes before the complainant could be got out. He took the complainant into the office, and whilst he was making a statement the prisoner entered and said, "Yes, I did knock the old --- in. He struck me first, and I will do it again if he attempts to stop me or my boat". He went for a police-constable, but when he came back the prisoner was gone. He and the constable tried to search a barge for the purpose of apprehending the prisoner, but the boatman prevented him, and though the prisoner's boat did not leave the basin that night the prisoner could not be found.

Mr John Prowdall, surgeon, said that he attended the complainant and found him suffering from a severe shock to the nervous system. He had a bruise on the right shin and one on the right hand, and the right second finger was much swollen. The complainant was compelled to keep in bed six or seven days, and was not yet able to attend to his duties.

Detective Thomas Tew, N division, said that from information he received he went to Birmingham on Saturday last and found that the prisoner had left that town. He made enquiries, and went to Stoke on Trent, thence to Stafford, and subsequently to Anderton, in Cheshire, where he apprehended the prisoner, who was in charge of his barge. He told him the charge, when he said he did not intend to kill the complainant; he only accidentally pushed him into the water. He had no ill feeling against him.

Mr Barstow committed the prisoner to the Central Criminal Court for trial, and refused to take bail.

603 December 9 1875

GLEANINGS A coroner's Jury has returned a verdict of "Wilful murder" against **James Walker**, of Bull Bridge, in respect of the death of another boatman, named **Thurnham**, at Bull Bridge on Saturday night. The deceased was found in the canal, his head being fearfully battered. The prisoner, at the lock-up at Belper, admitted striking the deceased with the tiller of his boat.

604 December 11 1875 Staffordshire Winter Assizes

THE WOLVERHAMPTON CHILD MURDER

Frederick Musson (23), boatman, and **Anna Maria Hillman** (21), boatwoman, were charged with the wilful murder of **Elizabeth Lowke**, on the 31st October, 1875, at the parish of Bushbury. Mr Underhill and Mr Owen were for the prosecution. The prisoners had no counsel retained on their behalf, and at the request of the learned judge Mr Plowden undertook the defence.

Mr Underhill having opened the case, the following witnesses were called:-

Joseph Lowke, a boatman in the employ of the Shropshire Union Canal Company : He had known the male prisoner about eight years, and the female prisoner two years. Witness was a widower, and had, a few months ago, three children. He parted with the deceased child to the prisoners on an understanding that it was to nurse an infant of the prisoners, and in return was to be fed and clothed. The little girl was between seven and eight years of age. The last time he saw her alive was on the 23rd of October, at the side of the Wolverhampton Locks. When the child first went to prisoners she was well and hearty. On the 23rd of October, seeing the child had a black eye, he asked her how it had happened, and she said she had fallen from the side bench of the cabin against a cupboard door handle. The next time he saw her was after she was dead. When witness saw the child, he said to the male prisoner, "I wish I had known last night, I would have come down". Both the prisoners began to cry, and Musson said the child had gone to bed well and hearty. He also said that on the previous Sunday the horse had trodden on the child's foot, but she went on playing, and he did not think anything was the matter with it. Cross-examined: During the four months the child was with the prisoners he never had any complaint of ill treatment. If he had he should have fetched her away. The child was weakly at her birth, being, in fact, a seven months child.

Emma Stokes and Eliza Proctor deposed to seeing the woman strike the child.

Sarah Johnson, the wife of **John Johnson**, a boatman in the employ of the Shropshire Union

Canal Company, knew both the prisoner and the deceased. About five weeks before the death of the child, witness was in her boat, under the High Level Station Bridge at Wolverhampton and on a Sunday morning she saw Musson beating the deceased with a horsewhip, like the one produced (an ordinary carter's whip). The child was on the bed in the cabin, Prisoner doubled the whiplash and struck the child heavily about six times, and afterwards, when the child got off the bed, he struck her again. The female prisoner asked him not to beat the child any more. Subsequently she saw deceased washing herself, and her neck and shoulders were covered with weals, and blood was running down her neck. The child had a black eye at the time. - This witness was subjected to a long cross-examination, but nothing was elicited favourable for the defence.

William Powell said he knew the prisoners by sight. One day he saw the male prisoner striking the child with a whip: he had the lash doubled, and beat the girl about the head and neck. The child cried. About a quarter of an hour after he saw the little girl standing in the hatches of the boat, perfectly naked. It was about a quarter past six in the evening, and was a cold night. He heard voices of a man and woman in the cabin.

Joseph Smallwood, a boatman, said he knew the prisoners, and had seen how ill the child looked, and noticed marks on its body. He told Musson at Ellesmere Port that he had better take great care of the child until he got to Wolverhampton. He said, "I will"; and witness said to him that if anything happened to the child he (prisoner) would get into trouble about it.

Anne Bedford spoke to an instance of ill treatment which occurred on the 30th of October.

Frederick Beasley, a toll collector on the canal, said he had noticed the sickly appearance of the child. He was fetched by the male prisoner about four o'clock of the morning of the 31st October. The child was lying dead on the side bed of the cabin. He noticed marks on both eyes, and asked the prisoner Hillman if it was dirt. She said, "No" - it was caused by her falling. The marks on the eyes led him to think the injuries had been recent. On the 1st of November witness saw the child again. There were the eyes blackened, the breast was all cuts and bruises, and the stomach was black and blue. On the right side was a wound that he could have laid his thumb in, and there were two smaller wounds under. Along the ribs and above the largest of the others were three long wounds about as thick as the whiplash produced. On the right shoulder, at the back, was a bruise as large as the palm of his hand. Nearly at the bottom of the back was a substance as large as his fist, which moved when it was touched as though filled with water; from the right knee to the foot were thirty to forty marks - wounds, in fact of some sort - the flesh being cut away. There were other discolourations, and from the lower part of the body there had issued clotted blood. He should describe the child's appearance as "one mass of bruises and cuts". By witness's advice, Musson went for a policeman, but came back and said he could not find one, on which witness told him that he would get into trouble over it. Musson replied, "What do you think I shall get".

By Mr Plowden : He was certain the marks could not have been caused by decomposition.

Tom Mander, a boatman, and his wife **Mary**, also gave evidence as to the ill treatment of the child. Charles Millington, a clerk in the employ of the Canal Company, said he knew the prisoners. About a quarter past four on the morning of Sunday, the 31st of October, the male prisoner came to his office and asked him if he would go to his boat and look at a girl, who he said was in a fit, or had fainted away. He said he had got up to start, and had put his hand on the child's face, and it was cold. Witness went with him into the cabin of the boat and saw that the child was dead. At that time the body was covered, except the face. He noticed that the right eye of the child was very much discoloured. The witness then proceeded to corroborate the statements of the witness Beasley; and at the conclusion of his examination the Court adjourned until ten o'clock this morning.

605 December 13 1875 Staffordshire Winter Assizes

THE WOLVERHAMPTON CHILD MURDER – THE SENTENCES

Mr Baron Amphlett took his seat at the Shire Hall, Stafford, at ten o'clock on Saturday morning, and the charge against **Frederick Musson** (23), boatman, and **Anna Maria Hillman** (21) for the wilful murder of Elizabeth Lowke, was at once proceeded with.

Police-constable Edward Clayton deposed to arresting the male prisoner. Witness had examined the deceased's body, and found it covered from head to foot with cuts and bruises.

Police-constable Reuben Billett stated that on the Monday after the death of the child he charged the female prisoner with beating and ill treating the child, and in reply she said, "I have never beaten or ill treated the child in my life". On the following Thursday he searched the prisoners' boat, and found the whip produced. When taking the two prisoners to the police cells, the male prisoner said, "What do you think they will do?" Witness replied that he dare not say. The male prisoner then said, "That's my whip you have got, but not the one I generally drive with". The female prisoner was crying at the time, and made a statement that she was not married.

Inspector Hackney said that on searching the prisoners' cabin he found the apron produced, with a number of blood stains upon it. He showed it to the prisoners, but they made no reply.

Mr John Cooke, surgeon, practising at Tettenhall, said that, by the direction of the coroner, he examined the deceased child's body. It was very much emaciated, and was cut and bruised and discoloured all over, from head to foot. He then gave a minute description of the separate wounds. Some parts of the body were very much inflamed. The scalp was puffy. From the appearance of the bruises and wounds he should say they were caused by blows, and undoubtedly a number of them could be caused by the whip produced, both by the lash and stock. Some of the individual wounds on the foot might have been caused by a horse treading upon it, but none of the other wounds could be assigned to such a cause. At that time he could not give his opinion as to the death of the child, but afterwards he made a *post mortem* examination of the body. The internal organs were quite healthy. On examining the head he found the scalp very much inflamed. There were two small collections of blood and matter, and several patches of clotted blood in the substance of the skull cap. On removing the skull he found a layer of dark coagulated blood extending over the right hemisphere of the brain. The brain tissue was healthy. He assigned the cause of death to the coagulated blood on the brain, which would result from repeated blows on the head. The blows must have been inflicted within twenty four hours before death. The blood on the brain would produce coma, in which state the child would remain until death. Undoubtedly the other injuries on the body would help to hasten death; but the clotted blood on the brain was the primary cause of death. This witness underwent a searching cross-examination, but nothing of any importance was elicited.

Mr Underhill having summed up the evidence for the prosecution, Mr Plowden, in addressing the jury for the defence, asked the jury to dismiss from their minds everything which they might have heard or read about the case. It was, he said, a misfortune in this country when serious charges were brought against any person, at the very first rumour certain zealous persons clustered round the scene to acquire information, which rapidly found expression in the public press. These expressions were contributed for the alleged purpose of discovering crime, but he was very much afraid they were more for the purpose of pandering to a morbid curiosity. Not only were facts – pretended facts – stated, but were overstated, and commented upon, and opinions formed, hastily arrived at by unskilled minds, and the impartial judgement of a constitutional tribunal was recklessly and hurriedly invaded, and thereby prejudice was excited, and by feeding upon itself acquired a shape of importance which it was almost impossible to subdue. He made these statements, as he had reasons for thinking they applied with peculiar force in this case. He hoped they would stifle this insidious voice, and whatever verdict they found would be on the evidence alone. The learned counsel then dwelt upon the definition of murder, and said that the jury must be satisfied that at the time the blows were given – assuming that such was the case – the person giving those blows had a knowledge that they would probably cause death. He put it forcibly to the jury whether the evidence on behalf of the prosecution sustained that view, and, reviewing the evidence, contended that it had failed to do so.

His Lordship summed up the case in a careful and lucid manner, and having reviewed the evidence at considerable length, said, in conclusion, that if from the evidence they could not come to the conclusion that the weapon was not used with that recklessness which implied malice, then they would be justified in finding a verdict on the lesser charge of manslaughter.

The jury then retired, and after half an hour's absence, returned a verdict of "Manslaughter", at the same time censuring the father of the deceased for his neglect towards his child.

His Lordship, addressing the prisoners, said that after a very careful consideration, the jury had returned a verdict against them of manslaughter only, but their offence as nearly approached murder as it possibly could. He did not hesitate to say that if the jury had taken a different view of the evidence, and found them guilty of murder, he should, as far as he had any influence on that question, have left them both for execution. Considering the enormity of the crime towards that child, for he had no doubt their violence caused its death, and Musson had promised to be a kind father to the child, he (the judge) must pass a most severe sentence upon them, not only as a punishment, but as a warning to people who undertook the charge of a child of that kind. The sentence of the Court was that they be kept in penal servitude for twenty years.

606 December 16 1875

NEWS OF THE DAY John McVee, a boatman, was charged with the murder of Annie Buckley, at Birmingham. It was alleged that the prisoner pushed the woman into the canal, and left her to drown; but after the counsel's opening statement the Judge stopped the case, and the jury found a verdict of acquittal.

607 January 12 1876 Birmingham Police Court

CHARGE OF EMBEZZLEMENT George Chattin (45), boatman, was charged with embezzling £2 16s 6d, the moneys of John Wainwright, coal dealer, of Ryland Road. Prisoner was entrusted with the above sum of money to pay some tonnage and other expenses, and nothing was heard of him until late on Monday evening, when his wife came to Mrs Wainwright, and said that her husband had come home drunk and without any money. He was then taken into custody, but, as there was considerable doubt whether the man had spent or been robbed of the money, the case was remanded for a week.

608 February 28 1876

INQUESTS BEFORE THE BOROUGH CORONER Mr Hawkes then held an inquest at the Bellevue Inn, Icknield Port Road, on the body of a man unknown, who was found by **Charles Chatwin**, a boatman, in the Birmingham Canal, near Spring Hill, on Saturday last. The jury returned an open verdict of "Found drowned in the canal".

609 January 12 1876 Birmingham Police Court

A GANG OF THIEVES Edward Kelly (17), tube drawer, Irving Street; John Clane (15), chandelier-maker, Old Inkleys; William Corkery (16), Fordrough Street; and **David Kirwin** (16), boatman, Wharf Street, were charged with stealing one dozen bottles of cider, six decanters of spirits, two decanters of orange bitters, and 190 cigars, belonging to Stephen Davis, of the Malt Shovel Inn, Fordrough Street; and Catherine Corkery (40), widow, Fordrough Street, was charged with receiving the goods, well knowing them to have been stolen. On Monday, prosecutor, whilst in the yard at the rear of his house, saw the prisoners Clane, Kirwin and Kelly, carrying something bulky. Corkery was posted a short distance away, and appeared to be watching the approach of anyone so that he could warn the others. Prosecutor followed, and saw the male prisoners enter Mrs Corkery's house with the goods. He at once communicated with Detective-constable Goodman, who accompanied him to the house. They there found the stolen goods and a large quantity of bottled porter and about a thousand cigars. Prisoners were then taken into custody. On the application of the police, prisoners were remanded for the production of further evidence.

610 March 23 1876 Wolverhampton

ALLEGED CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD At the Police Court, yesterday, Timothy Hill, bellman, New Street; Thomas Highway, North Street; and John Littleton, grocer, Lower Horseley Fields, were brought up in custody, charged with obtaining sixty five pots of apples by false pretences from

Charles Lane, boatman, of Ashleigh, Gloucestershire, and also with conspiring to defraud him of the same. Mr Turner prosecuted: Mr Dallow defended Hill, and Mr R A Willcock represented Highway and Littleton. The evidence showed that Hill, who had been hired to publicly cry that prosecutor had the apples to sell at 1/2d per lb, introduced Highway as a customer having a large banking account. It was agreed that Highway should have sixty five pots at 2s 10 1/2d each, Littleton carting them away from the prosecutor's boat. The money was to be paid when the last five were fetched but after sixty pots had been removed Lane could not find the whereabouts of either of the prisoners. He gave information to the police, and the arrests were made. A remand was now asked for and granted by the Bench.

611 March 31 1876 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Joseph Burton** (48), boatman, Dudley Road, Tipton, was charged with working a horse whilst in an unfit state, on the canal side, near to Watery Lane. Mr E W Thomas of the Birmingham Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, stated that the prisoner, on Wednesday last, worked a horse along the towing-path of the Birmingham and Warwick canal, which was lame and spavined in the off fore leg, and quite unfit for labour. A fine of 40s and costs was imposed.

612 March 31 1876

CHARGE OF MURDER AGAINST A CANAL BOATMAN At the Derbyshire Assizes, yesterday, before Mr Justice Lindley, **James Walker** (22), a boatman, was charged with the wilful murder of **William Thurnam**, at Bull Bridge, near Ambergate. It appeared that the deceased had said that the accused owed him 3s, with which he wished to get his clothes out of pawn. On Saturday night, December 4th, the deceased went into the prisoner's boat, and words were heard between them. The next morning, the prisoner was seen washing the tiller of his boat, and soon afterwards he gave information that the deceased was in the canal. He afterwards acknowledged that he had struck the deceased with the tiller, and the death of Thurnam had been caused by severe contused wounds of the skull. - The jury found the prisoner guilty of manslaughter, and he was sentenced to 15 years penal servitude.

613 April 13 1876 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

STEALING A COAT William Payne (23), filer, was ordered to be imprisoned for twelve months, and to be under police supervision for two years for stealing a coat, on the 27th of November 1875, belonging to a boatman named **James Bennett**. Mr Atkinson prosecuted.

614 May 22 1877 Solihull Police Court

WORKING A HORSE TO DEATH William Chard, corn merchant, of Banbury, was summoned for cruelty to a horse by working it in an unfit state. The principal witness in the case was **Thomas Bricknell**, a boatman in the employ of the defendant, and in whose charge the horse was. He stated that he was bringing a boat of sand along the Birmingham and Warwick Canal, with the horse in question to tow it. The animal appearing very poorly, he wrote to the defendant informing him of the fact, and on the 8th instant he saw defendant at Camp Hill, Birmingham. Defendant saw the condition the horse was in, and told witness to "wriggle" the horse home, and then he would turn it out. In consequence of defendant's instruction, witness continued to work the horse as far as Solihull. It was there stabled for a night, but in the morning it was down, and could not get up. It afterwards died. The horse was well fed while in witness's charge, and he only worked it for short distances at a time. He had worked the horse about ten weeks. The boat which it had to pull was of twenty eight ton gauge. Mr Proctor, veterinary surgeon, spoke to seeing the horse when down in Solihull. It was in a very weak state, had a sore upon each shoulder, and had evidently been unfit for work for some time. The animal died from no disease, but from sheer exhaustion. The defendant, in reply to the charge, said he told his man to shorten the distance to Fenny Compton, and he would then turn the horse out. The same horse got very low about three years ago, but on

being turned out, became quite fresh again. The Bench said it was a very bad case of cruelty, and they much regretted they could not inflict a heavier penalty. Defendant would be fined the maximum penalty of £5, and costs, or in default, a months imprisonment.

615 January 9 1877 Worcester

CHILD DROWNED On Saturday, a child, three years and nine months old, son of a boatman named **Sprag**, was drowned in the canal, near the bridge, in Bath Road. He and two other children had been left playing in a canal boat, and he got into the water unseen, and was drowned. An inquest was held yesterday, and a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

616 July 5 1876 Birmingham Police Court

A PATRON OF THE PLAY Thomas Morgan (17), boatman, 19 King Edward's Road, was charged on a warrant with assaulting Police-constable Withey. Prosecutor stated that on the 20th January last he was on duty in the Prince of Wales Theatre, when the prisoner, who had been very uproarious all the evening, came behind him while he was at the top of the stairs, and tripping him up threw him down the steps, rendering him insensible. He subsequently assaulted Mr McLean, the manager of the theatre, but they had not been able to apprehend the prisoner before. Sentenced to four months imprisonment with hard labour.

617 July 24 1876

INTIMIDATION BY BOATMEN AT OLDBURY

At the West Bromwich Police Court, on Saturday, before Messrs T Kenrick and H Adkins, **Samuel Willcocks**, boatman, aged 22, was charged, with others not in custody, with an assault upon Benjamin Tennant, horse fettler, in the employ of Messrs S and D Sadler, brickmakers, of Oldbury, on the 10th inst. He was further charged with assaulting **John Westwood**, boatman, in the employ of Mr John Sadler, another brickmaker of Oldbury. Mr Shakespeare appeared for the prosecution, and stated that a strike had occurred among the boatmen employed at the various brickyards in Oldbury for an increase in their rate of remuneration, The brickmakers had refused to concede the request of the men, and at once sought to engage other persons to take charge of their boats, and to keep their customers supplied. On the day mentioned Messrs S and D Sadler employed Tennant and Chilton to take a boat load of bricks to one of their customers. Mr D Sadler accompanied the boat. On their return, as the boat was passing underneath the Summit Bridge, near Smethwick, the prisoner and two other boatmen named **Cooksey** and **Sadler** rushed upon Tennant, who was driving the horse, and commenced to assault him in a violent manner. Sadler first struck him on the mouth, and then on the forehead with a piece of brick and knocked him down. Willcocks, armed with a brick and a stone, struck him with the missiles, and also kicked him. Mr Sadler got out of the boat to assist him, and his assailants ran away. Directly afterwards, however, they began to throw stones at Chilton, who was steering the boat, and one of the missiles striking him on the head knocked him to the bottom of the boat. Mr Shakespeare further stated that previously, on the same day, the prisoner and his companions had committed a similar assault, near the same place, on John Westwood, who was in charge of a boat belonging to Mr J Sadler. Tennant was first called, and stated that when he was knocked down by Sadler he cried out, "Give me a chance; let me get up". The prisoner replied, "We have you now, and we will kill you". He also called him a "blackleg". Mr Shakespeare said that there could be no doubt that the assault was committed with the intent to intimidate the men from going to work, and this brought them under the provisions of the Conspiracy Act. Evidence having been given by Chilton and Westwood as to the other assaults, the prisoner was convicted and sent to gaol for two months for each offence, making six months in all.

618 September 12 1876 Birmingham Police Court

ASSAULTING THE POLICE Thomas Dawes, boatman, Great Brook Street, was sent to gaol for six weeks with hard labour for striking Police-constable Rowe on the mouth.

619 October 26 1876 Birmingham Police Court

VIOLENT ASSAULTS **William Lyndon** (22), boatman, of Court, Holliday Street, was fined 10s and costs, or in default fourteen days imprisonment, for being drunk and disorderly in the Three Horse Shoes Inn, St Peter's Place, and violently assaulting the landlord and the police on Monday night.

620 October 31 1876

GLEANINGS On Saturday the county magistrates at Newton, Lancashire, committed to prison for six months a woman named **Birkenhead**, the wife of a boatman, for so starving her child as to endanger its life. The poor little creature, although ten months old, weighed only 4 3/4lb.

621 December 18 1876 Solihull Petty Sessions

TRESPASSING IN PURSUIT OF GAME **Charles Clarke**, boatman, Leamington, and **John Twist**, boatman, Birmingham, were summoned with trespassing in pursuit of game, on Sunday, the 20th ult, on land in the occupation of Thomas Glover, Knowle. It was proved by Police-constable Walker that the defendants were beating about the field with a dog. They were fined 10s each and costs 15s 6d, or in default fourteen days imprisonment.

622 December 30 1876

GENERAL NEWS A shocking revelation was made at the Runcorn Police Court on Thursday. A boatman, named **Carrington**, "bought" for 18s, Sarah Tyrer, who lived with **John Taylor**, another boatman, as his wife. The woman contentedly took up her abode with her new lord, and received a sum of money from him for family expenses. Returning next day to her former floating home, to fetch away her wardrobe, she found Taylor disconsolate, and elected to remain with him, Carrington was furious over his loss, and unfolded to the magistrates the tale of his wrongs. The answer he received was that he had no assistance to expect from the police in a transaction of so disgraceful a character.

623 January 6 1877 Wolverhampton Quarter Sessions

ACQUITTED Richard Whitehouse (20), general dealer, **Thos Hixon** (19), boatman, and **Ed Jukes** (19), boatman, were all charged with stealing about one ton of iron, of the value of £2 15s, the property of Mr Thos Bishton, galvaniser, Monmore Green. Mr C Smith prosecuted; Mr Jos Underhill (on behalf of Mr Darling) defended Whitehouse, and Mr Plumtre defended Jukes. No counsel represented Hixon. All the prisoners pleaded not guilty. Mr Smith said that with the sanction of the court, he proposed to discharge Hixon and Jukes, and call them as witnesses against Whitehouse. This course he considered necessary to secure the ends of justice. The Recorder consented to Hixon being discharged, but not to Jukes. After the case had lasted nearly five hours, the Recorder summed up at length, and directed the jury to return a verdict of "Not guilty" in the case of Jukes. He was accordingly discharged. The jury likewise acquitted Whitehouse.

624 January 9 1877 Birmingham Police Court

CAUTION TO BOOKSELLERS **Thomas Roads**, a boatman, was charged with stealing a book from the shop window of Mr Downing, New Street. Police-constable Hickman deposed that on Saturday evening he saw the prisoner standing at Mr Downing's window. Suspecting prisoner, the officer watched him for some time, and saw him pick up a book and put it into his pocket. He then picked up another, and professed to be reading it, when the officer went to him and took him into custody. The book found in the possession of the prisoner having been identified by the prosecutor, prisoner was sent to gaol for fourteen days.

STEALING CORPORATION COAL **William Higginson**, a boatman, living at 6 Court, Fazeley Street, was charged with stealing a quantity of coal, belonging to the Corporation Gas Company, from a boat on the canal. Several similar robberies having been committed, the police were communicated with, and Detective Fletcher on Friday morning last saw the prisoner coming from

the direction of the boat with a wheelbarrow full of coal. The officer stopped him, and the prisoner said that he was taking the coal to a Mr Jakeman, of the Aston Road, who was allowed it by the Corporation. Upon enquiry this statement was found to be untrue, and the coal was afterwards identified by the toll clerk, who had seen the prisoner take it away. Prisoner was then locked up. He was committed for trial at the Sessions.

625 January 10 1877 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

STEALING CORPORATION COAL **William Higginson**, boatman, 6 Court, Fazeley Street, was indicted for stealing a quantity of coal belonging to the Corporation Gas Company. Mr Stubbins prosecuted. Francis Betts, a toll clerk in the employ of the Canal Company, said that, on Friday morning, he saw the prisoner throw three large pieces of coal from a boat on to the towing-path of the canal. Police-constable Fletcher said he met the prisoner wheeling the coal on the canal path in Ford Street. He was unable to give a satisfactory explanation as to its possession, and witness afterwards charged him with the robbery. Prisoner, who had served two terms of penal servitude, was found guilty, and sentenced to eight years penal servitude and five years police supervision.

626 January 17 1877 Bilston

FELONIES At the Police Court, yesterday, a boatman of Berriew, Montgomery, named **John Davies**, was sent to gaol for a month for having, on the 13th inst, stolen 2s worth of coal from the Brook Furnaces of Messrs Bradley and Co.

627 February 7 1877

CHILD MURDER AT HILL TOP Yesterday afternoon, Mr Hooper resumed an enquiry at the Box Iron Inn, Hill Top, on the body of a female infant which was found in the canal, at Crookhay, on the morning of the 23rd ult, by a boatman named **Stokes**. Superintendent Holland said he had no further evidence to offer. The Coroner then directed the attention of the jury to the evidence given by Mr J C Garman, police surgeon, at the opening of the inquest, to the effect that the infant had been murdered, and offered to put any further questions to Mr Garman, who was present, if the jury thought fit. No questions being suggested, however, the matter was left with the jury, who returned a verdict of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown". The Coroner then said that, if the jury wished, he would write to the Secretary of State, asking him to offer a reward of £50, for the discovery of the guilty person or persons; but the jury expressed no wish in the matter, and consequently nothing was done.

628 February 12 1877 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **William Higginson** (25), boatman, living near Tipton, was summoned by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for working a horse while in an unfit state. Inspector Thomas stated that at one o'clock the previous afternoon he saw the prisoner on the towing-path of the canal near Dudley Road working a horse that was lame, spavined in both hocks, and totally unfit for work. The accused said he was aware of the animal's condition, and if he could get it home he would allow it to remain there. A fine of 40s and costs was imposed.

629 February 20 1877 Wolverhampton

ROBBERY FROM THE PERSON Yesterday, at the Borough Police Court, Mary Holland, Berry Street, was sent to the Sessions, charged with having, on Saturday night, stolen a pocket book, containing £5 10s, from **Edwin Roberts**, boatman, of Tipton Green.

630 March 1 1877

NEWS OF THE DAY **John Jackson**, a boatman, residing at 15 Great Barr Street, Birmingham, was yesterday knocked down and killed by a train of coal trucks, while standing in a siding at the Camp Hill station of the Midland Railway.

631 March 1 1877 Staffordshire Adjourned Quarter Sessions

ALLEGED IRON STEALING AT BURSLEM **Job Bailey** (18), boatman; **Samuel Harrison** (20), boatman; **Samuel Bailey** (18), boatman; and Patrick Quinn (58), marine store dealer, were charged with stealing 6 1/4cwt of pig iron and 1cwt of coal, the property of Mr Robert Heath, at Norton-in-the-Moors on the 25th of January. Mr C Smith appeared for the prosecution; and Mr J Rose and Mr Fisher defended the prisoners. After hearing the evidence for the prosecution, the Assistant Chairman advised the jury to return a verdict of not guilty, as there was not sufficient evidence of identification.

632 March 14 1877

GLEANINGS While Mrs Gee, wife of **Joseph Gee**, boatman, Milnsbridge, was filling a lamp with petroleum, on Saturday, with her five children looking on, and one of them holding a candle, the lamp exploded and set their clothes and the house on fire. All the persons in the room were burnt, three of the children seriously. One of them, Elizabeth, aged 10 years, died on the following day, and a boy, aged four years, is not expected to recover.

633 March 17 1877

GLEANINGS An inquest was held on Wednesday on the bodies of two children of **Joseph Gee**, boatman, of Milnsbridge, near Huddersfield, who died from burns caused by the explosion of a petroleum lamp whilst their mother was filling it. Verdict, Accidental death.

634 March 1 1877 Brewood

UNLAWFULLY WOUNDING At Cannock, yesterday, before Mr B Gilpin, **William Bedford**, a boatman, of Brewood, was charged with unlawfully wounding his son, James Bedford, on the 18th last. Police-constable Betts deposed that he apprehended prisoner at Crofts Bridge on the Shropshire Canal, on Monday morning, and charged him with unlawfully wounding his son, a boy of six, by throwing a stone at him. In reply to the charge prisoner said that the stone was thrown at the lad's mother, but only to frighten her. Witness asked for a remand until Monday, and put in a certificate from Dr R B Moore, to the effect that the child, which was at his house, was suffering from concussion of the brain, and could not be moved. Prisoner was accordingly remanded.

635 April 4 1877

WOLVERHAMPTON QUARTER SESSIONS Mary Holland, Berry Street, pleaded not guilty to a charge of stealing a pocket book, containing £5 10s from the person of **Edwin Roberts**, boatman, of Tyson Green, on the 17th of February last. Mr A Underhill (instructed by Mr R A Willcock) prosecuted. It was shown that the prisoner had taken the pocket book out of an inside pocket in the prosecutor's coat, and, as she had been before convicted at Quarter Sessions, she was committed to penal servitude for seven years.

636 April 5 1877 Birmingham Police Court

ALLEGED ROBBERY FROM AN ENGINE SHED **Thomas Rigby** (20), court, Richard Street, boatman, was charged with breaking into an engine shed in the timber yard of Mr Gosling, and stealing a jacket and pair of clogs, of the value of 7s, on the 15th January. The articles were missed on the date named by Richard Longford, to whom they belonged, and information was given to the police. On Monday last, between seven and eight in the morning, George Harris, a constable employed by the Birmingham Canal Company, was at the Level Locks at Aston, when he saw the prisoner wearing the missing jacket. He charged him with the theft, and he replied that he bought the jacket two months ago for 2s. The prisoner, who denied the charge, was committed to the Sessions for trial.

637 April 9 1877 Birmingham Police Court

ASSAULTING THE POLICE **John Kerwin** (25), 17 Court, Wharf Street, boatman, was charged

with being drunk and assaulting Police-constable George Dennis, 4 Pickford Street, watchman, and Police-constable Joseph Jones, of the borough force. Mr Tanner, from the office of Messrs Wragg, Evans and Co., appeared for the prosecution. At a quarter to eleven on Friday forenoon, the prisoner was at the Old Wharf, where he had no business to be. The watchman ordered him off, when he threw half a brick at him, which missed, and afterwards a piece of coal, which struck him on the head. He called Police-constable Jones to his assistance, and prisoner also assaulted Jones, and it was with difficulty he was taken to the station. The prisoner, who has been previously convicted, was sent to gaol for three months.

638 April 11 1877 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A HORSE William Guy, boatman, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it in an unfit state on the 1st inst; and William Benton, Bordesley, foreman to Mr Harding, coal dealer, of the Warwick Wharf, was summoned for allowing the animal to be so worked. Police-constable Jones saw the defendant Guy with the horse, to which was attached boating tackle, in Canal Street. It was lame and suffering from mange. It was evidently in a feeble condition. The police took charge of it. Mr Joynt, who appeared on behalf of the defendants, denied that they intended any cruelty to the horse, which had only been drawing an empty boat, and stated that the animal was placed by the police in a room at a public house much too small to contain it, and it was subsequently ordered to be removed by a veterinary surgeon into the yard, where it lay down in the wet and died. Guy was discharged, and Mr Benton was fined 10s and costs.

639 April 17 1877 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY BY A BOATMAN William Pailing, boatman, was charged with cruelly ill treating a horse by working it in an unfit condition. Mr W E Thomas, officer of the Birmingham Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, said his attention was drawn to the horse, on the canal side, near Snow Hill, yesterday morning, and he ascertained that it had been drawing a boatload of iron. It was spavined in the hind hocks, and was also diseased with farcy in the hind leg. Mr Parker, veterinary surgeon, stated that the animal was in a very bad condition, was totally unfit for work, and was suffering from farcy, which was a very serious contagious disease, and he desired to prosecute the prisoner under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, for moving the horse while in that condition. He hoped an example would be made of the prisoner in this case, as the canal side was the hotbed of contagion amongst horses. Mr Manton remarked that he had never seen a worse case. Mr Parker observed that the animal would have to be at once destroyed. Prisoner was fined £5, or in default two months imprisonment. Mr Timmins, in reply to Mr Parker, said it should be known that prisoner had made himself liable to a very serious charge under the Contagious Diseases Act.

640 April 19 1877

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

641 April 23 1877

GLEANINGS The adjourned inquest on the body of **Charles Moston**, a boatman of Wolverhampton, who was found in a dying state on the canal bank at Waverton, Cheshire, and who died shortly afterwards, was resumed on Friday. **Probert**, who was the master of the boat Usk, on which Moston was employed, and was the only other male occupant, was arrested at the opening of the inquest on Wednesday, and since then the police have been active in endeavouring to obtain evidence. The enquiry was adjourned for a week.

642 September 5 1877

A BOY DROWNED About noon yesterday the body of **Edward Silvester**, 8 years of age, son of a boatman living in Wolverhampton, was found in the canal, near to the Snow Hill Wharf. It was removed by the police to the Moor Street mortuary. It is supposed that the deceased fell from a passing boat into the water.

643 September 19 1877 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **John Morris**, boatman, was summoned for working a horse in an unfit state, and **Thomas Holder**, boat-steerer, the owner, was summoned for allowing the animal to be worked. On the 7th instant, Mr Thomas, officer of the Birmingham Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, saw the defendant Morris driving the horse, which was drawing a boat laden with iron. The animal was lame in all its legs, was suffering from a sore under the collar, and was in a very low condition. In fact its state was so bad that the society had it destroyed. Holder was fined 20s and costs, and Morris was ordered to pay the costs.

644 October 3 1877 Birmingham Police Court

STABBING **Luke Doyle**, a boatman, was charged with unlawfully wounding another boatman named **Joseph Mason**. The complainant stated that on Thursday night last he was walking along the canal side near Saturday Bridge, when he saw the prisoner and a man named Nixon and his two daughters. The prisoner was quarrelling with Nixon, and the complainant, who knew the parties, remonstrated with the prisoner, who turned round and struck complainant on the head with his fist. Complainant tried to escape from further violence, but prisoner followed him and stabbed him in the head with a knife, which he afterwards threw into the canal. Complainant's wounds were dressed at the General Hospital. A witness named William Osborne deposed to having seen the prisoner with a knife in his hand. The prisoner was committed for trial at the Sessions.

645 October 29 1877 West Bromwich

INQUEST An inquest was held on Friday, at the Britannia Inn, Dial Lane, Hill Top, before Mr Hooper, on the body of Samuel Clarke, the infant son of **John Clarke**, boatman, of Brickhouse Lane, who died on Tuesday. The inquest was held in consequence of a certificate of death having been given by Mr Layton, an unqualified medical practitioner. The evidence of Mr Manley, surgeon, who had made a *post mortem* examination, however, verified the statement in the certificate that death was the result of convulsions, owing to premature birth, and a verdict of "Natural death" was accordingly returned. The Coroner, however, remarked that if Mr Layton would obtain his medical certificate, coroner and jury would be saved the trouble of holding inquests in such cases; but so long as he continued to give illegal certificates he should hold an inquest in each case.

646 October 31 1877

GLEANINGS At Runcorn, on Monday, **John Hughes**, a boatman, was committed for trial on the charge of having murdered Nicholas Martin Stevens, a Cornish seaman. The evidence showed that on Friday night the deceased jumped on board the prisoner's boat to stop Hughes from ill treating his wife, and he was followed by a comrade named Dart. Hughes resented the interference, and

knocked both men overboard. Dart was got out at the point of death, but Stevens was drowned.

647 November 14 1877 The Assizes at Northampton

UNLAWFULLY WOUNDING A BIRMINGHAM POLICEMAN **Henry Smith** (22), boatman, was indicted for having, at Birmingham, on 23rd June, feloniously wounded and caused grievous bodily harm to Police-constable George London, with intent to kill and murder him. About half past five in the afternoon of the 23rd June the officer, being then in plain clothes, was on the canal side at Sandy Lane, Birmingham. Prisoner was there challenging another boatman to fight. The officer prevented him fighting, and the other boatman went away. Prisoner then said he would like to fight the officer, and at the same time put his fist in the officer's face. Prisoner was then under the influence of drink, but knew what he was doing. The officer pushed him away, and he fell down. On getting up he said, "I'll settle you for this", and immediately went into the cabin of his boat, and brought out a poker, with which he threatened to knock the officer's brains out. He endeavoured to strike the officer, who, however, struck him on the right arm, causing the poker to fall into the canal. Prisoner then went into the cabin and fetched an axe: but before he reached the officer his wife went behind him, snatched the axe out of his hand, and ran with it into the cabin. Prisoner went after her, and brought the axe back. He then went towards the officer, carrying the axe behind him. He made a rush at the officer, who, in self-defence, struck him on the arm. Prisoner then struck the officer on the right side of the head with the axe, inflicting a wound 2 3/4 in in length. The officer staggered, and another boatman coming to his assistance, the officer was taken to the General Hospital, where he remained for seven weeks. He was still under medical treatment. For the defence, it was urged that the prisoner, while under the influence of drink, was infuriated to such a degree by the interference of the officer and his use of the stick, that he scarcely knew what he was doing at the time of the assault. His Lordship, in summing up, spoke about the terrible effects of drink, and remarked that every right-minded man who had the power to do anything towards diminishing this growing evil ought only to be too anxious to do so. If this were once done, the calendars of prisoners which were now such catalogues of frightful crimes, would be diminished until offences such as these would become very rare indeed. Prisoner was found guilty, and sentenced to five years penal servitude.

648 November 15 1877

COOL ROBBERIES BY A BIRMINGHAM BOATMAN At the Walsall Guildhall, yesterday, **John Geally**, boatman, Ickniel Street East, pleaded guilty to having stolen an overcoat, the property of Henry Preston, Ablewell Street, and a purse, containing £4 14s from the person of **Chas Wall**, another boatman. On Monday night, Mr Preston, while the worse for liquor, was pushed or fell into the canal, and was got out by the prisoner, who took him into Wall's boat, and made a pretence of drying his clothes. He then made off with the coat, but almost immediately afterwards returned, and rifled the pockets of Wall, who lay in the cabin, threatening to "stick a knife into" a third man who was there, if an alarm was given. The Bench sentenced him to twelve months imprisonment with hard labour – six months for each offence.

649 November 17 1877 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY TO HORSES **Henry Colledge**, boatman, was charged by A W Thomas, inspector for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, with working a horse on the canal side, yesterday morning, in an unfit state. The horse had two raw wounds under the collar, and was in such a weak state that it could hardly draw. The owner of the horse, Mr John Skelton, coal merchant, Oozells Street Wharf, appeared, and chose to have the case heard instead of having a summons. He pleaded that he did not know the horse was in a bad state. He was fined 20s and costs, but on his consenting to have the horse killed the fine was remitted.

650 December 14 1877 West Bromwich

DOUBLE STABBING CASE At the Police Court, on Monday, before Mr L Spooner (stipendiary),

a boatman, named **William Durden**, aged 20, of Greet's Green, was charged with unlawfully cutting and wounding Edward Cranage and Mary Ann Critchley. The evidence for the prosecution was to the effect that on Saturday night the prisoner was fighting in William Street, and about eleven o'clock, excited with drink, rushed about brandishing a clasp knife. The prosecutor and prosecutrix were passing along the street, when, without the slightest provocation, the prisoner stabbed them with the knife. Cranage received a severe wound under the left arm, and Mrs Critchley a wound on the breast. The former was unable, through his injuries, to attend and give evidence, and the case was remanded until he was sufficiently recovered to be present.

651 December 17 1877 West Bromwich Police Court

STABBING CASE **William Durden** (20), boatman, of Greet's Green, was charged on remand with cutting and wounding Edward Cranage, furnaceman, William Street, Swan Village, on the previous Saturday night. About half past eleven on that night the prisoner, while under the influence of drink, commenced creating a disturbance and challenging persons to fight in the street. The prosecutor, who happened to be passing along the street, enquired from the bystanders what was the cause of the disturbance, whereupon the prisoner immediately struck him on the side of the head and knocked him down. Prosecutor got up, and said, "I will make you pay for this, you scamp". The prisoner then knocked him down again. Cranage had to be assisted home and attended by a surgeon, as it was ascertained that he had been stabbed in two places under the left arm. Subsequently a knife was found in the locality of the assault, which the prisoner admitted belonged to him. The prisoner was committed to the Sessions, pleading ignorance of the whole circumstances of the assault.

652 January 2 1878 Staffordshire Quarter Sessions

ALLEGED THEFT OF INDIAN CORN AT KINGSWINFORD John Thorns and Samuel Reece were indicted for stealing a quantity of Indian corn, the property of the Shropshire Union Canal Company, at Wordsley, on the 23rd November. Mr Darling with him Mr J Underhill, were for the prosecution; and Mr C Smith defended Thompson. The other two prisoners were undefended. On the day of the theft a boatman named **Edward Ward**, an employee of the Canal Company, had in his boat under his charge a quantity of corn, under instructions to convey it to Mr Webb, seedsman, Wordsley. On the morning of the 24th the corn was missed, and in consequence of another boatman in the employ of the company finding some corn at the back door of Thompson's premises, the police were communicated with. Police-constable Hinton and Mr Sedgwick, the manager to the company, went to the Black House. They saw Thompson, who at first denied having corn upon his premises, but subsequently brought a bagful out of a hiding place. It was explained that the corn was purchased by Thompson's wife from the prisoner. Several gentlemen were called to speak of Thompson's previous good conduct. The jury found all three prisoners guilty. They recommended Thompson to mercy on account of his previous good conduct; and in passing a sentence of six months imprisonment on each prisoner, the Chairman said he should have sentenced Thompson to a much longer term of imprisonment but for his previous good character.

PLEADED GUILTY **William Durden** (21), boatman, to nine months imprisonment, for unlawfully wounding a woman, named Elizabeth Granedge, at West Bromwich.

653 January 2 1878 Worcestershire Epiphany Sessions

PLEADED GUILTY **Thomas Fisher** (48), boatman, to obtaining by false pretences, a pint of ale from Sarah Hall; a pint of ale from Isaac Elwell, and from his wife some bread and cheese, at Dudley, on the 28th October. Two months hard labour.

654 February 7 1878 Birmingham Police Court

CRUELTY **James Vaughan**, a boatman, was charged at the instance of Inspector Thomas, of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, with working a horse when in an unfit state. The inspector proved finding the prisoner on Tuesday morning, on the canal side, working a horse which

Mr Parker, veterinary surgeon, stated was fit only to be slaughtered. Defendant was fined 20s and costs, and the owner of the animal promised that it should at once be killed.

655 February 11 1878

INQUESTS BEFORE THE BOROUGH CORONER An inquest was held upon the body of John Wagstaff (34), gasfitter, of King Street, Woolaston, near Stourbridge, who was found dead in the canal at Small Heath, on Wednesday afternoon..... He went out on the Monday afternoon, and was not heard of again until his body was found in the canal by a boatman named **Beresford**. Some of his clothes were found on the towing-path, and he bore no marks of violence. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

656 February 12 1878 Birmingham Police Court

STEALING COAL **Henry Hamilton** (31), boatman, Mill Street, was charged with stealing 1/2cwt of coal from a boat on the canal, near to Aston Road, the property of the Glasscote Colliery Company. The prisoner was seen to commit the robbery by a man named George Harris, and when apprehended the coal was found in his possession. A term of one months imprisonment with hard labour was imposed.

657 February 26 1878 Birmingham Police Court

William Phillips (18), boatman, Icknield Square, was remanded on a charge of having three pigeons in his possession, supposed to be stolen.

658 March 16 1878 Staffordshire Adjourned Quarter Sessions

ROBBERY FROM THE LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY **William Mountney** (20), boatman; **John Mountney** (18), boatman; **Isaac Thurston** (18), boatman; and **Daniel Kerwin** (17), boatman, were charged with stealing four cases of salmon, the property of the London and North Western Railway Company, on the 4th January. Mr Young prosecuted. The salmon was in transit from Liverpool to a tradesman in West Bromwich, and prisoners stole it from one of the company's boats at Spon Lane. Isaac Thurstan was also charged with stealing an overcoat and two waistcoats, the property of Daniel Reed. Prisoners were found guilty. Kerwin had a number of previous convictions against him, and on the present occasion he was sentenced to nine months hard labour, Thurstan was sentenced to six months for stealing the fish, and three months for stealing the wearing apparel; John Mountney was sentenced to six months; and William Mountney to eight months hard labour.

659 March 18 1878

CHILD MURDER IN BIRMINGHAM Mr H Hawkes, Borough Coroner, held an inquest at the Central Court, on Saturday, on the body of a newly born female child, which was found on Friday in the Old Birmingham Canal. The body was discovered floating naked in the water by **Samuel Cope**, a boatman, of Old Moxley. He got it out and put it on the towing-path, where he left it while he went to look for his horse. On returning the body had disappeared, a person who saw it taken from the water having called a policeman, who took possession of it. Dr Jackson, who made a *post mortem* examination, said the body was that of a fully developed infant, newly born, but having had separate existence. He found the skull fractured in five places, and there was a punctured wound at the back of the head penetrating to the brain. The wound, which was about the size of a pencil, had been caused by some blunt instrument. The injuries were not such as would have been caused by a passing boat. He believed the child had died from shock, consequent upon the fractures of the skull. The Coroner directed the jury that as evidence showed that the child had died from violence, the presumption of the law was that it had been murdered, unless there was testament to the contrary. The jury returned a verdict of "Wilful murder" against some person or persons unknown.

660 April 17 1878 Burton-on-Trent

BREAKING A HORSE'S LEG At the Burton-on-Trent Police Court, yesterday, before Sir Tonman Mosley, Bart., Mr C J Clay, Col. Leverett, and Mr H Wardle, **Charles Keen**, a boatman, of Moss Bridge, was charged with cruelty to a horse. Inspector Harper, of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, appeared to prosecute. On Sunday afternoon the defendant reached Burton with a canal boat, drawn by one horse. On arriving at Dallow Lane Lock the animal did not stop quite soon enough, and the consequence was that the boat went a little too far to permit the gates of the lock to be opened. This seems to have irritated the defendant, and he threw the handle of a windlass at the horse, remarking at the time, "There: I wish it had killed you". A young man named Parker witnessed this act, and on looking at the horse he saw that it had been struck on the near fore leg, from a wound on which there was a profuse flow of blood. The horse seemed unable to place its foot on the ground. Information was given to Police-constable Freeman, and he, on examining the animal, found that the leg was broken, and that the bone protruded through the flesh. The animal was slaughtered, and Inspector Harper then discovered that the cannon bone had been broken about the centre. The prisoner was sent to gaol for a month, without the option for a fine.

661 April 20 1878

BIRMINGHAM POLICE COURT Yesterday being Good Friday, no court was held; but Messrs Wright and Goodrick attended at the Moor Street lock-up, and dealt with cases of assault, drunkenness, and minor offences, remanding persons charged with felony until today. There were altogether twenty five prisoners. Thomas Lockett (17), moulder, 7 Court, Norfolk Street, was sent to gaol for one month, with hard labour, for violently assaulting **Henry Palmer**, boatman, on the previous night. Prosecutor was returning to his boat along Wharf Street, carrying some provisions, when the prisoner and four others assailed and maltreated him in a brutal manner. His brother, on running to his aid, was also badly assaulted, Prisoner was secured, but the other fellows made their escape. Mr Wright expressed a hope that the police would endeavour to apprehend them.

662 April 23 1878 Birmingham Police Court

VIOLENT ASSAULTS **Joseph Roberts** (19), boatman, Hampton Street, and John Lee, Court, Northwood Street, were charged with violently assaulting Arthur Riley, painter, of 3 Barr Street; and Louisa Riddler (17), screw-maker, Steelhouse Lane, and Mary Ann Broadey (20), steel-polisher, Cecil Street, were charged with assaulting Sarah Ann Newey, polisher, 39 Harford Street. On Saturday night Riley was near the canal side in Snow Hill, talking with another young man and Newey, when Roberts accosted him, and without any provocation knocked him down and kicked him. Riley's companion, on interposing, was ill-treated in a similar manner by Lee, whilst the two female prisoners assailed Newey, striking her about the face, causing her to bleed, and they also attempted to steal her shawl. Prisoners were taken into custody by Police-constable Kelly. Roberts and Lee were sent to gaol for four months with hard labour, and the women for two months each.

663 April 24 1878 Birmingham Police Court

VIOLENT ASSAULTS Charles Ore (21), labourer, Communication Row, was sentenced to four months imprisonment for violently assaulting **Thomas Weaver**, boatman, and a Mrs Jaynes, Wharf Street, on Thursday night last. Prisoner and a gang of other roughs waylaid Weaver as he was returning to his boat, and maltreated him and also his brother in a shocking manner. Mrs Jaynes, who ventured to interfere, was badly assaulted.

[\(does this relate to the PALMER entry of April 20 1878?\)](#)

664 May 14 1878 West Bromwich Police Court

A DISHONEST BOATMAN **Richard Austin** (21), boatman, was sentenced to one months imprisonment, with hard labour, for stealing a saucepan and sadiron, the property of Messrs Penrick and Son.

665 May 14 1878 Walsall

SERIOUS ASSAULT At the Guildhall, yesterday, **Thos Dyass**, boatman, who did not appear, was sentenced to two months imprisonment, without the option of a fine, for having severely assaulted Mary Cresswell, a widow, with whom he had been living, but who had left him.

666 June 27 1878 Birmingham Police Court

BATHING IN PUBLIC **Henry Douglas** (18), boatman, Brearley Street, **John Lamb** (17), brassfounder, 9 Court, Hanley Street, **John Cummings** (15), bellows maker, 30 Hanley Street, were charged with bathing in the canal and behaving indecently. Douglas, who is an old offender, was sent to gaol for a month, and the other prisoners were fined 5s and costs, or ten days imprisonment each.

667 January 20 1879

WOLVERHAMPTON QUARTER SESSIONS **John Lindon** (20), boatman, pleaded guilty to having, on the 10th of December last, stolen a truss of hay, the property of Charles Lane, from a canal wharf of the London and North-Western Railway Company. The Recorder said that the prisoner was a rogue and vagabond of the worst type; he had been convicted fourteen times. He was not however a confirmed thief. Prisoner was sentenced to a years imprisonment and three years police supervision.

668 March 4 1879 Birmingham Police Court

FELONIES **John Williams** (17), boatman, of no fixed residence, was sent to gaol for a month for stealing 9cwt of coal from a boat on the canal near Ford Street, on Friday, the property of Mr Smith, George Street, Parade. The case was proved by Police-constable White.

669 March 4 1879 Birmingham Police Court

ASSAULTING A TOWN COUNCILLOR **John Stokes** (23), stamper, court, St Vincent Street, Ladywood, and **James Rooney** (19), boatman, Norfolk Street, were charged with assaulting **Moses Swalbe** and **Samuel Pizer**, in Broad Street, yesterday morning, and also with assaulting Councillor **W H Dixon**, coal merchant, Old Wharf, and Police-constable **Edwin Lewis**. The evidence showed that Pizer was walking down Broad Street on Friday morning with a glazier's frame on his back, when, without giving any provocation, he was attacked by the two prisoners, who pushed him down and broke the glass that he was carrying. Pizer caught hold of Stokes and struggled with him, when the other prisoner pushed him down a second time, and kicked him about the hands, and attempted to strangle him. At this time Councillor Dixon came up and interfered with a view to protect the old man, but he, too, was assaulted by the prisoner Rooney, who struck him and kicked him savagely about the legs. A crowd collected, and Swalbe, who interposed, and the police officer who took the prisoner into custody, were both knocked about by the man Rooney, who, it was stated, conducted himself in an exceptionally violent manner. Prisoners denied the assaults; but Mr Kynnersley said he could not doubt the evidence that had been given for the prosecution. Rooney had been six times previously before the magistrates, and he was sentenced to two months imprisonment for each of three assaults, making six months in all. Stokes was sent to gaol for two months, with hard labour.

670 April 5 1879

THE DISTRESSING SUICIDE AT WALSALL Yesterday afternoon, Mr Hooper, coroner, held an inquest at the Red Lion Inn, Aldridge, on the body of Mr Robert Leighton, whose lifeless body was found in the canal, near Aldridge, on Tuesday afternoon. Mr W H Duignan attended on behalf of the relatives of the deceased. Mr E Leighton identified the body, and Mr Pritchard, master of the Workhouse, spoke to the absent manner and peculiar behaviour of the deceased at the audit on Tuesday, until he suddenly went away, and soon afterwards it became known that some irregularities in his accounts had been discovered. George Fryer, a farm labourer, stated that at about half past one o'clock on Tuesday he saw the deceased pass along the canal side and sit down

on the fence for about ten minutes whilst some boats were passing. During part of this time he appeared to be writing in a book or on a piece of paper. Half an hour afterwards witness was called to assist in getting the body out of the water. **John Gidley**, a boatman, spoke to finding the body, which lay in very shallow water, the head and shoulders being at the time above the surface. Police-constable Willis produced the various articles found on the deceased. Amongst these was £8 7s 2d in money and the summons to the audit, upon the back of which was written in pencil, "My own darling wife, - My last few words are that you may forgive me for my wrongdoing. I cannot bear the disgrace of going to gaol, and so have drowned myself. R L ". Mr Duignan then called Mr Phillips, surgeon, and Mr Samuel Russell, brass and iron founder, both of whom spoke to the bad state of health in which the deceased had been for some time, through want of rest and lowering of the system, arising from carbuncles, from which he was suffering. The former stated that, acting upon his advice, the deceased had promised to go to Ireland for a fortnight upon the completion of the audit, and the latter said that if the deceased had made known he was in difficulties his friends would have found him money. He himself would have done so. The Coroner summed up in favour of a verdict of temporary insanity, and the jury found that the deceased committed suicide, but there was no evidence to show his state of mind at the time.

671 June 28 1879 Birmingham Police Court

MERITORIOUS CONDUCT OF POLICE CONSTABLES **Thomas Elliman** (24), boatman, Court, Potter Street, and James Mills (30), moulder, Rope Walk, Dale End, were charged with stealing a quantity of brass, value £16, the property of Messrs Shorthouse and Glyden, brassfounders, Eyre Street, Spring Hill. On Thursday night last Police-constable Jones was on duty, in company with Police-constable Taylor, near the Winson Green Road. They noticed a cart and horse standing on the canal side, and watched. A little before nine the prisoners and another man came from under the canal bridge with a large plate of metal, which they took to the cart. The two officers then went up to the men and captured the two prisoners, but the other man, after dealing Jones a violent blow on the mouth and knocking several teeth out, escaped by swimming across the canal. After the prisoners were locked up, a search was made in the canal, and four coils of brass were found in the water under the bridge. The prisoners, on being charged, denied all knowledge of the brass. Mr B Shorthouse junior identified the brass as the property of the prosecutors, and said that it was missed from their premises about eight o'clock the same night. The premises had been entered by climbing over a wall 15ft high, which adjoined the canal. The prisoners were committed for trial at the Sessions. Mr Kynnersley remarked that the officers had behaved exceedingly well, and deserved great credit. He hoped they would be recommended to the Watch Committee.

672 June 28 1879 Birmingham Quarter Sessions

ROBBERY OF METAL **Thomas Elliman** (24), boatman; James Mills (33), moulder; **Thomas Stoddard** (18), boatman; Frederick Ward (18), metal roller; and William Warner (25), labourer, were indicted for having stolen a quantity of brass, the property of Benjamin Shorthouse and another, brassfounder of Spring Hill. Mr Daly was counsel for the prosecution; Mr Harris defended the prisoners Mills and Elliman, and Mr Fitzgerald appeared for Ward and Warner. The case for the prosecution was to the effect that on Thursday, the 15th of May, at about nine o'clock at night, Police-sergeant Jones and Police-constable Taylor had their attention attracted to a cart and horse standing on a piece of waste ground by the canal, near Winson Green Road. Having their suspicions aroused, the officers concealed themselves, and in the course of an hour, they saw Elliman and Mills approach the cart with a heavy bundle, which they carried between them. They deposited the bundle on the ground by a wall. A third man came to the cart and lifted the bundle into it, and then returned underneath the canal bridge, from whence he had emerged. Elliman and Mills then advanced in the direction where the constables were secreted. The police rushed out, secured both men, and handcuffed them. Leaving them in the hands of Taylor, Police-sergeant Jones waited for the return of the other man, who presently came along, carrying a coil of brass. Jones endeavoured to arrest him, and a violent struggle between them ensued, in the course of

which the man knocked several of the policeman's teeth out, and releasing himself from his hold, he jumped into the canal, swam across to the other side, and escaped, and had not been heard of again. The metal, which was found there afterwards, proved to have been stolen from the prosecutor's premises. "From information received" Police-sergeant Jones arrested the prisoner Stoddard on the 28th of May, and on the way to the station Stoddard, after denying complicity in the robbery, said that two others were "in it". In consequence of his statement, Ward, who was employed at prosecutor's works, was arrested, and he made a statement to the officer that the premises were entered from the back, that the metal was deposited in a boat and taken underneath the canal bridge, and part of it thrown into the canal, where it was found, and evidence was given as to Stoddard being seen near the spot on the night of the robbery. After being locked up several hours, the jury found all prisoners guilty, except Warner, in reference to whom they were unable to agree. The other four were sentenced to fifteen months imprisonment each. The recorder said the Grand Jury had made a presentment, directing attention to the intelligence displayed by Police-sergeant Jones. He entirely concurred in the presentment, and should forward it to the Watch Committee. Under the powers given him by Act of Parliament, he also ordered a reward of £3 to be given to the officer.

ALLEGED THEFT OF COAL **Joseph Hollier** (25), boatman, and Walter Groom, brassfounder, were indicted for the theft of 22cwt of coal on the 2nd of June. Mr Hugo Young appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Fitzgerald for the prisoners. The prisoners were acquitted by the direction of the Recorder, on the ground of insufficient evidence of the theft.

673 July 5 1879

THEFT OF MALT At the Northampton Borough Sessions, yesterday, **Joseph Hale** (65), boatman, West Bromwich, was found guilty of receiving malt, knowing it to have been stolen from Messrs P and R Phipps' brewery, and was sentenced to two years hard labour, the Recorder telling him that but for his age he would have been sent to penal servitude. His accomplices, Aldridge and Gibbins, got twelve months and nine months respectively, the latter pleading guilty, and giving evidence against the others. Webster, a fourth prisoner, was discharged.

674 July 18 1879

NEWS OF THE DAY A boatman named **Reuben Shirley**, was sentenced to penal servitude for fifteen years for a brutal assault on a little girl at Tipton. The man has been twice previously sentenced to penal servitude, and ten times to imprisonment with hard labour.

675 July 21 1879

SOLIHULL PETTY SESSIONS On Saturday, before Captain Boulton, Dr J H Kimbell and Mr G F Everitt, **John Sears**, boatman, Bedworth, pleaded guilty to stealing from a plantation at Knowle, on the 17th inst, a rabbit trap, belonging to Thomas Yarnold, gamekeeper, Knowle. Prisoner's dog was caught in the trap, which had been set by the gamekeeper to catch vermin. Having released the animal prisoner took the trap away with him, but was overtaken by Yarnold about 50 yards off. The prisoner then threw the trap in the canal, and told Yarnold he would have to fetch it out if he wanted it. Ultimately, however, prisoner fetched the trap out himself, and was then given into custody. He was sentenced to one days imprisonment. Mr Everitt, the employer of Yarnold, took no part in the hearing of the case.

676 August 6 1879

ATTEMPTED UNNATURAL OFFENCE **Job Wilkins** (42), boatman, pleaded guilty to this offence, and was sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment.

677 October 24 1879

GENERAL NEWS Yesterday morning, a canal boatman named **Bowler**, was apprehended, at Devizes, charged with an atrocious outrage on John Weston, aged 12. The boy was looking through an opening in the wall of the prisoner's house, when he procured a red hot poker and thrust it into

Weston's face. One eye was completely destroyed, and the boy lies in the Devizes Hospital in a precarious condition.

678 November 5 1879

ROBBERY AT SMETHWICK At West Bromwich, yesterday, before Mr Reuben Farley, a boatman named **Edward Oxley alias Burton** (26) was charged with stealing a sum of £103, belonging to John Burton, of Lewisham Road, Handsworth. It appeared that prisoner had been seen to go to prosecutor's house, and obtain the key, and enter the house where the money was kept, and when prosecutor returned prisoner had absconded, and the money was missing. A sum of between £5 and £8 was found on the prisoner by Police-sergeant Hinton when arrested. Remanded.

679 November 13 1879 Warwickshire Autumn Assizes

STEALING PIGEONS **Joseph Smith** (22) boatman, was charged with stealing nine pigeons, at Aston, the property of Henry Bellamy. Mr Stubbins prosecuted, The pigeons were stolen on Wednesday, the 16th of April last, and on the following Saturday the prisoner was found disposing of six of the birds. The witness who bought them said he kept the pigeons in a cupboard in the parlour. [Laughter]. Prisoner was found guilty, and there were previous convictions against him. The Judge cautioned him, and sentenced him to twelve months, with hard labour.

680 November 26 1879 Birmingham Police Court

ROBBERY OF BRICKS **George Jackson** (23), boatman, Court, Vaughton Street; Lot Bennett (29), labourer, Court, Allison Street; Henry Spencer (28), slater, William Street; and Alfred Bedford (19), brasscaster, Holliday Street, were charged with stealing about 3,000 bricks, the property of the Birmingham and Worcester Canal Company. The robbery had been effected by removing the bricks at various times in barges of which the prisoners had charge. Jackson and Bennett pleaded guilty, and were sentenced to six months hard labour; the other prisoners were acquitted.

681 December 8 1879 Aston Petty Sessions

INTIMIDATION OF WORKMEN **Thomas Insley**, boatman, of Long Acre, Birmingham, was charged with assaulting Eusemius Williams, coal dealer, Union Road, Aston, and with intimidating two boatmen named **Thomas and John Morteboys**. The prisoner was in the service of the prosecutor Williams about three months ago, but as there was some disagreement as to wages, he left. The two Morteboys shortly afterwards were engaged. On the 22nd October the Morteboys were unloading a boat of coal at Williams's Wharf, Cuckoo Bridge, Aston, when they were assailed by the prisoner and a number of other men, who threatened to throw them into the canal. Insley struck the Morteboys several times, who, fearing they would be further ill-treated, ran away. Williams came up at this time, when he was assaulted by Insley, who struck him on the face several times. Prisoner at the time escaped, but was apprehended on Thursday night by Police-sergeant Hall. He has been several times convicted of assault, and was sentenced to six weeks imprisonment for the assault on Williams : and was ordered to pay a fine of 20s and costs in each case of intimidation; or in default, one months imprisonment for each offence.

682 December 31 1879 Wolverhampton

FOUND DROWNED Annie Lockett (10), daughter of **George Lockett**, boatman, in the employ of the Shropshire Union Railway and Canal Company, was found drowned in the canal, near Southampton Street, yesterday morning. It is supposed that the deceased accidentally fell into the water whilst playing on the towing-path. An inquest will be held.

683 February 18 1880

INQUESTS An enquiry was held touching the death of **Samuel Munden**, 36 years of age, a boatman, residing at Eastcombe near Stroud, Gloucestershire. On Saturday night, deceased left a

public house in Wharf Street to fetch some hay for his boat, which was fastened to the side of the Worcester Wharf. Shortly afterwards a hat was seen on the water near the boats, and the body of the deceased was taken from the water close to where the hat was found. The night was a very dark one, and it was believed that the deceased accidentally fell into the water while crossing two boats to get to his own. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

684 April 20 1880 Staffordshire Assizes

ALLEGED RAPE AT HARBORNE **Samuel Weaver** (18), boatman, was indicted for feloniously assaulting Emma Hall (17), of Smethwick, at Harborne, on the 7th of March; and **John Osborne** (14), boatman, was indicted for aiding and abetting in the offence. Mr Owen defended Osborne : the prisoner Weaver was undefended. The evidence of the prosecutrix was very conflicting, and the jury acquitted both prisoners.

685 April 26 1880

NEWS OF THE DAY At Dorchester, on Saturday, **Harriet Reynolds** of Aston, and three persons named Trevett, of Upway, near Dorchester, were committed for trial on the charge of being concerned in the disposal of one hundred counterfeit coins. It was shown that the coins were sent from Birmingham to Upway Station, and one of the Trevetts was apprehended with them in his possession. The prisoner Reynolds, whose husband was said to be a boatman at Aston, stated in defence that her husband, at the request of the Trevetts, arranged with a man to "make" some money, and, in her husband's absence from home, she met this man at a public house, received the money, and sent it to Upway. The magistrates refused to accept bail for any of the prisoners.

686 April 26 1880

WHOLESALE DEALING IN BASE COIN On Saturday, at Dorchester, Harriett Reynolds, of Aston, Birmingham, and three persons named Trevett, of Upway, near Dorchester, were charged with being implicated in the disposal of 100 counterfeit coins. Mr Lock, barrister, defended the prisoners, who have several times been remanded on this charge. For some time past, counterfeit coins have been circulated in the neighbourhood of Dorchester, and the police have been on the alert. They ascertained that one of the Trevetts had been working at Birmingham, and they therefore watched the movements of the family. On the 29th ult., one of the prisoners was apprehended by the police while coming from the Upway station with a packet, which it was subsequently found contained base coins. On being apprehended, he stated that he was sent to the station for the packet by his brother, but was unaware of its contents. The brother was subsequently apprehended, and admitted having received the coins from Birmingham, though he refused to disclose the name of the person from whom he had obtained them. At the request of the Treasury authorities, the Dorchester police went to Birmingham with the view of discovering the parties, and now produced additional evidence. William Hart, letter-carrier, Birmingham, proved carrying a registered letter, sent by the Trevetts to Mr C Reynolds, Wainwright Street, near the Wellington, Aston. Reynolds gave him a receipt for it. Police-constable Matcham related a statement made to him by the prisoner, Arthur Trevett, to the effect that he received a letter from a boatman at Aston, whose name he did not wish to mention. The letter related to a box that was coming to him in the name of John Palmer. The witness Hart, on being questioned by the Bench, said **Charles Reynolds**, the person to whom the letter was addressed, was a boatman on the canal at Aston. Police-constable Haynes described the way in which the coins which he found on the prisoner were packed. The prisoner Reynolds, in defence, said Arthur Trevett wrote her several letters to Aston, in the first of which he said he should endeavour to see them on "business" if they would forward their address. At her husband's request, she answered that letter, saying they would be glad to see him if he would come to Birmingham. In a subsequent letter, Trevett wished to know if her husband could get him some money. Her husband wrote back to say that he would try and see the man he had some off in the summer. She did not write again for a fortnight, and then Trevett wrote asking them to be sure and send him some money. Her husband then saw the man, and promised to make him

“some” as soon as he received the money, which was duly forwarded. He named the train it was to be sent by. It was arranged for her husband to meet the man who made the money at a public house, but as her husband was away from home, she went, at his request, fetched the money, and sent it off to Dorset. The magistrates committed all the prisoners for trial, the application for bail being refused.

687 May 31 1880

FATAL QUARREL IN A BOAT Yesterday morning three men, named Daniel Smith, clerk; **John Roughton**, boatman; and William Cain, labourer, left Hull in a small boat, and went to Paull, about seven miles down the Humber. At Paull they landed, and had a quantity of drink. On the voyage back Roughton and Cain, who were both the worse for drink, fought, and in the struggle both men fell into the river. Smith, with some difficulty, rescued Roughton, but Cain was drowned. The body has not yet been recovered.

688 June 8 1880

Birmingham Police Court

VIOLENT ASSAULTS **George James** (37), boatman, Spring Hill, was brought up on a warrant, charged with having assaulted Louisa Matilda Moore. On Saturday, the 29th ultimo, the prosecutrix was delivering some newspapers in the Bull's Head public house, Spring Hill, when she heard the prisoner making some remarks about another man and his wife. She ventured to deny the statements which the prisoner had made, whereupon he used filthy language to her, struck her in the face, knocked her down, and then kicked her on the body. Prisoner, who had been previously convicted for felonies and assaults, was fined 20s and costs, or in default one months imprisonment.

689 July 10 1880

MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR IN CHESHIRE The adjourned inquest on the body of **Richard Colley**, canal boatman, Wolverhampton, who was found dead, with his skull fractured, in Shropshire Union Canal at Bunbury, Cheshire, was resumed yesterday, before the County Coroner. Evidence was given showing that there were a number of barrels of porter on board the canal boat Eyton, on which deceased was employed, and upon the arrival of the boat at Nantwich two men, also employed on the boat, named **Roscoe** and **Evans**, were soon in a state of intoxication. Suspicions were aroused that the cargo was being broached, and the boat was followed to Bunbury, where the deceased was found lying in the cabin in a pool of blood with a fractured skull. The medical evidence showed that death might have been caused by a fall or a violent blow; a poker having upon it what were supposed to be spots of blood and hairs was found in the cabin; and a constable produced a coat which Roscoe was wearing, which also had upon it marks of blood. Deceased's companions were unable to throw any light upon the affair, except that deceased when last seen alive was in the cabin in a helpless state of intoxication. The jury returned a verdict that deceased came to his death by violence, but how inflicted there was not sufficient evidence to show.

690 July 19 1880

Staffordshire Assizes

HOUSEBREAKING AT CHEADLE **Thomas Beardmore** (25), boatman, and James Fowell (21), miner, were indicted for breaking and entering the dwelling house and shop of Mr S J Coxon, and stealing a timepiece and a number of trinkets, on the 18th May last, at Cheadle. Mr Darling prosecuted. Prosecutor stated that on the day named he left home for two days. On his return he found the house had been broken into, entrance being effected by means of the window, and the articles mentioned were missing. The police searched Beardmore's house, and found the majority of the articles, all of which prosecutor identified as his property. Evidence was also adduced to connect Fowell with the robbery. The jury found both prisoners guilty. Beardmore was sentenced to twelve months imprisonment. The other prisoner was sent to gaol for six months.

691 July 23 1880

GLEANINGS A coroner's jury at Buckingham have returned a verdict of *felo de se* in the case of a boatman named **Twist**, who deliberately tied his legs together and jumped into Stoke Hammon Lock, and was drowned on Tuesday.

692 July 23 1880

TWO BROTHERS DROWNED AT DUDLEY Yesterday afternoon John William Flavel and Edward Flavel, aged nine and ten respectively, the sons of a fitter, at Woodside, were found in the Level Pond, on the canal, near Brierley Hill. Their bodies were taken from the water by a passing boatman named **Newton**. The children left home at 8.45 to attend school, but failed to do so.

693 July 27 1880

NEWS OF THE DAY A brutal ruffian named **William Jones**, a boatman, was charged before the Liverpool Stipendiary with throwing a boy, seven years of age, into the canal. A witness while walking along the canal saw the prisoner deliberately lift the boy up and throw him into the water. Happily the canal was not deep at the spot, and the little fellow managed to scramble out without assistance. The only excuse which the prisoner could offer was that the child struck his horse. A sentence of six months imprisonment will give him time to cultivate kinder feelings.

694 August 12 1880

Wolverhampton

LARCENY BY BOATMEN At the Police Court, yesterday, **Geo Cooper**, boatman, Peel Street, Winson Green, and **Philip Price**, boatman, Winson Green Road, Birmingham, were charged, under remand from Bilston, with stealing horse corn, the property of John Kent, and, together with **William Godfrey**, boat-steerer, Freeth Street, Birmingham, they were further charged with stealing 13cwt of coal, at Lane Head, on the 31st ult, belonging to Messrs J and C Abbots, Birmingham. For stealing the corn, Cooper and Price were sentenced to two months hard labour, and to a similar term of imprisonment for the theft of coal. Godfrey was committed for a month.

695 September 1 1880

Wolverhampton

COMMITTED FOR TRIAL Yesterday, at the Police Court, Thomas Careless (22), of Stafford Street was committed for trial at the Assizes, charged with criminally assaulting **Fanny Onslow**, a boatman's daughter, when early on Sunday morning she was going down Dunstall Lane, to join her uncle's boat, which was lying at Compton.

696 September 1 1880

Darlaston

THE BONA FIDE TRAVELLERS QUESTION AGAIN At the Wednesbury Police Court, yesterday, Thomas Hale, of the Boat Inn, Bentley Road, was summoned for having sold ale during prohibited hours on the morning of Sunday August 8th. The charge was proved by Sergeant Ainsworth, who saw the ale sold to a man named **John Dennis**, a boatman. Mr Sheldon, for the defence, said the ale was supplied by the defendant's son, to several boatmen who had that morning left Mr Boys' yard, at the Pleck, a mile and a half away, and who were starting on a long journey, his impression being that they were *bona fide* travellers. The Clerk pointed out that the section of the Act required that persons should come two miles, and said nothing about the distance to which they were going. The Bench dismissed the case upon payment of costs, telling the defendant that a second offence would be dealt with very differently.

697 September 4 1880

GLEANINGS **George Maccabe Ware**, boatman, was charged on Thursday, at North Shields, with cutting and wounding his son Charles. While under the influence of drink, he seized a large sharp saw, with which he struck his son on the left hand, and nearly severed the thumb. Prisoner was remanded, as his son was not out of danger.

698 October 23 1880**Balsall Heath Police Court**

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE Samuel Crossley (62), japanner, no fixed residence, was charged with attempting to drown himself in the Netherton Canal, at Selly Oak, on the 18th inst. A boatman named **Fox** stated that on the day in question he saw the prisoner walking along the towing-path of the canal. Prisoner's clothes were wet, as though he had been in the water. The man pulled his coat off, and was preparing to jump into the canal, when witness prevented him. The prisoner, who seemed to be ill, told a melancholy story of his misfortunes. He remarked that he had been distracted with sorrow, and thought he would put an end to his troubles by drowning himself. He jumped into the canal, but got out again, and, as he felt chilly, he pulled his coat off, though he did not contemplate jumping into the water again. He had been in the Birmingham Workhouse several months, but left, as he thought he might get work, as his trade generally commenced to be brisk towards Christmas. He went to his married daughter, who kept a pawnshop in Monument Lane, to ask her if she would allow him to live there, but she declined. Police-constable Stanton said neither the daughter nor the son-in-law appeared to care much for the prisoner, and he had great difficulty in getting dry clothes from them for the prisoner. Crossley expressed regret for having made an attempt on his life, and he was discharged, the Bench advising him to return to the Workhouse.

699 November 9 1880**Staffordshire Assizes**

OUTRAGE ON A GIRL AT WOLVERHAMPTON Thos Careless (22), sawyer, and William White (23), caster, were indicted for a criminal assault on **Fanny Onslow**, on the 29th August last, at Wolverhampton. Mr Owen prosecuted. The evidence went to show that prosecutrix, who is the daughter of a boatman living at Wolverhampton, her half-sister, and a friend were proceeding down Dunstall Lane at a late hour of the night, where they saw the prisoners, who caught hold of prosecutrix and threw her down. Her companions obtained the assistance of Police-sergeant Donnelly. Meanwhile, Police-constable Sergeant, hearing screams, went up and saw both prisoners and caught White. The other man ran away, and was apprehended by Donnelly. Both prisoners were found guilty, and were sentenced to ten years penal servitude.

700 November 15 1880

ROBBERY OF £200 WORTH OF SILK AT TIPTON On Saturday, at the West Bromwich Police Court, **Edward Cross** (49), boatman, **John Cross** (24), boatman, of Great Bridge, and Elizabeth Martin (60), of Mount Street, Birmingham, were charged with being concerned in the robbery of £200 worth of silk from the London and North-Western Railway, at Tipton. Superintendent Whitehurst said that on the 6th October last seven pieces of silk, each measuring about 90 yards, were stolen from a railway truck at Dudley Port, and 50 yards of silk, corresponding with that stolen, had been found in Cross's house. On Sunday last, in consequence of certain information, Martin's house, in Birmingham, was searched, when prisoner tried to conceal the piece of silk (produced) about her person. Remanded for the attendance of witnesses who are ill.

701 December 30 1880**Wolverhampton**

VIOLENT BOATMEN At the Police Court, yesterday, **Edward Evans**, a boatman, who said he came from Llangollen, was brought up in custody to answer nine different charges – five of which were for assaults, and the other four for wilfully damaging police uniform, breaking two panes of glass, being drunk and disorderly, and refusing to quit licensed premises. **Thomas Rowley**, another boatman, of Bilston, was also charged with assaulting the police. On Tuesday Evans went to the Union Inn, Canal Street, created a disturbance, and was ejected, but not before he had assaulted the landlord and his wife. After being turned out he smashed the glass window in the door and spoiled the lock. Upon Police-constable Deacon attempting to arrest the prisoner, he was kicked by him several times. Rowley also attacked the officer, causing Evans to escape, but allowing himself to be locked up, after a good deal of struggling. Later on Evans was found by the police in the cabin of his boat; but whilst they were in the cabin, several other boatmen cut the boat adrift, and the prisoner, after having bitten and kicked the officers, was by them swung by the arms and legs and

thrown from the boat to the towing-path. Here the assistance of a civilian named Henry Cartwright had to be obtained before Evans was arrested. Cartwright was now allowed 5s from the poor box for his assistance, Evans was sentenced to six months, and Rowley, who had been many times previously convicted, to four months hard labour.