

## BERROWS WORCESTER JOURNAL 1822 to 1838

### 1 February 28 1822

A fatal accident occurred on Saturday last at King's Norton, on the line of the Stratford Canal ; a boatman who was driving a horse belonging to a boat, the property of **Mr Prim** of Stratford, met the horse of another boat just under the bridge, the construction of which prevented the man steering it until the boat came close to him. The horses, in passing each other, forced the man into the canal. Immediate assistance was given by the other boatman, who was pulled into the canal by Mr Prim's man in endeavouring to drag him out. One of the boats had by then reached Mr Prim's man, which struck him on the stomach and lacerated his thighs in a dreadful manner. The unfortunate man died the same night.

### 2 October 17 1822

WORCESTER COUNTY SESSIONS Transported for seven years – **William Benbow**, boatman, for stealing 17 trusses of hay, the property of Archibald Cameron Esq, from a cow shed at Shrubs Hill. He was also indicted, but not tried, for stealing a board, the property of Messrs Hemming and Rowe. He appeared to receive his sentence with much pleasure, and thanked the Chairman.

### 3 July 17 1823

WORCESTER SUMMER ASSIZES

**Joseph Clements**, 32, waterman, and **Henry Phillips**, 25, labourer, charged with having feloniously stolen out of the river Severn two baskets, called wheals, used for taking eels, the property of Leonard Dark. Not guilty.

NO BILLS **George Barker**, 19, waterman, charged with feloniously stealing and carrying away some plough traces from a wharf at Lenchford, in the parish of Shrawley.

### 4 October 9 1823

PUGILISM Yesterday, a pitched battle for 60 gs (half minute time) took place about 5 miles from Upton, betwixt **Jordan**, a waterman of this city, and **Wheeler**, a waterman of Gloucester. The men had a turn up in the neighbourhood a few months ago, which caused the present match. They entered the ring about four o'clock, and soon afterwards set to ; Jordan, seconded by Johnson of the London school, and Wheeler, attended by Lydiatt, a provincial bruiser. In the third round, Jordan planted a heavy blow above his opponent's left eye, which produced a copious supply of claret. In the next five rounds Wheeler bored his man down, without gaining any advantages ; but during the four last rounds Jordan changed his system of fighting, went into his adversary, and hit him severely about the head. 4 to 1 on Jordan. Wheeler stood up one more round, only to receive similar punishment, and he then gave up the contest. There is little doubt but it was what the Londoners call a cross. Jordan had only one slight blow on the mouth. The battle lasted eleven minutes. A bustling and manly fight afterwards took place between Lydiatt, a butcher of Upton, brother to Wheeler's second, and Barnett, a coachmaker of this city, arising from some dispute on the ground. They contended 22 rounds with alternate advantages, when the Upton man proved the conqueror.

### 5 October 16 1823

Since the recent establishment of watchmen in this city, they have, by their vigilance, become exceedingly obnoxious to those nocturnal disturbers denominated "The Lambs", and several petty attempts have been made by those fellows to annoy them in the discharge of their duty, which offences the Magistrates are determined to punish with the utmost rigour. On Saturday night about eleven, the watchman was called into the Dog and Duck in Nicholas Street by the landlord, to quell a disturbance made by three men, whom he took into custody, but upon their promising to behave quietly he allowed to depart. Between twelve and one, a number of boatmen and others, armed with large sticks &c and headed by the same fellows, returned, swearing they would knock all the watchmen's brains out ; and when they arrived at the Corn Market commenced a general attack on

every person they could see, and several, who were summoned to aid the civil power, were considerably injured. The three ring leaders, **W Boughton** and **W Heming**, watermen, and George Cresswell, labourer, were with great difficulty secured and lodged in gaol. Yesterday, after an examination by the Magistrates, the above three were fully committed to take their trial at the next Sessions, for a riot and various assaults. John Bradley, a porter in this city, was held to bail for the same offence. Three other individuals were likewise examined, but the evidence was not sufficiently conclusive, and they were discharged. Warrants are out for the apprehension of 3 or 4 more, who have been advertised as principals in this atrocious outrage, but have absconded.

**Joseph Hughes**, a waterman, for being intoxicated on Sunday evening, and indecently exposing his person on the bridge, was fined and discharged.

#### **6 January 15 1824**

**WORCESTER CITY SESSIONS** **George Drinkwater, Jas Becket** and **Samuel Clewaith**, boatmen in the employ of Messrs Pickford and Co, carriers, were charged with stealing a quantity of earthenware from a crate entrusted to their care ; they were convicted on the evidence of an accomplice, Thomas Edge.

#### **7 January 29 1824**

**INQUESTS BY MR HILL, CORONER** At the Navigation Inn, Stoke Prior, on **Samuel Anson** aged eleven who, whilst steering a boat on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal on the 13<sup>th</sup> inst, fell overboard, it is supposed from his foot slipping, and was drowned. The father of the deceased, a waterman living in Doldy in this city, was hauling the boat with another man when the accident happened, but did not discover it until it was too late to render his unfortunate son any assistance. Verdict : "Accidental death". On Thursday at the same place, on Mr Samuel Parry, aged 72, who was taken from the canal on Tuesday. The deceased had been missing from the 13<sup>th</sup> instant, and is supposed to have fallen into the canal on his crossing the lock to go to Bromsgrove market. The spot at which the accident happened is very dangerous, and demands the attention of the Proprietors of the Navigation. Verdict : "Found drowned".

#### **8 February 12 1824**

**COMMITTED TO WORCESTER CITY GAOL** **Thomas Sable**, waterman, charged with stabbing and maiming James Day in Sansome Street on Saturday night ; the person wounded is said to be a member of the Society of Gentlemen called Lambs, and he received the wounds in one of those affrays in which they are particularly fond of engaging. He is now at the Infirmary, and in a fair way of recovery.

#### **9 March 18 1824**

**LOSEMORE CHAPEL** near the Wharf, which has been for some years proposed, in order to give encouragement to the boatmen and other people employed in that neighbourhood to attend Divine Worship, will be opened on Tuesday next, if please God, when two sermons will be preached by the Rev Joseph Entwistle of Birmingham, and collections made in aid of the same. Service to begin at Eleven in the morning, and at half past Six in the evening.

#### **10 April 29 1824**

At our City Sessions on Monday, the following prisoners were tried :-

**Daniel Dillon alias Evans, Samuel Blower** and **John Parry**, boatmen in the employ of Owner **Featherstone**, for robbing one of his boats of two shirts and 28 pounds of bacon, on the night of the 18<sup>th</sup> inst. Blower, in his defence, said that he could prove being at Mrs Bell's in Doldy on the night in question, and Mrs B said that he slept there, but was called up about half past four, by whom she did not know. The Jury expressed a wish that Mrs B might be reprimanded for keeping a house of ill fame ; and found all the prisoners guilty. The Chairman observed that they were old offenders,

and sentenced them to seven years' transportation.

**11 May 6 1824**

WORCESTERSHIRE SESSIONS

ASSAULTS **Henry Williams** of Hartlebury, boatman, charged with assaulting Mr W Hemming. The prosecutor is servant to the Towing-Path Company, and the offence was committed when attempting, as was his duty, to seize the prisoner's horse, which he found trespassing upon some lands adjoining the path. Fined 20s and to find two sureties to keep the peace for three months.

FOUR INSOLVENT DEBTORS were heard upon their petitions, when Samuel Salmon, formerly of Cropthorne, farmer, was remanded until next Session, to amend his schedule, it appearing that he had given an undue preference to a creditor ; the others, viz Samuel Tidmarsh of Evenoad, Baker ; **Richard Rowlands**, late of Claines, boatman ; and Benjamin Pratt, late of Pershore, Surgeon, having sworn to their schedules, were all certified for and liberated.

**12 May 20 1824**

COMMITTED TO WORCESTER COUNTY GAOL **William Hunt**, bargeman, charged with embezzling money which he had received for coals sold for his employers, Messrs Salmon and Dankes.

**13 June 10 1824**

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE , JUNE 9 Yesterday, a lock-keeper and five boatmen appeared to answer a charge of following their occupation on the Sunday ; but as it was the first time they were charged with the offence, they were discharged on payment of costs, 3s 6d each. (It gives us great pleasure to understand that the Magistrates are determined to prevent boats plying upon the canal on Sundays ; we trust that the boat owners will not expose their men to any more convictions for this offence).

**14 September 2 1824**

A DISAPPOINTMENT It having been generally announced that a fight would take place yesterday in the neighbourhood of Kidderminster, between **Jordan**, a waterman of this city, and Hall of Birmingham, the road from this city to the anticipated scene of combat was covered at an early hour in the morning with passengers of all sorts, from the humble peripatetic to the aspiring occupant of the tilbury ; upon their arrival at Kidderminster, these candidates for fistic amusements found that Alam Bridge (Salop), about seven miles on the Bridgnorth road, was the place of action ; at this spot, a multitude more numerous than select was assembled – the heroes of the day made their appearance – all was breathless expectation – when lo! a Constable made his appearance, deputed by the Magistrates, to apprehend the heroes of the day ; the man of office was soon knocked down, and deposited by some of the amateurs in a neighbouring pond ; but his courageous intrusion into the ring had the effect of disturbing the proceedings of the day ; Hall and his friends moved off towards Bridgnorth, with the avowed intention of fighting in that vicinity, but as Jordan and his followers did not follow, of course no fight took place. Hall was in this city this morning. We should be ill discharging our public duty did we not express the respect we feel towards those Magistrates through whose instrumentality another of those disgraceful scenes was prevented ; and we hope that measures will be taken to punish the persons who ill-used the constable. We must not omit to state that on Monday, the Magistrates in the neighbourhood of Kidderminster expressed by public hand bills their determination to prevent a violation of the public peace in their jurisdiction. It is seldom (perhaps we might say never) that these fights are conducted without some knavery ; such, we have reason to suppose, was the case in this instance ; the odds being against Jordan, his friends would not bet unless a sum equal to the odds was deposited in their hand ; thus, if they betted a pound, they expected a premium of five shillings – and this was done to some extent ; by the issue of the affair, these premiums will most likely be forfeited ; various reasons lead to the

conclusion that this mode of betting was adopted by Jordan's friends from a conviction that no fight would take place. We trouble our readers with this detail in the hope of opening the eyes of those who are weak enough to bet upon occasions where Honour and Honesty are "absent members".

**15 October 7 1824**

The Wharfingers and other persons trading on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal are signing a memorial to the County Magistrates, requesting them to put a stop to the passing or unloading of boats on the Sabbath day, along the line of the canal. We hope that the memorialists may succeed in their object ; if the boatmen have not the advantages of religious instruction, their moral conduct cannot be expected to be correct.

**16 October 21 1824**

INSOLVENT DEBTORS **Thomas Foster**, late of Lowesmoor, Boatman.

**17 October 28 1824**

COMMITTED TO WORCESTER CITY BRIDEWELL

By the Rev E W Ingram, for one month, **Joseph Darke, Abraham Gittins, Jonathan Oakes and Thomas Smith**, watermen, for leaving the employ of Messrs Devey, Severn Carriers, Bewdley, without proper notice.

**18 January 6 1825**

INQUEST BEFORE MR MENCE, CORONER On Friday at the Waterloo Tavern, Blockhouse Fields, on the body of a man of the name of **Bullock**, a boatman of Upton, who was drowned in the Worcester and Birmingham Canal opposite the Waterloo Tavern on Monday evening the 27<sup>th</sup> ult. The boat to which the deceased belonged was moored near the spot, and it is conjectured that his foot slipped on going on board, and he fell into the water. A companion was waiting to accompany the poor fellow home with the boat, but finding he did not come at the appointed time, he concluded that he was gone by some other conveyance, and he proceeded to Upton alone. On arriving there, however, he found that Bullock had not returned, nor had his family seen anything of him. After waiting throughout Tuesday and part of Wednesday, and Bullock being still missing, this man came here on Wednesday afternoon and, on dragging the canal about the place where the boat was moored, the body of Bullock was found ; he has left a widow and two children. Verdict - "Found drowned".

**19 January 20 1825**

WORCESTERSHIRE SESSIONS **James Moseley**, aged 18, waterman, for stealing from one of Crowley and Co's boats on Lowesmoor Basin, wearing apparel, provisions &c, the property of the boatmen ; 12 months' imprisonment to hard labour, and to be privately whipped.

**20 March 10 1825**

WORCESTER ASSIZES **Josiah Hill alias Cutler alias William Jackson**, aged 17, for stealing a watch, the property of his master, **W Featherstone**, boatman. 12 months' imprisonment to hard labour. He said that his master owed him 3s 6d and would not pay him ; he, therefore, took his watch to pay himself.

**21 March 24 1825**

The city and county magistrates have issued a notice to bargemen, stating that it is their intention to enforce the provisions of the Act of Charles II with respect to the violation of the Sabbath. The penalty is 5s for each offence.

**22 May 12 1825**

INQUESTS BY MR HILL, CORONER Thursday at the Barley Mow, Sidbury, on **William**

**Williams**, aged about 30, a waterman from Hanley Castle who, on Wednesday afternoon, in attempting to remove a canal boat from Diglis Basin, fell into the water ; he was extricated in a few minutes and conveyed to a boat cabin where, in about two or three hours afterwards, he expired. On opening the chest, by Mr William Hebb, Surgeon, it appeared that the lungs, from the immersion, had become so charged with blood, and no surgical aid being procured, that he died from suffocation, which was the verdict recorded. The jurors expressed their dissatisfaction at the omission to call in medical assistance, as the deceased was a fine healthy subject.

**23 July 7 1825**

COMMITTED TO WORCESTER CITY BRIDEWELL For one month, **George Clench** and **John Evans**, boatmen, for leaving their master's service without proper notice.

**24 August 25 1825**

COMMITTED TO WORCESTER CITY BRIDEWELL For twenty one days, by Rev H Pye, **Benjamin Hayes**, boatman, for leaving the employ of Mr R Goddard without proper notice.

**25 September 22 1825**

INQUEST BEFORE MR HILL, CORONER On Thursday at the Barley Mow, Sidbury, on the body of Elizabeth Sergeant, who was the preceding evening drowned in the sluice adjoining Diglis Basin. It appeared that the deceased and Ann Davis, about eight on Wednesday evening, met two watermen, one of whom the deceased was known to, and were invited into the Red Lion in Sidbury to take some ale, and from thence to the vessel at Diglis, to have some barge beef. On their way to the vessel, as the deceased and one of the bargemen (named **James**) were passing over a swing bridge, they fell (it is supposed from the darkness of the night) into the sluice, which was seven feet deep ; James soon got out, but it was half an hour before the body of Sergeant was discovered ; it was conveyed to the Albion public house, where the landlord refused to take it in, alleging that the drowning was in the county and his house was in the city ; it was then carried to the Barley Mow, and before a surgeon was procured, an hour and a half had elapsed, when it was thought useless to resort to the means recommended to restore life. Verdict : "Accidental death". (The conduct of the bargemen, in not waiting in Worcester to give evidence before the Coroner, was deservedly reprobated ; all persons present at an accident ought to remain in the neighbourhood until an Inquest has been held.

**26 October 20 1825**

WORCESTER CITY SESSIONS **John Sanders**, aged 40, waterman, for stealing coal from Lowesmoor wharf – Three months' imprisonment to hard labour.

**27 January 11 1827**

BANKRUPTS **William Cook**, Newton-upon-Ouse, Yorkshire, waterman.

**28 January 25 1827**

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, JANUARY 22 **John Bunn** of Kempsey, boatman, was convicted of leaving his master's service, getting drunk and neglecting his work, and was ordered to pay 15s 6d out of his wages, and expenses.

*General Post-Office, London, October, 1821.*

CAUTION.

**T**O CARRIERS, Masters of Stage Coaches, Coachmen, Watermen, and Bargemen, Masters of Vessels or Passage Boats, either coastways within Great Britain, or to or from Ireland, or to or from parts beyond the seas, against unlawfully collecting, carrying, or conveying Letters; AND TO ALL PERSONS whatsoever, against sending letters otherwise than by the Post.

*By the Act of 9th Queen Anne. c. 10.*

No person whatsoever shall receive, take up, order, dispatch, convey, carry, re-carry, or deliver any letters, or packets of letters, or make any collection of letters, or employ any vessel or boat, or other conveyance by sea or land, either coastways within Great Britain, or to or from Ireland, or beyond the seas, on pain of forfeiting 5*l.* for every offence, and 100*l.* for every week the practice is continued.

This Act renders carriers, masters of coaches, coachmen, watermen, bargemen, and masters of vessels, liable to the penalties, even if they carry letters without hire or reward.

*By Act of 42d Geo. III. c. 81.*

No person whatsoever shall send or cause to be sent, or tender or deliver in order to be sent, otherwise than by the Post, or to the nearest post town, to be forwarded by post, any letters or packets, on pain of forfeiting 5*l.* for every offence.

These penalties may be recovered with costs by any person who will inform and sue for the same; one moiety to the King and the other to the informer.

There is an exception as to letters which concern goods sent by common carriers, so as they are sent with and for the purpose of being delivered with the goods, without hire, reward, or advantage. Also as to letters sent by any private friend on his journey, or by any messenger on purpose.

Under this law a person carrying a letter may inform against a person sending one.

By an Act of 55 Geo. III. c. 153, masters of vessels opening sealed bags of letters entrusted to them, or taking thereout letters, or not duly delivering the bags at the Post-office of the Port of arrival, forfeit 200*l.*

Masters or others having letters in their possession, after the masters delivering their letters at the Post-office, forfeit 5*l.* for every letter found on board.

The Postmaster-General will feel it his duty to enforce payment of the several penalties imposed, on breach of any of the laws above referred to.

By Command of the Postmaster-General,

FRANCIS FREELING, Secretary.

30 April 26 1827

DEATH BY FIGHTING We stated in our last the fatal termination of a fight at the Dog and Duck, Henwick, on Easter Monday. On the evening of that day, about 60 persons of both sexes, of the lower class, assembled at the above house, and a dance took place. At about eleven o'clock, a young man named Barnesley, a waterman, entered the room, and finding Susannah Tyson, a female with whom he was on terms of intimacy, dancing with a youth named Hall, he went up to the latter and placed himself before him. Hall enquired the meaning of such conduct, and asked Barnesley whether he was Tyson's sweetheart, at the same time requesting him to stand lower. Barnesley said he had more right to the female than he (Hall) had, and refused to stir from where he had stationed himself. Tyson, fearing a quarrel, then left the dance, and was followed by Barnesley, who abused her for her companionship with Hall, and made her feel still more severely the effects of his jealousy by taking her downstairs, and there beating her, at the time time threatening to "serve Hall out" before he left. Shortly after, the parties were all sitting in the kitchen of the house, and Hall

was preparing to go home with another female, when Barnesley came behind him and, putting his threats into execution, struck him twice. The first blow, Hall merely enquired what was meant, but on its repetition, he asked a man named Andrews to second him, and a regular battle, in an adjoining meadow, was the consequence, Barnesley finding a second in one Richard Sammons. They had fought considerably more than half an hour, when Tyson and another female begged Barnesley to desist. He refused doing so, observing that he “was not beat, that he was good blood then”, and resumed his combat. In the next round he received a blow from his adversary behind the left ear, which felled him to the ground ; he was picked up, his eyes closed and in a state of insensibility. It was now about five in the morning. The vanquished man was laid upon a table in the garden, it being supposed at first that he was in a state of stupor only, from the effects of the liquor he had drunk, but showing no symptoms of returning animation, he was, by the advice of a medical man, about ten o'clock removed to the Infirmary, where he met with every treatment his situation needed, but to no avail ; about three o'clock he died, from the extravasation of blood upon the brain produced by the rupture of the vessels caused by the blow. An inquest was held upon the body before Mr N Mence, coroner, on Wednesday evening ; a verdict of Manslaughter was returned against James Hall, and a warrant under the Coroner's hand was issued for his apprehension ; but at present he is at large, having absconded. Hall, we are told, is little more than 18 years of age, and bears the character of a quiet inoffensive young man. It is evident from the above details that he did not willingly fight. Barnesley, we lament to add, bore a character which ill prepared him for a sudden termination of his existence. It is a disgraceful fact that a County Constable was present at this fatal fight, and made no attempt to put an end to it!

### **31 May 3 1827**

WORCESTERSHIRE SESSIONS Twelve months' imprisonment to hard labour – Thomas Partridge aged 25, for stealing a watch, the property of **Joseph Castrey**, boatman, at Dudley.

### **32 June 28 1827**

SALUTARY CONVICTION **William Bayston**, canal boatman, was convicted at Oswestry last week (under 1 Geo IV c56) in the penalty of 5/- for turning his horse into a field of grain by the side of the canal.

### **33 August 2 1827**

WORCESTER ASSIZES **Joseph Millward**, aged 29, boatman, was charged with stealing a quantity of ropes, the property of J Baker of Brinscomb, Gloucestershire, from a vessel in Stourport canal basin, on the night of the 16<sup>th</sup> ult. It was proved that he cut away from the vessel all the ropes that he could, and sold them immediately to a man named John Attic, in whose possession they were found the next morning. Before they were cut, the ropes were worth between 8l and 9l, and it was deposed by Attic himself that he gave 8s 8d for them. Twelve months imprisonment to hard labour.

### **34 October 4 1827**

INQUESTS BEFORE MR SMITH, CORONER

At the Swan Inn, St John's, on view of the body of **Isaac Jones**, a bargeman, who, on the preceding day, was on board a trow on the Severn belonging to Owner **Thorne** of Upton. It appeared from the evidence that the deceased, with six other men, had been drinking together at the Shades in Frog Lane, that at about three o'clock in the afternoon, the deceased, with other men, were on board a trow ; the deceased was on the deck, when suddenly the tiller, which the deceased had hold of, struck him and knocked him into the water. One of the men on board immediately tried to give him the shaft to lay hold of, but he could not reach it ; they threw a rope to him, but he could not catch it, and sank immediately. The body was picked up in about an hour and a half afterwards. He was not intoxicated when the accident happened. The deceased was about 42 years of age, and has left a wife and four children. Verdict : Accidental death.

**35 January 17 1828**

WORCESTER CITY SESSIONS

**Samuel Darke alias Gillam**, aged 23, waterman, charged with stealing a bundle of lath from the yard of E Weaver at the Butts in the night of December (??). Davis, the watchman of All Saints, met the prisoner with the laths and questioned him respecting them. Suspecting his account, Davis very properly took him into custody. The witness who could have identified the property did not appear, and his recognisances were estreated. - Acquitted.

**36 January 24 1828**

**WHEREAS I, THOMAS TARRAN, of Tirley, in the county of Gloucester, Bargeman, in company with my Brother, James Tarran (not in custody), did, on the evening of Friday, the 18th of January, 1828, obstruct the passage of the Carriage of the Rev. Dr. Timbrill, in the hamlet of Conderton, in the parish of Overbury, in the county of Worcester, by coming before the horses, and frightening them, and threatening to pull the Coachman from his Box ; but, in consideration of my acknowledging my said Offence, and begging his Pardon, and paying the Sum of One Pound for the Benefit of the Worcester Infirmary, Dr. Timbrell has kindly consented to wave prosecuting me for the same ; I hereby acknowledge his lenity.**  
The Mark ✕ of THOMAS TARRAN.  
Witness, JOHN LEAVER.  
January 19, 1828.

**37 February 21 1828**

INSOLVENT DEBTORS **William Smith**, Woodside near Dudley, boatman.

**38 July 24 1828**

WORCESTER ASSIZES, MONDAY JULY 21 **William Lloyd**, aged 30, and **Stephen Aldershaw**, aged 27, watermen, charged with stealing six hens and two cocks from the premises of Mr Geo Hartwright of St Peter's, in the night of Saturday se'nnight. Mr Carey conducted the prosecution. Lloyd was apprehended by Orchard on Pitchcroft on the Sunday, with some of the fowls in his possession. When Orchard went to Aldershaw's house, the latter denied having any fowls in his premises, but two were found boiling, and divested, of course, of all means of identifying them. The Jury acquitted Aldershaw and Lloyd was sentenced to eight months' imprisonment to hard labour. The Judge cautioned Aldershaw as to his future conduct ; and stated that the sentence on Lloyd would have been much more severe had any part of the premises been broken open ; but the fowls, it appeared, had not been locked up.

**39 August 21 1828**

INQUEST BEFORE MR SMITH, CORONER On Thursday and, by adjournment, yesterday at Upton, on the body of **James Lewis**, waterman, who fell from the barge of his employer, **Mr Geo Harris**, owner, of this city, into the Severn and was drowned. Verdict : "Accidental death".

**40 September 25 1828**

INQUEST BEFORE MR SMITH On Thursday at Ripple, on the body of **James Smith**, aged five, son of a waterman at Upton, who, whilst playing on the previous Tuesday morning on the banks of the Severn at the latter place, fell in and was drowned. The parents of the boy missed him soon after the catastrophe, but no person having seen him fall into the river, they could learn no tidings of his fate till his body was taken out of the water at Ripple in the course of the afternoon. Verdict : "Accidental death".

#### 41      **October 9 1828**

**THE MURDER AT MONMOUTH** This murder resembles in atrocity the murder of Maria Marten, and arose out of circumstances not very dissimilar. **Esther Stephens**, the wretched woman who has been murdered, appears to have been a very bad character, having for some time carried on a connection with a young man, Edward Barnett, who is charged with the murder. She had been from home several weeks, and on her return, on Saturday morning, she found the house locked, her husband, who is a bargeman, being out. She afterwards got someone to write a letter to Barnett, which was delivered to him at a public house by a little girl, to whom he said, "I can't read it, can you?" The letter was afterwards put into the hands of the hostler who, on his examination, said that he could not rightly make it out ; he, however, remembered that he read "Maria Marten and the Red Barn", when Barnett took it out of his hand saying, "I know where it comes from", and went hastily away. The child had been directed to tell Barnett that he was to meet Esther Stephens at the Gloucestershire House, whither he accordingly went ; and the child was afterwards sent to tell him that Esther's husband was just come home, and that she would not come to him for three quarters of an hour, by which time he would be gone down the river with the barge to which he belonged. They were afterwards seen to go together into Stephens's house. Esther went out late in the evening, and was heard by a man and his wife on the floor below to return about half past one or two ; soon after which a scuffle was heard, which becoming more violent, the woman jumped up, saying to her husband, "Bill, for God's sake, see what Stephens is doing to his wife", when he hallooed out, "What the devil, Stephens, are you about? Are you going to murder the woman?" Then something was heard to fall on the floor, and all was again silent. Little notice was taken of the scuffling and screaming, as Stephens and his wife frequently quarrelled and fought. But on the following morning, the dreadful truth became known ; the body was found lying on one side, with the knees drawn up, a deep cut through the larynx and half through the oesophagus, the external carotids and the superior thyroid artery divided. A clasp knife such as rustics generally carry in their pockets was found in the blood which surrounded the body, and a horn handled dining knife, round at the point, was lying on the table. The room was literally deluged with blood, and traces of blood were left, as if made by the fingers, on both sides of the staircase and on the back of the door. The suspicion against Barnett is very strong, as he was seen to go into the house with the woman, and a pair of boots, a hat, a fustian jacket and a shot bag, containing £11 15s 6d in notes, sovereigns and silver, were found in the house, and proved to have belonged to him. After a most patient investigation for three days, the Jury returned a verdict of *Wilful Murder against Edward Barnett*. It is supposed he has made for Liverpool, as he expressed an intention of emigrating to America.

#### 42      **October 16 1828**

##### **WORCESTER COUNTY SESSIONS**

**THE STAFFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE CANAL COMPANY v LOWER MITTON HAMLET** It will be recollected that a question was reserved upon the trial of this appeal at the April Sessions 1827, whether the profits of the Severn Locks at Stourport were to be rated in Lower Mitton only, or whether they should be divided among all the parishes through which the Canal runs in proportion to the length of each parish, in the same manner as the general profits of the Canal are divided. In consequence of the Counsel on each side not agreeing on the facts of the case, Sir C S Smith Bart (who was the Chairman at the above Sessions), on the application of and being attended by Mr Shutt, the Counsel for the Hamlet, and being also attended by Mr Mc Mahon, the Counsel for the Canal Company, finally settled and signed the case, and it is expected that in the next term the point will be argued and determined by the Court above.

**James Pountney**, aged 20, waterman, charged with stealing three planes, the property of S Murliss of Lower Mitton, carpenter, from the yard of Mr Rowley in Stourport, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August, was sentenced to one month's solitary confinement. The planes were found in his possession on the following day, and he stated that he had found them in Mr Rowley's yard!

**Thomas Jones**, aged 28, and **Thomas Horton**, aged 19, watermen, were charged with stealing six yards of woollen cloth, the property of Messrs W and G Devey, Severn Carriers, from a vessel called the *Bewdley*, lying in the basin at Lower Mitton, on the 20<sup>th</sup> ult. Harry Walker, against whom a true bill was found for receiving the goods, was stated to be too ill to be apprehended, having fractured his leg. Mr Shutt, who conducted the prosecution, stated that Horton was employed by the prosecutors ; on the 19<sup>th</sup> ult, the vessel was loaded at Stourport, for Bristol ; and on its arrival at the latter place, it was discovered that a brick and a half had been substituted for the cloth. Horton gave part of the cloth to a person named Powell, to carry it to his (Horton's) mother ; but Powell got drunk and gave it to a female, who pledged it at Mr Walter's shop in Worcester. Jones took his portion to a tailor named Walker at Stourport, to whom he sold it for 6s. Two confessions, in which each of the prisoners detailed his share in the transaction, were read. The Jury recommended Horton to mercy, and several persons bore testimony to his previous good character. Both, however, were sentenced to seven years' transportation. The Magistrates considered that the facility with which this offence may be committed rendered it necessary that a heavy punishment should be inflicted,

**Samuel Crump**, waterman, charged with stealing from a trench boat in a stream at Queenhill, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August, a quantity of eels, the property of Gen Dowdeswell and Sir A Lechmere, Bart, was sentenced to one month's imprisonment to hard labour. The prisoner was caught in the fact by Gen Dowdeswell's gamekeeper. Two persons were concerned in the theft, but the other escaped.

**Bartholomew Bridgford**, 28, waterman, pleaded guilty to a charge of stealing a silver watch from the person of B Bantam on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July, and was sentenced to four months' imprisonment, the last month in solitary confinement.

**Thomas Thorney**, 20, waterman, for stealing a watch and 19s 6d from the dwelling of G Turner at Ombersley – seven years' transportation.

#### 43 January 27 1831

INQUEST BEFORE MR SMITH, CORONER On Monday at the Mug House in Hylton Street, on the body of **William Evans**, a waterman, who fell into the Severn at Stourport about seven weeks ago. The body was not found until Monday morning. Verdict : “Found drowned”. The deceased was known by the name of Cucumber Billy.

#### 44 February 10 1831

INQUEST BEFORE MR SMITH, CORONER On Sunday at Kingsnorton, on the body of a boatman, name unknown, who fell from a boat while passing under the tunnel and was drowned. Verdict : “Accidental death”.

#### 45 May 19 1831

SHOCKING AFFAIR Early on Thursday morning, a shocking circumstance occurred at the second lock from this city on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal. A man named **William Dudfield** had arrived at the lock with a boat on his way to Birmingham ; while waiting to go into the lock, another boatman named **Robert Shirley** arrived at the other end, and after some words as to who should go first in the lock, the latter cut Dudfield's strap, and hit him several times ; some fighting appears then to have taken place, during which Shirley stabbed Dudfield with a knife, in the left breast just below the heart. He seems to have been immediately aware of the serious consequences which this shocking act might bring upon himself ; he assisted in conveying the wounded man to this city. Upon Dudfield's arrival here, he was taken to the Infirmary, where he now lies in a precarious state. It is to be regretted that Shirley was not immediately taken into custody ; persons are now in pursuit of him ; he is a Staffordshire man ; Dudfield is from Gloucestershire.

**46 May 26 1831**

**Dudfield**, the boatman who was stabbed by another boatman (as stated in our last) is doing well.

**47 July 14 1831**

Between 1 and 2 o'clock on the morning of Sunday se'nnight, a waterman named **William Matthews** was drowned in the Severn at Gloucester, into which he had thrown himself to escape the officers of justice, who had a charge of felony against him.

**48 October 6 1831**

We are glad to find that the Committee of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Company have given directions that boats shall not pass on the canal during the hours of divine service on Sundays. It is much to be regretted that boats are allowed to pass at all on the Sabbath Day. It is urged by some persons that if the boats were idle, the men would spend their time worse than in working them. No doubt this might be true of many ; but it seems a solemn duty to give all classes an opportunity of attending places of worship ; if they then neglect it, the fault is theirs. Few persons are more utterly ignorant of religious truths than boatmen employed on canals.

**49 November 24 1831**

Among the prisoners in custody at Bristol is **Samuel Levers**, a waterman from this city. He is stated to have offered a check for payment, which was stolen during the riots. His house here was searched yesterday, but no stolen property was found.

**50 December 1 1831**

**Levers**, the waterman from this city who was apprehended at Bristol in consequence of having tendered a bill which had been stolen during the riots, is committed for trial.

**51 January 12 1832**

BRISTOL, JAN 10 **Samuel Levers**, a waterman from Worcester, was charged with stealing a cancelled check and some Bank notes, the property of J S Broad. Levers offered the check for payment at Miles's Bank, and was immediately taken into custody, as it was known that it had been stolen from Mr Broad's house during the riots. When asked where he got the check, he said his son at Worcester had requested him to present it for payment. It being found that Levers belonged to the *Commerce*, a trow belonging to Messrs Soule and Co, Mr Broad went on board that vessel with a police officer ; they found a bag in which was a box ; in the latter were two bank notes belonging to Mr Broad, and in the bag were some dresses belonging to a Freemasons' Lodge ; the prisoner said he was a Freemason, and the box and other things belonged to him. Before the Magistrates, Levers stated that he had picked up a pocket book on the Quay, containing the check and notes. Upon the second examination, he said that he had picked it up on the deck of the vessel. On behalf of the prisoner, **John Stephens**, who worked on board the *Commerce*, spoke to the manner in which the prisoner had disposed of his time during the riots, with a view to show that he did not go ashore, but to his work. The vessel lay close to the Quay wall, and anything might have been thrown on the deck. He worked with the prisoner for five years on board the trow, and though much property had been entrusted to him, he never heard of any complaint against him. He believed the prisoner had no son of his own ; his wife has a son by another husband ; he may be about 24 years of age ; he lives at Worcester and they call him Peter. The Chief Justice summed up the evidence, and the Jury, without retiring, returned a verdict of Not Guilty. The Chief Justice said – Prisoner, your case has had a very lenient consideration, and I hope it will act as a warning for your future conduct.

**52 March 1 1832**

ADJOURNED SESSIONS

TRANSPORTED FOR SEVEN YEARS **Thomas Kirk**, 30, and **Joseph Cook**, 26, watermen, for stealing cloth and other articles from a trow belonging to Messrs Barnett.

**53 March 8 1832**

WORCESTER ASSIZES Not Guilty – **Charles Parsons**, aged 32, boatman, charged with embezzling money to the amount of £2 10s, received on account of **Eliakim Jones**, his master.

**54 March 15 1832**

WORCESTER ASSIZES The following cases were not included in our last report :-

JUDGEMENT OF DEATH RECORDED **Thomas Hyde**, aged 18, waterman, for having severely beaten William Knight on the highway, and stealing from his person various articles of property. (It appeared that the prosecutor in this case, who is servant to Mr S Boulter of Forthampton, was on his way home from Tewkesbury between one and two in the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> of September last, and when a short distance from the latter town, he was stopped by two men, who threw him down, beat him, and robbed him of 5s in silver, a knife and a wallet containing three pair of shoes.(?) After Knight had somewhat recovered from the effects of his brutal treatment, he pursued his course homewards ; he had not gone far, however, before these desperadoes again came up to him, saying “they had not got all from him” ; they then forced him against the bank, and having cut open his small clothes pocket, took therefrom a silver watch. The prisoner at the bar was apprehended on the following day in a canal boat at Pershore. When taken into custody, he said he was hid in the hedge whilst the offence was being perpetrated, and that the wallet, which was seen in his possession shortly after the robbery, were thrown there to him. The prosecutor swore positively to the prisoner. (The other men have not been secured.)

**55 March 29 1832**

HEREFORD ASSIZES

TRIAL FOR MURDER It may be recollected that in April 1831, the body of Walter Carwardine, a farmer of some property living at Broxwood, Herefordshire, was found in the Wye. The marks on the body and other circumstances led to a suspicion that Carwardine had been murdered in a brothel in Quaker Lane, Hereford, to which it is known he had gone, on the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> of March. The brothel was kept by a man named Joseph Pugh, and a woman from Worcester named Connop had taken to the house Sarah Coley and some other girls. Pugh and Connop were apprehended and tried at the Hereford Summer Assizes on a charge of murdering Carwardine ; but they were acquitted for a want of evidence. Some time, however, after the Assizes, Pugh ill-treated a girl named Mary Williams, who becoming in consequence very ill, and believing herself to be in a dying state, made such disclosures to the Magistrates as led to the apprehension of Joseph Pugh, **William Williams** (a waterman), and John Matthews, a wheelwright, upon a charge of being engaged in the murder. Sarah Coley, who was also charged with the offence, escaped, and has not since been apprehended ; soon after the murder of Carwardine, she changed a £5 Kington note at Worcester – and such a note Carwardine was known to have had about him. On Saturday last, Pugh, Williams and Matthews were tried before Mr Justice Taunton. The principal witness was the above named Mary Williams, who stated that on the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> of March, she left Pugh's house with a man ; at that time Carwardine was in the house. “I returned”, (the witness continued), “by the way of Eign Street to the end of Quaker's lane, by Eign gate turnpike. I went along the street as far as the gate of Mr Thomas, the coachmaker's, meadow. I there saw Joseph Pugh, William Williams, a man of the name of Matthews and Sarah Coley. I heard Mr Carwardine's voice very plain ; he said, “For God's sake, don't murder me”. I heard Coley say, “I have got his blunt, and if you will keep secret I'll treat”. Williams said, “We will soon put him out of the way”. I then heard a dreadful blow, and Mr Carwardine fell on the ground on his back. I distinctly heard two long deep groans, as if he was dying. I did not hear him speak after. At that moment, Williams saw me ; he ran to me, and forced me into the turnpike road to the Red Lion Inn, turned up Town ditch Lane, into the Cross Lane, but no one was there. I went into Quaker's Lane, by the end of the barn, and listened. I heard Pugh, Williams, Matthews and Coley, about Mr Thomas's house, the carpenter, three parts down the lane towards the tan yard. I distinctly heard Pugh curse his eyes and limbs, and say, “Go on”. Coley said, “Don't talk so loud, don't be in a hurry”. Susan Connop stated that Carwardine left the house,

but afterwards returned to the door, saying he had been robbed. She shut the door ; just outside she heard a dreadful blow given, after which the voice ceased ; she went out to look for the girl Coley who, it was said, had robbed the farmer ; she met the prisoners Williams and Matthews ; she asked them where the farmer was. Williams replied "it was no matter to her ; he was taken away from her door ; they had done his business". A woman named Powell, who lives in the lane, saw the prisoners striking Carwardine ; Williams knocked him down. William Carwardine, the brother of the deceased, stated that Williams said to him that his brother's body was in Monk's Hole ; witness asked him how he knew it was in Monk's Hole. Prisoner replied he knew it was there. The Jury, after 15 minutes consultation, found the prisoners guilty, and they were immediately sentenced to be hanged on Monday. The trial occupied the whole day, not being concluded until ten o'clock at night. It is a little singular that these men were tried on the very day twelvemonth after the deed of blood was perpetrated.

The execution took place at one o'clock on Monday. The conduct of the prisoners, from the time of condemnation, became their situation, but they declared their innocence of the crime imputed to them. In this declaration, they persevered after they were tied up. When the drop fell, Pugh was convulsed for some time, but Williams and Matthews were dead in a few seconds. After hanging the usual time, their bodies were given to the surgeons at the Infirmary for dissection.

Pugh was 27 years of age, Williams 24 and Matthews 25. Williams assisted in taking Carwardine's body out of the water, and betrayed no emotion on that occasion! The last person executed at Hereford for murder was a brother of Williams. Matthews was the son of a respectable retired tradesman at Brecon ; he was very well educated, and always bore a most excellent character. He voluntarily surrendered himself to meet the charge. He was by trade a wheelwright. The probability is that he did not anticipate the lengths to which his infamous companions would go. Pugh was a very bad character. At the commencement of the trial, he exhibited the most disgusting levity, but when he found how it was likely to terminate, his impudence was succeeded by terror.

## **56      May 31 1832**

We regret to state that some of the men connected with the Severn Trade have, within these few days, been engaged in some very unlawful proceedings. Our readers are aware that Towing Paths have been formed, under Acts of Parliament, along the line of the Severn from Gloucester to Bewdley. On this Path, horses are generally employed to tow vessels, in preference to employing men, who are called bow halliers. These latter have imbibed a false idea that the Acts had expired, and that men only ought to be employed. Acting under this impression, bodies of them have proceeded to various points and prevented the horses proceeding with the vessels, in addition to which they nailed up the gates situated on the Path ; the consequence has been that a stop has been put to the trade on the river. This morning, several owners of vessels assembled in this city, and went down to the river to see whether they could induce the men to desist, but the latter (who had assembled in considerable numbers), on an attempt being made to forward a vessel with horses, resisted, and forcibly prevented the horses being tackled, at the same time hustling or striking the owners. The ringleaders being known, application has been made to the County Magistrates for warrants for their apprehension. The Magistrates have, this evening, issued notices that persons guilty of offering these obstructions are liable to be imprisoned for six months. It is not improbable that some of the men have acted in ignorance, and we therefore hope that this well timed notice will have a good effect. It is impossible to allow the law to be violated with impunity, and the Magistrates cannot permit the trade to be thus interrupted, though they are desirous of giving the men an opportunity of considering the consequences of continuing these outrages to which, perhaps, they have been instigated by designing men. We hear that in the neighbourhood of Gloucester, a similar attempt has been made, but the men have been compelled to relinquish it.

## **57      June 7 1832**

**DISTURBANCES AMONG THE BOW HALLIERS** We mentioned in our last the disposition manifested by the bow halliers on the Severn to impede the passing of horses along the Towing-

Paths. The County Magistrates found, from what passed on Wednesday, that there was no prospect of preventing vessels on the Severn being detained, but by offering force to force and, with the view to show the men the hopelessness of resistance and to be prepared for the worst, they sent a letter to the Commanding Officer of the Scotch Greys stationed at Kidderminster, requesting that a portion of the men under his command might be marched to Worcester. In compliance with this requisition, about 30 of the Greys, commanded by Captain Gape, arrived here at 10 o'clock on Thursday morning, and soon after, Major General Campbell, the Commanding Officer of the District, also arrived. About the same hour, the Magistrates assembled at the Public Office, and swore in special constables ; accompanied by these, five Magistrates, viz John Williams Esq, Elias Isaac Esq, the Hon and Rev Somers Cocks, R Temple Esq and E Sanderson Esq proceeded to the One Acre Piece, a little beyond the boundary of the city (and to the banks of which the blockaded vessels were moored) to endeavour by persuasion to effect their release, and if that failed, to effect it by force. By the time the Magistrates had arrived at the spot, the refractory halliers had congregated in considerable numbers, and what with others drawn there by curiosity, with some, it may be feared, on the alert for mischief, together with women and children, a considerable and somewhat formidable mob had collected. Mr Williams then proceeded to address the multitude as follows :-

“Bargemen, Friends and Neighbours – A complaint has been made to us by the owners of several barges that they have been forcibly obstructed and assaulted by the bow halliers, and prevented them from proceeding on their voyage, and they applied to us for warrants to apprehend the offending parties. We declined signing these warrants till we had first an opportunity of explaining the nature of the act to you. I now repeat what I informed some of you yesterday, that the Act for allowing the use of horses for towing vessels up the Severn is a permanent Act of Parliament, and if you offend against it, you will be liable to fine or imprisonment. We are now called upon, as Magistrates, to liberate the vessels you have unlawfully obstructed in their passage up the river. We are provided with a sufficient force to effect our object, and we entreat of you not to attempt by force or riotous behaviour to resist the law, or such conduct will not only bring immediate punishment on you, but will ultimately injure yourselves, by lessening the traffic on the river. We are aware that, in common with the general depression of the country, you have suffered privation, for which we are sorry ; but we are now led to hope a speedy revival of the general trade of the country, which you will partake of in your employment as watermen ; and again entreat you not to resist the law. I now order the horses to be attached to the ropes, and desire you, constables, to take any person into custody who may attempt any obstruction”.

The horses were now brought up, and attempted to be tackled to the vessels, but in despite of the entreaties, threats and personal exertions of the Magistrates, the constables, and many of the respectable inhabitants of the city, the mob persisted in their resistance, urged on in no trifling degree by the jeers and taunts of the females who had mingled with them. Several of the men most active in the affair were singled out by the constables and taken into custody, but they were speedily rescued ; one of the constables was thrown down, and his shoulder much injured. Mr Williams now read the Riot Act, and again warned the people to disperse ; the horses were once more brought out to be yoked to the vessels, but still to no purpose, and the Magistrates were compelled to send for the soldiers, a detachment of whom (some dismounted) were marched upon the ground. The mounted men were immediately ordered to clear the towing-path, which they soon accomplished whilst, under the protection of the dismounted, the horses were fixed to the vessels, and the special constables and others rushed into the mob and captured the ring leaders, including those who had been before rescued. Nine in all were taken, and they were placed in the care of the military. The vessels now proceeded on their way, but it was necessary they should be escorted a short distance by the soldiery, as it was known there were parties of the halliers up the river to intercept them. At Camp, the Captain of one of the vessels was foolish enough to go into a public house, and during his absence (no soldier having accompanied the vessel), some women detached the horse, and turned him up on the turnpike road! After the vessel had started, the crowd gradually dispersed ; the prisoners were conveyed to the County Gaol ; some women had the audacity to pelt the constables

while lodging the men in the prison. During the above proceedings, the soldiers acted with admirable tact and temper.

In dealing with mobs, the most difficult portion to manage is the fair sex, whose vociferations are abundantly provoking, while men feel that it would be unmanly to use women as roughly as the opposite sex. A governor of a town upon the continent once hit upon a droll expedient. He had often been plagued by Amazonian riots, and all his efforts to put them down had proved ineffectual. One day, having reason to suppose that the ladies were going to have another spree, he ordered some pieces of artillery to be planted in the principal street ; he charged these with a little powder, together with bladders filled with soot and water. The damsels advanced, not doubting that this was a mere demonstration of the Governor. They were mistaken ; the word was given – off went the guns – the bladders burst, and covered every mother's child with their delicate contents! The women were utterly confounded, and took to their heels in double quick time. Another discharge covered their rear as handsomely as the front – and the sly old Governor was never more disturbed by petticoat insurgents.

### **58 June 21 1832**

**THE BOW HALLIERS** These men are now peaceable, and we have reason to hope will remain so. At a public house at Upton on Wednesday evening, a number of watermen attacked three men who belonged to a vessel drawn by a horse, and beat and stamped upon one of them in so savage a manner that he became insensible, and it was for a short time doubted whether he would survive. Three of the offenders were apprehended on the following morning, and held to bail to take their trial at the Sessions. **William Ward** has been committed to the County Gaol for two months for obstructing a horse employed on the towing path, and for one month longer for assaulting Mr W Devey, a special constable. **Thomas Bateman** has been committed for one month for assaulting Mr J A Ames, a special constable. On Thursday night, several vessels lying at St Clement's Gate were cut from their moorings, endangering the lives of those on board. A reward of £20 has been offered for the discovery of the offenders.

### **59 June 21 1832**

The Worcester, Upton and Evesham troops which assembled to repress the disturbances among the bow halliers have returned home, after having executed the duty for which they assembled with such discretion and temper as did them high honour. With the exception of some abuse they experienced from a rabble at Tewkesbury, their reception showed that their services were properly appreciated.

The detachment of Scotch Greys which marched into this city in consequence of the disturbances among the bow halliers left for Kidderminster on Saturday last.

### **60 July 5 1832**

#### **CITY SESSIONS**

**Elisha Hunt**, 22, waterman, was found guilty of stealing a gun and other articles from the warehouse of Messrs Hood and Wall, Bath Road, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. His conviction of felony at the County Easter Sessions, 1830, was read in court.

**John Munday**, 21, waterman, convicted of stealing a shawl from the person of Eliza Broughton, twelve months' imprisonment.

**John Vaughan**, 25, waterman, convicted of stealing fowls, the property of Thomas Read of St Peter's, one month's imprisonment.

### **61 July 5 1832**

#### **WORCESTERSHIRE MIDSUMMER SESSIONS**

**THE BOW HALLIERS** **James Mapp, Thomas Onions, John Withers, Thomas Stockhall, William Wheeler, James Smith, John Dickens, D Marsh** and **Henry Lowe** pleaded guilty to the charge of having riotously assembled and obstructed the Towing-Path. Mr Lea stated that the

prosecutors did not wish to press for punishment ; they were aware that many who engaged in these riots had been misled. The Chairman said the prisoners were much indebted for this forbearance. He hoped they would remember in future that the laws could not be violated with impunity. They would now be discharged on entering into their own recognisances of £20 each, with sureties of £10, to keep the peace for two years, and to appear for judgement when called on.

## 62 July 19 1832

**BOW HALLIERS** We are sorry to learn that a few days ago two of the Bow Halliers refused the offer of 3s and a pint of ale each to assist in towing a vessel from this city to Stourport.

## 63 July 19 1832

### CHOLERA MORBUS

We are sorry that it is our painful duty to announce that Cholera has made its appearance in this city. The first case occurred on Saturday. The following is the daily account made up to 10 am this day, and transmitted by the Worcester Board of Health to the Central Board :-

	Rem	New cases	Dead	Recovered	Rem
July 14	0	2	1	0	1
July 15	1	1	1	0	1
July 16	1	5	1	3	2
July 17	2	3	0	0	5
Total		11	3	3	

The first case was that of William Watkins, aged 56, who lived in a place called the Pinch, at the back of Bridge Place, Hylton Street, and near the Severn. He was taken ill at one o'clock on Saturday morning ; medical aid was called between 10 and 11, at which time he was lying in a state almost approaching insensibility ; his face, hands and feet had a dusky bluish colour ; fingers and toes contracted ; he complained occasionally of severe pain in the stomach ; the surface of the skin was cold, and there was no pulse at the wrist, his voice scarcely above a whisper ; the tongue cold. It appeared, upon inquiry, that he was in perfect health the previous day, and had walked to a neighbouring village ; he ate rather plentifully of cold new potatoes for supper, but went to bed apparently well ; at one o'clock in the morning, he was seized with violent vomiting and purging, cramp of the limbs and pain of the stomach, the matter brought up and passed by the bowels was thin, colourless and watery, and he had passed no urine. In spite of medical assistance, which was rendered to him by several members of the Board of Health, he expired about five o'clock in the afternoon, 16 hours from the commencement of the attack. Watkins was a travelling brazier and collector of rags, but it has not been ascertained that he had been in any place where there were cholera cases. He was a man of good constitution, and temperate in his habits.

On Saturday afternoon, a stout young man named **Bishop**, 20 years of age, was seized while in the market with vomiting, &c. When the medical attendant saw him, his symptoms were very much the same as Watkins's, with the exception of his having some pulse. He is now in the second stage of the disease, with severe fever of the typhoid description. He is not likely to recover. He had arrived here on Friday in a boat from the Staffordshire collieries, where the disease prevails. He was intoxicated on the evening before the attack, and had had a bowel complaint for a day or two previously, for which he used no remedies.

On Sunday morning at two o'clock, a man named Pingree, aged 48, living in premises immediately behind Watkins's, was seized with similar symptoms. When seen at half past eight, his appearance was precisely that which Watkins presented, the pulse being, however, barely perceptible ; general blueness of the integuments all over the body ; the abdominal muscles were cramped and in knots ; much pain was experienced ; the evacuations were very frequent, and looked like dirty barley water ; no secretion of urine ; the patient was in a state of apparent indifference, but remained perfectly sensible until his death, which took place at half past eleven am, nine hours after the

attack. Pingree appears to have been in a state of great destitution, and was naturally of a weak constitution. He had not been in Watkins's house, but his wife had been with the latter frequently. Upon a *post mortem* examination, the morbid appearances were in almost every respect the same as those presented in bodies of cholera patients at Sunderland.

On Monday morning, a man named Baldwin, aged 29, was taken ill while at work, but was well enough to walk to his house in the Pinch ; he, however, got worse, and died at two o'clock on Tuesday morning, leaving a widow and three children, and an aged father, who depended upon him for support. It appears, upon enquiry, that the deceased was subject to relaxed bowels, which he experienced on Sunday, and perhaps to the neglect of this premonitory symptom and not applying early for medical aid, his death may be ascribed. Another circumstance unfavourable to him was that, ever since the appearance of cholera in England, he has had a presentiment that he should be one of its victims.

Four more cases occurred in the Pinch on Monday – a man and his wife, a woman and a child – but by early attention they are now convalescent.

Last night, a woman named Coney, residing in a Court in Copenhagen Street, experienced a severe seizure. She remains very ill. It appears she had been in communication with some of the persons in the Pinch who had the malady. Another female was attacked last night ; it is believed that this attack was caused by giving way to unnecessary fears. It is, however, hoped that she will recover.

The Pinch, where the majority of the cases occurred, is precisely that kind of situation in which the disorder might be expected to make its appearance ; it is very confined, and not far from it is a ditch, which is often offensive. The rooms of the houses are generally crowded and ill ventilated and, as is too frequently the case among the poor, there is not sufficient attention to cleanliness.

Since the malady appeared, the members of the Board of Health have met daily, and are adopting every measure which seems calculated to arrest the progress of the disorder. All their efforts to obtain a building for a cholera hospital having failed, a temporary building is erecting in a field near St John's, to which patients who are not in an advanced stage of the disorder may be removed. The city is divided into districts, and medical assistants assigned to each ; parochial Boards, consisting of the Ministers, Churchwardens &c, have also been established. We are glad to find that the poor are grateful for the efforts made to afford them assistance upon this melancholy occasion. We trust that, by the blessing of Providence upon the precautions adopted, this frightful malady may not make any considerable progress among us. The rapidity with which this disease destroys life is a consideration well calculated to solemnise the mind of the most thoughtless.

In conformity to the instructions of the Central Board, the Board of Health directed that the bodies should be interred without delay. We may here remark that whatever repugnance survivors may feel as to the immediate interment of their deceased friends, attention to this point is of the last importance, as the neglect of it may tend to the spread of the malady.

The Board of Health have, since the Cholera Act was passed, made several applications to the Lords of the Council for powers to remove nuisances pointed out in various parts of the city and immediate neighbourhood, which could not be abated under the (.....) Act ; and we cannot but very much regret that such a (.....) was not conceded to them. They intend, we hear, to (.....) the application, but if their wishes are complied with, it (.....) be imprudent to attempt the removal of the worst nuisances during the hot weather.

(.....) precautionary hints may not be altogether useless upon (.....) occasion. The diet should consist of plain meats (mutton, beef), well boiled potatoes or rice, salads, cucumbers, (.....) and everything which each individual has found to be indigestible, or to disagree with him, should be avoided. For beverage, a moderate quantity of good beer is most desirable ; sour beer must not be taken ; the use of spirituous liquors is the most likely means of bringing on an attack. No one is so likely to become a victim as he who is recovering from intoxication ; life may be destroyed before he gets rid of the effects of drinking. Cleanliness, in persons and houses, is of the last importance ; houses should be washed with quick lime ; everything calculated to create disagreeable smells should be carefully removed ; pig sties near houses are very injurious ; bed linen should be exposed to the air ; windows should be kept open during the day, and rooms washed frequently. Flannel

worn next to the skin, more especially round the bowels, will be found very useful to prevent chill arising after perspiration ; damp linen should be changed without delay. Whenever a SLIGHT bowel complaint occurs, it is safest to obtain medical assistance immediately ; if that cannot be had soon, one or two spoonfuls of brandy may be safely given ; bags, to contain heated salt or sand, should be ready. We may conclude these hints with a general remark, that the INTEMPERATE, the UNCLEANLY, and those who give way to UNNECESSARY FEARS are commonly the FIRST victims of cholera.

The cholera has appeared almost simultaneously in various towns in this part of the kingdom. It has broken out within a few days at Dudley, Birmingham, Coventry, Gloucester, Bristol, &c.

Several fatal cases have occurred during the past week at Dudley and at Brierley Hill ; at the former place, one of the unfortunate victims was seized and died in the space of three hours. We believe the disorder has reached Stourbridge.

At Gloucester, 33 cases have occurred ; eight proved fatal ; three of the victims were two females and a child about three years of age. The mother of the child was first attacked, but in her case the progress of the malady was arrested, and she now lies under fever of a typhoid type. One case occurred in a lodging house. The sufferers lived in the Island, Bolt Lane and Littleworth – districts very favourable to the propagation of the malady.

At Bristol, up to Monday evening, there had been 12 cases and 6 deaths. All the persons attacked lived near the river.

Three cases occurred last week in Birmingham, all of which have proved fatal. The first two were boatmen, and the third was the wife of one of the sufferers. In the stomach of one of the men was found a great quantity of undigested cherries. One of the boatmen had come to Birmingham in his boat from Tewkesbury, and did not know that he had intercourse with any person labouring under cholera. He was a very temperate man. The other came from Tipton, where the pestilence prevails ; in his case, the transfusion of a saline solution into the veins was tried ; the effect was only a momentary restoration of the pulse, which had become almost imperceptible.

## 64 July 26 1832

### CHOLERA

The following account of cases of Cholera in this city is made up to 10 am this day :-

	Rem	New cases	Dead	Recovered	Rem
July 19	5	0	1	1	3
July 20	3	1	0	2	2
July 21	2	5	2	0	5
July 22	5	5	0	0	10
July 23	10	7	1	0	16
July 24	16	4	0	2	18
July 25	18	11	2	5	22

Total cases from commencement of returns 44 ; Deaths 9

Since our last report there have been more cases in the Pinch. Most of the present patients reside in Hylton Street, Tallow Hill, Wylde's Lane and Copenhagen Street.

The list of cases would have been considerably enlarged had the account included all cases of diarrhoea, a large number of which have been attended to, and thereby probably the access of cholera has been prevented. Indeed, every day's experience confirms the opinion that if the premonitory symptoms are attended to and medical aid instantly obtained, the patients do well. The slightest bowel complaints should not be neglected. Loss of time is loss of life. We have the satisfaction of saying that the practice of our medical men has been most successful ; in several instances where there appeared no hope of arresting the malady, the adoption of decisive measures has restored the patients. Upon the whole, then, we entertain sanguine hopes that cholera will make little progress among us, and that the exaggerated fears which have been entertained will prove

unfounded. We cannot too urgently press the importance of not indulging in unnecessary fears, the effect of which must be to produce the very evil which is dreaded.

In our last page, we have given an outline of an Order in Council, which invests Boards of Health with many salutary powers, the want of which hitherto has neutralised their exertions to promote the public health. The Worcester Board of Health will proceed immediately to enforce the provisions of this Order, with regard to nuisances &c. The Directors of our House of Industry have promptly made a grant of £100 to meet the expenses of the Board of Health, the members of which will meet daily while the malady remains in the city. The site fixed upon for the Cholera Hospital has been altered, and the building is now erected in a healthy situation near the Henwick Road. As two cases have occurred of watermen who came from Gloucester having the malady, means are taken to inspect vessels which come either by the river or the canal, to ascertain the health of the crews. A hearse has been provided for conveying the bodies of those who die of cholera to the new burial ground near the House of Industry ; the above Order provides that they shall not be interred in the usual burial grounds, and that the interment shall take place within 24 hours after death. We beg once more to urge upon the landlords of small houses the duty of lime washing them. The addition of a small portion of either sulphuric acid or vinegar in the use of chlorides of lime, for disinfecting rooms, will be found a great improvement, as it sets the chlorine at liberty in an uncombined state.

A fatal case of cholera has occurred at Pershore. There has been one fatal case in Droitwich, and two in the immediate neighbourhood. At Tipton and Brierley Hill, the cases have been numerous, but the malady is now abating. At Upton, there have been two fatal cases.

At Gloucester there have been 96 cases and 14 deaths. The great bulk of the cases have occurred in the Island, the Quay, Leatherbottle Lane, Dockham and Littleworth, not more than six or seven persons having been attacked in any other district.

No case occurred at Birmingham last week.

## **65**     **26 July 1832**

WORCESTER ASSIZES, WEDNESDAY JULY 25

**John Hyatt**, 18, waterman, was the first prisoner tried. He was charged with being an accomplice, with Hide, who was convicted at a former Assizes and sentenced to be transported for life, for cruelly beating William Knight at Bredon near Tewkesbury in September last, and robbing him of his watch and bundle. The jury found him guilty. The Judge said that, had it been proved in evidence that the prisoner's hand had dealt those heavy blows by which the prosecutor's life had been put in jeopardy, he should have felt it his duty to let the law take its course ; but as this was not proved, he should take care that no further opportunity of doing mischief in this country should be afforded him. Judgement of death recorded.

CHARGE OF MURDER    **Charles Hodgkiss**, aged 44, boatman, was put to the bar, charged with the wilful murder of **Francis Wassell** at Stourport. The prisoner is an ill favoured man, having a broken nose. Mr Lea conducted the prosecution. **William Cook**, aged 19, was committed under the Coroner's warrant with Hodgkiss, but he was admitted King's evidence on the trial.

William Edwards stated that as he was going to work at half past five on the morning of Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> inst, he saw a body in the basin of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal : it was taken out, and proved to be that of Francis Wassell, who used to be called "Old Frank". He was dressed in an old flannel frock ; there was no hat.

**Joseph Longmore**, a boatman, said he saw the prisoner at Kinfare on Monday the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. The deceased was also there ; prisoner was intoxicated ; he said to witness, speaking of Wassell, "I will be his butcher before the week is out". Witness came to Mitton (near Stourport) on the following Thursday, and saw William Cook in company with Hodgkiss. Cook asked if he had seen Wassell ; witness said he had not, upon which Cook said he was sure he must be drowned. Upon this witness's examination by the Judge, he said he had seen deceased in company with the prisoner and Cook, when they appeared to be on good terms.

**George Elmore**, boat owner of Kinfare, said that on the 10<sup>th</sup> he engaged Wassell at Mitton to take

care of a boat ; on the 11<sup>th</sup> he came to Mitton, and found that Wassell was not in the care of the boat ; he was a sober, respectable man ; while taking some boards out of the boat, to get at the cupboard, prisoner asked him what was the matter. He replied that Old Frank was missing, and the key of the cupboard had gone.

William Mazefield, a postboy at Stourport, stated that while he was washing his horses in the Stour at about midnight on the 10<sup>th</sup>, he heard a man cry, "Oh, Lord", and, "Murder", several times, after which all was silent. Before he heard the cries, he saw two men talking together ; one wore a white frock, and the other a blue jacket. George Mazefield, the father of this witness, said that just before his son came home, he heard a noise like fighting or kicking.

Mrs Saunders stated that at about midnight on the 10<sup>th</sup>, she heard cries of "Murder". She looked out at a window, and saw three men in light coloured dresses, and a fourth at some distance ; he had a short dark coloured jacket ; the men appeared to be quarrelling and pushing each other about, but not ill-using anyone in particular.

John Sparrow said he heard cries of murder and laughing, both of which went on for four or five minutes.

Thomas Mullett stated that on the 13<sup>th</sup> he found deceased's hat in an old boat in the basin ; it was wet, and from its situation he thought it must have been placed there, and not thrown in.

John Everton said he saw the prisoner cross several boats to one into the cabin of which he looked, and then went away. (The prisoner here said that it was very common for bargemen to look into the boats to know if they had been enquired for.)

George Bennett deposed that, at the inquest when persons said they hoped the murderer would be found out, prisoner said he hoped he would, and that if it was him, he hoped they would hang him ; he said he was not with the deceased ; he was at Kinfare and was drunk ; a person said he saw him at Stourport ; prisoner replied he was so drunk he did not know what day he came to Stourport.

William Cook, who was committed with Hodgkiss but admitted King's evidence, was next called. His appearance was by no means in his favour. He stated that a person named Mullett employed both him and deceased ; they both went to the Black Star at Stourport, which they left about half past 10 ; the deceased left two or three minutes before ; deceased asked witness to go and sleep with him ; and as witness passed the Bell Yard, prisoner came out ; he met deceased and they walked together, about 40 yards before witness ; prisoner asked deceased to let him sleep on board his barge, and upon the latter hesitating, prisoner said, "If you won't I'll mill you", deceased said, "Go it then" ; they went on a little farther, when prisoner struck deceased three or four times, and jowled his head against the wall ; witness was then 30 yards from them ; when prisoner and deceased got down to the boat where the latter worked, witness heard prisoner ask deceased to let him sleep in his boat ; he refused ; upon which prisoner said, "I will drown you ; and I'll serve them the same that are with you, if you have anybody with you". The next thing he saw was the deceased getting on his boat, when the prisoner pushed him into the water ; witness heard the noise of the plunge ; he then went to the house where he lodged, and heard no more. Next morning he went to deceased's boat ; the cabin door was open ; he soon after met the prisoner, who said he had been about all night, and had not met the prisoner (*sic*) anywhere ; they afterwards went to work, during which prisoner said, "I'm afraid this man is drowned – I am afraid he is murdered". Witness replied, "How can you think so unless you had something to do with it?" He replied, "I gave him two or three blows and jowled his head against the corner, and when he got into his boat, I pulled him into the water". He showed some blood on the back of his hand and said if witness told, he would kill him. The prisoner charged witness with telling a different story before, and in answer to the Learned Judge's questions, he admitted that he varied in some particulars. In answer to a question by the prisoner why he did not give an alarm when he saw deceased pushed into the water, witness replied, because he had threatened to serve anybody else the same. In answer to questions by the Judge, he said the deceased never spoke a word ; he took it all quietly ; there was no laughing nor any cry of any kind ; he was not near enough to take any part in the affair ; he did not give his evidence before the Coroner, because prisoner threatened his life. Although he had seen all this, he asked Mullett if he had seen deceased ; he also went next day to his boat and called, "Frank" ; he did so because he

thought he was in the boat. The Judge asked, "How came you to go and call, "Frank", when you saw him thrown into the water?" The witness replied, "I must have made a mistake".

The Justice Bosanquet told the Jury it was unnecessary to pursue the case further ; the testimony of witnesses of this kind always required confirmation ; but here the witness's statement did not accord with that of the other witnesses, who spoke of cries of murder and laughing ; but this witness said there was nothing of the kind.

The Jury immediately returned a verdict of Not Guilty. The prisoner had no counsel, but he put very pertinent questions to the witnesses, who were very carefully examined by the Learned Judge.

## 66 March 7 1833

### WORCESTERSHIRE ADJOURNED SESSIONS

**William Chatterton**, aged 21, boatman, was charged with stealing a purse and money from the person of **Richard Hutchins** at King's Norton. Mr Clive conducted the prosecution. It appeared that the prosecutor and prisoner were at the Boat public house near Birmingham, and that soon after leaving to go to his barge, the former missed his money ; and on his charging the prisoner with having taken it, the latter threw something away ; but afterwards took the prosecutor back to the place where it was thrown away, and there he found nearly all his money and his purse. The prisoner, in his defence, told a rambling story which did not bear on the case. Verdict : Guilty : Sentence, seven years' transportation.

## 67 June 20 1833

The most violent storm that has within living memory been witnessed at this season of the year visited the Metropolis on Tuesday last. The wind blew with great force early in the morning, but towards the middle of the day became a hurricane. It was quite dangerous to be in the streets, owing to the tiles, coping stones, chimney pots and broken glass that were flying about in all directions. In the Parks and Gardens trees were rooted up and large branches broken. On the river, boats were upset ; the steam vessels with great difficulty made their way up the stream ; and in many places above London Bridge, where there is usually a great depth of water, persons walked about on dry land. Several lives were lost on land and water, and whole columns of the newspapers are filled with lists of the casualties, We select a few of the more remarkable :-

About three o'clock in the afternoon, a peter boat containing a fisherman and a boy was blown over in Halfway Reach, between Gravesend and London, and both perished before any other boat could approach them. About six o'clock in the evening, four young gentlemen belonging to Westminster School were sailing up the river near Lambeth Stairs in a small boat, when a sudden gust of wind capsized the boat. Three of them swam towards the shore and were picked up by the watermen, who instantly put off to their assistance ; nearly a quarter of an hour elapsed before the fourth, Webber, the son of the Dean of Ripon, was taken out of the water by means of drags. All attempts to restore animation proved fruitless. Two sailors were blown into the West India Dock while proceeding along the quay, but by timely assistance were got out alive. A large wooden house, which was erected at some works near London Bridge, was blown down and the planks carried some distance. A great many ships were driven from their moorings in the Pool, and injured. A poor woman was proceeding along the bank of the Paddington Canal, when the wind suddenly caught her clothes with such force as to urge her down the shelving bank into the water ; where she would have been drowned but for the assistance of **Thomas Reynolds**, a Manchester boatman, who came in sight as she was struggling in the water, and got her out. A woman passing through White Hart Yard, Drury Lane, had her skull fractured by a stone falling from the roof of a house. Two girls, the one aged seventeen and the other twelve, were crushed by the fall of a tree in Hyde Park. They both died. The trees in the Temple, Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn Gardens have been dismantled of some of their finest branches ; in the latter place, three of the largest and best trees which adorned the grounds have been destroyed.

The accounts from the coast respecting the shipwrecks from the late gales are not so disastrous as had been expected ; it appears the hurricane had been confined to local, chiefly inland, districts.

**68     June 27 1833**

INQUEST BEFORE MR GWINNELL   On Monday, on the body of **Noah Tandy** aged 18. The deceased was a boatman in the employ of Messrs Brown and Son of Gloucester. On Saturday afternoon, while taking the boat into one of the locks of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, in this city, slipped off the bow and, falling between the boat and the wall, was instantly crushed to death. Verdict : Accidental death.

**69     July 11 1833**

WORCESTERSHIRE MIDSUMMER SESSIONS

**Joseph Walker**, aged 54, waterman, for stealing, at the parish of St Peter the Great, about fourteen pounds weight of cast iron, of the goods and chattels of John Wood and James Wall. Three months' imprisonment, the last fortnight solitary.

**70     July 18 1833**

On Saturday, a jury assembled in Lower Shadwell to investigate the circumstances attending the death of **John Heacock Wood**, a waterman aged 32, who died of injuries said to have been received while in custody of several policemen of the K Division. The chief injury was on the head, supposed to have been caused by a staff. The inquest was adjourned.

**71     July 25 1833**

Yesterday the jury on the body of **Wood**, the Shadwell waterman, returned a verdict of "Wilful Murder against a policeman unknown", adding a recommendation to Government to use means to discover the murderer. The Coroner said, "Very well, gentlemen, it is your verdict and not mine".

**72     July 25 1833**

The investigation into the charge against some of the Police of having caused the death of a waterman in Shadwell has been going on all week. The evidence is very confused and contradictory. The Jury are evidently prejudiced against the Police, and eagerly lay hold of any circumstance which tends to make the case look badly against them – in fact they seem to be acting the part of the Jury in the Coldbath Fields affair. The Coroner said last night the Jury had pursued a course such as he had never witnessed in his life, and such as he hoped never to see again ; many of them from time to time giving way to their prejudices, and under their influence starting up and putting words into the mouths of the witnesses. The Jury here started up together and cried, "Shame, shame, shame!", and grouping towards the Coroner with clenched fists, became so furious that many persons in the room became greatly alarmed for his safety. When peace was in some degree restored, the Foreman said he did not hesitate to say the deceased was murdered by one of the policemen. The Coroner said there was no evidence of that.

**73     July 25 1833**

WORCESTER SUMMER ASSIZES   **William Featherstone**, 22, waterman, and **William Vaughan**, 21, labourer, were charged with having, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June at Cotheridge, assaulted and robbed **William Bennett** of a watch and money. It appeared from Bennett's evidence that he was at Bransford Wake on Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> of June until about eleven o'clock at night, at the Fox public house, which he left for Worcester in the company of a young woman ; when near the bridge, three men stopped him and threw him into an ash bed, and took his watch, money, hat and handkerchief ; he did not know them ; after the robbery, witness went back to the Fox, following the men, until a person named Colley came up, when both of them followed the men until they came up with them. Two men were afterwards taken ; as they were being taken before the Magistrates, Featherstone offered to give witness his (Featherstone's) watch to make it up. He admitted on his cross-examination that he was in liquor when this happened, and that he had nine shillings left when he got back to the Fox ; the girl stood in the road while he was robbed. **William Lane** deposed that he left the Fox with Bennett, and that Featherstone, Vaughan and a third man followed them ; he

afterwards saw three men push Bennett into an ash bed ; he went back to the Fox for Colley, the constable who, with others, went to look after the men ; witness took Vaughan about 150 yards from the ash bed, near which he found two handkerchiefs and a pipe like one which Vaughan had in his mouth when he left the Fox. On his cross-examination, he stated that he had a girl with him, and that the affair took place in the sight of him and the two girls ; the ash bed is about 200 yards from the Fox ; was sober when this took place. John Stringer deposed that he went in pursuit with Lane, and that they found Featherstone talking to the two girls ; he ran off, but was taken. Colley, the constable, stated that a handkerchief found in the ash bed was like one which he had seen Featherstone wear. A hat which was found near the Teme after the robbery was proved to be Vaughan's, who when taken had no hat. In summing up, the Judge said the Jury must look carefully to the evidence. It appeared extraordinary that the men should make the attack upon Bennett in the presence of so many witnesses. Both the prisoners were found guilty, and judgement of death was recorded. It was intimated that they would be transported for life.

**John Albutt**, 22, boatman, was charged with having, at Droitwich, stopped Alfred Brewster on the highway and robbed him of 4s in copper. Brewster is from Wolverhampton ; he went to Droitwich Wake to play the music, and on Sunday morning the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, between 2 and 3 o'clock, he missed his road, and was beset by three men who demanded his money, which he gave them ; was certain that prisoner was one of them. Two witnesses who saw the affair were called ; their testimony did not tend to prove that there had been a robbery. The Judge cautioned the Jury as to some points in the evidence ; they returned a verdict of Not Guilty.

#### **74 August 22 1833**

MELANCHOLY CASE On Saturday, an inquest was held at the Infirmary before Mr Gwinnell, Coroner, on the body of William Rogers, a tailor aged about 22, who died in consequence of having taken laudanum. It appeared that about twelve months ago Rogers was married to a woman of so indifferent a character that they did not live together above a week after their marriage ; the woman went to live along with another man named **Josiah Penn**, a waterman. On Wednesday evening, while Rogers was drinking in the Pheasant, Quay Street, his wife and Penn came in. A quarrel took place between the parties, after which Rogers, evidently maddened by his wife's conduct, went out of the house and purchased half an ounce of laudanum, which he swallowed in some beer. Between 11 and 12, he was seen lying in a trolly, but as he was thought to be intoxicated, little notice was taken of him. On the following morning between 9 and 10 he was taken to the Infirmary, when the stomach pump was applied ; he was at length roused to consciousness, and related most of the above particulars, stating that he took the laudanum in consequence of the conduct of his wife, who had taken Penn into the room where he was drinking, Penn at the same time asking "who had a greater right to the woman than he had". He died on Friday morning. The wife of the deceased was examined, but her answers were so evidently false that the Coroner admonished her severely. The jury returned a verdict of *Felo de se* ; *but the deceased was induced to poison himself by the shameless and abandoned conduct of his wife, Ann Rogers, and one Josiah Penn, a waterman.* Pursuant to the statute, the body was buried at night in the House of Industry burial ground, without the rites of the Church. The deceased bore a very good character. His wife went on Thursday to the Infirmary when her husband was conveyed there, and being recognised by the populace who had assembled, she was saluted with such deserved execrations that she was glad to retreat.

#### **75 October 17 1833**

WORCESTERSHIRE MICHAELMAS SESSIONS

SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT AND LAST SOLITARY **James Panting**, 22, and **George Pritchard**, 21, watermen, for stealing a large quantity of walnuts, the property of John Warren of Upton-on-Severn. An accomplice named Weaver was the principal witness against the prisoners. A man named Help (*Elt*) appeared also to be implicated in the robbery.

## 76 November 7 1833

An extraordinary high tide occurred on Saturday, the river rising to a greater height than had been known for several years, occasioned by the north east winds. The regular time of high water at London Bridge was 53 minutes past 3 ; but the tide continued flowing till 5, long before which the low lands and streets near the river were under water. Several granaries and cellars at Rotherhithe were overflowed, and upwards of 200 quarters of corn injured. Wapping High Street was for some time under water, and boats were necessary to convey passengers. A Mr Geddes of the Waterman's Arms sustained a severe loss, the water having filled his cellars and starting 16 casks of ale and porter. Many of the houses in the lower part of the Strand, Lambeth and Vauxhall were flooded. At Lambeth Palace the cellars were filled to the depth of eight or nine feet. The premises of Mr Long of Northumberland Street, Strand, baker, were completely flooded, and the water rushed so suddenly into the bakehouse that one of the journeymen got into the dough trough for safety. The oldest waterman on the river does not recollect the tide reaching ever so high before, or indeed anything near to it. It is described as one of the spring tides occasional in the river, but much earlier than usual, which is said to prognosticate a winter of unusual severity.

## 77 November 14 1833

CANAL BOATMEN Some weeks ago the Mayor, Magistrates, Clergy and Dissenting Ministers of this city, together with many other persons, addressed to the Committee of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Company a representation upon the impropriety of their permitting the locks on the Canal to be opened on Sundays, so as to admit of traffic on that day, by which the boatmen are prevented attending any place of worship ; it was mentioned that many of the men thus compelled to work feel themselves much aggrieved in not having the advantages which Sunday gives to other classes of workmen ; and it was suggested that the practice of the Company having the locks shut during the hours of Divine Service is far from producing a salutary effect, the interval thus allowed being so short that it is seldom well employed by the boatmen, who are thus congregated at particular parts of the line. In reply to this representation, the Committee say “that they will take the subject into serious consideration ; but that at present they are of opinion that the interruption of the trade required would not remedy the evil complained of, and that the congregation of boatmen alluded to is occasioned by the partial obstruction of the navigation of the Canal which has already been given”. We cannot but regret that the Committee have not complied with a representation not only so just in itself, but bearing the signatures of individuals who ought to have weight on such subjects. That other Canal Companies do not view the matter in the same light, we have proof in the fact that the locks of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal are not opened on Sundays except in cases of emergency, and then only with the permission of a magistrate. But the real question is, ought a public Company thus to be the means of excluding a large class from the means of religious instruction? There is no difficulty in answering the question. Does not the character of the boatmen sufficiently show the effects of this exclusion, for where is there a class in which so large a proportion are utterly ignorant of their religious and moral duties? Surely, then, every effort to raise their character should be seconded by those who have it in their power to do so.

## 78 November 28 1833

John Griffiths has been committed to the City Gaol, charged with being an accomplice in a robbery, at a house of ill fame, of a man named **Roberts**, a canal boatman. The two women, Mary Bryan and Mary Bills, have been committed for one month, as lewd women.

## 79 December 12 1833

CAUTION TO WATERMEN &c On the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst, the captain and four of the crew of Mr John Burnett's trow called the *Bristol Packet* were taken before Mr A Turner Esq, when the captain was committed for six weeks and the others for a month to Worcester House of Correction, for leaving the vessel on the 23<sup>rd</sup> ult for several hours in the river at Bristol with only one man on board, whereby the vessel and cargo were much endangered.

**80 December 19 1833**

On Saturday at Bewdley, Henry Perry, aged 8, fell into the Severn from a wherry ; he drifted down the stream 60 or 70 yards ; the water was very high, and it was feared that he must perish ; but he was saved by the courageous conduct of **John Field**, a waterman who, hearing the alarm, ran to the spot, jumped into the water with his clothes on and, swimming to the boy, seized him just as he was sinking under a barge, and brought him to land. The boy remained insensible for a considerable time, but by care and perseverance was at length restored. Field has since received the reward given by the Worcester Humane Society in such cases of self devotion.

**81 January 2 1834**

CITY SESSIONS, MONDAY AND TUESDAY John Griffiths, 17, was charged with aiding in the robbery of **Benjamin Roberts**, a boatman, who was on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November robbed at a house of ill fame of £2 15s 6d. The principal witness was a man named Job Fisher who, before the Magistrate, had fixed the offence upon the prisoner ; but when put into the witness box professed entire ignorance of the transaction. He acknowledged that he had been drinking with the prisoner's friends. His prevarication was so gross that he was ordered into custody. Griffiths was acquitted, and Mr Godson said he could have produced as witnesses to his character three persons for whom he had worked, two of whom were willing to employ him again. Fisher was afterwards sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment for contempt of Court.

**82 February 13 1834**

A bargeman named **Moody**, well known on the Severn, was drowned on Monday at Coalport. Whilst stepping from one barge to another, he missed his step and sank.

**83 February 27 1834**

WORCESTERSHIRE ADJOURNED SESSIONS

NOT GUILTY **William Randle**, 35, boatman, charged with having, on the 15<sup>th</sup> inst, stolen a quantity of coal from out of a boat lying on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, the property of James Greeves.

**84 March 13 1834**

WORCESTER ASSIZES **Edward Boddington**, 21, and **James Daniel**, 27, watermen, were charged with stealing a ewe, the property of Mr Clemens of Birlingham. Mr Lee stated the facts of the case with a view of taking his Lordship's opinion on the question whether the identity of the ewe would be made out. Mr Justice Park thought that the identity could not be made out, and directed an acquittal. The prisoner Daniel was then tried for stealing a pair of shoes, the property of George Simpson. It appeared that the prosecutor never could hear of the prisoner until after he was taken up about the sheep. The Jury found the prisoner Guilty, and he was sentenced to be imprisoned and kept to hard labour for six months.

**James Elt**, 22, waterman, was charged with stealing 5 bushels of walnuts, the property of John Warren of Upton, gardener. It appeared that the prosecutor had had 8 bushels of walnuts in his summer house at Upton on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September, and missed about five bushels next morning. A prisoner named Weaver, who was imprisoned on another charge, was called, who stated that he accompanied the prisoner and others, and that they stole Mr Warren's nuts. Mr Justice Park directed an acquittal, as the accomplice Weaver was not confirmed by any other evidence.

**85 March 27 1834**

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH A correspondent earnestly recommends Clergymen and other individuals who feel for the best interests of society, to exert themselves in endeavouring to forward petitions to both Houses of Parliament, similar to the one so numerous and respectably signed in this city. Many benevolent persons residing in small parishes are deterred from attempting to

petition Parliament on account of the trouble and expense which they think must attend the undertaking, whereas a sheet of paper containing the petition duly signed, and addressed to a Member of either House, is sufficient. It is very important that such petitions should be obtained without delay. The following is a copy of the petition referred to :-

“That your Petitioners most deeply lament the profanation of the Sabbath in various ways, so universally prevalent in this professedly Christian land, and most earnestly entreat your Honourable House to enact such laws as shall appear best calculated, under the Divine Blessing, to promote a due observance of that sacred day. Not to enumerate each particular violation of the Lord's Day, your Petitioners beg most respectfully to call the attention of your Honourable House to one great evil, the consumption of beer on the premises in Beer Houses, which your Petitioners have, by observation, found greatly to contribute not only to the desecration of the Sabbath, but also to the general demoralisation of the people, and to the rapid increase of crime of every description”.

We have the pleasure of saying that, in addition to the above petition, no fewer than two hundred and fifty boatmen employed on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal have signed petitions to both Houses, praying that a law may be passed to prevent the opening of canal locks on Sundays, in order that men employed on canals may have the same advantages on the Sabbath Day as other of the working classes. We hope that so reasonable a request will not be lost sight of in the proposed amendments of the law on the subject.

## **86 June 26 1834**

**DEATHS BY DROWNING** On the 16<sup>th</sup>, **Mr Joseph Skinner**, a coal dealer of this city, in proceeding with his boat through the tunnel at Norton on the Worcester Canal, fell overboard and was drowned. At midday on Thursday, a boy named William White, aged 10, was drowned while bathing in the Severn near Diglis. The body was not found until Sunday ; on the following day an inquest was held by Mr Hughes. Verdict : Accidental death. On the same afternoon that White lost his life, and near the same place, **William Corbett** was drowned. Corbett was a boatman on board a vessel lying in the Severn belonging to Messrs Clay and Co. After drinking with others of the crew at a beerhouse called the Blue Bell, he went on board his vessel intoxicated, and while attempting to go down a ladder his foot slipped, and he fell overboard. Two fishermen named John and Leonard Darke put off in their boat to rescue him, but some time elapsed before he could be got out of the water. Mr Reece, surgeon, used every effort to restore animation, but in vain. Corbett was between 50 and 60 years of age, and has left a widow and family. Mr Hughes held an inquest on the body. Verdict : Accidental death. The Blue Bell beerhouse, at which Corbett had been drinking, is principally formed of the caravan which was used by the Worcester Board of Health for the reception of cholera patients. It is situated in the angle formed by the confluence of the Severn and the Canal, and is evidently placed there to catch the numerous boatmen who pass the spot ; the plan has so far succeeded, in that the place is much frequented by this heedless class of persons ; of course, from the peculiar situation of the house, when men who are intoxicated issue from it, there is the greatest danger of their falling into the Severn or Canal. The above is not the first accident which has occurred to persons who had been drinking there. The land upon which the house is placed belongs to the Canal Company, and much surprise and regret has been very naturally expressed that the Company should have let the land for such a purpose. We trust that at the next annual meeting, the subject will not pass unnoticed. In the meantime, we are glad to understand that Mr Hughes has addressed a letter to the Clerk of the Company, pointing out the danger arising from a beerhouse in such a situation, and expressing a hope that means will be taken to remove it. We hope that this praiseworthy vigilance on the part of Mr Hughes will produce the proper effect.

## **87 July 3 1834**

In mentioning last week the death by drowning of a boatman named **Corbett**, who had just before been drinking at a beerhouse called the Blue Bell, which is erected on land belonging to the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Company, we observed that “much surprise and regret had been very naturally expressed that the Company should have let the land for such a purpose”. We have,

however, pleasure in doing justice to the Company by saying, that though they let the land, the beerhouse was erected without the knowledge or consent of the Committee, who never intended that the land should be so occupied. And we have the additional satisfaction of stating that the Clerk of the Company, Mr Hodgkinson, has, in his reply to Mr Hughes, the Coroner, stated that, at the next meeting of the Committee, he will lay that gentleman's letter before them, and he has no doubt that they will give directions for the immediate removal of the nuisance.

**88 July 3 1834**

WORCESTERSHIRE MIDSUMMER SESSIONS

SEVEN YEARS' TRANSPORTATION **M White**, 19, boatman, for stealing a purse with money from a boat at Dudley.

**89 July 3 1834**

**James Turner**, waterman of Stourport, was convicted by Abraham Turner Esq on the 16<sup>th</sup> instant, in the sum of two pounds, including expenses, for wilfully damaging a trow at Greeton's lower ford in the parish of Grimley on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of April last, belonging to Danks, Venn and Co, Severn Carriers, Stourport and Bristol, by steering a canal boat against her.

**90 September 4 1834**

The flatmen on the Mersey and Irwell navigation who, from the constant habit of working on Sundays, have long been excluded from the ordinances of religion and Christian instruction, presented a petition to the proprietors to suspend their trade on the Sabbath. A partial suspension of trade has already taken place and, ere long, by arrangements that are making, a total cessation of labour will take place throughout the whole line on that day. The flatmen, as a token of gratitude for his exertions on their behalf, have presented Mr E A Lingard of the Old Quay, Manchester, who has been chiefly instrumental in obtaining this boon on their behalf, with a silver tea and coffee pot, and a sugar basin and cream jug, bearing a suitable inscription. Our readers will remember that a petition for a similar object from the boatmen on the Severn, some time since, failed. If there be a God, he must be of right the moral governor of all the universe ; if there be a moral governor of the universe, the observance of the Sabbath is a matter of moral obligation. The man who denies the former must be an Atheist ; and he that denies the latter must be an Infidel.

**91 September 25 1834**

**William Tunks**, waterman, fell from one of Mr Hughes's boats at Clement's gate last night and was drowned. His body was picked up this morning near the Bridge. It is said that the deceased was subject to fits. He has left a wife and child.

**92 October 16 1834**

WORCESTERSHIRE MICHAELMAS SESSIONS

**Philip Boucher**, 45, waterman, pleaded guilty to a charge of having fraudulently embezzled money belonging to his master, **Mr John Adams Ames**, at Kidderminster. Mr Lea, Counsel for the prosecutor, stated to the Court that it was not his wish to press for any punishment on the prisoner. It was a very common practice of captains of boats to receive from their employers money for horses to tow the boats, while at the same time they got men to tow and pocketed the difference, thus defrauding their employers. The prisoner had been guilty of an offence of this description, and the object in instituting the prosecution was to prevent this dishonest practice in future, by showing that those who committed the offence were liable to be punished for it. The Chairman, addressing the prisoner, expressed his hope that the prosecutor's leniency would not be lost upon him, and that the warning thus given would act as a caution to others. The prisoner was fined 1s and discharged.

**93 November 6 1834**

COUNTY PUBLIC OFFICE, NOVEMBER 4 At the above office, **Noel Hillier** and **John Bird**,

boatmen, for injuring a boat, the property of Mr Baylis, were ordered to pay £2 7s damages and 13s expenses.

**94 December 25 1834**

**OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH** A Petition from the great body of bargemen employed in Canal Navigation has been sent round to all their masters, praying for a suspension of labour on the Sabbath. It has been generally well received by the proprietors, and on the Mersey and Irwell Navigation has completely succeeded. A cessation of business on the Sabbath is secured to the men without injury to the facilities and interests of trade, and such is the ardour and gratitude of the men, that by extra exertions they redeem the time granted to them by working up to the latest minute on Saturday nights, and starting at the earliest hour on Monday mornings. The bargemen of the Irwell and Mersey Navigation have presented to Mr Edward Atterton Lingard of Old Quay, Manchester, who was very instrumental in forwarding their suit, a beautiful silver tea pot and coffee pot, with a silver sugar basin and cream jug to match, bearing the following inscription :- "Presented to Mr E A Lingard of Old Quay, Manchester, by the flatmen in the service of the Proprietors of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation, as a memorial of their esteem and gratitude for his sincere and earnest endeavours to promote their spiritual and temporal welfare. 1834".

**95 March 9 1835**

**NISI PRIUS COURT**

**DRINKWATER v COOPER** This was an action brought by the plaintiff, a bargeman navigating the river Avon, to try the right of the public to land goods on a small wharf adjoining the river near Evesham, which the defendant, Dr Beale Cooper, claimed as his own. The trespass complained of was that the defendant had seized the plaintiff's scales and thrown them into the river, alleging that he had no right to place them on the land in question.

It appeared from the evidence of a great number of witnesses called on the part of the plaintiff, that for the last 80 years they and other persons had landed coals and other things on the wharf in question. They stated that no demand of toll was ever made upon them, and they were never interrupted by the defendant, nor ever asked his permission to land there.

On the part of the defendant, several witnesses were called, some of whom stated that they had navigated the river for many years, and that whenever they had landed coals or other goods on the wharf, they had always first asked permission of the defendant or his predecessors. Two or three witnesses stated that they had on one or two occasions paid a small acknowledgement to the defendant ; and other witnesses stated that they had heard from old witnesses, now dead, that the wharf was formerly called Beale's wharf, and at that time belonged to Mr Beale, the defendant's uncle, without whose permission no person could land goods there.

The Jury found a verdict for the plaintiff, with nominal damages only, the action having been merely brought for the purpose of trying the right.

The case occupied the whole of the day. It is, we believe, the third time in which a Jury has come to the same decision on the same question.

**96 April 2 1835**

We are glad to observe that the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the Sabbath Observance Bill has been carried by a large majority. Not a single member connected with this county voted against it. Mr Barneby voted in the majority.

The following petition to both Houses has been signed by 616 watermen and boatmen plying on the Severn and Worcester and Birmingham Canal. We hope that the legislature will listen to the prayer of it, and afford to these men those opportunities of religious instruction of which they have been hitherto deprived. The consequences of that deprivation upon the moral habits of many of them cannot be contemplated by the Christian mind without pain :-

"That we, the undersigned watermen, boatmen and others, who gain our livelihood by the navigation of the river Severn and the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, humbly petition your

honourable House to take into your serious consideration our degraded state, by being compelled to violate the Sabbath, by working in our ordinary occupation on that day, which of necessity keeps us from attending any place of Divine worship, and having the benefit of the appointed rest from weekly toil. And we humbly pray that your honourable House will devise and adopt such measures as will entirely relieve us from such degradation and hardship”.

**97 April 9 1835**

**WORCESTERSHIRE EASTER SESSIONS**

**George Pritchard**, 23, waterman, was convicted of stealing a piece of beef from the shop of Jas Hooper jun, Upton, butcher ; and it was also proved that he had been convicted of a felony at Michaelmas Sessions 1833. Seven years' transportation.

James Harper was convicted of stealing a pair of trousers from a boat in the Severn at Upton. Six weeks' imprisonment.

**98 May 14 1835**

**INQUEST BEFORE MR HYDE, CORONER** On Wednesday at the Infirmary, upon the body of **John Firkins**, a waterman who died in the House on the previous Monday. It appeared in the evidence from Mr Cole, the house surgeon, that the deceased was brought to the Infirmary about two o'clock on the night of Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> of April, with a compound fracture of the right leg. The accident was occasioned by Firkins falling while in a state of intoxication. Verdict : Accidental death. The deceased was a widower with six children, and intended to have married one of the witnesses at the inquest on the Monday following the day on which the accident took place.

**99 May 14 1835**

One of the speakers at the late anniversary of the “Sabbath Observance Society” was the Rev John Davies, Rector of St Clements in this city, who in the course of his observations produced a petition to both Houses, signed in this city by six hundred bargemen and boatmen employed on the river and the canal, praying that such legislative provisions might be made as would leave them in the enjoyment of those privileges which the Sabbath bestows on other classes. The announcement that such a petition had been signed appeared to excite great interest, and a general wish was expressed that the persons employed on rivers and canals should have the relief which so large a portion of them desire.

**100 July 2 1835**

**DARING BURGLARY AND APPREHENSION OF THE BURGLARS** Early in the morning of yesterday, the neighbourhood of Lowesmoor was thrown into a state of considerable alarm by the cry of “Murder”, which was found to proceed from the chamber window of Mr May, who keeps a huckster's shop near the Lowesmoor Bridge. Assistance was immediately rendered, when it appeared that, after the family had retired to rest on the previous night at rather an early hour, the front door had been forced from its fastenings, by which an entrance had been effected into the house, and the shop plundered. There is little doubt but the burglars were disappointed in the amount of money which they obtained, the contents of the till not affording them more than 12s, and in the hope of procuring a larger booty, one or more of them proceeded upstairs, where they entered the chamber of Mr May who, with his wife, was sound asleep in bed. While one of the thieves was searching towards the head of the bed, for what specific purpose it is not yet ascertained, Mrs May was suddenly aroused by some person laying hold of her arms ; nor was the affrighted woman's consternation in any way allayed when she beheld a midnight plunderer close at her head, and who threatened to take away her life if she made the least noise. However, she succeeded in awakening her husband, who instantly sprang from his bed, when the ruffian immediately decamped. Mr and Mrs May then called for help from the window, when a policeman and the watchman at Lowesmoor wharf, with many others, speedily came to the spot. Upon

searching his shop, Mr May discovered that the robbers had taken away with them most of the portable articles with which they could most safely make off. Instant pursuit was made after the thieves, and so closely were they beset that, to prevent immediate capture, they disburdened themselves of their plunder by throwing part of it in the canal and on the towing-path, taking the direction across the meadows of Merryman's Hill. Suspecting the men might return, three of the policemen continued diligent search in the neighbourhood, and we are happy to say not without success, for in about an hour and a half after the robbery was committed, they apprehended three men under circumstances of strong suspicion. They took them to the home of Mr May who, with his wife, immediately recognised two, as having seen them leave their house after the alarm had been given and while they were standing at the chamber window. Upon the person of the third was found property which Mr May identified as a portion of that he had lost. The men were safely lodged in the Station House, at the City Gaol, for the remainder of the night, and yesterday morning at twelve o'clock, they were placed before the Magistrates at the Guildhall for examination upon the charge. The prisoners gave their names as **Thomas Williams, James Golden and William Elledge**. All of them had the appearance of boatmen and, by their dialect, are "Upper Countrymen". Williams and Golden looked considerably older than Elledge, who does not seem to be much more than twenty or twenty one. The two former were most suspicious and repulsive looking characters, but the latter much more creditable in appearance. The following are the depositions of the witnesses as given before the Bench :-

Mrs Harriet May deposed : Being unwell, I went to bed last (Wednesday) night about eight o'clock ; I was not awoke until about one o'clock in the morning, when I felt someone lay hold of my arms ; I was much startled, and upon looking I saw a man standing by my bedside, with his hands upon my arms ; the man said, "Silence, or your head's off" ; my husband was laying by me in the bed, and I called to him, "There are thieves – murderers in the house". I am sure the prisoner Elledge is the man whom I saw by my bedside ; I can speak to him from the clothes he had on, which were the same he now wears ; as also from his voice. Upon my husband jumping out of bed, Elledge left the room. I went to the window of the bedroom, and called out, "Thieves – murder". While at the window, I saw the prisoner Golden go out of the shop door, and he was shortly afterwards followed by Elledge. They turned round the corner of the building towards the canal. The policeman came up when I was at the window.

Mr May, having been sworn, deposed : I live in St Martin's parish near the Lowesmoor Bridge ; I keep a huckster's shop and a cider house. I went to bed last night about ten o'clock ; I was the last up ; I examined the doors and windows, and found them to be safe before I retired. I was awoke a little before one in the morning by my wife calling out that there were "thieves and murderers in the house". I jumped out of bed and made to the door just as the prisoner Elledge was going out of the room ; he shut the door and ran downstairs. I then went to the window, and saw him go out of the shop door ; he walked quietly from the house, and turned in the direction of the canal. I called for assistance, and a policeman and Mason, the watchman at Lowesmoor wharf, came up at the instant. I went downstairs, and upon examining the shop, I discovered that there had been stolen several pieces of cheese and bacon, a large knife used for cutting bacon, a loaf of bread and the till, containing about twelve shillings in copper. The policeman Story and the watchman at the wharf went in pursuit of the prisoners up the canal side ; several other individuals came to my assistance, and shortly afterwards two more policemen. Before Story went in pursuit of the men, I told him there was a peculiarly marked halfpenny among the coppers, which I could swear to if the money was found upon them.

George Story was next examined, and deposed : I am a policeman, and last night I was on duty in Lowesmoor. About one o'clock this morning, I heard the cry of "Murder". I immediately hastened to the spot, and found it to proceed from the chamber window of Mr May who, with his wife, informed me of what had happened. Mr May's shop door was wide open ; I went in, and entered several rooms downstairs, as also the cellar, but could not see anyone. Mr May came downstairs, and upon examining the shop, told me that he had lost some cheese, bacon, bread, a large knife and the till with some copper in it, and among which he said he could swear to a crooked halfpenny, if

he could see it again. In company with Mason, the watchman, I went in pursuit of the prisoners ; I followed by the canal side, in the direction of Gregory's Mills ; on the horse path of the canal I found a piece of bacon and cheese, and a light coloured greatcoat ; I also saw a loaf of bread floating on the canal ; I went as far as the bridge leading over the canal in the direction from Sansome Fields ; and, on the bank rising from the towing-path to the bridge, I saw the marks as of someone having recently got up to cross the fields in the direction of Merryman's Hill. I then returned, and when I came to Mr May's house, I found policemen Nos 1 and 15 there. I continued the search in company with them for about an hour and a half, at which time the dawn of morning was approaching ; as myself and Onslow were at the foot of Rainbow Hill, just on the other side of Lowesmoor Bridge, we saw three men (the prisoners now under examination) coming in the opposite direction ; we separated until the men had passed, when we followed and apprehended them ; we took them into Mr May's house, and there searched Williams, and found upon him 11s 7 1/2d in copper, among which was a piece which Mr May claimed as his property. (The halfpenny was here produced, and most positively identified by Mr May as his property ; he had had it, he said, a long time by him, and therefore knew it well ; he had seen it in the till the day previous to the robbery). I also found upon Williams three keys and a knife. While taking the prisoners to the station house, I heard Williams say to Elledge, "If we had known what we do now, the b-----s should not have taken us so easily as they did". Elledge replied, "I don't care ; I have got a pipe, and if I can get a light and some tobacco, I shall be happy enough".

Mr Skinner, the landlord of the Navigation Inn adjoining the Lowesmoor wharf, was examined, with the view of proving that the prisoners had a previous knowledge of each other, and that there was something like companionship existing between them. Mr S deposed that on Wednesday morning, the day previous to the robbery, the whole of the prisoners were in his house eating and drinking together, and that they remained there about an hour and a half, and had two quarts of drink. He said they were strangers to him, and from what he could judge of their conversation, they were boatmen out of employ.

The foregoing is the substance of the depositions it was considered necessary to take, as sufficiently establishing the charge against the prisoners, although other evidence was heard. Several individuals picked up pieces of cheese and bacon near to the spot where Mr May's house is situated. Onslow, the policeman, stated that upon meeting the prisoners, when within about ten yards of them, he saw Golden step from the other two a short distance, and throw something into some soil which was then being emptied into the street from some of the houses on Rainbow Hill ; and this was corroborated by Orton, who said that as he was passing the same spot about a minute afterwards, the man who was wheeling the dirt gave into his possession a large knife, which he told him he had that moment taken out of the soil. Orton produced the knife, which was a most formidable weapon for the prisoners to have defended them with. It measured about 14 inches in length and two in breadth, and was of considerable substance. Mr May, who identified this as his property, said it was a knife which he had used for many years to cut bacon with. The pieces of cheese and bacon which were found were also sworn to by Mr May as those stolen from his shop. Onslow said that when he apprehended Golden, he said to him, "What the hell do you want with me?" The language used was of the most shameful description, and it was with difficulty he succeeded in getting him into Mr May's house. He searched him, and found upon his person two skeleton keys and a knife. This Golden strongly denied, saying it was "a great false untruth", and the policeman wanted to swear his life away. Mr May said that he recollected during the Wednesday Golden coming to his house twice on some frivolous pretext, and while there he appeared to be taking particular notice of the premises. The prisoners were all fully committed to take their trials at the next Assizes, for the capital offence of housebreaking.

There were, besides the present serious charge, several others pending against the prisoners. The warehouse of Messrs Crowley was broken into a few nights since, and upon the person of Williams was found two keys, which had been stolen therefrom. An individual living in Sidbury had a pair of slippers stolen yesterday, and having some suspicion that Golden had become possessed of them, requested Mr Douglas, the Inspector, to let him look at them. Douglas took them from Golden's

feet, and the person who had lost them claimed them as his property. Against Elledge also there is a charge of stealing a boat line from the King's Head Inn in Sidbury. The Bench directed that the whole of these charges should remain over until after the Assizes, when they could then be preferred, if it was deemed necessary.

The prisoners, it seems, finding that they were closely pursued, took the course of Merryman's Hill, and returned towards Lowesmoor by way of Rainbow Hill ; conceiving, probably, that the search had been discontinued. Indeed it is a matter of sincere congratulation, particularly to the parties connected with the transaction, that the policemen did not come up with the prisoners sooner than they did, for it will be seen, by the evidence of Onslow, that the policemen were within about ten yards of the men and by them unperceived at the time, when the knife was thrown into the soil. It is to this, there can be no doubt, that the prisoner Williams referred on his way to the Station House, when he said to Elledge, "If we had known what we do now, the b----s should not have taken us so easily as they did". The circumstance of the knife having been thrown away and the order of time in which it occurred render it almost providential as, in all probability, it saved the loss of human life ; for the ruffianly and desperate appearance of the prisoners fully indicate that they would have had recourse to any means within their power in order to prevent their capture, and this knife would have afforded them a most formidable weapon of resistance.

### **101 July 2 1835**

The petition from the watermen navigating the Severn and Worcester Canal, praying for exemption from their labours on the Sabbath, and for a better observance of that day, was presented to the House of Commons by Sir O Mosley on Wednesday evening.

### **102 July 23 1835**

**FRIGHTFUL COACH ACCIDENT** Yesterday evening, between six and seven o'clock, a very serious accident happened at Bewdley to a coach purporting to be the "Owen Glendower" (although the one used was an old one called "The Emerald") on its route from Aberystwyth to Birmingham. As the coach was crossing Bewdley bridge, the horses gave a sudden jerk at the turn on the Wribbenhall side, when the bolt which connects the body of the coach with the fore wheels gave way, and the vehicle was overturned with a tremendous crash. There were no fewer than *seventeen* passengers inside and out, in addition to the coachman and guard. Though several of the passengers were much hurt, most Providentially no life was lost ; Mr H Hill of Rock, Mr Morris of Leominster (a proprietor) and some passengers from Aberystwyth received the most serious injuries, and some of them were obliged to remain at Bewdley. Dr Davis of Presteign (who was on his route to Oxford to attend the meeting of the Midland Medical Association), Mr Phillips of the same place, Mr Taylor of Oldswinford, Mr Mrs and Miss Hughes of Dudley and others were enabled to pursue their journey. The inside passengers (Mrs and Miss Acton of Birmingham, Mr Chinner of Dudley and Mrs Taylor of Oldswinford) were not in the least hurt. The inhabitants of Bewdley and Wribbenhall manifested the utmost sympathy for the sufferers by the accident, and rendered them all the aid that kindness could suggest. When the coach was upset, the horses broke away with the pole and two wheels ; they were headed in trying to make the turn to Kidderminster and wheeling round suddenly, they (some of them probably being blind) were precipitated off the Quay into the Severn, a fall of at least 15 feet. One valuable mare belonging to Messrs Godfrey of Kidderminster was killed, but the others were extricated by the gallant exertions of some watermen who, at great peril to their own lives, cut the harness and got them out of the water. It appears that a defect in the bolt was observed at Leominster, and the coach was detained there some time to repair it. The proprietors are much to blame in running an old coach, and in suffering it to be so overloaded.

### **103 July 30 1835**

#### **WORCESTER ASSIZES**

**WAKEMAN v DEVEY AND ANOTHER** Sergeant Ludlow and Mr Godson appeared for the plaintiff, and Sergeant Talfourd and Mr Whateley for the defendants.

Mr Godson opened the pleadings. This was an action brought by Wakeman to recover damages done to a boat by a trow belonging to Messrs W and B Devey whilst navigating the river Severn. The reply of the defendants was that they did not do the injury complained of ; or that if they did, it was the result of inevitable (.....)

Sergeant Ludlow stated the case to the Jury. This was a cause which rose out of a circumstance which not infrequently happened on the road and the water, namely one carriage or barge running foul of another carriage or barge ; and the law required that in driving or navigating carriages and (.....) injury was sustained, the party inflicting it should make reparation. His client was the proprietor of a barge called the *Royal Thomas*, and on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November last, having taken in a cargo of coal, had passed the lock into the river Severn from the Birmingham Canal. It so happened that some of the curb stones belonging to the masonry of the bridge lay in the water near the mouth of the lock, and the barge unfortunately got set fast upon something like a sand bank, in consequence of the stones. Being in this position, no one had a right to sail over her and knock her to pieces, but were bound to wait until she could be got away. On the following morning, however, the defendants' trow came up the Severn to the mouth of the lock, (.....) in order to get into the Canal. That afternoon, there was a great accession of water in the Severn, called "a fresh", by which the boat was placed several feet in water, and it was many days before she could be got up, and then the injury complained of was discovered ; the repairs of which and expenses connected with it amounted to £33 3s 10d, the sum sought by this action to be recovered.

**John Wells**, boatman : Was with the *Royal Thomas* on Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup> of November last ; she was laden with coal, and we had passed the lock from the Birmingham Canal into the Severn between five and six o'clock at night. **Wakeman** was captain, and **Collins** was steering at the time. On her starboard side, a lot of coping stones lay in the water near the mouth of the lock ; she heaved on the stones, and as she dropped off, her head and starboard side and part of her larboard was under water; the cabin, which is in the stern, was out of water. There was about three feet of water where she was lying ; we secured the boat in that position until next morning, when they went down to her again about six o'clock and, having procured assistance, put on some side cloths and began to bale out the water. Whilst so engaged, a trow belonging to the defendants, called the *Union*, came up, and attempted to pass into the lock on our starboard side. They got the hawser, and began to heave at the Paul windlass, and by so doing we got well jammed together ; this was about nine o'clock. We continued to bale the water out of the *Royal Thomas* until one o'clock, and then she began to swing a little, and had got higher out of the water. They then began to work the Paul windlass of the *Union* again, and heaved her into the lock ; in doing so, they canted our larboard side against the wall of the lock, and threw our head into the river about a yard. It was then of no use to continue baling out the water, and we secured the boat in that position and left her. The next morning we found there had been a fresh, and there was about a yard more water, and we could not get her out until the next Friday. There was a good deal of injury done to the stern of the boat.

Cross-examined by Sergeant Talfourd : He took some coal out of the stern of the boat, but that was not the cause of her striking against the lock wall.

Several other witnesses were called who corroborated the testimony of the foregoing.

Richard Jones, a beerhouse keeper, produced a bill amounting to between 6 and 7 pounds for meat and drink for the crew of the *Royal Thomas* during the time they were getting her afloat again, and also for some repairs to the side cloths.

A boatbuilder produced his bill amounting to £13 for repairs to the boat. This witness, who was the last called for the plaintiff, excited some merriment in Court by his taciturn manner. He acknowledged to his Lordship that he had been having a little sup of drink, and said it was quite necessary for carpenters and boatbuilders to get a little drink or they would get lost and confounded. When he repaired the boat, however, and made out the bill, he assured them he was as sober as a Judge – indeed he never went out of the way.

Sergeant Talfourd then addressed the Jury for the defendants, and observed, in the first place, that whereas his learned friend claimed nearly £33, he had failed to prove that his client had paid anything, or that he was liable to pay more than £20 including the beer which had been drunk. He

contended that these coal boats were only built for canals, and were quite unfit to navigate rivers, particularly without side cloths to keep out the water. They were by no means on fair or equal terms – here was the crazy old *Royal Thomas* stuck at the mouth of the lock in a manner to obstruct other vessels and to make it perilous to pass her, and he asked was it right that the business of the river and canal should be put a stop to from such a cause? He contended that the plaintiff was the first wrong doer, and must therefore take all the after consequences of his act. He should show that the cause of the plaintiff's boat striking against the wall and sinking her was the negligence and unskilfulness of his own servants in unloading the boat of the coal at her stern, against the advice of the crew of the *Union*, and thus causing her to swing round. He would now proceed to call his witnesses.

John Hopkins : I am clerk to the defendants. About seven o'clock on Sunday morning, the 30<sup>th</sup> of November last, I went down to the lock at Diglis. The *Union* trow had then arrived. I knew the *Royal Thomas* had sunk. I saw the *Defence* in the basin, she had passed up from the river through the lock that morning. The *Defence* is as large a vessel as the *Union*, and knowing that, I thought the *Union* could pass by the coal boat in safety. She had a cargo of groceries on board which were liable to injury from a flush of water, and it was of importance that she should get into the basin and be unloaded as soon as possible. She waited, I should think, three hours or more, whilst they were trying to get the *Royal Thomas* out of the way. I told the Captain of the *Union* to put out ropes from her head and stern to ease her into the lock, and prevent her from doing any injury to the boat. They got her as far as they could with the ropes, and then they used the Paul windlass until they got her jammed and could get no further. The lock-keeper then came and locked the gate. Some side cloths were obtained for the boat, and our men offered to lend them the jury and mizen masts to assist them. The crew of the boat began to get the coals out from her stern, but our men advised them to get them out at the head instead. They persisted however in taking them out of her stern, which at length lightened up and caused her to strike against the lock wall, and her head to swing into deeper water. I was standing upon the lock wall during the whole of the time, and could distinctly see all that passed. The boat was about six yards below me.

By the Court : Our men were not heaving at the windlass, or by any other means trying to force the trow in, when the boat struck. The trow was jammed close to the boat, and when the latter moved as I have described, the trow immediately floated into the lock without difficulty, and without hauling ; our men did everything they could to get past without injury to the *Royal Thomas*.

**Francis Oakes** was the captain of the *Union*. Saw the *Defence* go by the *Royal Thomas* on Sunday morning, the 30<sup>th</sup> of November. I did not see the crew of the *Thomas* get any coal out at all ; when we went past them, they made no sort of complaint whatever.

**Richard Jones**, mate of the *Union*, corroborated the testimony of Hopkins.

**Samuel Tildesley**, lock-keeper, saw the *Defence* pass the lock about eight o'clock on the Sunday morning. The *Royal Thomas* was then lying at the mouth of the lock. The *Defence* carries as much burden as the *Union*, but does not draw quite so much water.

This was the defendants' case.

Sergeant Ludlow replied, and said that with respect to the amount of damages, he had offered to settle that out of court. The whole amount sought might not have been proved, but they must remember there were many expenses in a case of this sort which the party would pay out of his pocket, and there was also loss of time and business, which ought to be considered.

The Learned Judge summed up, and the Jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff. Damages £10.

#### **104 July 30 1835**

CITY KALENDAR **Thomas Williams alias Enoch Weatherstone**, aged 21, **James Golden alias Riley**, 27, and **William Hillage alias Wall**, 18, (three canal boatmen) were placed at the bar charged with burglariously breaking into the dwelling house of Henry May in the parish of St Martin in this city, in the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> of June last, and stealing therefrom about 10s in copper, some bacon, cheese, &c. Mr Lee called Henry May, the prosecutor, who stated that he kept a cider house and huxter's shop in Lowesmoor ; that on the night of 24<sup>th</sup> June, himself and wife went to bed about ten

o'clock ; he had properly secured the house, and everything was safe ; between one and two in the morning, his wife awoke him by crying "Murder", when he jumped out of bed and saw the prisoner Hillage escape out of the room ; on going to the window, he also saw him go out of the front door ; he and his wife called out for the police, when Stoneleigh, the police officer, accompanied by a man named Mason, came to the house ; on going downstairs we found the till empty, which had contained between 10s and 12s in copper, and several pieces of bacon and cheese, &c, gone ; there was a peculiarly bent Irish halfpenny in the till. Harriet May, the wife of the prosecutor, was awake in the night in question by someone touching her arms ; on moving, the person said to her, "Silence, or your head is off" ; the person who touched me was the prisoner Hillage ; I screamed, "Murder", which awoke my husband, and he jumped out of bed ; I ran to the window and called, "Thieves, murder" ; I saw Golden as well as Hillage go from the front door. George Stoneleigh, policeman No 16, was on duty near prosecutor's house on the night in question ; heard a cry of, "Murder, thieves, robbers" ; went towards May's house, and Mr and Mrs May were looking out of their bedroom window ; the front door had been burst open ; May informed me of what had happened, and I went up the canal side ; after going a little distance, I picked up a drab coat, and further on a half cheese, a ham, and there was a half quartern loaf floating in the canal ; I went as far as the canal bridge, where it appeared distinctly by fresh marks on the bank that three persons had gone off the canal side, towards Rainbow Hill ; I returned back to May's and, with Onslow, kept a sharp look out for the prisoners ; in about an hour, we saw the three prisoners coming down the road from Rainbow Hill towards prosecutor's house ; I took Williams and Hillage into custody ; Onslow took Golden ; on the front of Hillage's trousers were marks of bacon grease ; on Williams we found 11s 7 1/2d in copper, three keys (belonging to Messrs Crowley and Co, canal carriers, whose counting house and warehouse had been broken open a few nights previously and the three keys stolen) and a knife ; on our way to the station house, I heard Williams remark to Hillage, had I known so much as I do now, they should not have taken me so easily. Emanuel Onslow, policeman No 15, was on duty near May's house, saw a man of the name of Michael Macnamara pick up some bacon in the road near the house ; about a quarter before two, when I was with Stoneleigh, we saw the prisoners coming from Rainbow Hill, and just before we came up to them, I saw Golden put something into a heap of manure. Michael Macnamara was employed on the night of the robbery in emptying manure at Rainbow Hill ; he heard the cry of "Murder" and went to May's house ; he picked up some bacon in the road ; after prisoners were taken he returned to his work, and in the manure heap in which Golden was seen to hide something by Onslow, he found a bacon knife ; the knife was produced ; it was a formidable weapon about twelve inches long in the blade, and was stolen from May's shop the same night. Superintendent Douglas and the other police constables produced the various things stolen to be identified. Mr May could swear to one particular piece of cheese, because it was so strong that he could not sell it and kept it for his boys to eat, and also to a piece of bacon, which had so peculiar a smell that he could not dispose of it, and was obliged to keep it for the same purpose. Williams had not been seen near the prosecutor's house on the night in question, but on searching him, among the copper money found was the Irish half penny mentioned above, and which Mr May swore had been in his possession for some time prior to the robbery, and was in the till on the night in question. On being called upon for his defence, Williams said that the crooked half penny was his own, and that he had had it for some days previous to being taken into custody ; and he produced from his pocket an Irish half penny bent in so similar a manner as the one sworn to by Mr May that no person could distinguish the least difference between them. Golden merely said he was not near the house ; and Hillage offered no defence. His Lordship shortly went over the evidence to the jury, who returned a verdict of guilty against all three. In passing sentence, his Lordship said that, as no personal violence had been committed, he did not think it was necessary to pass sentence of death formally upon them ; but there was no offence more likely to lead to personal violence than the one of which they had been very properly found guilty. He would tell them that their fate would be transportation for life, although the court would now record sentence of death against them.

The whole three prisoners were men of most forbidding appearance, and besides having broken into

Messrs Crowley's warehouse, have been guilty of several other serious offences. The police of this city are worthy of great praise for the promptitude with which they acted on this occasion.

**105 September 10 1835**

MIRACULOUS ESCAPE FROM DROWNING The Hon Charles Petre of Brentwood, Essex, with Mrs Petre and son and daughter, took a boat at Tilbury Fort on Friday last, to be put on board the *Magnet* bound for Margate when, by the unskilfulness of the ferrymen, the boat got under the wheel of the steamer, and was in a moment upset, plunging the whole family, as well as the boatman, into the water. Mr Petre quickly caught hold of the boat with his left hand, and supported Mrs Petre with his right arm ; meanwhile the maid servant clung to the boat also, and the young lady caught hold of her hair, and held so fast that a great portion of it separated from her head, but she continued her hold ; while Master Petre was seen by his agonised parents to go down in the water and come up again three times ; when most fortunately **William Merchant** and **Edward Oakley** came up with their boat from Gravesend and saved the whole of the family. The two watermen were handsomely rewarded by Mr Petre. We lament to add that the violent shock which Mrs Petre received on the occasion caused her to burst a blood vessel, which occasioned her death on Sunday morning at the Falcon, Gravesend.

**106 October 22 1835**

WORCESTERSHIRE MICHAELMAS SESSIONS

NOT GUILTY **James Young**, 23, boatman, charged with embezzling money entrusted to him by Eli Hitchen of Kidderminster, to buy coal. He was acquitted in consequence of a flaw in the indictment.

**107 October 22 1835**

WORCESTER CITY SESSIONS **Edward Boddington** and **James Daniel** (watermen) were placed at the bar, charged with having on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of October last stolen five boat cloths, from a boat belonging to **Thomas Mitton** then lying in the Worcester Canal. From the evidence of **Mary Seymour** and others, it appeared the prisoners had worked on the boat during its passage from Gloucester, and in the absence of the Captain had stolen the cloths and two boards called wings, which they sold at the Lane Dog public house – the wings for 6s, part of the boat cloths for 30s, and the remainder for 4s. The Jury immediately found them Guilty. The Town Clerk observed to the prisoners that the Court, by way of example, sentenced them to be transported for seven years. He remarked that the Court would always punish those who come before them charged with such crimes most severely, as it was absolutely necessary to make severe examples of servants who plundered their masters.

**108 October 29 1835**

INSOLVENT DEBTORS

Mr Commissioner Law held a Court at the Guildhall, Worcester, on Monday. There was less business than usual, only two city and six county cases being on the list. The city cases were, George Richardson late of Lowesmoor, baker and shopkeeper, ale and beer brewer and seller ; and **George Harris**, formerly of the parish of St Peter the Great, barge owner, waterman and carrier by water, and late residing in the parish of St Martin, warehouseman. They were both discharged.

**109 February 18 1836**

EXTRAORDINARY OUTRAGE On the night of the 8<sup>th</sup> instant at half past ten o'clock, a party of Pill men, between twenty and thirty, attacked the crew of the little steam boat *Fury*, lying at Portishead, which vessel had been placed upon the river to tow vessels to and from King's Road and Bristol. They were provided with firearms ; for upon Mr Whitwell of the firm of Whitwell and King, shipbrokers, who was on board at the time, remonstrating with them and directing the master to take particular notice of the party in order to identify them, a pistol was fired at him, and the ball

passed close by his head, one of the party exclaiming with an oath that he (Mr Whitwell) was the party they wanted. The crew then quitted the vessel, and left the Pill men in possession. The rioters then took the vessel away under sail ; what they subsequently did can only be conjectured by the fact that the ship was seen on Tuesday drifting up the Severn, and was ultimately taken possession of off Beachley, by the Custom House boat ; it is supposed that the rioters had not time to scuttle her as they were anxious to escape, and it is reported that the most active have succeeded in getting over to Ireland. The Magistrates have issued warrants against eighteen of the delinquents, and despatched a body of police to Pill to apprehend them ; and as a tumult was expected from the excitement produced in that place by the affair, the military received orders to render every requisite assistance ; but happily their services, up to the present time, have not been required. None of those concerned have yet been apprehended. The parties are all Pill boatmen, who have long vowed vengeance against the *Fury* because she deprived them of their employment, that of towing vessels down the river.

### **110 March 10 1836**

We alluded in our last to a petition to the two Houses of Parliament of boatmen and others employed on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal and River Severn for some enactment, by which they may be enabled to enjoy the rest and privileges of the Sabbath like other classes, instead of being, as they now are, employed on that holy day in their worldly occupation. We have the pleasure of saying that the Clergy have taken up the subject, and intend to repeat the attempt made two or three years ago to induce the Canal Company to order the locks to be kept closed on Sundays. The Clergy meet upon this subject at Mr Ridge's, tomorrow at one. This is a most becoming step on the part of the Ministers of Religion, and we earnestly hope that this effort may be more successful than the former one.

### **111 March 31 1836**

**SALOP ASSIZES** **Richard Simmons** was convicted of the manslaughter of **James Head** at the parish of Dowles. The prisoner and deceased are bargemen. At midnight on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, a quarrel took place between them on board a vessel on the Severn near Bridgnorth, which ended in blows ; during a struggle, both fell overboard, and the deceased, owing to the darkness of the night and a blow which he received on the head, was drowned. The prisoner was sentenced to 14 days' hard labour.

### **112 April 7 1836**

**WORCESTERSHIRE EASTER SESSIONS**

**John Connell alias Windell**, aged 20, boatman, charged with having, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March at the parish of Stoke Prior, stolen eighteen shillings and eight pence worth of penny pieces and halfpence, the property of Charles Veal. Not a true bill.

**James Lee**, aged 40, boatman, pleaded guilty to the charge of having, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, stolen at the parish of Kempsey, two brushes belonging to Mr Merriday of Upton-on-Severn. One months' imprisonment to hard labour.

### **113 April 7 1836**

The petition from the Watermen and Boatmen on the river Severn and the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, for such an alteration in the law as shall prevent their working on Sundays, was presented to the House of Commons on Wednesday.

### **114 April 7 1836**

**INSOLVENT DEBTORS** At the Insolvent Court for the county of Gloucester, **James Pumphrey**, late of Upton-on-Severn, bargeman, was opposed by Mr Francillon, on the part of Mr Hunt, for repairs done to a barge, formerly in the insolvent's possession, but sold by him to Mr Bird of Worcester. The barge some time ago sunk in the Severn, and insolvent employed Mr Hunt, who

repaired her for £58, receiving two bills from the insolvent for this amount ; but since becoming embarrassed he sold the barge for £70 to Mr Bird, who gave him a bill for £40, which the insolvent paid to a coal merchant for a debt already contracted ; he also stated that he had borrowed £20 of Mr Bird some time before the barge was sold. He was ordered to be discharged when he shall have paid into court £20, that being the amount of the first bill becoming payable to Mr Hunt, to evade which he had sold his property.

**115 May 12 1836**

**James Taylor alias Prettyfoot** was yesterday fully committed to Worcester County Gaol, charged with felony. It appeared that on Wednesday evening last, about dusk, the prisoner was observed to take a parcel, containing some plane irons and other goods, out of Messrs Pickford's warehouse on Diglis Wharf. Information of the robbery having been given to our Police, Phillips and Hall apprehended Taylor the same night, on board a vessel in the Diglis Basin ; he denied all knowledge of the transaction, but the stolen property was found concealed in a hogshead on the wharf. The articles taken had been consigned to the care of Messrs Pickford as wharfingers. The prisoner comes from Tewkesbury. When apprehended, he said his name was **Thomas Walker**, that being the name of a waterman in the employ of Messrs Pickford, who bears a good character. Taylor was employed by Messrs P.

**116 June 9 1836**

At the Guildhall on Monday, Mr W Featherstone brought a complaint against **Benjamin Beesley** for breach of contract. The complainant said it had become very common for bargemen to engage for a voyage, and receive 2s 6d or 5s earnest money, and refuse to embark when called upon to do so. Beesley had engaged to proceed on a voyage to the Staffordshire collieries, and had received 2s 6d earnest money, and had afterwards refused to fulfil his contract. The Magistrates considered the case one which demanded punishment, and sent Beesley to hard labour for 14 days.

**117 June 16 1836**

COMMITTED TO THE CITY GAOL **Edward Evans**, waterman, charged with stealing the apron, two straps, a whip socket and a cloth from the gig of Mr Thomas Hayes of Broad Street.

**118 June 30 1836**

WORCESTERSHIRE MIDSUMMER SESSIONS

**James Taylor**, aged 22, waterman, charged with having, whilst servant to Messrs Pickford and Co on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May, at the parish of St Peter the Great, stolen one gross of plain plates, three marbles and six images. 1 month's imprisonment.

**119 July 14 1836**

At Hertford Assizes on Friday, **Goodwin Hall, James Baldwin** and **John Hall**, boatmen, were tried for the murder of James Barry. The charge of murder failed, and they were convicted of manslaughter. Their conduct towards the deceased was of so brutal a character that Mr Justice Gazelee ordered them to be transported for life.

**120 August 25 1836**

CITY POLICE – FRIDAY

SUPPOSED MURDER Nine or ten days ago, the body of a boatman named **Samuel Edge** was found in the Severn at Deerhurst Ford, bearing the appearance of having been in the water for several days. An inquest was held on the body, and no evidence being offered thereon touching the cause of the deceased's death, a verdict of "Found drowned" was accordingly returned. It appears that Edge belonged to this city and was employed, in company with two other men named **William Lessimore** and **Thomas Dyson**, to bring up a coal boat from Gloucester, but for want of sufficient depth of water, they were compelled to stop at Deerhurst Ford. During the stoppage, deceased was

missed from the vessel, and no tidings heard of him for five days after when, as stated above, his body was found in the river. The friends of the deceased residing in this city, having heard that their unfortunate relative and the two men, Lessimore and Dyson, who were working the vessel with him, had quarrelled on the day he was last seen at the boat, and likewise that Lessimore had said, when speaking of Edge, that he would "break his b----y neck or throw him overboard if ever he came on the vessel again", they obtained warrants against the two men, which were executed upon them yesterday by Sergeant Onslow, and this morning they were brought up to our City Police Office to be examined on the charge before the Rev H A Pye, who is a Magistrate for the county of Gloucester. The individual who is reported to have heard the conversation alluded to was not present, having left the city to proceed on a voyage up the canal ; but after the fullest investigation of the case, the men were liberated, nothing appearing against them sufficiently conclusive to warrant their detention on so serious a charge ; at the same time, the friends of the deceased were assured that if they should hereafter be enabled to produce evidence tending to implicate the prisoners as connected with the cause of the death of Edge, they should again be taken into custody.

**121 September 22 1836**

INQUESTS BEFORE MR HUGHES On Tuesday, on the body of **Richard Hewlett alias Holland**, aged 17, who fell into the canal in opening a lock near Hanbury and was drowned. Verdict : Accidental death.

**122 September 22 1836**

CITY POLICE, MONDAY **Charles Spray** and **William Grenaway**, boatmen, were brought up by Douglas charged with stealing a quantity of beans. Prosecutor did not appear, but the prisoners were detained.

**123 September 29 1836**

CITY POLICE, MONDAY SEPTEMBER 26 Elizabeth Kepax, Maria Bardin and William Phillips were charged with robbing **Jeremiah Jones**, a boatman of Stourport, and assaulting Douglas, a policeman, on Saturday night last. The plaintiff, Jones, said he went on Saturday night into the Castle and Falcon in Broad Street, and drank gin and water with the two female prisoners. He left about 11 o'clock, when he was surrounded by a number of women, among whom were the prisoners, who in a few minutes ran away ; from this circumstance he supposed he was robbed, which proved true when he felt for his cash and watch. Jones, immediately upon discovery of the robbery, went to the Station House, where he saw Sergeant Onslow, who proceeded to the Falcon (in company with Jones) where he was joined by Inspector Douglas, and from the information they obtained, they went to the Sun in Bull Court at about a quarter past one on Sunday morning. When they had obtained admittance, they proceeded into the attic, where they found the prisoners Bardin and Phillips, partially undressed, and another man named Francis Bradley ; when the officers determined upon searching the prisoner Bardin, Phillips was seen by both Onslow and Douglas attempting to pass something to Bradley, which proved to be Jones's watch. When the officers perceived this, they wished to get possession, and in the scuffle which ensued, Douglas's staff fell from his pocket ; Bradley took advantage of the staff's falling and gave Douglas a severe blow on the head, from the effects of which he will be some time before he recovers. Phillips and Bradley made their escape, and the female Bardin was secured and taken to the Station House. Onslow, when he had seen Douglas taken care of, went with 6 men in pursuit of Phillips into St John's, and found him at his brother's house. The prisoner's brother refused the officer admittance, but they were determined not to leave, and the prisoner at last surrendered. Phillips, in his escape, met with Mason, No 9 and Hales No 5, at both of whom he threw large pebbles and severely wounded them. When taken into custody, Kepax had all her clothes packed up ready for a trip to Birmingham. The prisoners had nothing to say in their defence, and they were committed for trial at the Sessions. Baylis, the landlord of the Sun public house, was called before the Bench and severely reprimanded, not only for allowing such persons to frequent his house, but for not rendering that prompt

assistance which the case required.

Francis Davis was brought up by Sergeant Onslow for obstructing him while taking the above prisoners to jail. After being severely reprimanded, he was discharged.

#### **124 November 17 1836**

**CASE OF THE WATERMEN** The lecture delivered by the Rev John Davies, Rector of St Clements, at the Guildhall on Monday evening the 7<sup>th</sup> inst, on the state of religion and morals among this class of his Majesty's subjects, was most numerous and respectably attended ; the great room was completely filled, and numbers were unable to obtain admittance. The meeting was opened with a prayer selected from the Liturgy. The Rev Gentleman stated that he had for more than twenty years been Minister of a Parish on the banks of the Severn, and not far distant from the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, which had afforded him opportunities of witnessing the lamentable desecration of the Lord's Day on these navigations by the system of Sunday labour, which prevails more or less on almost all other navigable rivers and canals of the kingdom ; he therefore felt it his duty to endeavour to direct public attention to so great an evil. After speaking on the importance of Commerce to Great Britain, and referring to the high character maintained among foreigners by the merchants, manufacturers and tradesmen of this country, and their great influence, and remarking that "to whom much is given from them much will be required", he proceeded to speak of the degraded situation of the watermen, as a body of individuals closely connected with our commerce, and justly entitled to sympathy and kindness from all other ranks of society in general, as well as from the commercial world in particular. He next referred to the declaration of Judge Blackstone, that "the permitting of any secular business to be publicly transacted on the Lord's Day, in a country professing Christianity, was notorious indecency and scandal", and quoted a passage from an eminent Divine, which states that "the Sabbath is the great means of preserving in the world the knowledge and worship of the living and true God. Wherever the Sabbath is not, there is no worship, no religion : man forgets God, and God forsakes man". From the evidence given before the House of Commons, and other sources, he pointed out that the watermen in general are in a demoralised state, and clearly proved that the system of Sunday labour is the chief cause of this demoralisation – that the watermen themselves are aware of this – that they deeply lament it. He mentioned some affecting instances in confirmation of this within his own knowledge, and appealed to the petitions which had been forwarded to the Houses of Parliament, numerous signed by the watermen as a body. Mr D then described several death bed scenes he had witnessed, well calculated to excite an interest on behalf of these men ; and also referred to some instances to prove that, when placed under religious instruction, watermen are as capable of improvement, under the Divine blessing, as any other men. This declaration was most strongly confirmed by a reference to the case of the watermen employed on the Mersey and Irwell Navigation. Much to the honour of the proprietors, an arrangement has been made by which nearly 200 men have the full enjoyment of the Sabbath, and they have proved that they know how to value the privilege. They attend Divine Worship regularly, and their behaviour during the rest of the sacred day is consistent. They have formed themselves into a sort of club for mutual support during sickness, and have bound themselves by their rules not to profane the Sabbath, not to swear, not to use any indecent language. Many of them attend an adult school, and are learning to read the Bible ; and, by the help of Divine Grace, they practise what they hear inculcated from the Bible. Their sobriety, honesty and excellent conduct in every way are highly spoken of by those who have opportunities of judging ; and many, who were once swearing, reprobate, drunken characters, have become truly pious men, "adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things". They subscribed this year £20, to be divided between the "Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts" and the "Church Missionary Society", and have, in the whole, contributed £150 towards sending the Gospel to the Heathen! Success has attended other attempts on a smaller scale to benefit this class of persons. The Lecturer mentioned an excellent plan adopted at the Hanbury Wharf, that of supplying every boat with a Bible, to be kept in a bag for the use of the crew. Messrs Clay, Newman and Co, whose boats' crews enjoy this advantage, have also made regulations with respect to the Sabbath highly

creditable to them. Messrs Whitehouse and Co have given up Sunday carrying ; and there are also a few other individuals who have acted in the same conscientious manner. But it has been found by experience that those Companies who decline working on the Lord's Day have to encounter severe competition from other Companies. The merchants, manufacturers and tradesmen in our large towns are in the habit of crowding in their goods on a Saturday night to be delivered at such a time as, if complied with, must necessarily encroach on the Sabbath. Mr D then read a letter from a respectable individual, who had a considerable number of men in his employ on one of the canals of this kingdom, in which the writer declares that little or no loss would be sustained were the Sunday labour universally given up, and expresses his surprise that Sabbath desecration on rivers and canals should not have attracted more of the attention of those who profess to honour the Sabbath. After a solemn appeal to all classes upon the duty of exertion to promote the due observance of the Lord's Day, Mr D referred to the activity of infidels in endeavouring to injure the minds of the watermen, as an additional call to the friends of religion "not to be slothful". He observed that those who wish to promote the true observance of the Lord's Day are the real friends of the poor ; their object is to elevate the labouring classes in the scale of society, by teaching them the duty they owe to God, to themselves and their fellow creatures, as beings born for immortality ; that the aim of the friends of the Sabbath cause is to be the means of comforting and benefiting their poorer brethren, by raising them from the slavery of those evil habits and bad passions which embitter life and which sink men beneath the very brute creation. He exhorted them to pursue this charitable work on the principles of the Bible, "through evil report and good report, through honour and dishonour", undismayed by opposition, uninfluenced by fear, regardless of calumny, contempt, reproach or even insult, "rallying continually on their motives, *love to God and love to man*". After pointing out various methods by which the cause might be benefited, he reminded the Meeting that the African slaves were emancipated, not by means of petitions presented by themselves, but by petitions offered on their behalf by those who pitied them. Persons who felt this would be anxious to petition Parliament in favour of the watermen. Mr Davies concluded by proposing the following petition, which was most cordially adopted by the Meeting :-

"Your Petitioners beg leave to state to your Honourable House, that we deeply feel the degraded situation of our countrymen employed on the Rivers and Canals of this professedly Christian Nation, in that they are deprived of the privileges and blessings of the Sabbath, to the great dishonour of Almighty God, who has commanded it "to be kept holy". Your Petitioners humbly pray your Honourable House to take the lamentable case of the Watermen into your serious consideration, and to enact such laws as shall appear to your Honourable House best adapted to remove this evil, so justly complained of by so large a body of British subjects. Your petitioners would further beg to remind your Honourable House that a Petition, signed by 600 of this class of men working on the Severn and the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, was laid before your Honourable House the Session before last ; and a similar Petition, signed by 900 men, was presented last Session, in which they humbly pray that they might be permitted to enjoy the rest of the Lord's Day, which has not been withheld even from the emancipated slaves in the West Indies".

After a vote of thanks to Mr D had been passed with acclamation (moved by the Rev Thos Davis, Curate of All Saints, and seconded by the Rev W A Pruen, Rector of St Helen's) he expressed his hope, on behalf of the body of our fellow subjects whose cause he had been endeavouring to advocate, that those who felt an interest in their spiritual welfare would exert themselves in promoting it, and earnestly pray that the watermen might soon obtain the Sabbath, and employ it, when obtained, for the high and holy purposes for which it was originally granted "by the bountiful Giver of all good". It was evident that a most friendly feeling towards this class of men was excited in the minds of those present at this interesting Meeting.

## **125    December 22 1836**

**ATROCIOUS OUTRAGE**    An investigation of a very serious nature, and which has caused a great

sensation, has occupied the time and attention of the Mayor and other Magistrates of Gloucester for several days ; it is a case of a most brutal assault and rape upon a young woman named Mary Lea, aged 18. Four men, named **James Rea**, **Henry Parry**, **George Jones** and **Joseph Wright**, have been fully committed for trial at the next assizes, the two first as principals in the capital offence, and the two latter as accessories before and after the fact. Warrants are in the hands of the Police against others who are well known, but who have absconded ; it is however expected they will soon be in custody. We are in possession of the whole of the evidence in this disgusting case, but think the ends of justice will be more likely to be answered by giving only an outline. It appeared then that Mary Lea arrived in Gloucester by a boat on Wednesday evening the 14<sup>th</sup> instant, in company with a man named **William Jones**, the master of the boat, and another man named **Bodenham**. Jones, Bodenham and the girl went to the Royal Oak public house, where they had some beer ; the prisoners were in the house at the time, and Henry Parry endeavoured to get into conversation with her, but she would have nothing to say to him. After remaining some time, Mr Jones told the young woman she could go and sleep in the boat that night in one of the beds, and Bodenham in the other, as he, Jones, intended to sleep at his house, and then she could go to her home at Redmarley in the morning. Soon afterwards, she and Bodenham left the Royal Oak and went to the boat in the Severn, where they had something to eat. A noise of people was heard on the outside, and Bodenham looked out to see what was the matter ; on doing so, he saw all the prisoners and several others, and on asking them what they wanted, they with oaths said they would have the girl out of the boat ; he told them the first man that attempted anything of the sort he would strike with a hatchet which he held in his hand ; they however soon overpowered him, and as he said, *bundled* him out of the cabin without stockings or shoes on, in which state he ran to William Jones's house and told him what had happened. Jones hastened to the boat, where he found his cabin full of men and the young woman in a very disordered state, crying very much, and in great distress ; he remonstrated with them, but with no effect. They then attempted to force her out of the cabin, which he endeavoured to prevent, when they immediately set upon him and put him out ; they then dragged the poor creature out and took her to another boat at a little distance, where again a repetition of more brutal violence was perpetrated upon her, and she was threatened that if she made any noise or resistance she should be thrown into the river. She however did cry murder as well as she was able, and her cries were heard by a man in a barge near, but he neither gave alarm nor rendered her any assistance. One of the prisoners had struck her in the face, which made her nose bleed and gave her a black eye, and in her struggling to get from them, she lost her bonnet, cap, shawl and boots, and her gown was sadly torn ; she was then turned out, and made her way back as well as she could to Jones's boat, where she related to a woman what had taken place. She gave her evidence in a very clear and modest manner, and swore positively to all the prisoners, and she was corroborated by all the other witnesses ; she appeared very unwell, and was allowed by the Magistrates to sit the whole time she was under examination. The prisoners are all watermen ; two of them were apprehended in this city.

**DEATH FROM DROWNING** An inquest was yesterday held by Mr Hyde at the Royal George Inn on the body of Joseph Tain, aged 36 years. It appeared from the evidence that the deceased, who was in the employ of Mr Lightwood, coal merchant, after finishing his work on Monday, was proceeding home, accompanied by a fellow workman named John Walker, when the deceased went into a canal boat lying on the river Severn, opposite to the Distillery, for the purpose of taking away some coal which he expected had been left there for him ; and on springing from the cabin of the boat (which was not moored) for the purpose of regaining the bank, the boat moved from under him, and the unfortunate man fell into the water between the boat and the wall ; he rose once only, when he cried, "Oh Lord, John!" His companion went in search of a rope or a pole, neither of which he could find ; and although several persons came to the spot on the alarm being given, nearly half an hour had elapsed before the man was got out of the river. Attempts were afterwards made by Mr Chandler, surgeon, to resuscitate the body, but without success. Had this gentleman been fortunately called in to the deceased as soon as he was taken out of the water, a different result

would in all probability have ensued. Verdict : “Accidental death”.

## 126 January 5 1837

### WORCESTERSHIRE EPIPHANY SESSIONS

The following were the sentences of the prisoners :-

**Edward Fletcher**, 40, and **William Riley**, 40, boatmen, charged with stealing nine hundredweight of coals, the property of the British Alkali Company, at Stoke Prior, on the 28<sup>th</sup> November. Imprisoned six weeks to hard labour.

**William Morris**, 24, boatman, for stealing a tin basket, the property of William Bishton of Dudley, on the 6<sup>th</sup> September. Imprisoned six weeks to hard labour.

**William Parry**, 20, boatman, for stealing a silk handkerchief and four umbrellas, the property of Thomas Sturland. Imprisoned two months to hard labour.

**John Everett**, 19, boatman, charged with stealing a tarpaulin from a trow called *The Active*, lying on the Severn at Stourport. No bill.

## 127 January 5 1837

THE SNOW STORM A storm of snow, almost unequalled in this country for duration, severity and extent, kept the Metropolis till Friday in a state of blockade. For several days, London was like a besieged city, which none could enter or leave but at the risk of their lives. In every direction the roads were impassable ; and the consequence, of course, was a suspension of all news. A more prosy place than London without arrivals from the Continent or the country cannot be imagined. Men seemed afraid to move ; the streets were dull and dirty ; the only places which showed signs of life were the post offices and coaching inns, where crowds assembled to read the lists of mails not arrived, to inquire for letters written but not received, and for friends and relatives who were probably at the time shivering in snow drifts instead of regaling themselves on Christmas fare. A considerable improvement took place on Friday. The snow on the roads had been trodden down or shovelled aside ; and, though with great difficulty, mails got to town from various quarters. Those from the interior furnish reports of the extent and depth of the snow, and the suffering it occasioned in various parts of the country. Their accounts are generally of the same character – coaches buried in snow drifts, horses falling down, hazardous journeys through fields and crossroads, mail bags sent on in post-chaises and on horseback, passengers half frozen, and in some cases supplied with warm beds and good cheer by charitable neighbours. The following are a few of the more remarkable incidents :-

The most deplorable and terrific calamity we have as yet had any account occurred at Lewes at noon on Tuesday. An avalanche of snow glided from the Cliffe Hills at the back of Mr Hillman's lime kilns ; and falling over the precipice which towers above this part of the town, dashed in the roofs and entirely destroyed five houses, burying the unfortunate inmates under a mountain of snow. The scene which followed was terrific and distressing in the extreme. The report of the falling mass drew thousands of people to the spot ; and so great was the excitement which prevailed, that a quarter of an hour expired before silence could be established. Every hand that could lift a spade set to work without delay to extricate the unhappy creatures perishing beneath the ruins. A Mrs Robinson was dug out with a child at the breast, the mother dead. The unfortunate woman on the first alarm had escaped ; but, rendered desperate by the strong affection of a mother, rushed back to her house to save her other children, when the avalanche poured down upon the whole family and buried them alive. A Mrs Taylor was dug out alive, but with very slight hopes of her surviving, as she was all but dead. Her eldest daughter and five other children have also been taken out of the snow. Altogether six persons were dug out alive, and six dead.

At Brighton, a young man was found frozen to death ; and an old man fell down dead in one of the streets of that town from the effects of the cold.

About a mile from St Albans on the London side, a chariot without horses was seen on Tuesday nearly buried in snow. There were two ladies inside, who made an earnest appeal to a mail guard whose coach had got in a drift nearly at the same spot. The ladies said the post boy had left them

for St Albans to get fresh cattle, and had been gone two hours. The guard was unable to assist them, and his mail being extricated, he pursued his journey to London, leaving the chariot and the ladies in the situation they were first seen.

Towards the southern parts of the country, the snow has fallen 30 feet in thickness. The only roads that have been clear throughout the storm are the Portsmouth and the Poole. The depth of snowdrift in the hollows of most of the roads is reported to be from 12 to 20 feet.

The Duke of Wellington arrived at Marlborough on Monday evening in his travelling carriage and four, with out riders. His Grace, who was journeying to the mansion of the Duke of Beaufort, where he was to give away the daughter of the Duke of Beaufort in marriage to Mr Codrington, son of Sir Bethel, was anxious to pass on from Marlborough directly ; but learning the road was impassable, he stopped for the night at the Castle Inn. The next morning, his Grace started, but the carriage got fixed in a wheat field between Marlborough and Badminton. Fortunately the surveyor of that line of roads, Mr Merrifield, was not far distant and, on one of the out riders coming to him, he readily came to the assistance of the Noble Duke, whom he piloted across the country till they came to a sound bottomed road. To Mr Merrifield the mails also on the same road have been much indebted.

On Monday, the guard of the Exeter mail, on its way up, finding the road near Bridport impassable, mounted a horse in that town and set off with the bags for Dorchester, accompanied by a post boy on another horse. On Litton Down they were obliged to make a detour from the road, and were both plunged into a pit filled up with a snowdrift. After labouring three hours in the snow, assistance was brought to the spot by the repeated blowing on the horn of the guard, and they were both rescued and taken to the house of the Rev Mr Cox, who paid every attention and provided another horse, on which the guard was able at last to reach Dorchester at three o'clock on Monday morning, being ten hours after the usual time. He was found to be seriously injured by the cold, and was put immediately under the care of a surgeon ; he is now recovering. The post boy was got out of the drift and went back to Bridport.

The Exeter mail, by Yeovil, due on Wednesday evening, did not reach London until one o'clock on Wednesday. The guard stated that the coach was at five different places buried in snow, and had to be dug out. In one place, a kind hearted farmer, after lending his team and men to release the mail, insisted that its coachman, passengers and guard should partake of refreshment at his farm close by. He placed before them cold fowls and bacon, with good home brewed ale, and added a glass of brandy and water each. Fourteen mail coaches were said to be abandoned on the various roads.

In none of the suburban districts of the metropolis have the effects of the snow storm been more severely felt than in Chelsea, Battersea, Wandsworth, Merton, Fulham, Hammersmith, Teddington and Richmond. The condition of the fishermen and their families, who principally reside in little huts along the side of the river, especially at Battersea Marshes, is truly distressing. The watermen, lightermen and bargemen are also prevented working their craft from the severity of the season. The market gardeners have been particularly embarrassed by the snow storm, in consequence of the roads to the metropolitan markets being rendered almost impassable.

## **128 February 2 1837**

CITY POLICE, THIS DAY

**William Giddons**, a boatman, was remanded upon a charge of stealing a quantity of brass from Mr Danks's wharf, Diglis. (As the transaction took place without the boundaries of the city, the case will be brought before the County Magistrates at their next sitting).

## **129 February 9 1837**

INQUESTS BY MR HYDE On Saturday last, an inquest was held by Mr Hyde at the Mug House, Hylton Lane, on the body of **Charles Wall**, a fine athletic young man of the age of 21, and a waterman by trade. It appeared from the evidence of the deceased's brother and other witnesses that the deceased was quite well with the exception of a cough, occasioned by a cold taken about a fortnight since, that on the evening of Tuesday last he was with his brother and another waterman at

the Mug House from six to eleven o'clock, that they drank three pints of ale and a quart of small beer between them, and the deceased left the house perfectly sober and very well, with the exception of the cough. The deceased went into his bed on board his barge at a quarter past eleven o'clock, and on the following morning he was taken out of it quite dead. Verdict : "Found dead".

### **130 February 16 1837**

**GLOUCESTER POLICE, MONDAY** Harriet Brown was charged with stealing two sovereigns and three half crowns, the property of **James Greenaway**, a waterman of Worcester. The prosecutor, in company with another waterman of Worcester named **Featherstone**, went on Friday night to a house in Leatherbottle Lane, for the purpose of obtaining lodgings for the night. They slept in a room containing three beds, one of which was occupied by the prisoner. Two other women also slept in the room. In the morning, the money was missed, and found on the prisoner. She was committed to take her trial at the Assizes.

### **131 February 23 1837**

The Rev John Davies, the Rector of St Clement's in this city, has published "The Substance of the Lecture on the State of Religion and Morals among that class of his Majesty's subjects who gain their subsistence by working upon our rivers and canals, and on the duty of exertion to promote their spiritual welfare", which he delivered at the Guildhall on Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> of November last ; and has very liberally consented to devote such profits as may be derived from the sale to the purchase of Bibles and Testaments, to be distributed among watermen. This publication adds one trait more to the benevolent and Christian-like spirit by which all the author's actions are directed ; it abounds with strong facts which came under his own personal observation, bearing on the subject ; and is well calculated to answer the benign purposes for which it was originally delivered.

### **132 March 16 1837**

#### **WORCESTERSHIRE LENT ASSIZES – CROWN COURT**

**ASSAULT** Three men named **Harris, Weaver** and **Gregory** surrendered themselves to take their trials on the charge of committing an assault on Emanuel Onslow, and obstructing him in the execution of his duty as one of the police officers of this city on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June last. It appeared from the testimony of Onslow that, for some time previous to the commission of the offence, a man named **Bills**, whose occupation was a waterman, was charged with felony, and that he received instructions to apprehend him. On the day mentioned in the indictment, he saw Bills on board Harris's barge, then lying in Diglis. He called to him, saying he wanted him, but he refused to come. Onslow then charged Harris and the two other prisoners to aid and assist ; but they refused. Onslow then jumped on to Harris's barge, and followed Bills in the hold below, where he handcuffed him. While thus engaged, Harris called to the other two prisoners, Gregory and Weaver, who were standing on the bank, to unfasten the barge, to let her float to the middle of the Severn, and then they would "serve him out", which they did. Harris again said, "Put on the hatch and shut him in". They did so, and kept him confined in this place for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, in which situation Onslow said "he was almost stifled", threatening to annoy him while there by acts of cruelty ; among which, as stated by Mr Crane, hop merchant (who was an eye witness of the transaction, and remonstrated with them for their conduct), they called for brimstone ; and he also proved that Gregory and Weaver were standing on top of the hatch to prevent Onslow's forcing it open for his own liberation. The facts of the case being thus proved, Mr Sergeant Ludlow summed up the case to the Jury, remarking, that as all could not act as executors of the law, the public good required that someone should be appointed to fill those offices, and that if peace officers ran great risk of their own personal safety in the execution of their duty, it became an act of the greatest justice that the law, in return, should afford them the utmost protection in its power. The prisoners were found guilty and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

### 133 March 30 1837

**BOATMEN ON RIVERS AND CANALS** The Times of Wednesday last, in noticing the lecture (lately printed and published) delivered at the Guildhall in this city in November last by the Rev John Davies AM, Rector of St Clement's, on the state of religion and morals among that class of persons who work upon canals and rivers, says, "The great object of the lecturer is to promote the spiritual welfare of the persons who are the subjects of his discourse ; and for the success of his endeavours he contends, and contends most truly, that an exemption from labour on the Sabbath is a point which the masters of the boats ought to concede to their servants. The Rev Rector seems in earnest in his exhortations ; his lecture is devoid of cant ; and the facts which he places before the reader are worthy of serious perusal and reflection. The subjoined extract will best explain his object, and the means by which it may be accomplished :-

"I shall not presume to declare the exact line of conduct every individual should pursue in this matter, I leave this between God and every man's conscience. I have already remarked that I have ascertained that it is the conviction of many deep thinking practical men that the work will not be accomplished till the evil be put down, externally at least, by a decisive act of Parliament, which will deal out justice to all with a firm and impartial hand ; this was the opinion of our ancestors when they passed a law imposing a penalty on Sunday traffic ; but, in consequence of the alteration in the value of money, the fine is now become ineffectual. The best plan doubtless would be a union of all parties concerned, and the grant of the Sabbath to the watermen at once. This indeed would be an act well becoming commercial men living in a Christian country and bearing the Christian name. The conduct of the proprietors of the Mersey and Irwell navigation and a few others reflects high honour upon them, and deserved imitation. Why should it not become general? A canal carrier, a proprietor, a short time ago declared that it was the desire of his heart to see Sunday traffic put an end to ; he added there was wanted a union to bind them together, that one might not injure another. I am aware there are difficulties to be encountered ; this is to be expected in applying a remedy to long existing evils, such as the one complained of, or in carrying into effect new arrangements of any kind. But, were the waterman's motto recollected and applied, "Where there is a will, there is a way", difficulties would soon vanish, things would soon be righted, and in a little time masters and men would have cause to be thankful for the change".

### 134 July 6 1837

#### WORCESTERSHIRE MIDSUMMER SESSIONS

**Benjamin Nicholls**, 26, boatman, for stealing a pair of breeches and other articles of wearing apparel on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April, the property of Thomas Wakeman, at the parish of St Peter the Great, Worcester. To be imprisoned six weeks to hard labour and once whipped.

### 135 August 31 1837

*To the Editor of the Worcester Journal.*

SIR – In your last paper a reference was made to the improved condition of the watermen, but the name of the particular canal was omitted it appears by the individual who mentioned the subject ; permit me then to inform you that the men employed on the Mersey and Irwell Navigation have, through the kindness of the proprietors, enjoyed for the last five or six years the privileges of the Sabbath, and have devoted it to the blessed purposes for which the day of holy rest was originally granted to man by the bountiful Giver of all good. The following letter from the clergyman of a large parish where many of these men reside will, I feel persuaded, be gratifying to you and your readers. It is addressed to a gentleman who has taken an active part in promoting the welfare of the watermen, and who has an interest in the success of that particular navigation.

"Dear Sir – I should most deeply regret that any new regulations of the proprietors of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation should have the effect of diminishing the opportunities which the men now possess of observing the Sabbath. The pains which have been taken to improve the moral and religious character of the flatmen have produced here a very visible effect. They are generally an orderly well behaved class of men ; a large portion resident in this town are constant in their

attendance at the parish Church, and some of them among the most exemplary of the congregation. It is a remark that has been often made to me, that from having been (as once was the case) a most drunken, dissolute and disorderly body of men, they have of late become a pattern worthy of the imitation of the labouring classes. I have an opportunity of judging of men, not only from their behaviour on Sundays, but in visiting their families have been enabled to form a more correct estimate of their ordinary habits, and I have no hesitation in saying that from my own experience there are no cottages which a clergyman visits with greater satisfaction than those of the watermen.

I am, &c”.

Much more might be added had you space to spare for the insertion. Application has recently been made to a Noble Lord, the proprietor of another navigation, on behalf of the watermen ; his Lordship generously stated in reply that “no man should henceforth be compelled to break the Sabbath by working on his canal”. An address signed by a considerable number of merchants and manufacturers in Birmingham is about to be forwarded to the proprietors of the canals connected with that town, expressing their desire that all canals might be considered as closed from 12 o'clock on Saturday night till 12 o'clock on Sunday night. This example no doubt will be followed by this city and other towns similarly situated. Allow me to express my hope that exertions will be made to supply boats and barges with copies of the Holy Scriptures, and pains taken to teach the children of watermen to read, and to encourage their parents to attend divine worship. Let all classes unite in endeavouring to benefit a body of men whose religious instruction has been awfully neglected, and who have been suffered to live and die heathens in the centre of a profoundly Christian country.

I am, &c

CLERICUS

### **136 September 14 1837**

Last week, Inspector Arton also apprehended three bargemen in the employ of Mr Wilkes of Evesham, named **Bartlett, Russell** and **Mitchell**, for robbing the garden of Mr Edward Grove of Evesham. Upwards of two bushels of onions were found on board the vessel, which was going down the Avon.

### **137 October 26 1837**

WORCESTERSHIRE MICHAELMAS SESSIONS The following were the sentences of the prisoners :-

**John Mitchell**, 25, and **George Russell**, 27, watermen, for stealing two bushels of onions, the property of Edward Grove, at Evesham. One month's hard labour.

### **138 December 14 1837**

FUND FOR PROMOTING THE DISTRIBUTION OF BIBLES, TESTAMENTS, PRAYER BOOKS AND SUITABLE TRACTS AMONG THE WATERMEN We are much gratified to hear that a grant has been liberally made to this fund by that Venerable Institution, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, to the amount of £22, being the exact sum collected for the above object at St Clement's Church in this city. The grant is to be made in Bibles, Testaments, Prayer Books and Homilies. We anticipate much good, under the Divine Blessing, from such distributions, and are happy to learn that it is proposed to extend the plan, a subscription having been opened in London for that purpose. The following circumstance is an encouragement to exertion in promoting this benevolent design. On Sunday week, a vessel lying in the Severn was found to have on board a Bible, which had been presented to the crew fifteen years ago, and which has been carefully preserved. One of the men belonging to the barge stated “that a blessing seemed to come on board with that book, that he had read it for many an hour, which otherwise might have been spent at a public house, that he had learned from that book what his duty was, and what his end would be”.

**139 January 11 1838**

WORCESTERSHIRE EPIPHANY SESSIONS

**William Webb**, 22, boatman, for obtaining money under false pretences from Thomas Spragg at Offenham. To be imprisoned three months to hard labour, one month solitary.

CITY SESSIONS

**John Cash**, 21, boatman, charged with stealing an iron plank stand &c from his master's boat on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October. Not guilty.

**140 January 18 1838**

The Rev John Davies, Rector of St Clements in this city, delivered on Sunday se'nnight a very appropriate address in the Boys Sunday School Room, Stourport, to a crowded assembly of watermen and labourers, pointing out the evils of Sabbath breaking, drunkenness and pilfering goods entrusted to their charge ; and expressed a desire to place on board every vessel working on the Severn a Bible, a Prayer Book and religious tracts. The Rev Gentleman's audience separated, evidently impressed with his discourse ; and we trust their future course of life will be influenced by the excellent precepts and solemn admonitions it contained.

**141 January 18 1838**

THE WEATHER The thermometer in this city on Monday last was as low as 12, which is 20 degrees below freezing ; at Malvern the lowest point on that day was 15. Such severe weather has not been experienced for many years. The Severn and Canal are frozen over, and navigation is entirely at a stand. The poor boatmen are going round soliciting alms ; and the almost exploded custom of morris dancing has been revived in our streets ; we noticed this morning a little group, with the usual accompaniments of a fiddle and two fools.

**142 February 1 1838**

THE WEATHER The continuation of the amusements of skating, bowling, football &c on the Severn during the whole of the last week daily attracted immense crowds of spectators ; and on Saturday the ascent of a balloon from the ice was witnessed by a large concourse. It was, we believe, intended to roast a sheep on the Severn on Monday had the frost continued ; but Murphy, with his accustomed accuracy, predicted that the weather would be "changeable" on that day ; and we accordingly had a rapid thaw ; yesterday rain ; today frost ; - also foretold by Murphy. If we go on at this rate, we shall always be prepared for sunshine and shower. The late depression of the thermometer has not been equalled during the last 18 years. In several places, it is stated to have been as low as 7 degrees, which is 25 degrees below freezing. The watermen and bargemen in the neighbourhood of Hammersmith roasted on Thursday last a fat sheep on the ice near the centre of the river, on the east side of the suspension bridge. It was put down at nine o'clock am, and long before that hour the banks on both the Middlesex and Surrey shores were lined with thousands of spectators anxious to witness the novel sight of "the Thames on fire". After the process of roasting was concluded, which was about two o'clock, the work of demolition commenced, and many were the respectable persons who, on the payment of one to five shillings respectively, carried off "delicious morsels" of the "River mutton". On turning to our file for February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1814, we find it stated that "on one part of the Severn yesterday was to be seen a party playing at bowls, while at another spot some epicures were employed in cooking a joint of meat".

The house of Whittaker and Co, the publishers of Murphy's Almanack, has been beset by crowds anxious to purchase the work ; and the supply soon being exhausted, it is said that as much as 7s 6d and half a guinea was given for a single copy. To prove the astonishing demand for this almanack, we may mention as a curious fact in the annals of publishing that it has gone through twenty six editions in about as many days.

## CASE OF MANSLAUGHTER

INQUEST BEFORE MR HYDE An inquest was held on Monday at the Hope and Anchor public house, Newport Street, on the body of Edward Hill, who came by his death under circumstances detailed in the following evidence, which we have endeavoured to procure as accurately as possible, not only on account of the respectability of the parties implicated, but in consequence of the many erroneous reports which have gone abroad, and the great sensation the lamentable occurrence has occasioned. The deceased was an apprentice to Mr Mountford, confectioner of High Street in this city ; he entered into business in Broad Street and after that at Bewdley, but we believe, from misfortune, he has latterly been working for Mr Rouse. It will be seen by part of the evidence that **Mr Goodman** had occasionally been in the habit of rendering assistance to the deceased, and that at the time of the occurrence they were upon friendly terms. We have carefully examined the evidence, but cannot ascertain the exact cause of quarrel. It appears by the servant's evidence that they were *having words* in the bar parlour, but she did not know what these words were about. Another witness said he heard words at the door about lending half a crown ; but there is nothing positive about the origin or real cause for blows. It might have been supposed that a quarrel ensued upon the wager, mentioned by the witness Allen ; but it does not appear that the deceased was taking any part in the *bet* ; Goodman was laying the wager with another man. We cannot help remarking here that the conversation upon which the wager turned is a most singular coincidence when contrasted with the after occurrences of the evening. The deceased was a widower, and has left one child, about twelve years of age, who is residing in this town. Some friends of the deceased are raising a subscription to bury his remains, and are also anxious to provide a small sum of money, or an asylum, for his daughter. Goodman, who is a coal dealer and hallier and, until the office was abolished, held the appointment of Water Bailiff under the Corporation, is a respectable man in his station. He has, we have heard, absented himself until bail for his appearance at the time of trial can be procured. If this cannot be effected, it is probable he will not be forthcoming until the Assizes. The Magistrates have also issued their warrant for his apprehension.

The following tradesmen composed the Jury, viz :- John Matthews (foreman), Thomas Minchall the younger, William Davis, Frederick Brookes, Edwin Parsons, Benjamin Bibbs, Charles Birbeck, Emanuel Maiden, James Beese, William Bourne, Humphrey Crisp, William Wadley, Thomas Sims, William Bristow, John Dench Wensley and Jeffrey Jones.

The Jury having been sworn and proceeded to view the body, the inquest room was thrown open to the public, and was filled almost to suffocation immediately. The first evidence called was that of Mr John Oseman, builder of Birmingham. He stated that he knew the deceased, and saw him about seven o'clock on Saturday night at the Hope and Anchor public house. He was not with him more than five minutes, but left Goodman in company with him in the parlour, and they were sober. Witness is brother-in-law to Goodman, and he knew there was a friendly feeling existing between the deceased and Goodman. He returned to the Hope and Anchor about ten o'clock and saw Goodman ; did not see Hill, but he heard his voice in another room. He had occasion to go to the back part of the premises, and as he came in at the door, some person said, "Hill and Goodman are gone out into the street to fight". He immediately went into the street, and saw Goodman and Hill, each standing in a fighting posture. Goodman said, "Ned, I do not want to fight, I have a wife and family". Witness did not hear the deceased make any answer, neither did he perceive him to strike Goodman ; but saw Goodman strike Hill on the right side of his face with his left hand. Hill staggered and fell on his left side. Samuel Corbett and Edward Walker were present. Goodman, after striking him, went into the house. Hill got up without assistance and offered to fight Corbett, but witness prevented it by ordering Corbett into the house. Goodman came out of the house again, but previously to this witness had advised the deceased to go home, and had offered to accompany him, and asked if he did not live at Cotton's, and he answered no. When deceased saw Goodman come out of the house, he put himself in a fighting attitude, but did not strike him. Goodman again repeated, "No, Ned, I do not want to fight with you, I have a wife and family". Hill staggered up to Goodman with his fists raised for fighting, and Goodman struck Hill a blow with his right hand

upon the left side of his head. Witness could not say whether it was upon the face or neck he was struck, but Hill fell heavily upon his back in consequence of the blow. Goodman again retired into the house and witness, with the assistance of Walker, got Hill up and carried him into the back parlour of the Hope and Anchor, and laid him upon his back with his head to the fire. The witness was here interrogated as to whether any persons were present during the second combat. He said he saw no person until after the blow. There was no person but himself present when the second affray took place, but after Hill was down, two men came up. Hill did not speak, but he snored a great deal as if asleep. Witness stopped in the house with Goodman about a quarter of an hour, and he (witness) returned to the Hope and Anchor about one hour after that time, and the deceased was then lying with his feet to the fire, and still snoring. He did not know whether any person had been into the room to the deceased ; no person was present with him. Witness again retired to Goodman's house, Goodman was at home, and the family retired to rest as usual. About two o'clock on Sunday morning witness was awakened, and upon enquiry why he was disturbed, he was informed that Hill was very ill at the Hope and Anchor.

The witness was then about to relate a conversation he had with his sister, Mrs Goodman, but was stopped by the Coroner. It appears in the cross-examination.

Witness dressed himself and immediately proceeded to the Hope and Anchor, and saw the deceased sitting on the settle in the kitchen, there were people with him, and he was resting his head upon his hand with his elbow on the elbow rest of the settle. He did not speak. There was no medical man present, but he believed it was Mr Budd who came into the house soon after his (the witness's) arrival. He asked Mr Budd how the deceased was, who said he was dead. Witness did not perceive any foam at the mouth of the deceased, neither did he perceive any blood.

The witness, in answer to the cross-examination of Mr Pullen, answered : He considered Goodman struck Hill in his defence. When Hill approached Goodman, the latter retired, and made use of the language, "Ned, I do not want to fight, I have a wife and family". He did not think Goodman would have struck Hill, but Hill was fully bent on striking Goodman. The deceased's face was all the time towards Goodman, and Goodman did not strike deceased when his (the deceased's) back was towards Goodman. Goodman did not take an unfair advantage ; his object was clearly not to fight, and there were only two blows struck.

A Juryman here observed that the witness had before stated he did not know how many blows were struck, but he now spoke positively to two. Witness : "Hill said there were no blows before".

Cross-examination continued. They were equally intoxicated, both of them having been drinking the whole evening, but witness did not spend the evening with them.

In answer to the Coroner : There was a dispute, I think Hill wanted to borrow half a crown.

Cross-examination continued : Witness knew that Goodman had been in the habit of lending the deceased money, Goodman having mentioned the circumstance to him, as did also the deceased when at Birmingham. Goodman and Hill were always upon the best of terms. When the deceased was carried into the parlour, witness did not suppose he had received any injury, and that he was snoring from intoxication. The last time witness saw the deceased alive was about twelve o'clock on Saturday night. When the second affray took place, Goodman came out of the Hope and Anchor with his hands in his greatcoat pocket, apparently as if going home ; he was crossing the road, and Hill staggered towards him and made an observation which witness could not recollect, or could not catch the purport of. When Goodman went home he took his supper, and in about half an hour went to bed as if nothing had occurred. When witness was awakened, he went to Goodman's room door to communicate what had been told to him but, with the assistance of Mrs Goodman, he could not awake him or make him sensible that Hill was unwell at the Hope and Anchor. Witness supposed he slept soundly from intoxication, Mrs Goodman desired witness to get medical advice for the deceased. She said, for God's sake fetch a doctor to him.

[Mr Pullen here observed that he was anxious to place this part of the evidence before the jury, proving that a friendly feeling not only existed between the deceased and Goodman, but also between the deceased and Goodman's family]. Witness did not apprehend there was danger till about two o'clock.

A Juryman : The witness returned to the Hope and Anchor about eleven o'clock, or about an hour after the fatal occurrence. Perhaps he would state his reason for doing so, if he did not apprehend danger to the deceased.

Witness replied his reason for returning to the house was in consequence of his being subject to spasms in his stomach. He had an attack on Saturday night, and upon the recommendation of his sister, he returned to the Hope and Anchor to purchase some cordial. Saw deceased, but did not suppose he was anything more than drunk. He lay in the same posture as before, with the exception of having his *feet* towards the fire.

A Juryman : Did you put any burnt paper to his nose?

Witness : No!

A Juryman : Did you see any blood upon the deceased?

Witness : I did not see any blood upon the deceased ; but believe there was some seen afterwards.

Mr Pullen again proceeded with the cross-examination. Witness did not know the object of singed paper being placed under the nose of a person. He was not aware that any trick was played with the deceased. Witness was certain no malice existed between the parties.

In answer to a Juryman : Did not know the men he saw in the street. Did not hear one of them say you have killed the man. The witness then withdrew.

John Lovett, a young man in the employ of Mr Trow of the Green Dragon Inn, was next sworn and examined. He stated that he was standing at the door of the Green Dragon between the hours of nine and ten o'clock on Saturday night, near to ten o'clock. Witness looked down the street and saw two men standing opposite the Hope and Anchor. A third man came out of the Hope and Anchor and knocked one of the two men down, and *immediately* returned into the house. The man who struck the blow had a long brown coat on.

In answer to a juryman, this witness said he went down to the spot, and said to the man, "It is a rascally thing to knock a man down when he is so drunk, you have killed the man, and it ought to be seen into".

Examination continued : The man knocked down had every appearance of being drunk. The man did not stand in a fighting attitude. The place where witness was standing is 28 yards from the fatal spot, but he did not hear any words pass between the men, although the street was quiet at the time. Witness was enabled to see clearly what was going on in consequence of there being two lamps burning at the time, one at the Dragon and the other near the Hope and Anchor. The lamps are 40 yards apart. Witness did not accompany the deceased into the Hope and Anchor, by reason of which he did not know who had struck the blow, nor the person who had been knocked down. Two other men were conversing near the same place at which witness was standing when he saw the blow struck, and they also went to see the affray. (These persons were not examined ; one having left Worcester for his residence at Halesowen ; the other could not be found).

Witness, in answer to a Juryman : The man made no reply when witness observed, "You have killed the man". He placed the deceased against his knee, and said, "Come, Hill", at which time another man came out of the house, and they both carried him in. The man that was struck had his face towards the Hope and Anchor, and he supposed (he would not speak positively) that the blow was inflicted upon the forehead. He fell backwards upon the stones, his hat was on, and he was lifted up by the man who stood at the place when he first observed them. Witness saw but one blow struck.

The witness was then cross-examined by Mr Pullen, but there was no new fact elicited, neither could the witness be induced to swerve in the evidence he had given. It was merely a repetition of the above.

Eliza Cox was next examined. She went out about ten o'clock on Saturday night for her supper ale, and saw Goodman and two other men standing at the door of the Hope and Anchor. Goodman was talking to the deceased, who wanted to fight. Goodman said, "Why do you want to fight with me? I do not want to fight with you". Another man came out of the house and took Goodman in, and witness did not see any blows between them. A man named Corbett came out of the house and said to Hill, "You call yourself a dun fighter and I will have you published in the papers".

Cross-examined by Mr Pullen : It was not very light, but I think a person standing at the Dragon

door could see all that passed – both lamps were burning. Goodman did not want to fight.

To a Juryman : Did not know whether they had fought before – there was no quarrelling.

Mr Price, landlord of the Hope and Anchor, was then examined. He had only resided at the above house about 16 days, but knew the parties well. He left them with a person named Allen, drinking at his house on Saturday evening, when he went into town upon business. They were all friendly together. Goodman and a person named Cole were making a bet a little time before he left, and they wanted him to hold the stakes, a sovereign each. Witness refused. It was about fighting. Witness supposed they were talking about the pugilistic contest between Spring and Langan, and the number of half bushels of half crowns Goodman received upon that occasion. Witness returned home about eleven o'clock, and enquired of his daughter, "Who is in the parlour?" She answered, "Mr Hill, but he seems intoxicated". Witness went into the parlour in about twenty minutes, and found the deceased sitting upon the ground, resting his head and arm upon a chair. Witness said, "Mr Hill, won't you come into the kitchen, I want the girl to clean the room". The deceased made an indistinct answer, and appeared to express a wish to remain longer where he was. Between twelve and one, the deceased was carried from the parlour into the kitchen, when witness perceived there was something seriously wrong in the appearance of the deceased, and he immediately sent Goodman's waggoner, who was in the house, in search of a medical gentleman. In about half an hour he returned, and said that the gentleman he had been after would not come at that time of night, being too unwell. Witness became still further alarmed, and proceeded himself (with the assistance of a man, being a stranger to the town) in search of a surgeon. They proceeded to Mr Morris's in Broad Street, but he refused to go with them, although witness made himself known, and guaranteed the payment of any expense that might be incurred. Policeman No 10 came up during the time they were parleying with Mr Morris's servant, and he also explained who Mr Price was, and urged the necessity of assistance being immediately rendered. Witness, with the guidance of the policeman, went to Mr Budd's, who arose immediately he was made acquainted with the case, and proceeded to the house as quickly as possible. There were not many words passed between witness and the deceased, but witness could not understand what he said. There was no quarrelling, and Goodman and the deceased seemed friendly.

Cross-examined by Mr Pullen : Did not know that a fight had taken place. The lamp was burning at the corner. He considered that deceased was in a drunken stupor. Goodman had treated the deceased with ale upon several occasions, and they had always appeared on the best of terms.

Mr Herbert Budd was sworn and examined. When he went to the Hope and Anchor, he saw the deceased sitting upon the screen in the kitchen, and two men appeared to be supporting him. He looked at his countenance and felt for his pulse ; there was none. He said, "The man is dead", at which the people around seemed astonished. He had been dead 15 or 20 minutes, perhaps half an hour at farthest. Had him taken into another room, and there examined him. There was a little blood in the left nostril. There was no bruise about the nose. Examined his head, and found a little bruise on the left side above the ear, and there was also a little blood there. The skin was (.....) and it was much puffed. The witness then deposed that himself and Mr Pierpoint had that morning made a *post mortem* examination of the body. Upon (.....) the scalp, they found extravasated blood opposite the bruise which has been named, and also a considerable extravasation of blood in the substance underneath the temporal muscle. They found a great deal of serum in the scalp at the back part of the head, but no extravasation of blood. Upon removing the top of the skull, they found a large quantity of coagulated blood between the internal table of the skull and the *dura mater*, producing a great depression on the left side of the brain. The coagulated blood extended downward into the fosse of the skull. Opposite the extravasation of blood mentioned above, they found a fissure in the parietal bone on the left side of the head, extending in two directions and wounding an artery at that part of the head. The extravasation of blood pressing upon the brain they considered to be the cause of the man's death. His death was caused by a blow on some part of the head. The blood was gradually running at the wounded artery. The stomach was perfectly healthy. Mr Pullen asked Mr Budd a few questions, to which he answered : Cannot say the blow was inflicted with a fist. I do not consider a blow with the fist would cause the fissure ; but a fall would

occasion it. A person in a state of intoxication might from a fall cause a similar fracture, and similar consequences might ensue, perhaps more probably to an intoxicated person from the vessels being full at the time. I think if a medical man had attended soon after the accident, the man's life might possibly have been saved. Snoring is a symptom of pressure on the brain.

To the Coroner : The second fall, described by Oseman, was sufficient to cause death.

Mr Chandler (who was present during the investigation) was the person who Mr Price said Goodman's waggoner was sent to, but refused to attend. Mr Chandler here rose and said that the latter part of Mr Budd's evidence was calculated to strengthen any wrong impression which had gone abroad, or likely to go abroad through the press. He alluded to that part which stated that had a medical man been present, the man's life might probably have been saved. He doubted it. He did not refuse to attend ; but he had not waited upon a patient for a month, and he was not allowed by his medical advisers to leave his house at night.

Mr Pierpoint agreed with Mr Budd, and thought that the life of the man might have been saved if assistance had been rendered directly after the accident. But he could not see that what Mr Budd had said could apply at all to Mr Chandler, as he was not called upon till one o'clock. He could be of no use then. A very interesting conversation afterwards ensued between the medical gentlemen relative to the possibility of Hill's life being saved.

Mr Henry Allen, who was in company with the party during the evening, was then called in and interrogated as to the wager mentioned by Price. He stated that Goodman did put a sovereign upon the table, and wanted Price to hold stakes, for a bet that he wished to make upon the truth of the following assertion, "That in case of a quarrel, or if he (Goodman) fell out with a man, and he killed that man, he could procure bail if it were brought in manslaughter". (This announcement caused great sensation in the court). Witness shortly afterwards left them, and they seemed very friendly with each other at that time.

Hannah Price, daughter of the landlord, was next examined, she knew but little of the affair, and did not throw any fresh light upon the case. In answer to a Jurymen, she said she heard Goodman say he had driven Hill off crying.

Elizabeth Baker, servant at the Hope and Anchor, was then sworn. Did not see any row or quarrel, but Hill and Goodman had some words in the bar parlour, but witness did not know what it was about. Goodman did not challenge Hill to fight. Went to Hill two or three times while he was in the back parlour, and said she wanted the room to clean. He did not speak. He was alone each time. Told him to get up, and thought he was drunk. He laid quiet, but snored. Did not observe any blood about his nose or mouth. Did not see Goodman after deceased was brought in.

Mr Pullen did not cross-examine this witness, she answered a few questions of the jury, but they were all answered before.

**Samuel Corbett**, a boatman, was then called in and sworn. He knew Hill. He was about 33 or 34 years of age. He was a journeyman pastry cook, and worked for Mr Rouse in the High Street. He was civil when sober, but very fast with his tongue when in liquor. Saw Hill and Goodman outside of the door of the Hope and Anchor on Saturday night. Witness went out to them in consequence of a man named Walker saying they were gone out to fight. Hill was squaring his fists at Goodman, but did not see him strike. Goodman took his hand out of his pocket and struck Hill, and he fell. Hill got up without assistance.

Cross-examined by Mr Pullen : When I got to the door, before the blow was struck, there were some words about lending money. Goodman said to Hill "he could not always find him money, he had a wife and family to look after. Although he had found him support, he wanted to act dirty by challenging him (Goodman) to fight". Hill approached Goodman with his hands up. They were always good friends, and Goodman supported the deceased when he was out of employment. Certain that Goodman would not have done him any harm.

Edward Walker, labourer, was next examined. Knew the parties. Was in the kitchen of the Hope and Anchor. Miss Price called to me, and said they were gone out to fight. Witness saw Hill squaring at Goodman as he (Goodman) stood with his hands in his greatcoat pocket. He told Hill to get out of his road, he wanted nothing to do with him. Hill kept haggling (teasing) him, and

Goodman at length took his hand from his pocket and pushed the deceased down. Hill got up and said, "Now, Charles, come on". Goodman went into the house. This witness knew no more until he assisted the deceased into the house as described by Oseman and Lovett. He went into the room where the deceased lay, and lifted his head up ; he (the deceased) said, "Never mind me, I shall be better after a bit". Witness carried him from the parlour to the kitchen, and placed him upon the settle near the fire, as he appeared cold. He was in the kitchen an hour before Mr Budd appeared.

To a Juryman : We laid him across the fireplace, but he afterwards turned himself about. Witness did not think he was dead.

This concluded the evidence, whereupon Mr Pullen addressed the Jury on behalf of Goodman, contending that it was an accidental affair, and that Hill died by the visitation of God, and not from the blow given by Goodman.

The Coroner then briefly instructed the Jury as to the law upon the subject, and they consulted for about five minutes, and returned a verdict of Manslaughter against Charles Goodman. The Coroner immediately issued his warrant for the apprehension of Goodman.

#### **144 February 1 1838**

An old man, supposed to be about 70 years of age, was yesterday found in the Severn, near Camp House. He appears to have been a waterman, and as there was a man named **Samuel Ball** missing from Stourport about a month back, it is probable that the deceased was that person. Mr Hughes held an inquest on the body this day, at the Camp House, Grimley.

#### **145 February 8 1838**

The navigation of the Severn is still obstructed, for although there is no ice about the bridge here, yet there is a vast accumulation of it about three miles lower down, and which probably will not be dislodged until there is a little fresh in the river. During the week, in consequence of the intensity of the weather, a number of colliers from Brierley Hill have been drawing a waggon laden with coals about the town, for the purpose of exciting the charity of the benevolent. Our own Severn and Canal watermen have likewise been perambulating the town with a boat, rigged out complete, upon a pair of wheels, for the same purpose. The morris dancers have also again made their appearance.

#### **146 February 15 1838**

**INSTRUCTION OF THE WATERMEN** The distressing state of this class of our countrymen in a religious general point of view has often excited the sympathy of the Christian Philanthropist, but no especial plan for their spiritual improvement in connexion with the Established Church has been hitherto adopted. We have therefore learned with much satisfaction that the Lord Bishop of the Diocese has kindly patronised the appointment of a Clergyman, whose sole attention shall be directed to the religious instruction of the watermen belonging to the river Severn and the Worcester and Birmingham Canal. In addition to visits made to the vessels as well as from house to house among them, it is arranged that there shall be (with the permission of the Minister of St Paul's) every Sunday at three o'clock, at the new church in the Blockhouse Fields, an *extra service*, which the watermen, with their wives and families, shall be invited to attend ; this service to commence on Sunday next. It will be some time perhaps before long established habits of Sabbath desecration will be overcome, but by degrees it is hoped a beneficial change will, through the Divine Blessing, be produced among this too long neglected class of our fellow subjects. The present system of Sunday labour so prevalent on our rivers and canals presents a great barrier to the improvement of this useful body, but we trust that ere long the commercial world will be led to see the advantage as well as the duty of affording to the men employed in their service an opportunity of setting apart the Sabbath for the sacred purposes for which it was granted by the Most High. We understand that that valuable institution, the Church Pastoral Aid Society, has most liberally supported this undertaking, to which we cordially wish success, and we shall rejoice to hear that similar arrangements are being made in other places connected with the internal commerce of the country ; the beneficial effects produced among the watermen of the Irwell and Mersey Navigation by the grant of the Sabbath has

been most encouraging. The Clergyman who has been appointed to this important sphere of ministerial labour in this city is the Rev F Hewson, AB, Assistant Curate of St Clement's.

**147 March 1 1838**

ADJOURNED EPIPHANY SESSIONS

**John Guyler**, 22, boatman, for stealing at Lower Mitton, a fish spear belonging to Thomas Brentworth. Not guilty.

**148 March 15 1838**

WORCESTERSHIRE LENT ASSIZES

**William Harris**, 34, waterman, was charged with stealing a £5 note and five sovereigns on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May, the property of Thomas Collins Caldwell. Mr Whitmore, for the prisoner, submitted that the case was not within the jurisdiction of the Court, the offence, if any, having been committed in the county of Gloucester. The learned Judge took the same view of the case, and thought there were no grounds for conviction even if the case had been tried in the right county. - Not guilty.

**John Pountney otherwise Tomkins**, 16, boatman, was charged with violently assaulting William Stinton and taking from his person a watch, 30s, &c. Stinton examined : I live in Herefordshire, and was at Pershore fair on Friday the 26<sup>th</sup> of June last. I left that town intending to come to Worcester about ten o'clock at night. When a mile out of Pershore, the prisoner with some other parties came up and knocked me down, drew my smock frock over my head, and held their hands tight over my mouth. The prosecutor then detailed in a very humorous manner the means employed by the robbers in lightening his pockets of his watch and money, and said that during their rough examination he had been nearly suffocated, and thought he should never have seen Worcester or any other place again. Edmund Taylor sworn : I live with my uncle at the Seabright Arms Inn, London Road. I was there in June last, the day after Pershore fair. The prisoner, with a man and woman, came from the direction of Pershore and entered the house, calling for something to drink. While there I saw Pountney pull the watch now produced from his pocket, and sell it to the other man, whose name was Corfield. I can swear to its being the same watch ; I saw the hole in it at the time. The prisoner had some crown and half crown pieces of silver in his hand when he pulled the watch out of his pocket. - Guilty. Judgement of death recorded.

**James Lee**, 42, waterman, was charged with stealing a bag containing divers articles, the property of Joseph Phelps of Pauntley, Gloucestershire. Henry Phelps, brother of the prosecutor examined : I took some cider, by my brother's order, in a cart to Mr Clark's house, Upton-on-Severn. I went into the house and left the cart containing the stolen articles in care of a boy named Jonathan Hall. I was absent about half an hour, and missed them directly I came back. Jonathan Hall sworn : I saw the prisoner take the bag from the cart and walk towards a boat on the river with it. When he reached the boat, he carried it to the top, and a man received it from him and went with the sack into the cabin. James Draper sworn : I saw a waggon standing near Mr Clark's premises in December last, early in the morning. The prisoner went up to it and took the bag from the inside. He carried it on board a boat lying in the river. I saw no person watching. Robert Hartland sworn : I was told of the robbery by the last witness, and on running to the river side, saw the prisoner jump on shore from a boat and walk away by the Severn side. The prisoner was apprehended by John Day, constable of Upton-on-Severn. A former conviction was produced, and the prisoner was sentenced to be transported for life.

**149 March 22 1838**

INSTRUCTION OF THE WATERMEN

We are happy to find that a greater interest is being excited on behalf of this neglected class. We mentioned some time ago that a Clergyman has been appointed in this city, whose sole attention is directed to the spiritual welfare of the men employed on the river Severn and the Worcester and Birmingham Canal. We have heard with much

satisfaction that one benevolent individual connected with the trade at Oxford has subscribed the munificent sum of £400 to be expended in the fitting up of a vessel to be used as a floating chapel for Divine Worship for watermen, and as a school for the instruction of boys employed on the Oxford Canal. Dr McBride and another eminent Divine residing in the University have kindly undertaken to arrange for the supply of a Clergyman for carrying into effect the pious intentions of those who are promoting this good work. Surely it would not be inconsistent with the object of our Church Building Societies to make occasional grants for floating chapels, from which a large body of our countrymen might, through the Divine Blessing, derive most important advantages in a religious and moral point of view.

**150 April 5 1838**

WORCESTERSHIRE EASTER SESSIONS

TO BE TRANSPORTED TEN YEARS **George Burrow Fox**, aged 32, waterman, for stealing, at the hamlet of Lower Mitton on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, a quantity of cotton corduroy from a boat, the property of Matthew Heath and his partners.

**151 May 3 1838**

The following four convicts, adjudged to transportation at the last County Sessions, were on Tuesday sent off from the county gaol to the *Ganymede* Hulk at Woolwich, previous to embarkation for New South Wales :-

For ten years : **George Burrow Fox**, aged 32, waterman, for stealing a quantity of corduroy from a boat at Lower Mitton, the property of Messrs Heath, carriers of Stourport ; Thomas Stock, aged 19, labourer, for a burglary in the dwelling house of Elizabeth Plant of Hindlip ; and William Hetheridge, aged 42, for a burglary and robbery in the dwelling house of James Jones at Great Witley.

For seven years : Charles Ross, alias John Arnold, for stealing a quantity of bed linen from the house of Samuel Brotherton of Evesham, in which he was a lodger.

**152 May 3 1838**

The following prisoners, against whom sentence of death was recorded at our last Assizes, have had their sentences mitigated as follows :-

**John Pountney otherwise Tomkins**, 16, boatman, charged with stealing a watch from the person of William Stinton at Pershore Fair on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1837. - To be transported fifteen years.

**153 May 17 1838**

WORCESTER ADJOURNED EASTER SESSIONS **John Strain**, aged 24, waterman, was charged with stealing a silver watch. Henry Griffiths, the prosecutor, on being sworn, stated that as he was in Broad Street on his way home on Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup>, he met the prisoner with another man ; the former came up to him, and snatching at his pocket, drew from it his watch, with a riband and key attached to it. After a struggle between the two parties, the prisoner was secured by policeman Hales who, on hearing cries, went to the spot and conveyed the prisoner to the station house. The watch was produced and identified, and the Jury, after a short consultation, returned a verdict of Guilty. Seven years' transportation.

**154 June 28 1838**

CONDITION OF THE WATERMEN We have often had occasion to speak of the meritorious labours of the Rev John Davies, the highly respected Rector of St Clements, to improve the condition of the watermen ; and most gratifying would it be to us to see effects produced here similar to those noticed in the following article, which we extract from the Manchester Courier :-  
"THE MERSEY AND IRWELL NAVIGATION FLATMEN – GRATIFYING TESTIMONIAL OF GRATEFUL RESPECT. In this day of loud profession of compassion for our fellow creatures who are enduring wrongs and injuries in remote and foreign climes, it is remarkable that so little concern

is manifested in the oppressions under which a large body of poor and useful men are labouring in our own country, and under our immediate observation. The thousands of poor men who toil upon our inland navigations form a portion of our population hitherto grievously neglected but claiming not only the notice, but the utmost commiseration of the Christian public ; of the friends of humanity, of religion, and of public morals most especially. Systematically deprived of their privileged and lawful rest on the day which God and their country have given them, the watermen generally employed in the vessels of this trade are suffering under a grievance as cruel as it is illegal, and as demoralising as it is cruel. No such thing as a Sabbath, with a few honourable exceptions, is known on the navigable waters and canals of this kingdom, and consequently the depravity, vices and moral degradation of our watermen exceed all bounds and all belief ; but appalling as it is to contemplate this extensive scene of iniquity and misery, the mind is relieved in the prospect by one or two cheering instances where means have been successfully applied for the melioration of this long neglected class of men. Our attention has frequently been particularly directed to the remarkable improvement in the character of the flatmen of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation, who have, for some years past, enjoyed opportunities of Christian instruction, and, to a considerable extent, the religious rest and privileges of the Sabbath, which we are most anxious to see extended generally to their fellow watermen on other navigations. We would most earnestly commend the adoption of similar regulations to those in operation on the Mersey and Irwell by the proprietors of all other rivers and canals who, it is painful to consider, have so long been enriching themselves at the expense of the happiness, the morals and the eternal interests of a large and interesting portion of our population. We have been led to these remarks from our attention having been particularly directed to the subject by the following truly gratifying circumstance. The flatmen of the Mersey and Irwell navigation, whose grateful generosity towards one who had exerted himself for their temporal and spiritual benefit we have before had occasion to record in our columns, have this week afforded another expression of their gratitude to the same individual who, for the last ten years, has exercised a superintending care over their moral and religious interests. In consequence of some recent arrangements in the establishment of the Mersey and Irwell navigation, Mr Edward Atherton Lingard has been appointed to the agency of the company at Runcorn, and these poor men, anxious to testify their ardent attachment to him before he leaves Manchester, and their grateful sense of the services he has rendered them, have presented him with a silver water pot to match the tea and coffee service which they gave him four years ago, and a beautiful tortoise shell tea caddy, together with an elegant set of silver castors, bearing the following inscription, viz :

Presented to  
MR EDWARD ATHERTON LINGARD  
BY

The Members of the Mersey and Irwell Flatmen's Friendly Society.

A small token of affectionate and grateful esteem for his invaluable services, as Honorary Secretary of the Society, and his religious and unremitting attention to the best interests of its Members.

1838

Most gladly do we record this pleasing act of these grateful and generous hearted poor men, and we are happy to hear that they are not likely to suffer by the removal of their friend from the neighbourhood, permanent provision having been made for the continuance of their Sabbath and religious privileges, which they so deservedly enjoy, and have improved so eminently to their elevation in the rank of moral worth. As a further testimony to the general character of the Mersey and Irwell flatmen, we may add that by the rules of their friendly society, they have voluntarily and unanimously engaged themselves not to profane the Sabbath, and to exact a fine of one shilling in every instance wherein a member is convicted of profane swearing, and to promote, to the utmost of their power, sobriety and moral deportment in each other ; indeed, their friendly society comprehends within it a Sabbath society, a temperance society and a society for suppressing profane swearing, as well as its avowed object of assisting one another in seasons of calamity and

distress”.

**155 July 5 1838**

MIDSUMMER SESSIONS

TO BE TRANSPORTED SEVEN YEARS **Edward Turner**, waterman, charged with having, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June at Kidderminster, wilfully, maliciously and to the prejudice of the Company and Proprietors of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, damaged the towing-path and bank of the said canal.

NO BILL **George Baldwin**, 19, waterman, charged with stealing on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May at Kempsey two sovereigns, from the person of Timothy Johns.

**156 July 12 1838**

BRUTAL CONDUCT The County Magistrates were engaged on Thursday at the Public Office, Church Street, Kidderminster, in investigating charges of a most revolting description preferred against two bargemen. A married woman named Elizabeth Thomas deposed to the following effect :-

About twelve o'clock on Sunday night, she went to bed with her husband at a lodging house in Kidderminster. Before going to bed, she had some words with her husband because he did not work for their support, and early in the morning she got up, walked about the streets for some time, and at last determined upon going to Bilston, to her brother. She went to the canal side and walked on towards Bilston, and when she had got some distance she overtook a boat on the canal. A man named **William Paytun**, who was steering the boat, asked her where she was going, and on her telling him, he said he was going as far as Stourbridge, and asked her to ride that far ; she at first declined, but he asked her a second time and she assented, and took a seat in the cabin ; after going about a hundred yards, another man named **Thomas Giles** entered the cabin, and asked Paytun who he had got there, and told him he had better give her “a drop of that in the bottle” in the cupboard ; Paytun took a half pint cup and told her it was port wine, saying, “If you drink it, it will not hurt you” ; she drank about half the quantity and found it was brandy ; soon afterwards, Giles asked her if she had any money ; she said no, fearing from the question that perhaps they would rob her ; she had five shillings in her pocket, which she contrived to slip from her pocket into her right stocking ; Giles and Paytun then whispered together, and she became alarmed, and asked them to let her get out of the boat, when Giles threatened that if she did not hold her tongue he would drown her ; she then tried to get out of the cabin, but was pushed back by Giles ; Paytun then held her whilst Giles took off her shoe, cut a hole in her stocking, and robbed her of five shillings ; she cried very much, and entreated them to return the money, when they threatened to drown her if she did not hold her noise ; Paytun then left the cabin and closed the door upon her ; and Giles, notwithstanding her entreaties and screams, effected the violation of her person, and in struggling with him her clothes were almost torn from her back. The brute then left her, and his companion entered the cabin and took some indecent liberties with her, but did not violate her person ; they used her in a most scandalous manner, and on her asking for her money they threatened repeatedly to drown her, and Giles fastened a rope around her for that purpose, but was prevented by Paytun ; the boat, on arriving near Kinver, stopped, and the two men got out ; she followed them and again asked for her money, when Giles caught her by the leg with one hand, and fastened his arm around her waist, and threw her into the canal, although she screamed loud enough to be heard by the Rev Mr Wharton of Kinver, who was at some distance ; he saw her rise once, and saw Giles thrust her under the water a second time, but on Mr Wharton's coming up she was rescued from her perilous situation, stupid and senseless, and her clothes torn off her back. The conduct of a man named Child, who keeps a beerhouse at Kinver, was highly disgraceful and inhuman upon this occasion. The magistrates present were H Talbot, T S Lea and William Trow Esqs, who committed the offenders to the county gaol to be tried this week at our assizes. They will, we understand, be indicted for three distinct felonies.

**157 July 19 1838**

CITY MAGISTRATES' OFFICE **James Allen**, waterman, was charged by Policeman Hales with stealing a watch belonging to **William Mann**. Hales stated that Mann, who was out on a voyage to Bristol, came to him on Saturday night and said the prisoner had robbed him of his watch at the Albion public house on the Gloucester Road. The witness went with the prosecutor to a trow called the *Druid* belonging to Messrs Russell and Wall, which was lying moored near the Liberty Posts in the river, and saw the prisoner, who attempted to escape by jumping on board a lighter near the trow. The watch was found in the trow. Remanded until Monday for the prosecutor to appear.

**158 July 19 1838**

WORCESTERSHIRE ASSIZES

THE STOURBRIDGE MURDER Ann Orchard, aged 50, widow, and Maria Orchard, aged 27, single woman, were placed at the bar, the former charged with the murder, at Stourbridge on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August last, of John Orchard, her husband, by stabbing him with a skewer in the left breast, and the latter with having aided and abetted in the committal of such murder.

Before the prisoners were called upon to plead to the indictment, Mr Godson submitted to the Court that in the first line of the indictment the prisoner, Ann Orchard, was designated as Ann, wife of John Orchard, whereas she was the widow of the deceased. Now, although she was afterwards designated as the widow of the said John, yet he thought it right to take his Lordship's opinion on this point, as there was an Act which permitted certain changes to be made by the Court in indictments. The question for his Lordship's decision was whether this came within the Act.

The indictment was amended by the Court, and the prisoners having pleaded not guilty,

Mr Whateley, for the prosecution, said he was certain that the very circumstances stated in the indictment would induce the Jury to give this most lamentable and awful case their most serious attention. In the discharge of the duty imposed upon him, he would study to avoid introducing all extraneous topics, and confine himself strictly to the evidence to be laid before them. The learned gentleman then detailed the facts of the case. It appeared that for some years, the prisoner and the deceased lived very unhappily on account of some suspicion that an improper intercourse existed between his wife and a person named Smith. On the evening in question, Smith was at the deceased's house, the Woolstaplers' Arms in Stourbridge. He went up the yard, and the prisoners were observed to follow him up the yard. The deceased followed, and he never came back alive. Smith returned down the yard, but the two prisoners remained. At this time there were several persons drinking in the house ; the prisoner, Maria Orchard, came into the room where they were, and stated that her father was taken very ill, and that they must go away. The youngest daughter, Sarah, was going up the yard in the direction the prisoners and the deceased had gone, but was told that her mother wanted her in another place. A man also, who had occasion to get a light about half past nine o'clock, as there was no one in the house, came into the yard, and saw John Orchard stooping, almost bent double, on something in the brewhouse. A woman of the name of Wright came to the house about twelve o'clock, and was told by Maria Orchard that her father had been taken very ill, and she was afraid he would die. She asked her if they had sent for a medical man. She said she had not. Now this was between eleven and twelve o'clock, and it would be proved that the deceased must have been dead from half past nine. Mr Hillman, a medical man, was then called in ; he found that there was a small punctured wound immediately over the heart, as if caused by a kitchen skewer or some other small pointed instrument. There was no blood on the body, and the upper part of it was quite clean. It would be proved that, on the evening in question, a smell of burning linen or woollen was felt in the neighbourhood ; and it would also be proved that the deceased had a flannel shirt. After some further remarks, the learned counsel proceeded to call witnesses in support of the facts contained in his opening.

Sarah Wright : I am the niece of the late John Orchard ; I recollect the late John Orchard ; he kept the Woolstaplers' Arms at Stourbridge ; I was there from six o'clock to half past eight ; it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August ; I saw John Orchard at half past eight ; he was brewing. The brewhouse is at the back of the premises. His wife was also in the brewhouse. There were a great many people drinking in the

kitchen. I left the house at half past eight and went home ; I was called up at half past eleven that night by Maria Orchard and Sarah Orchard, her sister. They said their father was very ill – they thought he was dying. I can't tell which of them spoke. I went with them, and I said it was a very extraordinary thing ; I asked how it happened, and Maria said her father came reeling up the yard and tumbled over the tub. Went to the room opposite the brewhouse, and saw Mrs Orchard with her husband's head on her left breast, wiping the sweat off his face. He was dead. He was sat in a chair. I laid hold of his hand, and I said, “Good God, he's dead”. I put my hand on his cheek and repeated that he was dead. Mrs Orchard said, “Good God, I hope not”. I asked her how it came. She told me he came reeling up the yard and tumbled over two tubs. There was a yard or kind of passage between the room we were in and the brewhouse. Myself and Mrs Orchard and Maria carried the body from it into the kitchen. There was no other person in the house then. Orchard had only his shirt on, and small clothes, stockings and shoes, when I saw him. I remember Mr Hillman, the surgeon, coming into the house the moment after we took the body into the kitchen. Orchard and his wife lived very comfortably when he was not in liquor – when he was, he was very quarrelsome ; to which he was addicted for the last two or three years. He was very fresh when I left.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : He was drunk when I left ; he had an accident by tumbling out of a gig two years ago, and since then we supposed he was not exactly right ; I have often heard him say he would put an end to his existence ; he said he was not happy in his mind ; he said if he found one thing out he would put an end to it ; he would finish it. I supposed he meant to destroy himself ; do not know what he meant by the one thing, but supposed it to proceed from jealousy ; I did know that he was very jealous of one Smith, his christian name was Joseph ; I did not see Smith there that night, for I did not go into the kitchen ; Maria Orchard told me when she called me up that they had sent for a doctor, and so did Mrs O ; when sober, deceased was comfortable, and when tipsy he was unhappy, and made use of wild expressions ; I think he used that sort of expression a week or fortnight before his death ; when in liquor he was of violent temper ; he had been married to Mrs Orchard above twenty years ; they had three girls and four boys living, and she has buried some betwixt, I think two ; till he had the accident, he was a very comfortable married man, drunk or sober ; Joseph Smith is about the middle period of life, and younger than Mrs Orchard ; I suppose Mrs Orchard to be forty or more ; I suppose her age as described in the calendar is correct ; the youngest child is about seven years old ; I saw Mr Hillman in the room ; we were ordered to take the body upstairs and wash the lower parts ; it was not washed till Mrs Finch was called, who did it. By the Court : The body was taken upstairs and washed, but not till it was ordered to be done. The place I found him in is called the warehouse ; the distance between the warehouse and the kitchen is about the same as the length of the Court ; I saw a great many people in the kitchen before I went away at half past eight. I lived near the deceased ; I have had many opportunities of knowing how deceased and his wife lived together, and never knew any quarrel till about two or three years ago ; I was reared with them ; the wife appeared very kind and gentle to her husband ; when he expressed his jealous suspicions, when in liquor, she always passed it off, and said, “Oh, he'll not think of it when sober”. She was a good woman, and attached to her husband and family. She was a good tempered woman, and I never knew her have any ill will towards her husband. (Witness was here much agitated, and cried. The prisoners, at the request of Mr Godson, were allowed chairs). Uncle was doing well in the world, and he was comfortable in his family ; I am sure I never observed any signs of jealousy in him till after the accident, and then only when he was in liquor. Maria is his eldest daughter, and I nursed her in her infancy. What sort of a tempered girl is she? Witness could not speak for tears ; at length she stated, they were kind to each other ; he loved his daughter, and she was kind to him ; she took the management of the family, and worked hard ; I never heard him quarrel with her.

**Mary Hook** : I am the wife of **Henry Hook**. I was at his house the day Orchard died ; it was a Thursday ; it was the afternoon. They were brewing. I went down the yard for some grains. They were having a few words in the brewhouse, Mr Orchard and Mrs Orchard ; the wort was running out of the pail ; it rather spurted on Mrs Orchard, and she said get out, are you going to scald my

feet. John Orchard said you always let folks know my concerns ; why don't you keep it to yourself. He meant if they quarrelled. I was in the house just before eight. I saw Mr Smith, the carrier, in the house. It was about eight o'clock. John Orchard came and sat in the two armed chair against me. I remember Ann Orchard went out into the back yard while Orchard was in the kitchen, and Smith followed her. Orchard lifted up his head, looked round, and upon missing Smith, walked out. There were 10 or 12 people in the house at the time. Maria followed her father. Smith came back first into the house in a few minutes. I was fetched back at half past eleven. It was ten minutes past ten when I left. Maria came back ; I can't say whether immediately after Smith or before ; she came back also in a few minutes. She went back a time or two into the yard. I said to Maria what was the matter ; how were they getting on? She said better than expectation ; my father stood in the passage and heard every word what they had to say, and I said, "Oh, nonsense, he couldn't, for he has not been gone out a moment". Maria made no answer. She went to the back yard after this. When Maria went back, there was some kind of a groaning ; it was rather awful, but I can't tell what it was. Maria came back, and I said to her, "Whatever is that noise?", and she said, "It is the children". Immediately after that, Maria said to Sarah you must go to mother, as I must wait upon the company. Sarah I did not see again. Maria went in and out but did not say anything that witness could remember. The back door was fastened by Maria a little after Sarah had gone to her mother ; the front door was fastened also ; it was not the usual time for the doors to be fastened. She said we'll fasten the doors as it is rather a rambling night, and we must not have any more come in. I left a little after ten, and there were many people there then. John Orchard was in his shirt sleeves, a light waistcoat on, and an apron on up to his breast. He was fresh in liquor. When I left the house, I and my husband went to our boat. Mr Atkins and Joseph Orchard came to fetch us about half past eleven. I found Mrs Orchard, Maria and Sarah. Mrs Orchard sat against the window in the house. They were all together. Orchard was laid on the bed. I went to see the body. I did not notice his shirt. I went into the yard with Mr Parrot. We looked all round the yard ; it was washed, the brewhouse was washed, and the tubs were washed. Mrs Orchard said, "He might have done it against a nail. He came stumbling up the yard, and tumbled over a tub". We took a candle and looked over all the tubs, and did not find any nail – they were all even and smooth. We could not find his waistcoat or apron. Mrs Finch was with me. Mrs Orchard never came up at all to the room upstairs. Mrs Parrot was with us. I know a person of the name of Smith, a carrier. I have often heard very disrespectful enjealousement between Ann Orchard and John Orchard about Joseph Smith, and have heard the deceased order him from the house, at least two months before his death. I have heard frequent quarrels between them on this account. I never saw the deceased strike Mrs Orchard ; but I have seen her strike him a time or two – it was about Smith they were quarrelling. She struck him on the face – he has had black eyes several times, and I have even sent my boy for sticking plaster for his eyes. Maria was a very bad girl to her father. She has jumped up and taken a knife, and said she would run it through him if he did not hold his noise. Maria always took her mother's part when she was quarrelling with her father. One night she was in the parlour, and had got him down, and I said, "Oh dear, what are you doing?", she said see how my father is throttling me ; and I said he is not ; and her father said see how she is biting me on the shoulder. The parlour was dark, but the house was all alight.

Cross-examined : I have been 18 years a boatwoman. I do not know how far it is from where I live to Mr Orchard's house. It may be 50 or 60 miles. I can't tell exactly how many times I have been at Stourbridge. Generally we sleep and eat in our boat, except when we go up to a public house. I have known Smith five or six years. It was between four and five when I went. I had perhaps a couple of glasses of ale, or three with my husband. When I went into the brewhouse they had been brewing, but the beer was on boiling when Mrs Orchard went from the kitchen into the brewhouse. Smith might have gone into the street if he liked, without coming back from the yard into the kitchen. I asked Maria Orchard "how they were getting on", because I had seen so much unpleasantness on account of Smith before. Orchard seemed very much in trouble when he went out. I never heard him in my life threaten to take his life. When he was low spirited about Smith, he would say, "Oh dear, oh dear, this is poor work". The shirt on the body when it lay upstairs was

not a clean shirt ; it might have been on a time or two. I saw Mr Hillman there, the medical man ; he was sent for when I came back. The doors never were shut before so early as that night. They were never fastened before the company left, unless it was very late. I have talked about this matter all along. I have heard of a reward of £100 offered for the discovery, but I have talked the same today as before I heard of it.

Re-examined by Mr Whateley : I did not see a flannel shirt on him.

By Mr Godson and the Court : The shirt was slightly marked as if it had fallen on the side ; round the waist where he had leaned on something. I remarked that it was odd that the shirt was so clean and the trousers so dirty. I can't say whether the shirt was wrong side out or not.

By the Court : Deceased was a very sensible man when sober. I can't say when he began to take to liquor. I have known him it may be two years ; he was very often in liquor, and even when he was solid, he was very queer about Smith, but in his quarrels about him he was generally fresh. I never heard of his falling out of a gig.

Thomas Southall : I am a labourer in Mr Styles's yard ; it joins to Orchard's yard ; there is nothing but a wall between them. On the night of Orchard's death, I went out of our yard through the yard of the Woolstaplers' Arms, to the brewhouse. Mrs Orchard and Mr Orchard were there ; it was about half past nine ; I asked her the time, and she said it was so. I saw the deceased ; he was leaning over something, but what it was I can't say. There was then a candle in the brewhouse. I went to the brewhouse door and went through the yard first ; the door was open. Orchard's back was to me. He was leaning forward over something. I was about four or five feet from him, and Mrs Orchard was about three feet from me. She stood against the furnace with her face towards me. I mean by the furnace, the boiler. The candle was standing on something, but I do not recollect where. I asked if she would be so kind as to let me have a candle, and she said she durst say Maria would let me have one. I went from the brewhouse to the back part of the house, and asked her for a candle. She was in the back part of the house behind the screen ; it is in the kitchen, but there is a screen between the customers and that place. She said I could not have it, as they had no more than they should want in the morning. I returned, and as I was going by the brewhouse door, I saw Mrs O in the same place as before, and I did not see Orchard. I said, "Maria says you have no candle". She said she did not know what quantity they had by them. Orchard had not his coat on, but I can't say what else he had on. I saw no tubs in the yard.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : I did not look as I returned past the brewhouse so as to let me see whether deceased was in the same place or not as at first. All this did not take more than two minutes ; I had been in our own yard for a quarter of an hour ; we can hear in our yard when a noise is made in the other. I got a candle in the Wool Pack directly, it is one hundred yards off, and I returned back to our yard, and remained about five minutes.

**Martha Atkins**, wife of **John Atkins** : I was at Orchard's house in the afternoon of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August last. I saw John Orchard go out at the back door into the yard. I afterwards saw Joseph Smith come in. I did not see Maria Orchard in the house at the time. Maria came and asked me to get John Atkins to go as her father was very ill, and they did not want to bring him through the company. John Atkins and I left as soon as the drink was out, and in a very short time the other persons went out also. I was the last person in the house.

By the Court : I mentioned it to a man who was selling nuts, and requested him to ask them to go. I informed him of the reason, and he told it to all the company. My husband and I were called back by Maria about a quarter of an hour afterwards. She said, "John, John" ; he ran to her, and she said she thought her father was a dying. We then went back to the house. I saw Mr Orchard sitting on a chair in the kitchen. A woman of the name of Wright was there. My husband said to Mrs Orchard, "Oh! Mrs Orchard, here's a dead man". She said, "Oh dear, what do you say". A surgeon came in. When he came in, Ann Orchard said "she thought it was done with a nail". Before that, the doctor asked her if he carried a penknife ; she said he did not. I saw Parrot look to see if they could find a nail, after she had spoken about the nail. She said she dared say they could not find it because they did not know the tub.

Cross-examined : Was her expression, "It might be done by a nail?" It was. Did not the surgeon

say, pointing to the wound upon the breast, how came this, and she said she did not know unless it was by a nail from his falling over a tub? Yes. I did not see anyone go out after him or before him. I did not see Mrs Orchard nor Smith go out into the yard. Smith went out by the front door about a quarter of an hour after he came from the yard. Smith did not leave the kitchen after Orchard went out into the yard till he left the house by the front door.

James Cooksey : I live at Stourbridge ; am a nut seller ; I was at Orchard's house the night he died. Mrs Atkins comes to me and she says, "Jemmy", and I says, "Yes", and she says, "Maria Orchard wants the company to take the drink they have got and go, as her father is very ill, and they don't like to bring him through the company" ; and I said, "Well, my lads, let's drink our drink and go, for we have all had enough". We all went away, and I stopped with one of them in the street. Maria came down the yard to me, and asked if Atkins and his wife were gone to the boat ; that was all she said. I said yes.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : The yard down which Maria came down on to the street opens into the street the same as the front door. We left about half past ten. Saw Mrs Hook there, and she left perhaps about a quarter of an hour before us. Also during the evening, I saw Joseph Smith, his father and John Partridge, who keeps the Jolly Soldier in Pig Street. The three were drinking together, and left the house an hour before us.

**Henry Hook** : I am husband of the witness Mary Hook ; I was with her at Orchard's on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1837. John Orchard had a light waistcoat and a brewer's apron on, and was in his shirt sleeves. His shirt was neither clean nor very dirty. I left the house at a quarter past 10, and was fetched back at about twelve by Joseph Orchard and Mr and Mrs Atkins. I saw Orchard dead in the bed. I saw two spots of blood on the shirt the size of a horse bean, and a little betwixt his fingers of the right hand. The upper part of the body was clean, the lower part was not. I examined the shirt to see if there was ever a hole in it, and there was not, as ever I could find. The spots of blood were over the wound. I said to Maria in the back yard, "Your father is a murdered man" ; and she caught fast hold of my hand, squeezed it, and said, "He is, he is, he is, it's not me Master Hook, it's not me". John Atkins walked up at the same moment, and I asked him to walk back into the house if he pleased, and he said I know what you are talking about, and he did not go, and no more was said. We were in the habit sometimes of coming down every five days and sometimes not for months. I have seen quarrels between Mr and Mrs Orchard.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : I am husband of Mary Hook, and was never before any justice in this matter. My wife and I have talked about it. I can't tell how long it is since I told about Maria speaking to me, nor how long it is since I was taken to Stourbridge by the constables.

By the Court : Orchard was a shortish man ; shorter some inches than me.

Joseph Parratt : I am constable of Stourbridge ; I was called about half past eleven on the night of the murder. The body was upstairs ; his shirt was rather clean, not quite clean, it was daubed as if worn only on a Sunday ; it was put on wrong side out. I found that on looking at the wound. I did not see any blood on the shirt. I saw the wound on the left breast and pressed it with my finger, and a little blood came, which I wiped on the shirt. The body appeared about the chest as if it had been washed.

By the Court : How do you know it was washed?

Witness : Because the chest was remarkably clean. I saw Mrs Orchard sitting in the kitchen. I said to Mrs Orchard, this is a bad affair, Mr Orchard is dead, and has been so some time ; how came he so? She said she could not tell ; he came staggering across the yard and fell upon a tub. I said I thought the wound was mortal, and she said nothing. There was no hole in the shirt.

The Judge here remarked that it must be mere conjecture as to the cleanliness of the body ; all men were not alike for cleanliness. The witness said he had never seen Orchard's chest before, but it had *the appearance* of having been washed.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : Had he a mark across his chest as if he had fallen upon a tub?

Witness : I cannot say that there was any mark of importance save the wound. There was a little discolouring of his skin as if he had fallen on something.

Mr Godson : Was that mark on the very part of the body which you said was washed?

Witness : I cannot say that.

Mr Godson : Now, sir, turn to the Jury, and tell them what you meant by saying there was no other mark but the wound.

Witness : I meant there was no mortal mark. I did not hear Hook's testimony. I did not take Hook to give his testimony. I am not the person who looked up Hook.

Thomas Smith : I live in the parish of Oldswinford. I was at Orchard's in the afternoon, between four and five o'clock. I talked with him ; he had no waistcoat on. He had a brewing apron on, shirt sleeves turned up, and a flannel waistcoat under his shirt.

By the Court : How do you know it was a flannel waistcoat?

Witness : Oh, it came down below his shirt on his arm, and was bound with white binding.

Mr Godson had no cross questions for this witness.

Samuel Pearce : Lives at Oldswinford. His evidence corroborated the last evidence as to the flannel, and had seen several times that Orchard wore flannel. He knew that Orchard did so, because he had recommended it to witness for his wife who was rheumatic ; and Orchard, opening his breast, showed him that he wore flannel, and told him it was a very fine thing.

Abraham Green, plumber and glazier, Stourbridge : Knew John Orchard. Between 6<sup>th</sup> February and 9<sup>th</sup> November 1837, has seen him wear flannel under his linen between these times. On one occasion, Orchard was standing without his coat in the street, and witness put his finger into a hole in his waistcoat and said, "Mr Orchard, you have more holes in your waistcoat than you put your head through", and saw he had flannel on then.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : Only saw flannel on his arms. Never saw him with his breast open.

Richard Brown : Remembers the night when John Orchard died. At ten o'clock, stood opposite the door of the house, and could see up to the back door in the yard. Mrs Orchard stood near to the door ; the candle was between her and the back door. She was sideways to me, and she was looking as it were through the back door. She was there when I remained a minute perhaps. I was up at work all night, and I went with a man of the name of Mees to the bridge which adjoins the house. I observed Praed and Parratt come out of the house. It was about ten minutes after 12. I observed a smell coming from Mr Orchard's house, as though there was some flannel or woollen, or something of that kind, burning.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : There is a tan yard behind. I smelt nothing of the tan yard. From my work I can tell whether a flannel waistcoat is on fire or not, from the circumstance of fire often flying from the forge I work at. I did not know that Orchard wore flannel. I did not speak to Craig or Parratt. There were three or four of us on the bridge, and there were two women and a man in the house where the body was, at the time I perceived the smell.

By the Court : It was neither Orchard's wife or daughter who were upstairs. They were strangers.

Joseph Mees : I am an iron puddler by trade ; was with last witness, and perceived a smell come from Orchard's house. It was a smell of linen or woollen burning, but strongest of woollen. The smell is familiar to me ; I can judge of the difference.

By Mr Godson : I smelt the two smells together. When linen and woollen are burnt together, and there is a smell of burning linen and burning woollen, does that make a third smell? No answer but a tittering through the court.

William Perry : On 23<sup>rd</sup> May assisted in searching river Stour. Saw a boy pick up a skewer about three quarters of a yard from Orchard's kitchen window. Boy gave it to me, and I gave it to Craig, the constable.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : I was not in Craig's custody. I had been in his custody the day before. I did not go to the river with him ; he was in the Stour at the time I came. There had been men drawing off the water. The water had been drawn off before this time by order of the magistrates. I do not know how often. I was 28 days in custody. I knew of this search the day after I was liberated, because it was an "oration" in the village and town. Never spoke with Craig upon the subject. I have not seen the boy who picked up the skewer since. He was in the river, and several boys were there too. Craig, the constable, did not see the boy who found the skewer. Am a

nailer, but never made skewers in my life.

William Craig : Is a police officer in Stourbridge. The river Stour was searched 21<sup>st</sup> May, by order of the magistrates. Perry gave me a skewer. (Produces the skewer). Except in being wet, there was no difference in the skewer when found and now.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : Was there mud on the skewer when it was given to you?

Witness : There was river dirt on it, you may call it mud if you please. I did not see the boy who found the skewer. The river had been searched before partially, but the water was not got out sufficiently till this time. It is sometimes a rapid river in a flood. It is 21 feet broad. It was on the former partial searches laid dry for eight feet on the side opposite Orchard's house.

John Hillman : In August last I was assistant to Mr Cooper, surgeon, Stourbridge ; was called for at about half past ten on the night of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August last, to the house of deceased. Deceased was on a chair in the centre of the kitchen. Ann Orchard sat upon the screen, three yards from the body. I examined the body and tried to feel his pulse, but could not feel any. I found he was dead, and in my opinion had been dead at least two hours.

By the Court : Are you sure of that?

Witness : I think so. I perceived the wound in the breast, and I asked her if she knew what caused it. She said she did not, unless it was caused by a nail in falling over a tub in the yard. The wound was two or three inches above the left breast, and passed between the third and fourth ribs into the heart. I said that I did not think the wound had been caused by a nail, or the edges would not have been so smooth. There was a single spot of blood only above the orifice of the wound, and the shirt was stained. The shirt was not buttoned. I examined to see if there was any hole in the shirt opposite the wound, and there was none. I ordered the body to be taken upstairs, and the lower part to be washed. I see the skewer on the desk before me, and in my opinion such an instrument would produce the wound. I attended the *post mortem* examination.

By the Court : Any similar skewer would have produced the wound.

Cross-examined by Mr Lee : I have attended persons who have died from injuries of the heart. The wound was in the heart, and circulation would stop immediately, and the lower extremities would be cold first. The wound was a clean cut wound, though not such as a cut in a piece of paper. The wound was not exactly either a jagged or a clean cut one. My opinion is that the man had been dead from an hour to two hours. Did not probe the wound. The wound was traversed by Mr Cooper.

Thomas Cooper, surgeon, Stourbridge : On Friday morning the 4<sup>th</sup> of August about 7 o'clock, went to the Woolstaplers' Arms, and saw the dead body of the deceased. Introduced his probe into the wound, all the length of the probe 4 1/2 inches. Opened the body in the morning. There was a puncture on the left breast between the third and fourth ribs, it passed over the fourth rib, entered the chest between the fourth and fifth rib, then passed obliquely across the chest to the right side, it penetrated the pericardium, in which there was 12 oz of blood ; there was about two pounds of blood in the chest. The wound penetrated the right ventricle of the heart, and through the anterior and posterior wall of the heart. The extent of the wound was about five and a half inches. I have seen the skewer, and I believe that wound might be caused by an instrument similar to that. Deceased in my judgement could not have withdrawn such an instrument had he killed himself.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : I believe that the man might have staggered a few yards after receiving the wound. I have read of a man after being shot in the heart running 100 yards and then leaping over a hedge, but I do not believe it. In my opinion, after such a wound, a man might live five minutes, but I do not believe he could live twenty minutes. I swear that the wound was not a round one, but a long one, a flat longitudinal one. Since this case occurred, I have wounded a dog with a skewer, and the wound made was precisely like the wound of deceased. Mr Freer, surgeon, was not present at that experiment. I have spoken about this wound to different surgeons, and have had differences of opinion as to whether the wound could be given to a man by himself with such an instrument, but as to his withdrawing it, we had no difference about that.

Mr Godson : Supposing a man to strike himself in such an oblique direction with a sharp instrument, could he withdraw it?

Witness : I will not swear that he could not, but I do not believe it. It was such a wound as could

not easily be inflicted.

By the Court : Owing to the internal effusion and the oblique direction of the wound, there would be little external effusion of blood. As soon as the heart was touched, the circulation would begin to cease, and that would make the body cool.

(The next witness could not get into the bar without great difficulty, and the crier stated that there were not sufficient officers to keep order).

Isaac Downing, surgeon, Stourbridge : Examined the body on the day of inquest. In my judgement such a wound might have been inflicted by such an instrument, and I think that such a wound would produce death in a very few minutes. I don't think the deceased could have inflicted the wound himself ; I don't think it impossible, but it is exceedingly improbable that he could have withdrawn the instrument. As to external bleeding, that would depend upon the rupture of the valve. I think there would have been a little external bleeding, but there might have been none, and there might have been a considerable quantity.

By the Court : In this case, I think there must have been bleeding. I think there would have been no bleeding had the wound formed a valve, that is, had it detached a portion of muscle, so that at every inspiration it would fall upon the wound, and act exactly as a valve.

By Mr Whateley : The deceased was of a full habit of body.

Cross-examined by Mr Godson : I have had no difference of opinion on this subject. I do not believe the man could have struck himself. If I were to state that the man struck himself so that he wounded himself as deceased was, I should be saying that which is contrary to my conscience.

Mrs Finch, examined for the defence by Mr Godson : Is the wife of Joseph Finch, has been a washerwoman for seven years to the family, and never saw flannels worn by Orchard, or washed them. When he was in liquor he was in a low desponding way, and would walk about gnashing his teeth.

By the Court : Was called out of bed about twelve o'clock on the night of the deceased's death, by Mrs Wright and Sarah Orchard. The watchman said "past twelve" as I came from my house. I took three minutes to walk to Orchard's, and stayed there all night. I observed no smell of burning. Mrs Orchard sat in the kitchen, and I continued with her all the time. I do not recollect seeing Maria that night. I have always seen Orchard and his wife, when sober, very loving together. He was in the low way described for at least twelve months before he died.

His Lordship then observed that several witnesses were not examined, there was Smith and Sarah Orchard.

Mr Godson : Yes, my Lord.

This closing the case for the prosecution,

Mr Godson then opened the defence for the prisoners in a very argumentative and ingenious manner, and at great length. He observed that the indictment had charged each of the prisoners with being the murderer, and each of them with being an accessory. Now it was certain that there was but one wound, and that it could only have been inflicted by one person. It was certain by the evidence which had been placed before the Court that Maria was not the person who had committed the murder – indeed, the man Hook had exonerated her from the charge ; but where was the man Joseph Smith? Where was the sister Sarah? - each of whom could have explained that there was not time – that there was not a possibility of Maria Orchard's being able to perpetrate or participate in the foul transaction. He again enquired why Smith, who could have explained what had occurred in the yard, was not brought forward? He had not fled his country ; and why the sister Sarah, who had twice been examined before the Magistrates, was not also present. It was not for him to bring them. He complained that Maria, who could also have explained the transactions of that night – Maria, against whom not one tittle of evidence would bear, and who stood at that moment fully acquitted, had been placed in the dock, so as to deprive him of that evidence which would have exonerated both herself and her mother. He would not say that Smith had committed the deed ; but by the evidence there was the choice of three who did – either that Smith did it, or the widow did it, or that the deceased had inflicted the wound himself. He then dwelt upon the improbability of the wife's murdering the man with whom she had lived kindly and comfortably a number of years, and

by whom she had a large family, and who was assisting to maintain them in comfort and respectability. He commented severely on the evidence of Mrs Hook and Parratt who, if there had been any attempt at concealment of a murder, would not have been allowed to have been present and have searched the premises when they did and as they did ; neither would the sister have been sent to the mother in the first instance, and a doctor and other parties sent for immediately. He then proceeded to show, from the evidence, that Orchard had threatened suicide, and the possibility of Orchard himself having committed the act. He concluded a very eloquent and feeling appeal to the Jury, and not without some effect both upon them and the Court. The result of the examination was apparent when the evidence had been sifted and laid before the Court by Mr Godson.

His Lordship then proceeded to sum up the evidence, and very ably explained the nature of circumstantial evidence, before commenting on the testimony of the witnesses, which he did at great length and with the utmost perspicuity, pointing out the bearing of the different points and circumstances upon each other, as they related to the probability of the guilt or innocence of the prisoners. The summing up of his Lordship was entirely favourable to the prisoners – following in a great measure the points taken up by Mr Godson. He particularly pointed out to the Jury that they should erase from their minds all probability and conjecture of the case, and be guided solely by the evidence adduced by the prosecutor. His Lordship dwelt upon the circumstance of Smith and Sarah not being present ; and also that, from the evidence, the deceased might have proceeded in a paroxysm of rage to the yard – that a quarrel ensued – and that Orchard came by his death from some party ; but this was not murder – it was manslaughter, as there was not *malice prepense* proved by any part of the evidence. If the act were committed by the man himself, his stumbling up the yard was quite consistent. His Lordship then proceeded to review the time mentioned by the parties, in which all agreed. The witness Southall had appeared upon the scene at the time, and he perceived no difference in Mrs Orchard ; now it was contrary to human nature for a murderer to stand before the first evidence without agitation. The burning of the woollen and linen, it appeared, was done during the time that persons who had been sent for were in the house – this was inconsistent. His Lordship concluded by observing that he could see nothing against the daughter, and that it was a case which was involved in much mystery. If there were any doubts upon the minds of the Jury, the prisoners should have the benefit of that doubt. It was a case involving life and death. This was only an earthly tribunal, and from which the guilty might escape ; but there was one from whom no secrets were hid, and from which the guilty would not escape unpunished. The case was shrouded in darkness, permeable only by Him who searches the heart, who alone knew the guilty in this mysterious case ; and that it was not for them, upon suspicion only, however strong, to come to a conclusion so fatal to the accused as a verdict of guilty would be.

The Jury consulted together for a few minutes, and then returned their verdict, finding both prisoners not guilty. His Lordship observed that they had found a very proper verdict.

The case, which occupied about seven hours, was concluded at six o'clock.

The prisoners, soon after they were brought into the dock, were accommodated with chairs ; and by the kindness of Mr Lavender, a female was in attendance upon them, and occasionally handed to them a glass of water or a smelling bottle. Shortly after their appearance, Maria Orchard fainted, but soon recovered, and although apparently suffering great anguish of mind, appeared to grow firmer as the trial proceeded. The mother did not appear to be conscious of what was proceeding ; the only time that we perceived any emotion in her was when her daughter fainted – she looked anxiously at her ; but we did not observe her raise her eyes again until the Judge had summed up and the Jury were directed to find their verdict, when she suddenly started from the chair, and clasping her hands, exclaimed, “My Lord, I am innocent”. There was no indication of either guilt or innocence in her countenance during the proceedings. When the Jury had returned their verdict, she fainted, and was carried from the dock ; the younger prisoner showed no emotion, and was led away as if unconscious of the fact that she was declared innocent of the charge for which she had been arraigned.

**159 July 26 1838**

CITY MAGISTRATES' OFFICE

**BATHING IN THE RIVER** A boatman was charged by policeman Griffiths with bathing in a very frequented part of the river, where respectable persons were precluded in consequence from passing. The fellow said in excuse that he was washing himself. This being the first offence of the kind, the Bench reprimanded the man, and discharged him upon his promise that there should not be any repetition of the offence, and that he would acquaint his companions that they must not bath there. By the 21<sup>st</sup> section of the bye laws, it is enacted that any person found bathing in such portions of the river or canals within the boundary of the city shall forfeit for the first offence 1s ; for the second 2s 6d ; and for every subsequent time 5s.

**ANOTHER COAL ROBBERY** **James Phillips** and **Henry Taylor**, boatmen, remanded from Sunday, were charged with stealing a quantity of coal, the property of Mr Edmund Lane, coal merchant, living at Powick. In support of the charge several witnesses were called : **Benjamin Lee**, steersman to the *Fancy Lass* belonging to Mr Lane, proved that on Saturday evening, the 15<sup>th</sup> of June, his boat was moored in Lowesmoor basin, opposite to Jones's coal yard, to another boat which belonged to Taylor, the prisoner's father ; and on Monday found that the *Fancy Lass* had been moved, and was fastened to another boat. **Charles Goodyear**, a lad in the employ of a boatman named **Boucher**, proved that early on Monday morning, the 16<sup>th</sup>, he saw the prisoners heaving coal out of the prosecutor's boat. There was a plank from the shore to the boat, and while Taylor placed the coal on the plank – three pieces – the other prisoner, Phillips, took them up and carried them into Taylor's father's yard. Mr Daniel, solicitor, addressed the Bench on behalf of the prisoners, against whom he contended the evidence tendered was anything but conclusive. Witnesses were called for the defence. The case, which occupied nearly three hours in the hearing, closed by the parties being committed for trial at the Sessions. Bail was rendered afterwards, and they were consequently liberated on recognisances to appear when called upon at the necessary period.

**160 August 2 1838**

CITY MAGISTRATES' OFFICE

**ALLEGED WATCH ROBBERY** **James Allen**, waterman, remanded from the 16<sup>th</sup>, was again brought up for re-examination. The owner of the watch, William Mann, said he had been in the habit of lending things to the prisoner, and could not swear whether he gave Allen the watch or that it was taken from him. The Magistrates strongly suspected that Mann had perjured himself, but were obliged to order the prisoner's discharge. It will be recollected that in the apprehension of Allen, the policeman Hales was so severely bruised as to be unable to perform his duties ; and since that time has been obliged to have recourse to medical assistance from the Infirmary.

**161 August 23 1838**

COUNTY POLICE OFFICE

**CAUTION TO WAGGONERS** **Cornelius Westwood**, a tall ill looking man, who said he was by trade a boatman, was charged with stealing a quantity of cut peas, in the straw, the property of Mr William Rogers, farmer of Knightwick. The facts of the case were these :- The prosecutor on Saturday morning missed some clover from one of his fields near the turnpike road in the above parish, which leads from the city to Bromyard, and having suspicion that some waggoner had taken it to feed his horses on passing up the road, determined to watch ; and accordingly did so with his servant on the evening of that day. About half past eleven o'clock, having taken up their position in one corner of the field, they observed a man enter it and take up a quantity of the peas, which had been cut and ready for harvesting, and after tying them round, turned back to go out of the field again, when the prosecutor pounced upon him and took him into custody. On the following morning, the prisoner was given in charge of Caswell, the Knightwick constable, in whose custody he was brought up. It turned out that Westwood was connected with a man named Arnold, who a short time ago was proved to have stolen clover from a field near Crow's Nest Lodge, on the same

road, which is much frequented by waggoners and boatmen driving their coal carts to and from this city to Bromyard. Mr Williams said it was time this system of plunder, which had been carried out for some time past on the above road, should be effectually put a stop to ; as he had not the least doubt that many teams were entirely supported by the produce of these frequent depredations. The prisoner, on being called upon for his defence, admitted the charge, and was committed to take his trial at the ensuing sessions.

## 162 September 6 1838

### WORCESTER CITY QUARTER SESSIONS

**Henry Taylor**, 21, boatman, and **James Phillips**, 15, labourer, were placed at the bar on a charge of stealing, on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of July last from a boat on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, three large lumps of coal, the property of Edward Lane of Powick ; and a second count charged them with stealing one cwt of coal from the same boat, situated in a creek in the canal. Mr Beadon conducted the case on the part of the prosecution, and Mr Lee was engaged for the defence.

**Charles Goodhere**, a little fellow of apparently nine or ten years of age, deposed that he was employed by **Mr James Boucher** on the day in question, and went to bed about nine o'clock at night, and about half past two next morning got up and went to his master's stable. The boat he slept in was in the wharf, and there were three others abreast at that place, but the one he was in was a yard from them. The boats were with their heads together. He was at his master's three quarters of an hour, and then returned to his own boat. Shortly after, he saw Henry Taylor, whom he knew perfectly well, on Mr Lane's boat. He saw Taylor take three lumps of coal from Mr Lane's boat and place them on a plank which was across the side of the boat. The other prisoner was carrying the coal into the yard of Taylor's father. He saw no more of them, for he went to Malvern with his master's cart, and did not return until the afternoon. When he came home, he told his master what he had seen.

Cross-examined : Taylor's father sold coal cheaper than Mr Boucher, and a good deal of ill feeling had in consequence sprung up between them. His master did not give him wages, but found him in all necessaries. He knew it was the 16<sup>th</sup> of July, because it was the day after "apple christening" (St Swithin's Day). He did not tell his master, thinking that Taylor might have purchased the boat load of coal, but was afterwards told that he had not. He got up for the purpose of getting the cart ready to go off to Malvern, and went back to the boat to lock up the cabin and fetch his jacket. He read the name on the boat - "Edmund Lane, No 2, Powick". Lane's boat was about half empty, and lay lower down in the water than those between him and the one in question. He had worked for Mr Perkins, but was not turned away for telling lies.

Re-examined : He knew the boat by its having a timber nose at the head of it.

By the Recorder : No money up to the time of the robbery had been given him by Mr Boucher, nor since ; but when he went to Malvern he got some money over the price of the coals his master charged them. They always have this allowance.

**Benjamin Lee** was next sworn, and deposed that he worked for Mr Edmund Lane, and on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July he brought *The Fancy Lass* into Lowesmoor Basin, and tied her to Mr Green's boat. The coals he missed were called Brazil coals, and were in pieces of about half cwts. He left the boat on the Saturday evening, and did not see her again till Monday morning. There were several boats in the basin, and on Monday morning *The Fancy Lass* was lashed to another, and on the different side of the canal to that in which he had left her. On the Saturday evening, he missed between a ton and 30 cwt of coal out of the boat. He then proceeded to Powick, and informed his master's two servants of the loss, but did not tell his master, as he had a disease of the heart which, when he heard anything that affected him much, made him ill. He informed his master of it on the following Wednesday.

Benjamin Lee the younger deposed to seeing the boat safe in the canal, and generally corroborated the evidence of his father.

The learned Counsel for the defence addressed the Jury on behalf of the prisoners, and dubbed the prosecution as a trumped up charge, and the boy Goodhere as a scapegoat for the purpose of filling

up whatever chasm may have happened to be in it, and concluded by calling a witness to character. The Recorder read over the depositions, commenting thereon as he proceeded, and perspicuously summed up the whole of the evidence to the Jury who, after a long consultation and putting several questions to the Bench (in reply to some of which the Recorder stated that he did not doubt the prisoners' guilt, or believe a tittle of what had been said as to ill feeling on the part of Goodhere's master), retired for the purpose of consulting together, and the Court adjourned till eight o'clock, to give them time to discuss the dubious points. Accordingly at eight o'clock the Court reassembled, and the Jury came into Court. The Recorder asked them if they were all agreed. The foreman said they were not ; there were ten for finding a verdict of guilty, and two could not be brought to that conclusion, neither was there any likelihood of their ultimately agreeing. The two dissentients imagined that it was a trumped up prosecution, and brought against the prisoners by Mr Boucher, the master of the witness Goodhere, for the purpose of revenging some insult or injury, real or imaginary, which he had suffered at the hands of prisoner's (Taylor's) father. The Recorder then stated that there were two courses for him to pursue ; one, of having them locked up until they could agree ; and the other discharging them from giving a verdict at all. As the foreman had stated there was no probability of coming to a unanimous decision, he should adopt the latter course ; and they might therefore consider themselves released from that portion of their duty in the present case. He did this because he did not like the idea of two men, who honestly believed the prisoner not guilty, being starved into saying that which they believed to be untrue ; neither could he allow the majority to be unnecessarily punished for the probably wrong imaginings of a small minority. Addressing the prisoners, he said, "You have heard that the Jury cannot come to any decision in your case ; but from that circumstance do not imagine that you have escaped punishment for the crime you are doubtless guilty of. If the Grand Jury were now sitting, I would direct a true bill to be brought against you ; and after the facts which have been proved against you by the prosecutor, I shall certainly consider it my duty to recommend that you be indicted hereafter. At present, I shall simply remand you till tomorrow".

[At the conclusion of the Sessions on the following day, both the prisoners were again placed at the bar ; and the Recorder, addressing them, said that as no further evidence had been produced against them, he was bound to order their discharge. But in doing so he would have them recollect that no verdict had been returned against them, therefore they could not congratulate themselves on being acquitted. There was only one way to prove to the world that they were not guilty of the offence, and that was by their subsequent behaviour – which, if such as to establish general good conduct, would be a fair presumption that they were innocent of the charge at present brought against them.] The Court rose at half past eight.

Edward Field alias Thomas Matthews was charged with stealing coal belonging to Mr Henry Walker, coal dealer, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August. Thomas Stanyard swore to his having seen Field take a piece of coal from the prosecutor's stack at Lowesmoor wharf on the day in question. The Jury found the prisoner Guilty. The certificate of the Clerk of the Peace of his having before been convicted was put in, and he was sentenced to fourteen years transportation.

### **163    September 20 1838**

#### **CITY MAGISTRATES' OFFICE**

**ASSAULTS**    Policeman Hall, No 10, charged a boatman named **George Featherstone** with striking him on the previous evening. Hall was sent for to clear a brothel in Merevale of some disorderly men, and found the defendant there, who refused to go. Witness turned him out, but was resisted in doing so, and was struck a severe blow on the eye. Another policeman corroborated this evidence, and the Magistrates adjudged him, in default of payment of the fine, to be imprisoned for seven days.

### **164    September 27 1838**

An inquest was lately held at the White Horse Inn, Alvechurch, before Mr Ralph Docker, on the

body of **Charles Roberts**, aged 12 years, son of **Benjamin Roberts**, boatman. The deceased, his father and another man were working a boat from Birmingham to Eckington ; on arriving at the King's Norton tunnel, which is about two miles in length, on the Birmingham and Worcester Canal, the boy was sent forward with the horse to the opposite end of the tunnel, leaving the men to "leg" the boat through the tunnel ; when they reached nearly the end of the tunnel, they saw something floating in the water ; the father, taking the boat hook, caught hold of it, and on drawing it up discovered it to be the body of his own son. It is supposed the deceased was stooping down and looking into the tunnel, to see if the boat was coming, when he slipped in and was drowned. It was represented as being a dangerous place ; and Mr Docker, at the request of the jury, undertook to write to the Canal Company about it. Verdict : "Found drowned".

### **165    October 4 1838**

PRESENTATION OF PLATE TO THE REV JOHN DAVIES    The parishioners and friends of the Rev John Davies, rector of St Clement's in this city, entertained this exemplary Clergyman on Friday last at a public breakfast in the Lecture Room of the Natural History Society, for the purpose of presenting him with a Service of Plate previous to his leaving Worcester. Soon after eleven o'clock, upwards of two hundred and fifty persons, including not only members of the Established Church but of other denominations, had taken their seats, and the room was so crowded that it was with difficulty all could be accommodated. John Williams Esq of Pitmanston, presided on the occasion. Grace having been said at the conclusion of the breakfast, The Chairman rose, and having read a note from the Rev Frank Hewson, apologising for his absence on account of indisposition, spoke to the following effect :- "Mr Davies : Rev Sir, - On behalf of the committee, your parishioners and friends, I beg to present you with this Service of Plate, as a token of their affectionate regard and esteem for you, and of their unqualified approbation of your conduct in discharging the important duties of Rector of the parish of St Clement's in this city, for the long period of twenty two years past. The unwearied zeal you have shown in promoting the cause of Christianity, by your discourses from the pulpit, added to the praiseworthy discharge of your pastoral duties in visiting the sick and instructing the ignorant, are proofs of the sincerity of your faith in the Gospel of Christ. Nor can I omit to mention that when you commenced your Ministry in St Clement's, you found a small old dilapidated Parish Church, most inconveniently situated, and often rendered useless for weeks together after a flood on the Severn ; it was chiefly through your exertions that a new and handsome Church was built on a more convenient site, capable of holding 800 persons, 400 of the sittings being free, and more than half the cost of the building was raised by voluntary contributions. I wish, Sir, that some person better qualified than I am had been chosen to address you on this occasion, to express the regret of your parishioners at being for a time deprived of your pastoral aid ; but they and all your friends most sincerely hope that a temporary change of residence will improve your health and the health of your family, and that you will at an early period return to resume your important duties". The Chairman then addressing himself to Mrs Davies, said, "Mrs Davies : Madam – I am desired also by the subscribers to offer you for your acceptance, as a mark of their respect, regard and esteem for you and your amiable young family, a portrait of Mr Davies, painted by that highly talented artist Mr Cole of this city ; and I think you will all agree with me that, although in an unfinished state, it is extremely well executed. I may add for the information of the Meeting that the Plate weighs upwards of 150 ounces".

The Plate was exhibited on a tray, tastefully decorated with dahlias. It consists of a complete tea equipage of a very beautiful design and excellent workmanship, and was furnished by the Messrs Mason of St Swithin Street. The following is the inscription :-

*This Salver  
(with an accompanying Tea and Coffee Service)  
was presented to the  
REV JOHN DAVIES MA*

*for 22 years*  
*Rector of St Clement's, Worcester.*  
*By his Parishioners and other Friends, as a token of the high estimation*  
*in which they hold his character as a zealous*  
*and consistent Servant of God.*  
*Sept 28<sup>th</sup> 1838*

Dr Hastings rose and addressed the meeting nearly as follows :- “Having been unexpectedly requested to state my feelings upon this interesting and heart stirring occasion, it gives me the greatest pleasure to see this room, originally dedicated to science, crowded with persons anxious to testify their respect to a Clergyman whom I have known for twenty years or more, and whom I in the highest degree esteem for his unceasing labours in diffusing Christian knowledge, especially among the poorer inhabitants of his parish. Often have I seen this room crowded to excess by persons anxious to gain some knowledge of those sciences which tend to elevate the mind ; but never did I witness an assemblage in it with so much delight as at the present moment. In elevating the human character, science falls infinitely short compared with the soul inspiring precepts of the Gospel ; every thing therefore which has a tendency to promote the extension of Christianity I view with unspeakable satisfaction. In the address of Mr Williams, our respected Chairman, I most heartily concur. I well remember the dilapidated state of the old church, and its exposure to the floods of the Severn, which often prevented the attendance of the parishioners upon the public ordinances of religion. I also remember the zeal and devotion of the exemplary Rector in raising funds for the present beautiful edifice, which is so situated that the obstacles before complained of are entirely removed. These labours however of the Rev Gentleman sink into insignificance when compared with what he has since done in the parish. About six years ago the cholera came among the inhabitants, and St Clement's parish seemed to be the favourite spot on which that awful scourge had chosen to fix its deadly grip ; Death seemed armed with more than its accustomed terrors. At such an hour, when many of the boldest and the most humane forsook their friends and fled from the pestilence, I saw the Rev Gentleman going into houses of misery and woe, where death from that fatal malady was momentarily expected – thus setting a bright example to the Ministers of the Church. I cannot help calling to mind those fearful hours, and the many instances in which I witnessed the ministrations of the Rev Gentleman so signally beneficial. The services of the temple are doubtless of the highest importance ; but these are not the only duties of a Minister of the Gospel. Visiting the sick, and pouring the balm of Christian consolation into the broken heart, are duties equally incumbent on him. These Mr Davies has in a most exemplary manner discharged. With feelings therefore that I cannot express, I now look upon this Christian assemblage, come to do honour to this much esteemed Clergyman by presenting him with an elegant and splendid service of plate as a testimony of their sincere regard, and that they are not insensible to the merits of so bright an ornament to the Established Church.

The Rev J W Chesshyre having been called upon by the committee to make a few remarks, expressed his inability to do justice to the subject, but assured the meeting that, as one of the younger Clergymen, he was not insensible to the high merits of Mr Davies, and could not but have seen how holily, how unblamedly he had walked among them. He hoped the Rev Gentleman would soon return to resume his duties in St Clement's parish. In conclusion he had only one request to make, namely that as Mr Davies possessed the painting, could not his friends be left a print?

The Rev Mr Hensman of Bristol spoke at some length and in the highest terms of eulogy in reference to Mr Davies.

The Rev J Feild said it was his privilege to commence his ministry under Mr Davies, and he could not adequately express the gratitude he owed to so excellent a friend. He felt great regret at losing him, but trusted his absence would be but of short duration.

The Rev John Davies then rose and said that he felt assured that his parishioners and friends would not expect from him any flattering compliments on that occasion ; such would be unbecoming in him to offer, and in them to receive ; but he hoped he could say from his heart that he felt most

deeply their kindness and his own unworthiness of the honour conferred upon him. He begged to be allowed to remark that as a retired Clergyman he was not in the habit of using much plate of any sort, much less such costly plate as that which had been just presented to him by their liberality ; but as a mark of their esteem and regard, it assumed a value which he never thought to have attached to anything of the kind ; and that henceforward he should use with pleasure even embossed plate, since it had been embossed by the hand of affection and brotherly love, and would call to his recollection so many friends, for whom he felt an attachment which he trusted would cease only with his existence. The inscription engraven on this beautiful plate was gratifying to his feelings, as it intimated that it was presented to him as *a servant of God* – a title he prized more highly than any human distinctions, however exalted ; but he felt on this occasion great jealousy, lest in acknowledging the honour conferred upon him by man he should be tempted to forget that he ought to seek supremely “the honour which cometh from God alone”. The worthy Chairman in his address, and the gentlemen who followed, had used expressions of their esteem of which he was unworthy ; but he entreated the prayers of his friends on his behalf, that whether “present or absent” he might be enabled to endeavour to follow the example of the Divine Redeemer, and never “be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ”. Allusion had been made to the building of St Clement's Church – with reference to which he begged to observe that he was deeply indebted to the assistance of many friends around him, but especially to their esteemed Chairman, who not only lent the aid of his extensive influence, but contributed most liberally himself. (Cheers). Certainly St Clements had been placed in a very painful situation ; the Church was at best a dilapidated fabric, with little or no accommodation for the poor ; and when the river overflowed it, the parishioners were compelled to wander about as sheep without a fold, having no place to assemble in for Divine Worship ; but now, through the Divine blessing, they have a church with 400 free sittings ; and he remembered with gratitude the liberal collections made after sermons in aid of the building fund, towards which many persons not resident in the parish contributed most largely. Reference had been made by Dr Hastings to that fearful malady the cholera ; he must say that none of us had felt sufficient gratitude to Almighty God for removing that dreadful scourge, which had desolated so many parts of the world. He would avail himself of this opportunity also of remarking that he did not think the services of the Board of Health or of the medical profession in general had been duly appreciated on that distressing occasion. He could bear testimony to the value of these services – they had been most important, not only to individuals but to the public at large. The Board of Health had, under the Divine blessing, been the means of checking the progress of the disease, by the adoption of measures of precaution. One instance he would mention. A case of cholera had occurred in a crowded part of the parish of St John, which seemed likely to favour the spread of the malady. Happening to pass by the house, the inmates requested him to see the patient. Having ascertained that it was a real case of cholera, he urged them to seek medical advice without delay ; but the disease had far advanced, and the sufferer expired in a few hours. Application was made, through the Chairman of this meeting, to the Board of Health, who immediately removed the surviving family to a place prepared for their reception ; the bed &c was burnt and the house fumigated. The disease was arrested, for this was the only case which occurred in that neighbourhood. He mentioned this to show that while humbly relying for a blessing on Him in whose hands alone are the issues of life and death, we ought to be diligent in using proper means to prevent and remove diseases. He must not forget to add that £50 was collected at his Church for the widows and orphans who were cut off by the cholera. There was another subject to which he wished to call the attention of his friends, which was the importance of providing means for the education of the rising generation. They were well aware of the insidious methods at present so industriously employed to corrupt the principles of the labouring classes, by poisoning their minds with the tenets of infidelity. This called for vigilance and exertion. While he rejoiced at the progress which had already been made in this city as to the instruction of the children of the poor, he hoped those efforts would not be relaxed, for much remained to be done. All classes ought to unite in this good work. He had known something of the higher, the middling and the labouring classes of society ; and he honoured many in all these classes on account of their Christian character and real excellence. He was not

one of those who wished to separate the various classes of society, but would rejoice to see them united in friendly co-operation to promote each other's welfare. It had been well said by someone, in reference to this point, that there is a golden chain which descends from Heaven, whose links should bind in one bond of union the whole family of man ; that golden chain is the *Gospel of Christ*. He wished to see all classes united in promoting *Scriptural* education through the land. When persons had received marks of kindness from others, they generally wished to remember them in their wills ; in like manner he begged to give and bequeath to the assembly an Infant School in Doldy, in which are upwards of a hundred little children being carefully taught. He solicited at the hands of the meeting the support of this school, and trusted it would become a little nursery for producing much good in a spot where at present considerable evil is found to exist. Kind reference had been made to his leaving this place. He could assure his friends that such a step had not been taken without the deepest consideration and most fervent prayer ; but they would not expect him to enter into particulars on that point. The Rev Gentleman here alluded to the deplorable state of religion and morals among the watermen employed in the inland navigation of this kingdom, who were a class of men ground down by the world, and neglected even by the Christian Church too generally. He was not such an enthusiast as to suppose that any instantaneous change would be produced among this body of men ; but he had ascertained, upon the best authority, that in those places where due attention had been paid to their religious instruction, and the Sabbath granted, they had, through the Divine blessing, profited, and become quite an altered race – a pattern to the other labouring classes of society. He earnestly recommended the case of this class to the consideration of the Christian public, and exhorted all to make such arrangements with reference to ordering and sending goods that the day of holy rest might not be infringed upon, as the awfully immoral state of the watermen in general was to be attributed principally to their being deprived of the privilege of the Christian Sabbath, although dwelling in a land professing Christianity. While Parliament doubtless had a duty to perform as to the prevention of Sabbath desecration, which duty ought not to be neglected, he trusted more to the united efforts of the Christian public in promoting the due observance of the Lord's Day than to any legal enactments. He would remind the meeting that there was calculated to be about one hundred thousand watermen in this kingdom (including their families). At the place to which he was going, he intended to use every exertion to promote the distribution of the Holy Scriptures and suitable tracts among them, the education of their children, the erection of suitable places of worship in neglected spots, and endeavour to call forth as far as possible a friendly feeling towards them, and kind exertions in their behalf. He was happy to be able to state that, among the clergy and the laity, a few individuals were liberally coming forward in aid of these objects. We must not, therefore, “despise the day of small things”, but looking up for a blessing, diligently seek the salvation of the immortal souls of these our fellow countrymen. He hoped that the female part of the assembly he had the honour of addressing would not forget the wives and daughters of the watermen of this vicinity. Reference (continued the Rev Gentleman) had been made to his return among them. On this point he felt that too much kindness had been expressed on the part of his friends and parishioners towards so insignificant an individual as himself. He begged to observe that it was his intention at the expiration of a twelvemonth to reconsider the subject, with prayer for heavenly direction that whether called upon to labour on the banks of the River Severn or the River Mersey, he might be found at the post of duty. But should it please the Supreme Disposer of all events, his desire would be to come and lay his bones among his flock ; for, being born in the county of Worcester, and partly educated in the city of Worcester, he could not view with an eye of apathy a spot in which he had laboured as a Clergyman more than two and twenty years. Wherever he might be called, he should regard this beloved spot as his *home*, and whenever he might bend his steps towards the county of Worcester, should be reminded of the lines of the poet :-

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
“This is my own, my native land!”  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,

As home his footsteps he hath turned,  
From wandering from a foreign strand!

In concluding these remarks, he begged in the name of Mrs Davies and his family again to return the assembly his most cordial thanks for the kind tokens of their friendship and affection. He entreated to be permitted to remind them that we are all fast hastening to a future and eternal world, and of the importance of being daily found looking with the eye of faith to that land "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be at rest"; where will be no more pain, no more sorrow, no more separation, no more death ; where all will be harmony, peace and love. But he implored them to look well to the foundation on which they built their hopes, and ever to remember that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST". He had only to thank them for the patience with which they had listened to his address, and to remind them of the apostolic injunction - "Brethren, pray one for another". While his own unworthy supplications would constantly be offered for them at a Throne of Grace, in the name of the Divine Advocate, he hoped they would not forget, on behalf of his successor as well as himself, to pray for the blessing of HIM "without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy". For the present at least he must bid them farewell.

The Rev Gentleman was listened to throughout with the deepest attention ; and at the conclusion, the feelings of his hearers were evidently much affected.

On the motion of the Rev Mr Hensman, seconded by Mr Evans, chemist, the cordial thanks of the meeting were given to Mr Williams for his conduct in the chair ; after which the meeting separated. The breakfast was served by Mr Mountford, and was highly creditable to his establishment.

### **166    October 11 1838**

**CASE OF THE WATERMEN** A respectable meeting was held at Liverpool last week to promote the better observance of the Lord's Day among this too long neglected class of our countrymen. The desecration of the Sabbath on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal more especially claimed the attention of the meeting. A memorial was read, signed by 35 clergy and gentry living on the line of the canal, and also a petition signed by more than 150 of the men employed upon it. The following resolutions were carried :- "That this meeting, sensible of the high dishonour done to Almighty God, in the desecration of this holy day, by traffic on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal – believing also that no real advantage can arise from using the Lord's Day for secular purposes, will employ every effort to put a stop to the violation of the Sabbath Day. 2. That animated by the most Christian and benevolent motives towards the boatmen employed on the canal (deprived as they are of every public means of grace), jealous for the honour of God in the proper observance of this appointed day of rest, and anxious to encourage the most amiable dispositions between the employers and the employed, this meeting desires to adopt for the purpose the most persuasive and respectful means". Another resolution was carried, appointing all the clergy on the line as a committee to promote this benevolent object.

**SEVERN NAVIGATION** On Friday last, a meeting of deputies from interests connected with the River Severn took place at the Lion Inn, Kidderminster, when, after a careful and friendly discussion of some hours, we have the satisfaction of informing our readers that the meeting came to the unanimous conclusion that an improvement of the river between Gloucester and Stourport, to be conducted by commissioners, was absolutely necessary. The necessity for it was indeed never more apparent than at the present moment, the navigation being almost impeded from the low state of the river. It is not in the recollection of any individual that the river was ever in such a state in the month of October. It was agreed that another meeting of deputies should be held shortly. Among the persons on the occasion were Lord Hatherton and Mr Blakemore MP, both of whom entered into the subject warmly.

### **167    October 11 1838**

In consequence of the arrangement entered into by the Birmingham Railway Company with Messrs

Pickford, Bache and other great contractors for the conveyance of goods to and from the manufacturing districts, the services of a great number of bargemen have been dispensed with ; in revenge for which, it is thought, they have during the dusk of the evening scaled the enclosure of the line, and placed logs of wood across the rails, for the purpose of overturning the trains. On one occasion this was accomplished ; but although thrown completely off the line, the train preserved its equilibrium and was, after some difficulty, replaced without any material injury. The company have offered a reward of £10 for the apprehension of the offenders.

**168    October 18 1838**

WORCESTERSHIRE MICHAELMAS SESSIONS    **Cornelius Westwood**, aged 40, boatman, for that he did, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August at Knightwick, steal a quantity of peas in the straw, then and there being cut and severed from the freehold. Three months' imprisonment, first and last week solitary.

**William Evans**, 29, boatman, charged with having, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July at Dudley, being then and there employed as servant to Hugh Jones, did receive and take into his possession the sum of £1 15s 7 1/2d, for, and in the name, and on the account of his master, and fraudulently embezzled the same. Not Guilty.

**James Phillips**, 17, boatman, **William Mills**, 14, boatman, charged with having, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September at Great Malvern, feloniously stolen a silver spoon, the goods of Crispin Whatmore. Mills Not Guilty, Phillips to be imprisoned six months, first and last solitary, and to be twice whipped.

**Robert Evans**, 18, boatman, for that he did, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October, feloniously steal about twelve pounds weight of cheese, the goods of Edward Kite of Saint Peter. Pleading guilty – to be imprisoned six weeks, last week solitary.

**William Daniel alias Fletcher**, 22, boatman, charged with having, on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of April last, feloniously taken away from the person of William Woodfield a box containing two sovereigns and some silver. Not Guilty.

**John Stokes**, 20, boatman, charged for that he, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July at Stoke Prior, did falsely pretend to John Moreton that he had paid to John Waldron the sum of three shillings, as tonnage for certain goods conveyed for the said John Moreton on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal. Not Guilty.

**169    October 18 1838**

CITY MAGISTRATES' OFFICE

REFUSAL OF A MAN TO SUPPORT HIS WIFE    The following extraordinary case was brought before the Bench by Mr Tyler, the relieving officer of St Clements. The object of the application was that a warrant should be granted against a person named Richard West to compel his attendance before the Magistrates to show why he refused and neglected to support his wife, who appeared with a little girl of apparently six years old to state her case. She said that in the year 1830, she was married at Claines Church to a boatman named **Hodges**, who was drowned in the Severn, between this city and Stourport, in a year or two afterwards ; she then contracted a second marriage in 1834 with her present husband, West. She was married to him at the Protestant Episcopal Church of Newark, in the state of New Jersey, by Mr Matthew H Henderson, the rector ; whose certificate of his having solemnised the banns at that place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November 1834 was put in and read. In October of the following year, he (West) became possessed of property to the amount of nearly £4,000, which had been left to him by a distant relation, and leaving his wife (and the child she had borne to Hodges, her first husband) in Elizabeth Town, United States, he came to England and took possession of his property, situated near this city, and gave his wife no intimation either of himself or his concerns afterwards. Not hearing from him as she naturally expected to do, she left America

and followed him to this city, where in an interview together the husband, on being asked to do a common act of justice by acknowledging the unfortunate woman as his lawful wife, threatened to kick her out of his house, a share in the comforts of which she is legally entitled to, and refused to have anything more to say to her. In this situation, she was compelled with her child to solicit relief, in the shape of a loaf of bread from the officer at St Clements. Singular to state, a person named Joseph J Scott Miller, who has lately come to this city, came forward and proved that he witnessed the ceremony of the marriage legally performed according to the rites of the general Protestant Church of the United States, between the above mentioned parties, in the year 1834. Mr Tyler stated that West had repeatedly refused to afford any sum whatever for the maintenance of the woman, when he had urged him to do so. The Bench without any hesitation granted a summons against West, and appointed the hearing of the case on Monday.

### **170    October 25 1838**

#### **CITY MAGISTRATES' OFFICE**

**PADDY IN TROUBLE** Jeremiah Linenham, a sturdy uncouth son of Erin, was charged with felony. The circumstances of the case were these. The prisoner entered the lodgings of a boatman named **Benjamin Lee** in Cripplegate during the night of Saturday, and not finding any person downstairs very unceremoniously began to appropriate to himself two pair of boots, a hat (in the place of which he substituted "a shocking bad one"), a shirt and a quantity of raw mutton ; during the liberal disposal of which he was interrupted by the prosecutor coming downstairs. He excused himself by saying he had found the door open during his search for a lodging, and had crept in to rest himself. This artful tale had its effect, and the man was told to go away, but Lee wanting his hat to go out missed it, and following the prisoner found the hat upon his head. His suspicions were then increased, and on searching a bundle which the Irishman had on his arm, he found two pair of boots and a shirt which belonged to his brother-in-law, Henry Barber. Finding these, he immediately took him to the station house. Lee identified the hat and Barber the shirt. The prisoner, on being called for his defence, with the greatest impudence asserted that he had no intention of "stealing" the things, but he thought he might as well take them, as they would be useful by the roadside. Mr Sidebottom : "You are committed to take your trial". Paddy : "Sure enough, is not this trial sufficient. But there's one thing, you can't hang me ; and if you send me to Botany, I'll come back again by the road". He roared out fast and furiously in *real* Irish lingo when he was removed by the constable.

### **171    November 8 1838**

**CITY MAGISTRATES' OFFICE** **William Bishop** and **Joseph Field** were charged by Tilt with being drunk. They were found by him in so beastly a state of intoxication in Foregate Street on Saturday night that he was compelled to procure the assistance of another officer, and remove the incapables on a truck to the station house. They stated themselves to be watermen in the employ of **Mr Benjamin Devey** of Stourport, but could give no satisfactory answer to the charge brought against them. Fined 5s and discharged.

### **172    November 22 1838**

**MANSLAUGHTER** On Wednesday last, an inquest was held at the Britannia Inn, Saint Mary's Square, Gloucester, before Mr Richard Coley, coroner, and a respectable jury, on the body of Mary Powell whose death, which took place on the previous Tuesday, was alleged to have been occasioned by the violence of a waterman known as "Long Charley", who struck her with his fist in the side. The deceased was a youthful prostitute of a weakly constitution, and only from 15 to 16 years old. She went to Gloucester in company with another girl from this city, and lived at a house in an obscure court. It appeared that both her parents were dead and probably, like too many more, the wretched circumstances in which she was placed, without friends and suffering from poverty, impelled her to the course of life which so prematurely and wretchedly terminated. On Thursday night she, in company with other girls of a similar course of life, was in the Crown and Anchor

parlour. They had a fiddler and were dancing. About half past ten at the conclusion of one of the dances, the deceased went and sat down on a bench by the side of the prisoner, she having, it was said, previously danced with him for a short period. After a few minutes the prisoner is alleged to have quarrelled with her. She arose to come away from him, when he caught her by the clothes, pulled her towards him then pushed her, and struck her a blow with his fist on the side just above the hip. The poor creature reeled a little, and walked towards the fireplace and leant her head upon a table. She was unable to speak for some time, but on recovering her breath, she repeatedly cried, "Oh, my side! Oh, my back!", and said Long Charley had struck her on the side. The blow was witnessed by several persons in the room, who abused the prisoner for his conduct, but scarcely any of them were able to speak positively as to which side of the deceased was struck. She remained in the Crown and Anchor nearly an hour after the occurrence, continually complaining of the pain she suffered. She was at length led home by a companion and put to bed; Mr Wood, surgeon, was sent for, but by a strange neglect nothing was mentioned to him about the blow she had received, and he supposed she was attacked with fever. She continued to get worse, and on Monday evening Mr Wood himself saw her; she was then in a very dangerous state, and on the morrow she died. Mr Wood made a *post mortem* examination of the body, and his evidence upon this subject was to the following effect :- he found the liver and kidneys in a morbid state, which were the only decided marks of disease that he discovered. A blow in the situation described by the witnesses might, if severe, produce injury to the liver and kidneys, but he was inclined to be of opinion that the diseased condition of those parts in the body of the deceased must have had its origin before Thursday last. There was a mark on the right side of the body, just above the hip, which might have been caused by a blow, but he could not trace any direct communication between that mark and the internal disease. A number of circumstances might combine to cause death, and his opinion was that the previously diseased state of the liver and kidneys, the mode of life of the girl, and the injury described by the witnesses, all combined to cause the death of the deceased. The morbid state of the liver and kidneys, supposing it to have existed previously to the alleged injury, was not in itself, in his opinion, sufficient to account for death. A severe blow on the part mentioned was likely to injure the liver and kidney. The testimony of the witnesses went to show that the alleged blow was given maliciously; but one girl, Eliza Clark, said she thought it was "larking". This witness was contradicted in many parts of her story, and she admitted that she cohabited with the prisoner. The jury, after a patient investigation of all the circumstances of the case, returned a verdict of Manslaughter against **Charles Smith**, who was committed to prison upon the coroner's warrant to take his trial for the offence.

### **173    December 20 1838**

CASE OF THE WATERMEN Another lecture was given on this subject by the Rev John Davies, at the Guildhall on Friday evening. The meeting was highly respectable, and so numerous attended that many persons returned home, being unable to gain admission. Among those present, we noticed the Mayor and eight of the resident Clergy. The Rev Lecturer began by stating that on a former occasion, it had been proved that the demoralised state of the Watermen was to be traced to their being cut off from the privileges of the Sabbath – that they were become themselves aware of this – that many of them felt it deeply, and had respectfully memorialised their employers, as well as petitioned Parliament for relief. He then gave a description of three Navigations in the parish where he is now residing, and stated that the character of the men employed varied in proportion to their religious advantages. On one of these Navigations, the flatmen had been favoured with the Sabbath, and had so profited that they had become, under the Divine blessing, a decidedly improved class. On the other Navigations, several proprietors of vessels had also, much to their honour, granted to their men the privilege of the Sabbath, and it deserved notice that they had not been losers by this change, so beneficial to those whom they employ. On the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal, some important regulations have been recently introduced, under the sanction of Lord Francis Egerton, to check Sunday labour. Lady Francis had presented the munificent sum of £400 for the erection of a Sunday and Infant school near the Bridgewater Canal at Runcorn, which is

much needed for the instruction of the children of the flatmen and others in that vicinity. The Rev Lecturer further stated that improvement was evidently commencing among the watermen in general – that the plan of placing on board of each vessel a box containing a Bible for the use of the crew, had been attended with most beneficial results. Instances had occurred where watermen had learned to read on purpose to make use of the Bible, and had gradually become quite altered characters, through the Divine blessing. He found also that a layman, a member of the Church Establishment, had rendered most essential service to the flatmen employed on the River Weaver. After this benevolent individual had placed a copy of the Holy Scriptures on board each vessel, he found many of the men applying to purchase Bibles for themselves by paying small sums weekly. Drunkenness, swearing and quarrelling have greatly diminished on this River. It has been found on different navigations that watermen, who had for a time been favoured with the Sabbath and were becoming quite altered men, upon a change which called them again to Sunday labour, have relapsed into their former vicious courses. The want of the Sabbath is the great hindrance to their improvement. The Reverend Lecturer further remarked that in his efforts to benefit this class, he had received encouragement from the Bishop of Chester, as well as the Bishop of Worcester. The venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge has made several liberal grants of Bibles and Testaments to be distributed among watermen. The Prayer Book and Homily Society have also remembered this neglected class. He rejoiced to be able to state that in addition to other efforts, made in various parts of the kingdom, the Clergy on the line of the Liverpool and Leeds Canal have formed themselves into a Committee for the purpose of obtaining for the boatmen freedom from Sunday labour, and promoting their religious instruction. After many interesting details, the Reverend Lecturer concluded by exhorting the assembly, while anxious themselves “to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy”, to spare no exertion to advance the spiritual welfare of the watermen, by endeavouring to obtain for them the Sabbath, by promoting the education of their children, by the distribution of the Holy Scriptures and suitable Tracts, as well as by friendly counsel and advice. He deprecated any attempts to alienate the men from their masters, expressing his sincere hope that ere long the masters would see it to be both their duty and interest to allow the men rest on the Sunday, and that the men would be anxious to apply to the best purposes the opportunities which might be thus afforded them for spiritual instruction. The Lecturer was listened to with the deepest attention ; and the following resolution, proposed by the Lecturer and seconded by the Rev John Adlington, was unanimously carried with acclamation:-

*“That this meeting fully recognising the Divine Authority of the Sabbath, feel anxiously desirous to promote its due observance among all ranks of her Majesty's subjects, but more especially among that class who gain their subsistence by labouring on our Rivers and Canals, whose case calls for peculiar sympathy, and immediate consideration and relief”.*

A vote of thanks to the Lecturer, moved by the Rev F Hewson and seconded by the Rev J Field, having been cordially adopted, the meeting separated, evidently much interested in the object for which they had assembled.

#### **174    December 27 1838**

**FRIENDLY SOCIETY AMONG WATERMEN**    The anniversary of the Mersey and Irwell Flatmen's Friendly Society was held at Runcorn on Thursday last, Mr E A Lingard presiding. The members resident in the neighbourhood, some of them accompanied by their wives and daughters, had a grand tea party on the occasion. More than twenty ladies attended to assist, and not a few urns were put in requisition. Forty gallons of tea, four rounds of beef, together with divers minor articles, in due time disappeared. A sail room near the Old Quay was comfortably fitted up for the occasion, and tastefully ornamented with laurel and other evergreens. The scene was truly delightful ; the men were all decently attired and the women most respectably dressed. Cheerfulness and good humour prevailed at every table, and the appearance of the whole party gave evident proof of the happy change which has been produced among a body of men formerly

notorious for profligacy and wickedness. The report was read by Mr Lingard, the Treasurer, from which it appeared that the Society had 269 enrolled members. Not one death had occurred during the year – a remarkable fact ; only two deaths in the space of three years, and those by accident, since these watermen have enjoyed the privilege of the Sabbath, habits of temperance and sobriety have been formed ; the result, under the Divine blessing, of religious instruction. The Treasurer stated that the balance in hand amounted to £387 10s 2 1/2d, after all the cases of sickness occurring during the year had been liberally relieved. Among the expenses enumerated was £20, presented as a token of gratitude to Mr Lingard to purchase another piece of plate, he having been the means of raising the Society from penury to affluence. The sum of 5 guineas was also included, being annual subscriptions to five charitable institutions. Among the persons present at the meeting were five Clergymen who, as well as the President, severally addressed the assembly, pointing out the true nature and object of friendly societies, contrasting the rotten system of Socialism with the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel of the Divine Redeemer, cautioning the members of the Society against the peculiar temptations to which they are exposed, warning them especially against the evils of intemperance, enforcing the importance of improving the Sabbath, and acting up to their profession as servants of Christ. It was strongly urged that the flatmen of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation ought to be particularly circumspect in their conduct – that other canal proprietors, seeing how profitably the Sabbath was spent by them, might be induced to grant the same privilege to their men, who were at present in a most awfully neglected state, generally speaking. The Rev John Davies, after having been elected an honorary member of the Society, was called upon to read the parable of the “Good Samaritan”, and offer a prayer for the Divine blessing upon the institution. Several appropriate hymns were sung during the evening, together with the National Anthem, and the company separated with feelings strikingly contrasted with those too often excited when friendly Societies hold their anniversaries. At the close, one of the flatmen, in the name of his brethren, returned thanks in a becoming manner for the kind attention shown to them by their superiors on this interesting occasion. It ought to be remarked that the members of the Society never meet in a public house. At every monthly meeting a collect is read, followed by a chapter in the Bible, before business commences. The following rules of this society deserve notice :-

“10 That the funeral solemnity of deceased members, or their wives, shall be conducted with propriety and decorum, avoiding those scandalous practices which convert “the house of mourning into a house of feasting” and dishonour the memory of the departed brother or sister. One pound shall be withheld by the Treasurer from every funeral allowance, till after the interment has taken place ; and if the funeral observances have been consistent with a ceremony so solemn and melancholy, the pound shall be immediately paid, when claimed ; but if so otherwise, it shall be forfeited to the Society, for perverting to purposes of profanity and sensual indulgences the last offices of kindness to the dead”.

The 13<sup>th</sup> rule condemns members guilty of drunkenness, warning them against frequenting public houses, dram shops, &c.

“18 That members being intoxicated on the Lord's Day, or in any way profaning that holy day, shall be fined five shillings for every instance ; and members cursing, swearing, using lewd language, or if they be masters of vessels, allowing and not checking or forbidding profane swearing and obscene language on board their vessels, or otherwise breaking the good order of moral conduct in their daily deportment, shall be fined one shilling upon conviction of every offence. That members convicted of pilferage, robbery, forgery, sedition, fornication, adultery, or any such like grievous crimes, shall be excluded, and be incapable of being again admitted”.