

BERROWS WORCESTER JOURNAL
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1 January 20 1872

STOURPORT

A BOATMAN DROWNED An inquest was held a few days ago at Gloucester Infirmary, in the case of **Henry Cox**, thirty five years old, a waterman of Stourport. On the afternoon of the 6th inst, he and another were in charge of one of two barges roped together and sailing along the Severn. Opposite Tandy's brickyard, he went forward, as ordered, to loosen the rope ; his foot was caught, he was thrown into the water and dragged two or three hundred yards, remaining below the surface seven or eight minutes ; and when pulled out his leg was cut, and the efforts of the Infirmary surgeon to save the man were unavailing. The verdict was that deceased was accidentally drowned.

2 January 20 1872

WORCESTER COUNTY COURT

SMITH v DAYUS George Smith, miller, Silver Street in this city, claimed from **William Dayus**, boatman, who lives near Foundry Lock, £29 11s 8d, balance of an account of £53 10s 8d for hay and straw sold, in the ordinary way of business, by plaintiff to the defendant, in the year 1869. Mr Quarrell for plaintiff and Mr Clutterbuck for defendant. His Honour made an order for the amount claimed. £2 per month.

3 February 10 1872

NARROW ESCAPE FROM DROWNING On Friday night, as PC Adams was passing the Lower Quay, he heard a splashing noise in the water and saw a man's hand just above the surface. Adams immediately got into a boat, and by dint of great exertion pulled out the drowning man, **George Payne**, a boatman.

4 February 10 1872

MATHON

DISCOVERY OF MR ARDEN'S BODY On the 6th ult, Mr Frederick Arden, assistant overseer of Mathon, disappeared from his home. All efforts to ascertain his whereabouts proved fruitless. On Sunday morning a waterman named **James Smith** discovered the body of a man floating in the Severn at Upton, and on being taken out, it was found to be that of the missing rate collector. The body, which was in an advanced state of decomposition, was conveyed to the Severn Trow Inn at Upton-on-Severn to await a coroner's inquest. The only property found on deceased was a rate book, an empty money bag, two half pence, a farthing, a pocket knife and a pair of gloves. A man answering to the description of Mr Arden was seen to fall into the Severn near the Butts, Worcester, on the evening of the day that he left Mathon. There was a freshet in the river at the time, and the body must have been washed down as far as Upton. Deceased was fifty seven years of age, and has left a widow and several children.

5 February 17 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK **John Harrison**, boatman, Droitwich, charged with being drunk and riotous, was cautioned and discharged.

6 March 23 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CHARGE OF STEALING BACON **John Baylis**, boatman, Powick, was charged with stealing a chawl of bacon. Sarah Ann Booth, wife of Samuel Booth of the Bear, Hylton Street, said that at about four o'clock on Thursday afternoon, she hung up two chawls of bacon in the kitchen. Prisoner came to the house about eight o'clock, and stayed until a little after eleven. He was the last

to leave. Early next morning she missed one of the chawls. It was within reach of a person standing on a step at the door between the kitchen and another room. The piece of bacon produced appeared to be part of the chawl she missed. Philip Matthews said he saw prisoner at the Bear on Thursday evening. When he left, between eleven and twelve, he saw the two chawls hung up. Prisoner was then the only person in the kitchen. Witness offered to accompany prisoner, who had been drinking, to his boat, but the latter refused to leave. Detective Underwood said he apprehended prisoner at Stourport on Friday. In a cupboard in the cabin, he found the pieces of bacon produced ; they had been boiled and were then warm. One of the pieces exactly corresponded with the cut of the other chawl. Prisoner said he could produce a witness to prove that the bacon had been in the boat for a week. The case was adjourned until Thursday, to enable prisoner to bring forward this evidence.

7 April 6 1872

DROITWICH BOROUGH MAGISTRATES' OFFICE, THURSDAY APRIL 4

ASSAULT **Mary Pittaway** was charged with assaulting **Sarah Bourne**, wife of a bargeman, on the 2nd inst at the Golden Cross Inn. The Bench, considering both parties at fault, dismissed the summons, and ordered the costs, 12s, to be paid equally between them.

8 April 13 1872

A SHROPSHIRE BOATMAN DROWNED On Saturday evening, a boatman named **Benjamin Boden**, belonging to (?Tedfield), Shropshire, fell into the Severn at Diglis lock and was drowned. With several others, he had been engaged all day unloading a barge at the Royal Porcelain Works, and in the evening, deceased, William Burns and another went to the Anchor public house. There they remained until half past eight, when deceased left to go to the barge. He was rather the worse for drink, and Burns, who was sober, accompanied him. When they came to the road across the gate at Diglis lock, Burns asked if he could cross without assistance, and he said he could. He fell, however, before he got across. It was low water ; and half an hour elapsed before he was got out, when he was dead. At the inquest before Mr W S P Hughes, the jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

9 April 20 1872

WORCESTER COUNTY COURT

IMPORTANT TO BOATMEN

WILLIAM DAYUS v THE WORCESTER AND BIRMINGHAM CANAL COMPANY This was a common jury case. The plaintiff is a boatman living at the Foundry Lock, and the action was brought to recover from the Canal Company the sum of £26 14s 6d for damage sustained to his boat, in consequence of the defendants having negligently allowed baulks of timber to remain in a navigable part of the canal. Mr Clutterbuck appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr Motteram, barrister, appeared on behalf of the company. In March 1871, the plaintiff was in possession of a boat called the *Envy No One*, worth about £45. On or about the 3rd of that month he was on a return voyage from Birmingham to Worcester, had passed the King's Head lock, and was coming into the basin when he saw several baulks of timber floating about. He called out to his wife, who was steering, and to his man, **Danelow**, to be careful of these baulks. A Severn line was thrown to him, and he then led the horse along the towing-path for a short distance, but suddenly the boat lodged on some of the baulks, and plaintiff and the animal were pulled into the canal. After some difficulty he got out of the water, but not until he had sustained injuries to his head and body, which necessitated his obtaining medical advice. The assistance of a man named Lea, a boat builder, was at once obtained and, the boat having been extricated from the timber, it was discovered that it had been damaged to such an extent that it would require immediate repairs. Lea was ordered to repair the boat, for which he charged £2 10s. The plaintiff was examined, and swore to the above facts, adding that the boat was afterwards further repaired by Mr College, the total amount charged, including Mr Lea's account, being £20 14s 6d. He also claimed £3 for keeping the horse and for injuries it had

received, which rendered it unfit for use for three days ; £2 for personal injury to himself and loss of time ; and £1 for damage done to the hay with which the boat was afterwards loaded. He asserted that he was sober when the accident occurred, and that it was through no negligence of his. Mrs Dayus corroborated the evidence of her husband, and stated that there were as many as fourteen or fifteen baulks floating about. Samuel Lea, boat builder at Diglis lock, removed the boat from the baulks and afterwards repaired the damages, charging £2 10s. In cross-examination by Mr Motteram, witness said the boat was worth £15 or £20 when it left him. William College, boat builder, Millfield, deposed to making some further repairs in April. Mr Motteram, in defence, first quoted several sections of the Canal Act, showing that if any boat obstructed the navigation of the water, the Company had power to order its removal, and should the obstruction continue, they might cause the vessel to be unloaded and removed, distraining such vessel to pay for the cost of such removal. In the case of timber floating in the canal, however, the company had only power to give notice to the owners, and if it were not removed within a reasonable time, a fine of £5 could be inflicted. In this case that notice had been given, and with this the liability of the company ended. The learned gentleman then contended that the matter rested entirely with the owners of the timber (Messrs Danks and Co) and the plaintiff, but he asserted that the latter was the worse for liquor, and that the accident was occasioned simply through his negligence and the negligence of the two others in charge of the boat. He then called **E Waldron**, lock-keeper at the Diglis lock, who said he remembered the plaintiff coming with an empty boat into the basin. It was about five o'clock on a day in March 1871, and there was at that time a baulk of timber in the basin. The plaintiff was drunk, and as he was turning his horse round, he fell with the animal into the water. Witness helped him out. As soon as he had ascertained to whom the timber belonged, he gave notice to the consignors and the consignees to remove it. In answer to one of the jurymen, witness said it was customary to float the timber, and these particular baulks had been floating there for two or three days previous to the accident to the plaintiff. Two other witnesses were called to swear that the plaintiff was intoxicated. Mr Clutterbuck next addressed the jury, submitting that the defendants were liable, and that Mr Motteram's version of the Act of Parliament was an incorrect one. His Honour summed up the evidence, and afterwards informed the jury that if they were satisfied the accident occurred through the company allowing the baulks to remain in the water, they would find for the plaintiff, but if the latter had contributed to it by his neglect, they would return a verdict for the defendants. The jury retired, and after nearly an hour's deliberation, returned into court with a verdict for plaintiff, damages £10.

10 April 27 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK AND INCAPABLE James Jones, boatman, Newent, Gloucestershire, was charged with being drunk and incapable in the High Street on Wednesday night. Discharged.

11 May 4 1872

A PROSPEROUS NAVIGATION COMPANY Mr E Leader Williams jun is engineer to the Weaver Navigation Trustees, whose undertaking, notwithstanding railway competition, has been most successful. The Trustees are now applying to Parliament for additional powers for improving their navigation, and the Board of Trade has investigated the circumstances connected with the traffic carried on upon this 26 miles of river. The report presented to Parliament by the Board shows that in about 60 years the Trustees of the Weaver received in tolls £1,602, 278 1s 8d, which has been thus expended :- Upon the maintenance and improvement of the navigation, £843,720 ; handed over to the county of Chester, in reduction of the county rates, £716,613 ; building and endowing three churches for the use of the boatmen navigating the river, £17,049. The present annual revenue is about £60,000, and this large sum is earned by the water traffic opposed by railway competition on each side of the river.

12 June 1 1872

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

STEALING COAL **William Harmer**, boatman, Sidbury, was charged with having, on the 4th of May, stolen a quantity of coal, the property of William Stephens of Kempsey. Mr Tree defended the prisoner. Prosecutor said that on the 3rd of May the prisoner brought a boat load of coal down to the Kempsey Wharf, and the next day proceeded to unload. Witness asked him if he had taken it all out of the boat, and he replied that he had with the exception of about half a hundred. The boat was afterwards searched, when nearly three cwt was found. It was customary to allow the captain of a boat 2 1/2 cwt of coal, but prosecutor had given him 1s 6d instead. In defence, Mr Tree called **Frederick Smith**, who said that he assisted to unload the coal, and knowing that it was customary to allow the captain of the boat 2 1/2 cwt, he put aside that quantity, but was not told to do so by the prisoner. Committed for seven days with hard labour.

13 June 15 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ASSAULT **Herbert Spares**, boatman, Pheasant Street, was charged with assaulting his wife on the 8th instant. Dismissed on payment of costs.

14 June 22 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK AND RIOTOUS **William Blake**, boatman, Foundry Street, was charged with being drunk and riotous at Park Hill this morning, and fined 10s and costs. Committed for 14 days in default.

CRUELTY **John Lewis**, boatman, St Andrew's Square, was fined 10s and costs for cruelty to two donkeys, by working them when in an unfit state on the 13th inst.

15 June 29 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNKENNESS **Charles Waldron**, boatman, Birdport, was charged with being drunk and incapable at Bullring. Discharged.

16 July 13 1872

On Wednesday night, a boatman named **John Dearden**, residing at Leeds, shot his wife, who died next morning. Dearden is in custody.

17 August 3 1872

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY AUGUST 1

ASSAULT **Eliza**, wife of **James Ewers**, boatman, who has on many previous occasions occupied the attention of the Bench, was charged with assaulting her brother-in-law, **Mark Pittaway**, boatman, on the 10th July last in Hanbury Street. Bound over to keep the peace for six months, and to pay 13s 6d costs.

18 August 3 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ASSAULT **George Cullis**, boatman of St George's Lane, was summoned by Mary Ann Cullis, St George's Tavern, for assault. Adjourned till Tuesday.

19 August 10 1872

UPTON-ON-SEVERN PETTY SESSIONS THURSDAY AUGUST 8

Alfred Weaver and John Weaver of Upton, father and son, were charged by **John Feradey**, boatman, with assaulting him on the 27th July last. Dismissed.

20 August 10 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ASSAULT **George Cullis**, boatman, St George's Lane, was charged on remand with assaulting his wife on the 29th ult. Fined £1 and costs, and bound over in his own recognisance of £20 to keep the peace for six months.

21 October 5 1872

A CHILD DROWNED IN THE SEVERN On Wednesday afternoon a child, three years of age, the daughter of a waterman named **Jones**, living in Quay Street, was drowned in the Severn. The child was playing near Warmistrey slip, when she fell down the side of the bank into the water. An alarm was immediately given, but unfortunately no boat could be obtained and the child sank. Search was made for the body, but without avail, and it is supposed that the strong under current has carried it a considerable distance down the river. Efforts are still, however, being made by the relatives of the deceased to recover the body. It is a singular circumstance that nine years ago the parents lost a son in a similar manner, and near the same spot.

22 October 19 1872

UPTON-ON-SEVERN PETTY SESSIONS THURSDAY OCTOBER 17

ASSAULT **William Alfred Griffin** of Upton, boatman, charged **Joseph Trotter** of the same place, also a boatman, with assault at Upton on the 10th inst. Fined 2s 6d with costs.

23 October 19 1872

SHOCKING BOAT ACCIDENT

FOUR PERSONS DROWNED A shocking boat accident occurred near Tewkesbury last evening. Joseph Baylis, fisherman ; Emily, wife of John Baylis, boat owner ; **Thomas Farrant**, waterman, and Eliza Franklin, single woman, left Tewkesbury on Thursday afternoon in a fishing boat. At Chaceley a son of Mrs Baylis joined them. When near the Coal House, they met Danks's steam tug and the pleasure steamer running between Worcester and Gloucester. The boat was steered between the two, and was upset by their wash. Joseph Baylis clung to the boat and reached the shore. Mrs Baylis floated for a short time, but all except Joseph Baylis were drowned. The bodies are now being searched for.

24 October 26 1872

THE FATAL BOAT ACCIDENT ON THE SEVERN An accident, resulting in the loss of four lives, took place (as briefly recorded in Berrow's Worcester Journal last week) near the Haw Bridge on the Severn, on the afternoon of the 17th inst. Joseph Bayliss, fisherman, Emily Bayliss, the wife of John Bayliss, boat owner, **Thomas Tarrant**, waterman aged 40, and Eliza Franklin, a young woman about 18 years of age, left Tewkesbury about three o'clock in the afternoon in an ordinary fisherman's long boat. Some of the party had been to Tewkesbury with eels, and the boat was a new one recently purchased chiefly by the young woman Franklin, who was to have been married on Sunday. The party proceeded down the river with the flood, and at Chaceley Stock they were joined by a little boy named Alfred Bayliss, the son of Mrs Bayliss. When opposite the "Coal House" or the "House in the Tree", Messrs Danks's tug steamer, with a fleet of four barges and a trow, and the passenger steamer *Queen Mab* were seen, the latter alongside of the former, and the party in the boat, instead of going to either side of the river, which was nearly bank full, took a course between the two steamers. The boat came into collision with the *Queen Mab* and was upset, and its occupants were precipitated into the water. Joseph Bayliss managed to cling to the boat (which turned over more than once), and reached the shore almost exhausted ; and Mrs Bayliss floated till opposite the last of the fleet of boats, so that had there been a small boat attached she might have been saved, but all except Joseph Bayliss were drowned. Mrs Bayliss was near her confinement. The body of Thomas Tarrant was recovered, and an inquest was held on Monday at Apperley, before Mr Coren, the district coroner. The following witnesses were called :-

Joseph Bayliss, who was rowing the boat with a pair of "peels", said the deceased man Tarrant was steering it with another peel. They were returning in the boat from Tewkesbury. They were passing a tug which was drawing a number of trows at Apperley, when in coming round the bend of the river they came upon the *Queen Mab* steamer, which was going up the river. He heard no one call out, probably on account of the tug blowing off steam. The boat suddenly struck the *Queen Mab* in the bow, and was upset. He swam to the boat, and held on, and was rescued by a trowman. All the others sunk. Tarrant, the deceased, must have seen the steamer before striking it, as he faced it while steering. He did not think any of the others in the boat saw the steamer. They had had two quarts of beer among eight, coming along, but were all quite sober. Witness attributed the accident to the bad steering of the deceased (Tarrant).

Mrs Taylor, a passenger on board the *Queen Mab*, said the man at the wheel shouted out, when he saw the boat approaching, "Keep your own side", and waved his hand. The tug and trows were between the *Queen Mab* and the Apperley bank of the river, and the boat, when first seen, was nearer the Tirley side of the river than the Apperley side but, instead of keeping that line, it shaped its course towards the steamer, and the man at the wheel called out, "I say, keep back", and waved his hand. When the steamer was close to the boat, she saw Bayliss stand up and row very hard with his peel, so as to turn the boat between the steamer and the trows. She was looking over the side of the vessel, and called out, "For goodness sake, Joe, go back or you'll all be drowned". The boat then bumped against the steamer, but not very hard, and it was upset. She called out for help, and the young man at the wheel ran with a lifebuoy.

William Preedy, mate of the *Queen Mab*, said the tug and trows were hugging the Apperley shore, and the steamer was coming up behind, when a flat bottomed fishing boat with five persons in it came round the bend and across their course. He shouted out, and said to the engine driver, "Tom, they're coming right into us ; stop the engine", and he steered towards the Apperley shore, and nearly fouled the trows. The driver reversed the engine directly ; the boat was then ten or twelve yards off. If the boat had been allowed to drift down the stream in coming round the bend, it would have gone clear of the steamer. The steamer was going at the rate of about seven miles an hour. The Jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death", and gave their fees to the deceased's widow.

25 November 9 1872

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNKENNESS **John Boddendam, William Radford, George Goodwin, Henry Bourne and George Manley**, boatmen, were summoned for being drunk at Diglis on the 23rd ult. Mr J J Corbet appeared for the defendants. The defendants, who were in the employ of Messrs Danks and Sanders, were engaged in unloading clay at Diglis, but left their work. The clerk went in search of them, and found them at the Anchor Inn. They were drunk, and refused to return to their work. Mr Corbet contended that the men were not drunk, and called two witnesses, Mr John Smith and Mr Walter Bowkitt, who declared that the men were perfectly sober. The Bench did not consider the question for them to decide was whether the employers had sustained any loss in consequence of the men leaving their work, but as they were undoubtedly the worse for liquor, a fine of 5s and costs would be inflicted. The Bench also expressed a hope that the publican would be careful not to allow men to get drunk in his house, as under the new Licensing Act, he rendered himself liable to a severe penalty. Orders were also given to the police to watch the house.

26 November 23 1872

WATERMEN'S CHURCH A sermon in aid of the expenses of this church will be preached on Wednesday afternoon next at the Watermen's Church by the Lord Bishop of Worcester.

27 December 7 1872

REDDITCH PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 4

LARCENY AS A BAILEE **James Clarke**, a boatman of Kingsnorton, was charged with having converted to his own use a boat, the property of Leonora Poole of Headless Cross, Redditch, on the

17th November. It appeared that the prisoner, some years ago, hired the boat in question from the prosecutrix, and agreed to pay her 8s per week for the hire. A short time since, the boat being in a wrecked condition, prisoner sold it for £5. Prisoner called two witnesses, who gave evidence tending to show that he had purchased the boat from the prosecutrix, and had paid her part of the purchase money. Witnesses on behalf of the prosecution, two sons and a daughter of the prosecutrix, swore it was not sold to him, but simply lent on hire. The Magistrates, being of opinion that the evidence against the prisoner was not strong enough to convict, discharged him.

28 December 14 1872

KIDDERMINSTER

DEATH BY BURNING Two children were fearfully burnt on Friday night. They were the illegitimate children of a woman named Carter, living in York Street. The eldest was seven years of age, the other seventeen months old. The mother left them in the house sleeping on a flock mattress before the fire, and went to the theatre. A little before midnight the shrieks of the poor little ones brought the police and neighbours to the cottage where they lived ; the door was broken open, and the room found to be on fire. The children were quickly rescued, but the youngest died almost immediately, and the eldest, when taken to the Infirmary, was found to be in a hopeless condition. Mr R Docker, coroner, opened an inquest at the Old Hop Pole Inn on Tuesday, on the body of Ann Maria Wild. **Emma Cartright** of York Street, wife of **Henry Cartwright**, boatman, said she was the mother of the deceased. It was seventeen months old, and was not her husband's child. She went out at nine o'clock on Friday evening, leaving the deceased and another child, a boy six years old, in a bed before the fire. Her husband was away up the canal. She left no one in the house but the two children. She made a fire in the room because it was so damp. The bed in which the children slept was on the floor. There was not much fire in the grate when she left. There was no fender to the grate. According to the description of the witness, the bed was about thirty inches from the grate. She did not return until near twelve o'clock, and then found the children had been burnt. The one was dead on the floor, by the side of the fire. The Coroner : What occasion had you to be away so long? Witness : I went to borrow sixpence from my husband's sister, and afterwards went to the play with her. I went straight from the theatre home. Samuel Carter, carpet weaver, said an alarm being given, he went into the house, which was full of suffocating smoke. He groped his way into the bedroom and stumbled against a little boy, who had scrambled off the bed towards the doorway. With great difficulty he found the other child. Its head was quite close to the fire grate – it was not a foot from the grate. It was dead. There was a little fire in the grate, apparently the remains of a good fire. There was a bed on the floor before the fire, and he pulled it away. He should think the bed would nearly touch the mantelpiece. There was plenty of room to put up a good sized bed without putting it near the fireplace. The bed was in such a position that if heated cinders fell from the grate they must fall against the bed. It was only the middle of the bed which was burnt, the ends were not reached by the fire. There were no bedclothes except an old sheet. There was no furniture in the room. He was in the house when the mother came home, and he should think it was nearly one o'clock. Other evidence having been given, the Coroner said the case was one for further enquiry, and he proposed to adjourn the inquest in order that a *post mortem* examination might be made, and that the police might trace the woman Cartwright from the time she left home until she returned. The position of the body of the deceased, as described by Carter, would certainly go very far to implicate the woman in a very serious charge, supposing her to have intentionally placed the bed before the fire, so that the ashes falling from it must fall against the bed ; and she had at least been guilty of an amount of negligence which he thought the law would call upon her to answer. The enquiry was adjourned till Saturday. Chief Superintendent Haigh afterwards caused Mrs Cartwright to be apprehended.

29 December 14 1872

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CRUELTY **James Smith**, boatman, Hereford, was charged with cruelty to two donkeys.

Defendant was in charge of the animals, which were drawing barges. Henry Hughes of Tallow Hill saw him beat them very cruelly with a windlass. So severe was the ill treatment that a piece of flesh was cut out of one of the animals. Fined £1, or fourteen days' hard labour.

30 December 21 1872

SEVERE GALES AND FLOODS

WORCESTER The very heavy rain which has fallen for several days past has again caused the Severn to rise to a considerable height, and the river has overflowed its banks, submerging the whole of the meadows in its vicinity. On Monday the water began to rise, but not to any great extent until late in the night, when it rose six feet in two or three hours, and on Tuesday morning the water mark at Diglis locks showed the depth to be 29 ft 4 in. It continued at this the whole of Tuesday and Wednesday, when it gradually subsided. The meadows are still flooded, and the water is of sufficient depth to enable large steam tugs with heavy burdens to go over the weir without difficulty. The only accident of a serious character is one reported from Leigh Sinton, where Mr Henry Dance, bailiff to Mr G B Essex, was drowned whilst endeavouring to recover some sheep which had been overtaken by the flood. The county constabulary experience great inconvenience from the effects of the frequent rains. In many parts of the country the roads are flooded, and in order to traverse the whole of their "beats", many of the men have to wade through water for as long a distance as half a mile. One effect of the new Licensing Act is to preclude the possibility of the unfortunate officers obtaining something to "keep out the cold". This is really a serious matter, as it is stated as a fact that many police officers have been dangerously ill and been obliged to give up their duties in consequence of the hardships they have had to encounter. On Tuesday morning the residents of North Barbourne who had engagements in the city, on arriving at Barbourne bridge, found that the road in the direction of Worcester was flooded a foot deep. Some difficulty was experienced in reaching the city. Many passed down the lane adjoining the brook, and with difficulty, owing to the darkness of the morning, found their way by the fields into the turnpike road again. Others waded through the flood. At the Swan Inn, the water entered the lower rooms. The water began to subside about nine o'clock, but the stream continued high during the rest of the day.

PERSHORE During Tuesday and Wednesday, the Avon in this neighbourhood rose with greater rapidity than at any previous flood within the recollection of the watermen here. All the meadows along the banks are submerged. The road at the end of the town near the Bridges crossing the Avon is under water and almost impassable even with vehicles. Goodwin's Corn Mill is flooded, and the employees have had to leave work. Mr Lock's house, near the mill, is also flooded, and most of the gardens at the rear of the houses on the Avon side in Bridge Street are under water. The oldest inhabitants say it is the highest flood that has occurred for upwards of twenty years. For some time scarcely a week has passed without a flood here, but no serious damage has occurred.

EVESHAM On Tuesday last the Avon again overflowed its banks in consequence of the late heavy rains. The water commenced rising rapidly shortly after midnight on Monday, and at ten o'clock on Tuesday morning had attained a height of nearly ten feet above its ordinary level. The pleasure grounds were inundated to an extent of some five feet, and the whole of the low lying levels in the town and immediate neighbourhood were submerged to an alarming extent. The water subsided a little in the afternoon, but the heavy rains of Tuesday caused a still further rise, and on Wednesday morning the water had risen more than a foot higher than on the previous day, and within one inch of the height attained on the 25th March 1867. The warehouses and premises of Messrs Burlingham and Co, ironmongers, were partially submerged, and considerable damage caused to the agricultural implements and stock. The premises of Mr J Gilbert, engineer and machinist, were also flooded to a considerable extent, to the great detriment of machinery and stock. Mr George Hunt's premises near the Bridge were also flooded to an extent which caused a general suspension of business. Several houses in the locality of Avon Terrace, facing the pleasure grounds, were badly flooded, and the occupants were compelled to retire into the upper storeys. At Hampton, a house in the occupation of Mr J Mansell was submerged to an extent of three feet, and the occupants were confined to the upper storey of the house for several days. On Wednesday the water had subsided a

little ; but if the present wet weather continues, a further rise will be inevitable. The highest flood which has ever occurred in this locality took place in the month of October 1848.

DROITWICH The river Salwarpe, which passes through the town, rose to an unusual height on Monday evening, and, continuing to rise throughout the following day, inundated the adjacent fields and premises near. Where the river approaches the Droitwich Junction Canal, the water has been higher than has been known for years. At Mops Wharf, a group of salt works adjoining the canal, the water entirely extinguished the fires in the furnaces, causing the operations at the works to cease, and about 40 tons of salt lying in the adjoining warehouses have been considerably damaged and a portion washed away.

KIDDERMINSTER On Tuesday from 12 o'clock midday there was a perceptible rise in the Stour. The mill meadows which lie in the valley were inundated. From 12.15 to one o'clock the river rose eighteen inches, and about four the waters rose in Mill Street, which at 5pm was for some 250 yards flooded, in some parts to the depth of eighteen inches. At the factories the work people had to leave their work. At the Park Gate Inn, the occupants locked up and migrated to drier quarters. The tenants of the cottages in the court at the Park Gate Inn were either driven to the upper stories of their dwellings or took refuge with their neighbours. At Mr Boucher's vaults, the cellar and kitchen were flooded, and the smoke room was several inches in water. The casks in the cellar were set afloat, and several of them found their way to the top of the cellar steps. A part of the wall bounding Mr T Lea's premises was undermined by the Stour and washed down, and in other quarters damage was done by the water. Messrs Hilton and Co, the contractors for laying the sewers, had a staff of men at various points to guard against mischief.

31 January 4 1873

POLICE INTELLIGENCE, SATURDAY

ROBBERY **William Hemming**, boatman, Gloucester, was committed for three months for stealing a coat, a vest, two shirts and eight linen collars from Thomas Clinton at the Leopard Inn on the 22nd instant. It was stated that at the expiration of the three months, prisoner would be "wanted" at Gloucester.

32 January 11 1873

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY JANUARY 9

ALLEGED ASSAULT Eliza, the wife of George Hemming, salt maker, was summoned for assaulting Elizabeth, wife of **Thomas Price**, bargeman, on the 6th instant in the Vines. The charge, which appeared to the Bench most frivolous, the offence being provoked by abusive language, was dismissed – the complainant being ordered to pay the costs, 7s.

33 February 1 1873

THE LOSS OF THE NORTHFLEET On Friday morning the inquiry into the loss of the Northfleet was resumed. Mr John Beveridge, the only survivor of those who were on the deck at the time the collision took place, and Biddiss, the man shot in the leg by Captain Knowles for jumping into the boat against his orders, were the only persons examined. The inquiry has been adjourned. It appears that the collision was one of extraordinary severity. The steamer rebounded, and came a second time in collision with the Northfleet. The noise is likened by one of the survivors to a peal of thunder, and such was the violence of the shock that those who were standing were knocked down. The blow made a clean breach in the Northfleet's timber beneath the water line, actually crushing the massive timbers traversing the main deck. One of the strangest features of the catastrophe is that immediately after the collision the steamer cleared the ship, and before more than a very few of the passengers could reach the deck she was altogether out of sight. The scene at the Sailors' Home was most affecting. The survivors were followed by large crowds of people, who displayed the utmost anxiety to render assistance. The strangest escape of all was that of a man named Brown, who leaped into the sea in the hope of reaching a fishing smack. He swam towards her, but she suddenly tacked, rendering pursuit hopeless. After being tossed about in the sea for

about three miles, he was saved by the City of London steam tug, which he was the first to reach. The Board of Trade has offered a reward of £200 for the discovery of the steamer.

An inquest was held on Saturday on Mr Brand, the only one of the unfortunate persons who were drowned by the sinking of the Northfleet whose body has been recovered. The evidence of John Stanley, mate of the pilot cutter which saved some of the passengers, is intensely interesting. After stating that the light on board the Northfleet was an unusually good one, and her place of anchorage ordinarily a safe one, he said that after seeing the Northfleet's signals, his pilot boat reached the sinking ship within ten minutes. He added :-

We then saw she was going down head first. When we got close to her, we sang out to her as loud as we possibly could. Five or six blue lights were then burning on board the Northfleet, and we saw plainly the people on deck with their children in their arms, and heard them cry to us to help them. We saw this in the glare of the blue lights. I could see everyone on deck as plainly as I see the people in this room ; for the cutter went as close to her as she possibly could with safety. The deck was very much crowded. We saw two boats loaded with people. We tacked the cutter directly we had passed the ship, and lowered both our boats immediately. I took charge of one with three hands, and pulled for the ship. On getting to her, I found some of the people floating about and some in the rigging. The other boat was among those who were floating. The vessel was sinking as we pulled towards her, and we saw her gradually going down. I had a light in my boat, and showed it for as long as I could ; but the sea washed it out. I could not see the floating people afterwards, but could hear them all around me. By the time my light had washed out, the vessel was on the bottom. We heard cries in the rigging, and rowed towards the ship.

Did you pick anyone up before you got to the ship? - No, I looked about, but could not see. When we got to the ship we rowed round her to see how we could best take off those that were clinging to the rigging. We first took ten from the mizzen rigging ; that was as many as our boat would hold, as it made fourteen in all. We had to row about a mile back to the cutter ; for, as I had lost my light, the cutter could not see us to pick us up. I left the cutter at a quarter past eleven, and did not get back till one o'clock.

Could not the cutter have stood by the ship? - No ; a sailing vessel cannot stand by a ship like a steam boat. If you had seen what I saw that night you would not think so. I knew the cutter by her light, and after I had put the first ten safely on board – the pilot was among them – we rowed back to the vessel. When I was leaving the wreck the first time, I saw another boat close to her, and I called out to the hands to take off the people in the main rigging.

Where did that boat come from? - I cannot say.

Were there other ships near? - Plenty ; one not a quarter of a mile off. I went to the wreck three times. After putting the ten we had taken from the mizzen rigging on board the cutter, we returned and took off the people in the main rigging – five. There were still others in the fore rigging, and I sang out to them, “Wait, my lads, and we'll take you all off”. The cutter had then got from half a mile to a quarter of a mile from the wreck ; but though I took a light the second time it was again washed out by the sea. On returning to the wreck for the third time, we took six poor fellows from the fore rigging.

What was the state of the vessel? - She was lying with her head off, and her topgallant yards just above the water.

What time was it when you took off the last lot? - About two.

The witness then proceeded to give evidence as to the recovery of the body of Mr Brand. He said :- After we had landed the shipwrecked people, we left Dover and returned to cruise upon our station between Dymchurch and Dungeness. About half past seven o'clock yesterday morning, we were about four miles off Dungeness, the lighthouse bearing west, when I saw a speck upon the water. The vessel was tacked and proceeded towards it, and in about ten minutes afterwards I made out that it was the body of a man. A boat was got out, and the body was brought on board the cutter. It was the body of the deceased. It was quite dead. It had a life belt fastened around it. Upon unbuttoning the waistcoat of the deceased, a revolver fell upon the deck. The body was afterwards brought to Lydd, and it is that which has been identified as the body of Mr Brand.

The inquest was adjourned for a week.

The Queen has sent a message of sympathy to Mrs Knowles (the captain's wife) and the other survivors, and has contributed the generous sum of £200 to the Relief Fund.

An official communication of the Board of Trade states that the present impression of the Marine Department is that the steamer which caused the calamity must herself have foundered in deeper water. Cruisers have been sent out to look for floating material or other signs of such a wreck.

The remainder of the crew and passengers left Dover on Friday morning for London. Mrs Knowles left the same afternoon in the care of an uncle, who arrived in Dover to take charge of her.

The diving vessels left on Tuesday for the wreck of the Northfleet, but the bad weather rendered diving impracticable. The body of a child has been picked up near the scene of the wreck, and a piece of rough board, which may have formed part of the temporary fittings of the Northfleet.

At a meeting of the Mansion House committee on Tuesday, it was announced that the Board of Trade intend to award Mrs Knowles a handsome testimonial, not pecuniary, in recognition of her husband's gallantry. The Board will also reward the brave men who rescued the sufferers. Mrs Knowles's uncle attended the committee, and stated that she was twenty four years of age, and had been brought up by himself. She had a small property worth about £40 per annum. The Lord Mayor and the committee said they would do all in their power to secure her some material support. Various grants were made to the relatives of the officers to procure mourning.

The little girl, Maria Tapling, will be adopted by Miss Foster, sister of the Belgian Vice Consul, with the consent of her relatives.

The sum already subscribed is £3600. It is hoped the total will be raised to £6000.

It was fully expected that the operations of the divers on the wreck of the Northfleet would commence today, and perhaps bring up a number of bodies which lie at the bottom of the sea in and around the ship. Captain Oates, who was to have commanded the vessel, is at Lydd, authorised to give £2 for each body recovered. Should that of Captain Knowles be secured, it will be buried at Norwood Cemetery and not in the neighbourhood of the calamity. The body of a woman has been washed ashore at Seabrook. Captain Oates has received a telegram from the Lord Mayor, requesting that all recognisable bodies shall be photographed.

GRAPHIC STORY OF A SURVIVOR The following narrative, obtained from one of the emigrants who arrived at the Sailors' Home, Wells Street, from Dover, on behalf of the *Standard*, will be read with interest. The narrator is a man much above the average of his class for intelligence, and his account of all that befell the unfortunate Northfleet, from the time of her leaving Gravesend up to the night of the wreck, corroborates in detail the accounts which had appeared :-

George Montague Preston : I lives in Northfleet near Gravesend. I engaged myself to Messrs Clark, Punchard and Co, the contractors, to go to Tasmania to work for five shillings a day on the Tasmanian Railway. I was to have joined the ship at Gravesend on the 13th, but when I applied to the waterman to take me on board, he told me the ship was full and that he would not be able to take any more. He told me also to go to the public house in West Street, Gravesend, and to stay there till the next day. On the 14th, Bill Wood and me, with his wife and two children (who, poor things, are all drowned) were taken on board at three o'clock in the afternoon. On the 15th I signs the papers of my engagement. Arter that I goes and turns in, and remains in my berth (165) all night. Next morning about half past six, the tug come and towed her away. And then she towed us past Dover against a head wind, and as we passed Dover she let go the hawser and went off home – I expect she did. The *Middlesex* is the tug's name. Just before she went from us, they had all the sails very near up. Before the tug left us the sun went down very black all round and red like, all different colours – a wonderful sunset. The tug left us about half past twelve o'clock at night ; it was blowing wonderful hard, whistling in the rigging, and what I could see of it the tug was afraid to go any further with us. The ship, after the tug left us, was driving about the Channel all night. I stopped on deck till about two o'clock. There was only the sailors and the pilot on deck. Before I left, the ship's carpenter, what's drowned, said we shall have an awful night, it will blow a heavy gale, and he was right, for it did blow an awful heavy gale. Everyone very near was sick, and I am certain if

we had gone on our voyage we should have had some sickness or fever on board.

But why do you think that? - Because we were so closely packed – like herring one a top t'other. There was such a nasty smell that I could not sleep that night. All was silent, and I turned out about five in the morning, and it was a blowin' shocking hard at the time, and up to four o'clock in the afternoon of Saturday, we kept tacking about over to the French coast and back again, but made no headway. There was a wonderful sea on all the time. The ship was rollin' her inside out, and the water came over forard and over her bullwarks, and went out of them holes as is in the bullwarks as fast as it could go out. We kept beatin' about, and the people was all sick and wouldn't go arter their food. The vessel's floor, as you can call it, was covered all over with knives and forks, spoons, water bottles, tin plates, biscuits, which were thrown down by the rocking of the vessel, and the men had their heads out of the berths sick each side of the ship.

How many men were there? - Well, I should fancy to myself there was about 212.

Why do you think there were 212? - Because the hold was so crowded in every part.

Well, what time did you turn in? - I did not turn in not that night, because it was so rough that I thought as the vessel would have gone down. The sailors said they didn't see a night like that for some time to come. About the hour of four in the morning, I goes down her hatch arter a biscuit, and when I got that I hurried up because the smell was so bad, and then I was lolling up against the bullwarks, and then she takes a lurch over to the other side like, and throwed me up against the bullwarks on the other side of the ship. This was about half past seven in the morning. Then she turns and runs back into shelter in the Downs, where we brought up about two o'clock on Sunday afternoon. And she dropped her anchor, and had 95 fathoms of cable chain out, and then after that we had our dinner ; but there was only a dozen besides myself who could eat dinner.

How is it you were not sick too? - Because I have been brought up on the water. This was Sunday afternoon, and those men what was not sick and what had wives come forard and played at cards ; and arter they had done playing cards, they began to dance and sing, and jump, and chuck biscuits about at the others what was not well. While we was lying at anchor these here cliffs kept the wind off, and we was at ease, and the wind changed about half a pint in her favour of going her course. And then arter that I goes and lays down on a seat at the side of the table, because the berths smelt so. Then arter that I gets up and undresses myself and goes to bed and eat a biscuit in a berth like. The sea got down, and the wind, as I said, got half a pint in her favour, so I slept all right up to half past seven in the morning. I then got up and had a wash, and had my breakfast, and I went on deck, and the pilot gave the second mate orders to haul the anchor up, and then she got her sails up and got under weigh about ten o'clock on Monday morning ; and then arter that she got past Dungeness Lighthouse, and the wind chopped round and she had it in her head forard – a head wind you can call it. Then it came on to blow rather hard again. She kept against the wind till eight o'clock on Tuesday morning. Nothing happened in the night only it blowed hard, and the watch for'ard see a craft on the port bow. He called aft to the pilot, and then the *Northfleet* turned her head and run back to Dungeness, and brought up in the place where she was afterwards lost. She had about 80 fathoms of chain out. This was about three o'clock on Tuesday. Then arter she was brought up the sea was more calmer up to eight o'clock at night. During the afternoon, everybody, women and children, come on the deck. Then the single men begun to wash their shirts, but the women, who were only just getting better, sat about on the deck, and some of the little children begun to play about. The sun was out but it was rather cold. As the evening come on the weather kept fine, and many began to play at cards, some at dominoes, and some began to sing and join a coal box, as they call it, and some had a tin whistle and some had a concertina. They was all happy and comfortable, and then arter they was all turned in the doctor come round, and he said to those other chaps as was playing at cards, and he says aint you goin' to bed, and the chaps says yes sir. Then arter that they got up and made their beds and turned in, and they was all comfortable. I turned in too, and dropped off to sleep. The wind increased during the night, and the ship began to knock about. I turned out about six o'clock and goes and washes myself, and goes arter the coffee and biscuits for the ten of us, don't you see, sir. During the morning the women and children was playing about on the deck, but some of the single men would not get up.

Why not? - Because they was sluggards, sir. And then the doctor and chief mate and captain came round, and told them to get up. The chief mate had a pail of water, and the doctor had a pannican, and the doctor began to chuck some water on them, and they jumped out. About twelve o'clock I had a headache, and I goes and turns in for three hours, and then I gets up and washes and had summat to eat, sir. That there was about four o'clock. Then they began to play at cards and dominoes, and tin whistles and dancing.

Any music? - Well, the concertina wasn't out, sir. Then the night begun to come on, sir, and then after that they (the single men) began to sing blackguard songs, which went all round, and they kept this up to about nine o'clock, then they all got to bed. Then arter they all got to bed, about an hour arter that they was fast asleep and I was getting undressed, and arter I was undressed I made my bed, sir, and I got into bed, and I could not lay. I kept turning over from one side to the other. I could not sleep. And I was busy with thoughts when a sudden clap come just like thunder.

What were you thinking about? - My mother, sir, and my brothers and sisters, just as it was to be like. Well, when I heard the clap, I jumped like that and got up, and I see all the bunks all fell over like, and a great hole in her side.

What do you call a great hole? - Well, sir, a great hole as I could get through.

What part was it in? - Well, it was just against the galley and nearly opposite my berth.

Was the hole at the bottom of the vessel? - No, it was between under the water and above the water. It was all splintered. When I saw it, I jumped out and run up on deck in my shirt.

Did you take your clothes with you? - No, sir. No clothes.

Why not? - Because I hadn't got no time, sir, not then, to get my clothes, for the water was coming in quite fast. When I got on deck, I saw the first mate standing just where the head of the screw vessel loomed over our ship, and I heard him say, "Oh my God, come alongside and save us, because we have 430 emigrants aboard". The first mate then said to me, "Can you see any name on the head?" I looked, and I could make out "Ton", but should not like to go to court about that, because I am not sure, sir. And while I was trying to make out the name, some canvas came down over her head.

But how could you see that? - Because the head was right over and the light from the hole of our ship reflected upon the name. I noticed that it was gilded.

Had she a figure head? - I am not sure about that, sir ; but I don't think she had, because the reading came down on both sides of her stern. While I was trying to make out the name, she reversed her engines.

How do you know that she reversed her engines? Could you hear them? - No, I could not ; she did so because she went astern so fast. She came head on to us just astern of the galley ; she backed as far as I could throw a stone, and then shot away by the stern of our ship, and I saw her go right away as fast as ever she could down Channel. Then the boatswain, carpenter and the first and second mates went down to see the damage, and told them that was in bed that there was no harm, that they were to go to sleep. All this happened in a few minutes, and I stood trembling in the cold.

Did you see anybody on board the screw? - Not a soul.

Had she any lights? - No.

Did you hear any voice? - No. I went down with the boatswain and mate, and then I jumped up into my berth and pulled my trousers and things out, and I don't know how I got them on. I says to the chaps on both sides of me who would not turn out, "Turn out, my God, the ship's a sinking, there's the water coming in". They wouldn't believe me, and thought I was making game at 'em till they heard the pumps at work, and then some come up and some didn't come up. Then while the pumping was goin' on the blue lights and rockets was going up. The boatswain says to the women and men what was round, "There she sucks". I makes heart and sayd, "She's too old suck".

What did you mean by that? - Because the water was coming in so fast she got over flooded. There were 40 at the pumps, but we didn't stop more than five minutes, because it was all in vain. The first mate called the second mate, and said in a low voice, "It's no use". Some of the women and children were on deck crying and fainting, and the mate said to them, "Go down and turn in and make yourself comfortable", and so they went down, most part of them.

Was there any water on the deck at this time? - No ; only that brought up by the pumps. The first mate said to the boatswain, "Take the cannon forward and fire it off". It would not go off, because the white lead was in the touch hole.

How did you know there was white lead in the touch hole? - Because I looked at it in the daytime before the wreck, and I says to Bill Wood, "Here's a nice cannon". "Yes", he said, "If you had any shots it would send a hole through the pirates", and then I pulled the stopper out of the mouth of it, and I afterwards noticed that the touch hole was blocked up with hard white lead.

Do you think that was the cause of its not going off? - Yes, it was loaded, and the light was put to the touch hole.

How long were they trying to fire it? - Only a few seconds, sir. When I saw they could not fire the cannon, I went aft, and the decks were getting crowded all over with men, women and children – some were praying on their knees, some were fainting, some were crying, while some of the young chaps were dancing, and pretended not to see any fear. I saw the captain standing against the skylight with his wife, fastening a lifebuoy over her, and I saw him lift her up and put her into the life boat before it was lowered, and he said to her, "I shall be with you in the course of an hour". She kissed him, but I did not hear her say anything to him. The boatswain says to me, "Come, come and pull on this fall". I pulled three or four times, but as we could not get the boat off the deck, I runs across and caught hold of the tackle fall, and went down it into the ship's life boat, and then while I was in the boat, the captain he says, pointing a revolver at me, "Come up, or else I blow your brains out" ; but before he could do that, there were others jumped into the boat's tackle and come in on top of me, and knocked me to the bottom of the boat, and they kept coming down until there was 30 in the boat, and the mate, boatswain and captain shouted out, "Drown them all, the scoundrels ; pull the fall up". They tried to do this, but as there was too many in the boat they could not raise her. Then the captain and the others tried to swagger our boat about so as to upset it, but they could not do so. I called on the men in the boat to cut the fall, as they could not unhook it. This was done, and we shoved off from the ship, just as she was sinking forard. The captain stood all the time on the poop deck with two revolvers in his hands to keep the people from comin' on to the quarter deck, and I heard the revolvers fired four times.

Did the captain say anything? - All that he said, sir, just as we was shoving off, was, "Cowards, scoundrels", and arter that I heard a report just like thunder – the poop deck aft burst up, and then the *Mary* pilot cutter boat came up as we was drifting out to sea, and throwed us a line and we lost it. Then she came round arter us again, and three of us caught hold of the pilot, and we all got out of the life boat, which was half full of water, because the plug was out of her. We sent the boat adrift for someone to pick her up that was overboard. We had just got on board the pilot boat – we were about 50 yards from the ship – I looked round and see the hull of the ship all under water, and then I see the people, all like corks, floating about groaning and praying. The wind had got up, and there was a great foam round the sinking ship, and I see her gradually go down, till her mainmast was covered to within ten feet. The pilot boat then sailed towards Dover, with 30 of us on board, and as we left the scene we could hear for some distance, every now and then, the groans of the drowning people.

34 February 8 1873

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **George Morris**, boatman, Blockhouse, was charged with cruelty to a horse on Saturday. Sergeant Tolley informed the Bench that the animal was exposed to the inclement weather during Saturday night, and that for sixteen hours no food was given it. Fined 10s and costs.

35 March 1 1873

TEWKESBURY

STEALING BOAT CLOTHS At the Gloucester Police Court, **James Walker**, a boatman of Tewkesbury, was charged with stealing three boat cloths from a long boat on the canal at Llanthony,

the property of Edward Cotterell. Mr Cotterell, timber dealer of Upton-on-Severn, identified the cloths found in the prisoner's possession as his property. Prisoner was in his employ. Sergeant Piff deposed to charging prisoner with stealing three boat sheets. Prisoner said, "I did sell him that one, as I wanted some money to get to Tewkesbury ; the other two I have not seen ; they were not in the boat when I went to her". One cloth had been sold to Mr Cook, marine store dealer, Swan Lane ; the other was at Mr Andrews's, marine store dealer, Deacon Street. It was shown that the prisoner sold both these cloths. John Brooks, a brickmaker of Sandhurst, proved receiving one of the cloths from the prisoner, and lending him 4s 6d on it. Prisoner pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to four months' hard labour.

36 March 15 1873

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY MARCH 11

BREACH OF CONTRACT On information of Alfred Goodyear, clerk to Mr John Corbett, proprietor of Stoke Salt Works, **Thomas Dean jun**, boatman, was summoned for having left his contract unfinished without giving proper notice on the 10th ult. It appears that complainant employed defendant to take a boat load of salt from his works at Stoke Prior to a certain place in London, for which he (defendant) was to receive £5 for the double journey, the former finding the boat and the latter the horse. Dean proceeded as far as Weedon in Northamptonshire, when he sold the horse and spent the money, leaving the boat on the canal uncared for for some ten days, when it was taken on by other men in the employ of complainant. £5 was claimed as compensation for delay in transit, also costs of clerk and expenses to Weedon. Fined 24s compensation and 23s costs, or two months' hard labour.

37 March 29 1873

LEDBURY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY MARCH 26

James Williams, a boatman of Ledbury, was summoned by Sergeant Scoates for being drunk and riotous in New Street, Ledbury, on the 9th instant. Fined 2s and costs 8s, or seven days' imprisonment.

38 April 26 1873

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

WILFUL DAMAGE AND ASSAULT **William Blake**, boatman, Sidbury, was charged with breaking a door in Sidbury and assaulting PC Hickman in Diglis early this morning. Fined £1 and costs, and 1s 6d damages.

39 May 3 1873

ECKINGTON

AN ECKINGTON MAN DROWNED AT GLOUCESTER An inquest was held at the Albion Hotel, Gloucester, on the 22nd ult, on the body of **John Viner**, a waterman of this place, whose body was found in the old arm at the Docks on the previous Sunday. **William Richard Rice** stated that he worked on board the *Bee*, steamer, plying between Gloucester and Evesham, and which belonged to his father, Mr Jacob Rice of Evesham. The deceased was also employed on board the boat. He left her at half past four on Saturday afternoon, saying to witness that he was going to Mr Rice's. Deceased did not return on board again that evening, and the following morning inquiries were made for him in the city. About half past two on Sunday afternoon, witness found the cap of the deceased on the after deck, and he then thought deceased must have fallen into the water. Information was given to Dock Constable Hunt, search was made, and the body was found in the water nearly under the stern of the vessel. It was proved that the deceased visited the Squirrel Inn, Littleworth, on the Saturday evening, and left about a quarter to eleven, being the worse for drink. The supposition was that he had been asleep on the part of the deck where his cap was found, and that he fell into the water. Henry Viner, brother of the deceased, and who lives at Norton, said the deceased had been employed sometimes on board vessels and sometimes as an agricultural labourer.

He was married, was 34 years of age, and had a wife and three children. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

40 **May 31 1873**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK **John Harrison**, boatman, Droitwich, was charged with being drunk and incapable in Copenhagen Street last night. Discharged with a caution.

41 **June 14 1873**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, SATURDAY JUNE 7

Eliza, the wife of **James Evans**, boatman, a frequent offender, was charged with assaulting Harriet, wife of William Hughes, on the 6th inst. Defendant went into the Rising Sun Inn about seven o'clock in the evening, and without the slightest provocation, spat into the complainant's face, roughly pushed her about, and threatened her with further ill treatment. Complainant was corroborated by a witness named Harrison, and defendant was ordered to find sureties to keep the peace for six months in £10 each, but the antecedents of this delinquent rendered this impossible, and she was accordingly sent to gaol for a month.

42 **June 14 1873**

A boatman named **Walker** has been charged at Salford with having attempted to drown two boys. The prisoner either wilfully or accidentally pushed them into the canal off the cabin of a boat on which they were standing, and when asked by a bystander whether he was going to assist them out of the water, he replied, "No, let the young hounds drown ; I am plagued off my life with them throwing stones". He was committed for trial, but admitted to bail.

43 **July 5 1873**

WORCESTERSHIRE MIDSUMMER QUARTER SESSIONS

STEALING BOOTS AT DUDLEY **Charles Pennell**, 54, boatman, was indicted for stealing a pair of boots, the property of William Parkes of Dudley, on the 11th of November 1872. Mr Godson prosecuted. The prosecutor said the prisoner came to his father's house and offered to sell the boots. He bought them for 3s 6d and a pair of clogs. The prisoner slept at the house that night, and when prosecutor went to bed he put the shoes at the foot of the stairs. He got up soon after four on the following morning, when the boots had been taken. The prisoner had left the house, but had not taken his clogs. The boots were afterwards found in a boat in prisoner's possession. There were three previous convictions against the prisoner, who was found guilty and sentenced to seven years' penal servitude, and afterwards to be subject to seven years' police supervision.

44 **July 19 1873**

CROWN COURT

WOUNDING AT HOLY CROSS **William Ferris jun**, 25, boatman, pleaded guilty to unlawfully and maliciously wounding Jane Annie Mann with a hatchet, on the 17th March at the parish of Holy Cross in Pershore. Mr Selfe appeared for the defence. Sentenced to ten years' penal servitude.

ROBBERY OF COPPER INGOTS AT SPON LANE **James Jordan**, 29, boatman, was indicted for stealing 120 lbs of copper, the property of the London and North Western Railway Company, at Spon Lane. Mr Amphlett prosecuted and Mr Underhill defended. The jury found the prisoner guilty, and he was sentenced to six months' hard labour.

45 **August 23 1873**

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

MUTILATION OF A DOG George Penny, glover, was charged with having cruelly tortured and mutilated a dog on the 11th inst. Mr Tree appeared for the defence. **George Darke**, waterman,

Diglis, said he was on the bridge at Diglis when he saw Penny fishing a little distance away. There was a dog and also a bitch near Penny, and when he next saw the animals they were both bleeding. Pools of blood were under the dog, which was suffering from a violent cut underneath its body. Joseph Strange corroborated. Edward Marston, Diglis, said he was the owner of the dog, and described the mutilation which the dog had suffered. His attention was called to the dreadful condition of the animal, and he at once gave information to the police and had the creature poisoned. Deputy Chief Constable Phillips proved apprehending the prisoner ; in the cellar of prisoner's house, the bitch was found, which was identified as being one of the animals near the weir. Mr Tree said for the defence that the prisoner admitted being in the vicinity of the weir fishing, but denied committing the offence. John Slade, glover, Little Charles Street, Blockhouse, said he went to the weir fishing with defendant between five and six o'clock on the day in question. Penny, a man named Dodge and himself fished all together until about half past seven. He had known the prisoner from childhood, and Penny had always borne a character for humanity. Henry Dodger, leather dresser, Blockhouse, corroborated, and said he had known the prisoner for twenty years. Sentenced to one month's hard labour, and ordered to pay the costs of the prosecution ; or, in default, one month's further imprisonment.

46 September 13 1873

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

OBSCENE LANGUAGE **Samuel Moss**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged with using obscene language in Bridge Street, about ten o'clock on Sunday evening. Fined 5s.

47 September 20 1873

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 18

ASSAULT **Mark Pittaway**, boatman, was summoned for assaulting a man named **John Shelly**, who follows the same calling, at the Canal Wharf in Hanbury Street on the 11th inst, but as the complainant did not wish to press the charge, the Bench released the defendant on his paying the costs, 7s.

48 October 4 1873

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 30

REMAND **Joseph Bennett**, boatman, was charged with converting to his own use a canal boat at Stoke Prior. Mr East of Birmingham appeared for the defence. Remanded for a week. Bail was allowed, prisoner in a £25 bond, and two sureties in a like amount.

49 October 11 1873

A SHOCKING DISCOVERY IN BIRMINGHAM

Late on Friday night, a shocking discovery was made during the emptying of a cess pool at No 6 Court, Oxford Street, Birmingham, at the back of the Black Horse public house. One of the men engaged on the work stuck his fork into what he believed to be a piece of old sacking, or some similar substance. The man pulled at it with the fork, and a clog came away from what eventually proved to be a human foot. The foot came away suddenly, and an examination resulted in the discovery of the body of a man in a state of advanced decomposition. The deceased was identified as **Thomas Bishop**, Cheapside. About six weeks ago, Bishop was known to be drinking at the Black Horse Inn, and he was not seen after that time, but his relatives thought he was following his occupation as a boatman. It is supposed he fell into the cess pool (which has a low wall round it) while in a state of intoxication. At the inquest, a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

50 October 18 1873

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

STEALING GLOVES **George Jones**, boatman in the employ of Messrs Barkworth and Spalding, Gloucester, was charged with stealing eight pairs of gloves from Ellen Smith, residing in

Watercourse Alley, on the 10th inst. The prosecutrix declined to press the charge, and the case was accordingly dismissed.

STEALING A SHEET **William Green**, 26, **Charles Hook**, 19 and **William Randle**, 40, boatmen of Gloucester, were charged by Martha Hyde with stealing a sheet from her house in Dolday on Sunday evening. The defendants were at prosecutrix's house and were left alone in her room. When the men had gone, she missed the top sheet from her bed. Hyde gave information to PC Phillips, and accompanied the officer to Diglis lock, where she identified the defendants as the men who had been in her room. The case was dismissed.

51 **October 25 1873**

DROITWICH

CRUELTY TO AN ASS **William Browne**, canal boatman of Droitwich, was charged at Leamington with cruelly ill treating a donkey on Sunday. Mr John Gibbs, the officer of the Leamington and South Warwickshire Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Society, found the defendant drawing his boat, which was laden with 29 tons of salt, with a couple of donkeys. One of the animals had a great number of sores about it, was in a very poor and weak state, and totally unfit for work. Mr Gibbs thought some of the wounds had been caused by blows or pokes from a stick ; but the defendant affirmed that they had arisen from his having extricated some thorns, which he said the donkey got into its back before he bought it a month ago, by rubbing against a thorny hedge. The Bench fined the defendant a guinea.

52 **October 25 1873**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 22

MASTER AND SERVANT **George Harrison**, bargeman, was summoned by his master, **John Pittaway**, bargeman, for absenting himself from his service on the 15th instant, for which he claimed £1 as compensation. Case withdrawn on the defendant paying 12s as compensation and the costs, 6s 6d.

53 **November 22 1873**

DROITWICH BOROUGH MAGISTRATES' OFFICE FRIDAY

ASSAULT Two boatmen of this borough, named **Priddey** and **Griffiths**, were charged with assaulting another boatman named **George Apperley**, of Gloucester, on the 13th inst in the parish of St Peter. Complainant was going with his boat along the Droitwich Junction Canal, and endeavoured to pass boats worked by the prisoners. He was prevented, and prisoners knocked him down and brutally kicked him. Complainant's wife corroborated her husband's statements, and the prisoners were sentenced to twenty one days' hard labour each.

54 **November 22 1873**

KIDDERMINSTER

A BOY DROWNED On the 13th inst, Mr M Corbet held an inquest at the Pheasant Inn, Mill Street, on the body of a boy aged eight years named Thomas James Bootan, who was drowned on the previous Thursday evening. The deceased was returning from school, and when on the canal side near to the Pheasant Inn, he attempted to cross the lock by means of a fly boat which was entering the lock at the time. He slipped and fell into the canal between the boat and the side of the lock, which at that point is about 18 feet deep. The paddles of the lock were at once drawn to empty it, but with the rush of water the boy was carried along into the tunnel, and was ultimately found a considerable distance from the lock. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned, the jury appending a recommendation that the canal authorities should be called upon to make the lock and the canal side at that point more secure for passengers.

55 **December 20 1873**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, DECEMBER 18

QUARRELSOME RELATIVES **Mark Pittaway**, boatman, and Elizabeth, wife of **Samuel Priddey**, boatman, were summoned by PS Colley, the former for being drunk and disorderly in Hanbury Street on Monday evening last, and the latter for being drunk and incapable at the same time and place. The officer stated that the defendants, with other relatives, had been as is their custom whenever they meet and are under the influence (of drink), quarrelling and causing considerable disturbance at the Barley Mow Inn and, on being turned into the street, Pittaway behaved in a very violent manner, threatening the landlord of the house and using very gross language. Defendant denied being disorderly when in the street, but by his own admission he had been drinking all day, and said he had no recollection of seeing the officer after he was in the street. Priddey admitted being drunk and, in reference to this defendant, the officer remarked that she was so utterly incapable from the effects of drink that she twice let fall the infants that she was carrying in her arms. Samuel Priddey, boatman, the husband of the last defendant, **Elizabeth Priddey**, and **Ann**, the wife of the defendant Mark Pittaway, were then charged by PC Simons with being drunk on the same occasion. The officer deposed to being sent for to expel the quarrelsome family from the house, which he did, when the two defendants, who were both intoxicated, behaved in a drunk and disorderly manner in the street. The Bench considered the whole affair was most disgraceful, especially as the delinquents were relatives, and fined them 1s each and (?) 6d costs, or seven days' hard labour.

56 **January 3 1874**

DROITWICH

CURIOUS ACCIDENT Between eleven and twelve o'clock on Christmas night a man named **Bennett**, a boatman from Stoke Works, whilst under the influence of drink, fell into the canal near Chapel Bridge, where the water is very deep. Luckily his calls for help were heard by a Mrs Mason, whose residence adjoins the canal, and she immediately gave an alarm and called up a man named Charles Smith, who lives in a house on the bridge. The latter at once ran to render assistance, and in his haste jumped over the bridge wall, thinking he should alight in the water ; but unfortunately he fell on the towing-path, a distance of about twenty feet, and sustained such serious injuries that he lay for some time senseless, until he was found by some persons who were attracted by the alarm given, and carried to his home. Dr Curtler was speedily in attendance, and found that the heavy fall had caused severe contusion of the spine of the back and dislocated several ribs ; and, on his recommendation, Smith was at once removed to the Worcester Infirmary. Meanwhile Mrs Mason had procured other assistance and, with the aid of a rope, the man Bennett was rescued from his perilous situation by being drawn through the window into Mrs Mason's house where, through her kindness, every necessary was provided and stimulants administered. Bennett, however, ultimately left without thanking those who had rescued him or acknowledging his obligations to the poor fellow who risked his life for him.

57 **January 17 1874**

TEWKESBURY

THE RECENT DISCOVERY IN THE SEVERN There seems to be no reason to doubt that the remains recently found in the Severn were those of a child which accidentally fell into the water at Worcester as far back as September 1872. It was the daughter of a boatman named **Jones**, residing at Walmestry Slip, was one of twins, and was nearly four years old.

58 **February 7 1874**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ASSAULT **Thomas Strange**, 24, boatman, Diglis Gardens, was charged by Mr Power (Head Constable) with having assaulted him in High Street. Mr Power said he was in front of the Guildhall at about nine o'clock on Tuesday evening. He saw the defendant causing a disturbance,

and when he interfered, the defendant purposely tripped him up. As the man was poor and had a wife and child, and as he had not been injured, he did not wish to press the charge. Dismissed with a caution.

59 April 11 1874

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

HELPLESSLY DRUNK **Matthew Frieth**, waterman, Gloucester, pleaded guilty to being drunk in Sidbury on Good Friday. A police officer found the defendant on a doorstep, asleep, and when awoke he was so intoxicated that he could not stand. The employer of the defendant, Mr Orpin, coalmaster, Gloucester, said that Frieth had come up the river from Gloucester, and had met with two friends who had treated him to some beer. This was the defendant's first offence, and the Bench ultimately agreed to dismiss the charge.

60 May 2 1874

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS MONDAY APRIL 27

ASSAULTS **Thomas Priddey**, boatman, was summoned for assaulting his aunt **Eliza**, the wife of **James Ewes**, boatman, on the 29th inst, but as the complainant, by her own admission, appeared to have given the first offence and greatly provoked the defendant, the case was dismissed.

61 July 18 1874

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK **Mary Ann Smith**, boatwoman, Lion Row, was charged by PC James with being drunk in St Nicholas Street on Sunday evening. She had to be carried to the police station on a stretcher. This was her ninth appearance before the Bench, and she was committed for a month's hard labour.

VAGRANCY **John Greenway**, boatman, Blockhouse, and **George Boswell**, labourer, were charged by PC Joyner with sleeping under a rick at Upper Henwick on Sunday night. Cautioned and discharged.

62 June 27 1874

UPTON-ON-SEVERN PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY JUNE 25

Benjamin Shepherd of Upton-on-Severn, waterman, was summoned by PC Thomas James for being drunk and disorderly on June 11th. Fined 2s 6d and costs.

63 July 18 1874

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS THURSDAY JULY 16

CHARGE OF ASSAULT **Alfred Bennett**, labourer, was summoned for assaulting **William Davis**, boatman, but as defendant was provoked, the case was dismissed on his paying the costs.

64 August 22 1874

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

ILLEGAL FISHING **Thomas Harris**, boatman, pleaded guilty to illegally taking eels in the Worcester and Birmingham Canal at Claines on the 6th inst. Fined 10s and 7s 6d expenses.

65 August 29 1874

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK AND RIOTOUS **James Brace**, boatman, was fined 5s, in default of payment to be committed to seven days', for being drunk and riotous upon the Lower Quay yesterday evening.

66 September 5 1874

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

CRUELTY TO AN ASS **Thomas Strain**, boatman, charged by PC Rudge with having cruelly

beaten an ass at Astwood on the 19th ult, whilst the animal was attached to a boat, was fined 13s 6d, including costs.

67 **October 10 1874**

THE TERRIBLE EXPLOSION IN LONDON The frightful explosion of gunpowder on board a barge passing along the Regent's Canal spread destruction and alarm through the greater part of St John's Wood. The barge, named the *Tilbury*, was one of five in tow of a steamer, and is said to have contained no less than four tons of powder destined for Derby. The explosion occurred whilst it was passing under the north gate bridge at Regent's Park, and its first effect was to blow up the whole superstructure of the bridge, which fell back into the canal, choking it with a heap of debris 20 feet high. The three men on board were instantly killed. All the buildings within a radius of half a mile were shaken and damaged by the shock. Some in the immediate vicinity had their costly interiors completely wrecked, and the scene is described as suggestive of a bombardment. The report, which sounded like a heavy cannonade, was heard in the most remote parts of London. The houses that have suffered the most are those fringing the Albert Road. No pen could adequately describe the state of chaos into which the interiors of these dwellings have been thrown, but an idea of the fright and the effects of the shock may be formed from the subjoined description by a gentleman who resided in Tichfield Terrace. There is an egotism about it which not even the serious nature of the matters described can render otherwise than diverting, and the military style in which the narrator directed the movements of those around him is singular in the extreme, but the statement affords a description of the terrible character of the explosion. The writer says, "A noiseless shock, and sudden unexplained and violent awakening from sleep, followed by a furious rattle like a discharge of musketry ; and I stood by my bed, with a cry of women and a distant wail of agony in my ears that I shall never forget. A furious wind rushed into the room. It seemed as if the house were falling to pieces. Three weeks ago a ceiling had given way. My first thought was that I had neglected this providential warning to leave an ill constructed house, and that the foundations had collapsed. "What is it?" cried my wife. "Don't move," I said, "I think the house is falling". I felt that broken glass was piercing my naked feet. It was dark. I stretched out my hand. The matches were gone ; slippers, clothing, everything. My wife was encumbered with the blinds and curtains. I released her. We heard the children crying above. "We are not hurt, Ma", shouted one of them. I groped into the next room to a cupboard where my boots are kept. It was open. A lurid light showed me the windows blown in. "It is an earthquake", I said to myself. I got on a pair of boots, crept back to my wife, gave her a pair, impressed upon her the necessity of not moving, except to dress. "My dress is gone", she said, "there is one in the next room". "Tread carefully and come to it", I said, "but keep quiet". The light gleaming in at the front window easily showed me the staircase, which was covered with glass and plaster. I called to the children. Their voices assured me of relief to my most immediate anxiety. The servants were screaming. "Have you matches?" "Yes". "Don't strike a light until I tell you – are you out of bed?" "Yes". "Unhurt?" "We think so". I crept to the upper storey, my leading idea being that the chief remaining danger was that the stairs would crumble under my tread. Through the bannisters the cook gave me some matches. "It may be an explosion of gas , but the danger is over", I said, "if you are quiet". I crept downstairs. No smell of gas. The wind driving through the house from all points. I trod cat like upon every stair, and every side was encumbered with debris. The hall door was wide open. It was a thick heavy door, fastened with two bolts, two locks and a chain. The bottom half of the door, with the bolt upon it, was upon the stairs. It was a relief to me to know there was a way out. A house of cards it had seemed to me before, only waiting for a second touch to shiver to the ground. I flew back the way I had crept, lighted the gas on the stairs, called out, "It is all safe", and at once proceeded to light candles and gas wherever I found them. Some of the candles were put out by the wind. My wife was partly dressed. Our bedroom was a total wreck. Upstairs in the first bedroom, my youngest child and a little guest sleeping together, were already sitting up in bed, the servants by their side. One window and blind had completely covered them. When I lifted them up, the glass fell from them in a shower. There was the smallest possible cut on the forehead of Bessie, the

youngest. On the same floor in the next room, my son was calling to me to say he was all right, I need not bother about him. The faces of the servants were almost black. Their hair was covered with plaster. I feared for them, but they assured me they were not hurt. "Dress the children – all get ready to leave the house". I went below. My wife had taken some pride in her drawing room. I entered it with a candle, shading the light with my hands. Everything seemed to be upon the floor, except the Venetian blinds at the back, which were hanging upon a broken chandelier ; and the same light I had previously noticed showed me the broken ceiling. Books, vases, chairs, china, glass, curtains and long splinters of blinds made it impossible to walk to the windows. I descended to the ground floor. The dining room has windows back and front. They were both cleaned out, the sashes and framework of one hanging as if from the ceiling. Two chairs were snapped in half, and many other things broken. The sideboard was blown open and the glasses blown out. I lighted the gas. The chandeliers were intact, so was the pier glass. Not a picture on the walls was disturbed. All this must have happened in little more than ten minutes. I went into the street. My house is about 100 yards from the North Gate. At this point a tall column of fire was climbing up to the grey sky. Morning was breaking in mottled streaks over the park. I saw a neighbour running towards me. "What is the matter?" I asked. "A powder barge has exploded ; and they say it is in compartments, and only one lot has gone off ; another explosion is expected". I saw the whole district was in ruins. "Don't fear about any other compartment", I said, "It has all gone off". Overjoyed at the escape of my family, I had nearly said, "It has all went off, my friend", for Artemus Ward's pyrotechnics flashed into my mind, just as ten minutes before I had somehow thought of the hero of Tom Moore's "Epicurian" and Turner's illustration of the falling stairs and the suspended ring. "What fire is that?" I asked. "The gas main is alight", was the reply, "the bridge is down, and when the main broke the gas took fire". I looked around me. Every house in Titchfield Terrace and as far as I could see was thrown open. Blinds were flapping in the air ; window frames protruding ; doors broken in. Here and there heads were peeping out, and gas was burning. A few people were running to and fro, and I could see a couple of policemen near the bridge. I went into the house. The children were dressed. A neighbour from Portland Terrace had sent to our assistance. I took the children thither, and found that Bentinck and Portland Terraces were in a state of commotion, though the furthest houses in Portland Terrace were comparatively uninjured. On my return I found my wife conjuring tea from somewhere. Tea is somehow made in the midst of every calamity. I began to feel a little interest in my neighbours. Mr John Leighton's voice was heard at the door. "Not hurt?" "No". "Glad of that", he said. "It's an awful sight outside – bad as the siege of Paris! Glad you are not hurt". He was gone. I went round the corner to Avenue Road. Having visited several neighbours, I began to wonder about the police. Policemen on duty away from the scene of the calamity did not know whither to direct their steps, and the telegraph wires being broken, it was impossible to send quickly for assistance. When the scene of the occurrence was somewhat identified, the police were directed to repair to the bridge, and they had no idea of the extent of the damage in the adjacent terraces, therefore we received no official visits of any kind, but the police are entitled to everybody's thanks for the good service they did in the streets from the moment that they were marched to the spot. Last night, when my house was emptied of its contents (a technical opinion reporting the building unsafe), they were as courteous as they were prompt in the execution of their duty. With the escape of my family, the special interest in my narrative is at an end. It may be taken as an example of hundreds of similar incidents occurring in hundreds of houses at the same moment. Now that the house is empty, the danger through which the household passed is all the more apparent. The kitchen doors and windows are blown in, and the ceiling torn. On the first floor, the dining room windows are wrecked ; the staircase window is paneless. The drawing room floor may be similarly described with the addition of a cracked wall. On the third floor, the same story, but the fourth floor has a cracked wall and an open ceiling, and adjacently the staircase wall is bulged out. The attic is a terrible wreck, the front of the room stripped and letting in the daylight. The roof is opened, and through these apertures my servants in their terror had the additional horror of seeing the flashing light of the gas main. Only a few hours after the catastrophe, a double rainbow, perfect in shape, brilliant in colour, with a dim leaden sky

for a background, spanned the scene of the calamity, with the ruined house and the broken bridge as the centre of the desolated landscape”.

Dr Hardwicke has formally opened his inquest into the death of the men killed by the gunpowder explosion at Regent's Park, namely **Bexter**, the captain of the barge *Tilbury* ; **William Taylor**, assistant boatman ; and a man not then identified. When the preliminary evidence had been taken respecting Bexter and Taylor, the inquiry was adjourned until Wednesday.

The animals at the Zoological Gardens were after the explosion in a very excited state. This was particularly observable in the elephants, the rhinoceros, the giraffes, the antelopes and the deer ; while the elands were in an extraordinary state of agitation. The explosion forced open the doors of different houses in which these animals were confined, upon which they rushed wildly about the enclosure. Almost without exception they suffered from fright, and for the first twelve hours after the report they refused their food. Next day, however, they were much better, with the exception of the young red deer which was presented to the society by Mr Auberon Herbert. This little animal was absolutely paralysed by the shock, and so serious is its condition that it is not expected to live. Considerable damage was done to the glass in the gardens, and about twenty small birds escaped through the broken windows. The insurance offices and the canal company both repudiate their liability to make good the damage.

It is hardly necessary to state that the scene of the explosion has, ever since the occurrence, formed a centre of great public attraction. The locality has been visited by tens of thousands of persons, who naturally gaze upon the dismantled houses with marked astonishment.

On Monday night, the relief meeting at the Eyre Arms, in connection with the Regent's Canal Explosion, was largely attended, Mr Forsyth QC, one of the members for the district, presiding. Resolutions were passed in favour of soliciting the advice and counsel of her Majesty's Government, as well as the cooperation of the Lord Mayor, towards obtaining some redress for the sufferers by the explosion.

Several charges of robbery committed at the scene of the explosion have come before the Marylebone police magistrate. In the first case the prisoners got the benefit of insufficient evidence, and in the others remands were ordered. The work of restoration has commenced in the damaged streets, and men are busy everywhere executing the more urgent repairs.

At the adjourned inquest on Wednesday, it appeared from the evidence of **Mr Hall**, captain of the barge *Limehouse*, that except in the case of Government powder, there are no regulations as to precautions in carrying explosive materials ; no prohibition against smoking, carrying matches or having iron nails in boots. **Mr Hughes**, traffic manager of the Grand Junction Canal Company, deposed that there was petroleum and benzoline as well as powder on board the *Tilbury*. Mr Meadows White, counsel for the Regent's Canal Company, submitted that under the Act of Parliament they were compelled to take every boat that paid the tolls, it being a common highway. **Francis Clarke**, the steerer of the steam tug, stated that he heard shouts to stop, and some said the boat was on fire. On looking back he saw a blue flame. He had, however, time to stop for a second and go on before the explosion took place. The inquest was adjourned until Monday.

68 **October 17 1874**

THE RECENT EXPLOSION IN LONDON The body of one of the persons killed by the recent explosion on the Regent's Canal, in reference to which no clue could be obtained, has just been identified as that of **Jonathan Holloway**, boatman, aged 19, of Brades Village near Oldbury. The deceased left home about twelve months ago in charge of a boat on the canal, and his parents had only seen him once during the interval.

69 **October 31 1874**

A DISHONEST BOATMAN A boatman named **Joseph Cooper**, in the employ of Mr W Rice of Tewkesbury, having been entrusted with the conveyance of a quantity of hay from Tewkesbury to Stafford, felt disposed, on reaching Stourport, to have a “spree”. To raise the funds, he sold 1 ton 2 1/2 cwt of hay, which was in transit. He was apprehended at the Kidderminster Railway Station

after he had taken a ticket to Birmingham. The prisoner was remanded to Stourport.

70 November 7 1874

KIDDERMINSTER

A DISHONEST BOATMAN At the Borough Police Court on Friday, **Joseph Cooper** of Tewkesbury was charged with stealing hay, the property of his employer, Mr William Rice, corn merchant. He was committed for two months' hard labour.

71 November 14 1874

COUNTY POLICE At the County Magistrates' Office on Wednesday, before Colonel Norbury, a boatman named **James Smith**, living at Droitwich, was fined 2s 6d for being drunk and riotous at Ombersley on the previous day.

72 December 26 1874

DROITWICH

CASE OF SMALLPOX A virulent case of smallpox was imported into this borough at the latter end of last week by a man named **Henry Merrell**, a boatman who had been affected whilst in Birmingham with his boat. The disease was of so severe a type that the poor fellow succumbed to its effects on Monday. Every precaution has since been taken by the sanitary authorities to check the spread of the malady.

73 December 26 1874

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY DECEMBER 21

CHARGE AGAINST A SERVANT **Henry Jones**, a boatman in the employ of the Droitwich Salt Company, was brought up on remand charged with absenting himself from his master's service on the 30th October last, by leaving the boat he had engaged to work, in consequence of which complainants had sustained damage to the amount of £2, which they claimed as compensation. The evidence of Mr J Harris and Mr Smith proved the neglect of service to the satisfaction of the Bench, who considered that the payment of the £2 claimed from prisoner as compensation would not be a sufficient punishment, and he was therefore fined in addition £3 and £2 for costs, or one month's hard labour. Prisoner, not having the means to pay, was sent to gaol.

74 January 9 1875

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK AND INCAPABLE **Alfred Whitmore**, boatman, Stourport, was charged with being drunk and incapable in Broad Street on the previous evening. Discharged with a caution.

75 January 9 1875

EXECUTIONS Three of the four men sentenced to death at the last Liverpool Assizes were executed in Kirkdale Gaol on Monday morning. It will be recollected that three young men – Peter Campbell, John McCrave and Michael Mullen – were tried before Mr Justice Mellor and condemned for the murder of Richard Morgan on the evening of the 3rd of August last by kicking him to death in Tithebarne Street, one of the most crowded Liverpool thoroughfares. Down almost to the last moment, it was fully expected that all would have to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, and so greatly had public feeling been shocked by the brutal character of the outrage of which they had been guilty that but little sympathy was felt for them and but very little interest was taken in their unhappy fate. Campbell, however, was recommended to mercy by the jury who tried the case, and his friends got up a strong memorial in his favour, principally relying upon his youth and the fact that he worked regularly, and had never before been in the hands of the police. But little hope was entertained, however, of any successful result of these friendly efforts, and it was generally supposed that Kirkdale would on Monday be a second time the scene of a quadruple execution – such an execution of four men at once having previously taken place there on the 12th

September 1863. On Saturday morning, however, a reprieve arrived for Campbell, and the number left for execution was reduced to three – McCrave and Mullen, Campbell's companions in what was locally known as “The Tithebarne Street murder”, and **William Worthington**, the canal boatman, who was sentenced to death at the same assizes for the murder of his wife.

Worthington's crime, the murder of his wife, was also attended by circumstances of the most revolting brutality. The culprit was a canal boatman, 33 years of age, and his wife lived with him on the boat. On the night of the 26th of August, the boat being at Liverpool, Worthington and his wife were at a public house, which they left about eleven o'clock, having had some words about the deceased's age. Soon after, the culprit was seen kicking the unfortunate woman, and though a policeman was called and saw that she was suffering considerably, he refused to interfere. When on board the boat, Worthington renewed his brutal violence, and his wife was put to bed in a state of semi consciousness. Next morning when she was sitting up in bed, he kicked her violently again several times, but afterwards seems to have relented, for he gave her £5 to pay for a doctor. No doctor was called in, however, till the boat got to Wigan, and then such assistance was in vain, for she died from a combined attack of asthma and pleuro-pneumonia, accelerated beyond all doubt, according to the medical testimony, by the great violence inflicted upon her by her husband. Under these circumstances, he was convicted of wilful murder, and in his turn has had to yield his own life for that which he had so ruthlessly sacrificed.

The culprits were all Roman Catholics, and from the time of their sentence Father Bonte, the Roman Catholic chaplain of the gaol, had been most assiduous in his efforts to bring them to a sense of their unhappy condition. They retired to rest early on Sunday night, and appeared to sleep soundly till about five o'clock, when they rose. They remained in silence, and it may well be supposed solemn, meditation till a quarter to seven, when they were visited by Father Bonte and attended mass, receiving afterwards the Sacrament of the Holy Communion. They then went to breakfast – simply bread and “skilly” - but only Worthington partook of any, and he but little. A procession having been formed to the scaffold, the usual painful preliminaries were gone through, and the unfortunate men were placed under the fatal beam. The executioner was “Calcraft's assistant” - Anderson, sometimes known as the “Gentleman hangman”. The culprits appeared to listen attentively to the prayers which were impressively read by the chaplain, and beating their breasts, they repeatedly exclaimed, “Lord be merciful to me, a sinner”, “Oh Lord, forgive me”, &c. The bolt was drawn, and the three men were launched into eternity, all dying almost instantaneously and without a struggle. The morning was dark and dreary, and the dim gaslights in the gaol added, as it were, additional gloom to the melancholy scene.

76 **January 16 1875**

STOURPORT

DEATH BY DROWNING An inquest was held at the White Lion Hotel on Friday, on the body of **George Harris**, boatman, aged 30. The deceased had been engaged to attend a boat on the canal, and on the previous Tuesday evening was seen by Mr S Cook, butcher, proceeding in the direction of the canal locks, and apparently under the influence of drink. On the following morning, his dead body was found in the canal near the locks. Verdict : “Accidentally drowned”.

77 **January 23 1875**

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH POLICE, FRIDAY JANUARY 15

LARCENY **Rose Longford** (20) was charged with stealing from her father, **Charles Longford**, waterman, a pair of boots, value 8s, which she took to a lad named Rowland Hill, who sold them for 2s. Committed for trial at the next quarter sessions.

78 **February 6 1875**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ALLEGED ROBBERY FROM THE PERSON Mary Morris, Dolday, was charged with stealing £3 from the person of **John Curtis**, waterman, Gloucester. It appeared that the prosecutor had

made the acquaintance of the accused several months ago. On Thursday, having arrived in this city with a boat, he went to the Boar's Head Inn, Newport Street, and sent for the prisoner. She came to him at the public house, and he gave her some money to buy gin. About eleven o'clock he left the public house and, accompanied by the prisoner, went to the house of a neighbour of the latter in New Passage, Dolday, where he paid for more gin. When he was going to leave the house in order to go on board the boat, prisoner (he alleged) said she should accompany him. She went with him a short distance, but stopped somewhat suddenly and said, "Here's your purse". He expressed his surprise, and questioned her as to how she obtained the purse. He shortly afterwards examined it, and found that it only contained 1s 6d, as a short time previously there was £3 1s 6d in it. He went in pursuit of the prisoner and, having overtaken her, accused her of stealing the money, but she denied it. He did not then give her into custody, hoping that if he visited her on the following morning, he should be able to regain his money. He went to the prisoner's house the next morning, but she positively asserted that she had not had the money. He afterwards gave her into custody. The prisoner stated that the prosecutor gave her the purse, stating that it contained only 1s 6d, and she was welcome to it. The case was remanded for a week, in order that additional evidence might be adduced.

79 February 27 1875

LEDBURY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 24

DRUNK AND RIOTOUS **James Webb**, boatman, was summoned for being drunk in Home End Street, Ledbury, on the 10th inst. Defendant admitted the offence, and was fined 5s and 8s costs.

80 April 10 1875

WORCESTERSHIRE EASTER QUARTER SESSIONS

CHARGE OF STEALING MONEY AT ALVECHURCH **Henry Knight** (21), boatman, was indicted for stealing from the person of Thomas Parsonage a cotton purse and two shillings, at Alvechurch on the 27th of February. Mr Amphlett prosecuted. The prosecutor stated that he was at the Hopwood Wharf Inn at Alvechurch on the 27th of February, and the prisoner was also there. He had some drink in the tap room, and conversed with the prisoner. He pulled his purse out several times to pay for drink. The prisoner came up to him and, he alleged, by "main force" took the purse out of his pocket. He struggled with the prisoner, but the latter was the stronger. As the prisoner refused to return his money, he gave information to the police. The prisoner cross-examined the prosecutor at considerable length. The latter appeared very reluctant to answer the questions, and his evidence was somewhat unsatisfactory. He admitted drinking four or five pints of beer on the day in question. He stated to PC Oakey, who took him into custody, that the amount he had been robbed of was 3s 6d. The officer stated that the prisoner resisted when being taken into custody, and asked him to allow him to "square" the matter. Prisoner also said he had been "put up to it". Witness was incapacitated for duty for a week owing to prisoner's violent conduct at the inn. The jury acquitted the prisoner.

81 May 8 1875

WATERMEN'S CHURCH The collection after the sermon in aid of the funds of this church amounted to £13 3s 9 1/2d. The church, which was erected as a memorial of the Rev John Davis specially for the poor, is supported entirely by voluntary contributions. All the sittings are free.

82 May 22 1875

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

FIGHTING **John Greenway** (18), boatman, Dent Street, was charged with fighting in Severn Street on the previous day. Dismissed with a caution.

83 **June 12 1875**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CRUELTY **John Footman**, boatman, was charged with cruelly using a donkey by beating it near Diglis locks on the 4th inst. Fined 17s including costs.

84 **June 26 1875**

CHARGE OF ATTEMPTED MURDER On Tuesday, before the Maidstone magistrates, a young bargeman of Rochester named **Robert Fredericks** was charged with attempting to drown a boy named William Hayes, at Maidstone on Sunday. Evidence showed that the prisoner, who did not appear to know that the boy could swim, threw him into deep water after a dispute, and at once rowed away, saying with an oath, "Drown, or else get out". The prisoner was committed for trial at the Assizes.

85 **July 3 1875**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK AND ASSAULTING THE POLICE **John Summerfield**, boatman, was charged with being drunk and assaulting PC Paget in Lowesmoor on the previous evening. Defendant, in striking at the officer, struck another man in the face. Fined £1 4s 6d, including costs.

86 **July 3 1875**

WORCESTERSHIRE MIDSUMMER QUARTER SESSIONS

STEALING A JACKET AT OLDBURY **Job Flavell**, 19, boatman, was indicted for stealing a flannel jacket, the property of **Frederick Brain**, at Oldbury on April 12th. Mr Ashmore prosecuted. The prosecutor lost his jacket from a boat on which he was working. Prisoner was subsequently seen wearing one like it, and it was found in a boat at Birmingham on which he had been employed. He was found guilty, and sentenced to four months' hard labour.

87 **July 10 1875**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CRUELTY **Charles Butler**, boatman, Newent, Gloucestershire, was summoned for cruelly treating a donkey. The information was laid by the owner of the animal, Mr Greenway, Bath Road. Several wounds were found upon the donkey. The defendant was fined 9s and 11s costs.

88 **July 24 1875**

WORCESTERSHIRE ASSIZES

UNNATURAL OFFENCES **William Bate** (21), boatman, was found guilty of an attempt to commit an unnatural offence at Kingswinford, and was sentenced to eighteen months' hard labour.

89 **August 21 1875**

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Philip Langford**, boatman, was charged with stealing a purse and 2s 6d from **William Rollings**, boatman, on the 13th inst. Committed for trial.

90 **August 21 1875**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNKENNESS **George Pearce**, boatman, Gloucester, was fined 4s 6d, including damage, for being drunk and disorderly, and wilfully breaking a window at the Prince of Wales Inn.

91 **August 28 1875**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

USING THREATS **John Brace**, boatman, Lowesmoor Wharf, was charged with using threats towards his daughter on Sunday last. Bound over in his own recognisances of £10 to keep the peace for six months.

92 August 28 1875

GREAT FIRE AT GLOUCESTER On Sunday morning the Alexandra Warehouse, one of the largest corn stores at the Gloucester Docks, was totally destroyed by fire. Between 13,000 and 14,000 quarters of grain was housed at the time, and at least a fourth part of this has been lost, while the bulk is very much damaged. The building was seven stories high, and the fire broke out near the roof. A number of engines were at work, but none were powerful enough to reach the top of the warehouse, and the flames spread unchecked until they reached the fourth floor. The scorched and burning grain poured out of the broken windows and fell in great masses on the ground below. A bargeman observed the flames about half past three o'clock a m. One of the walls had to be pulled down, and tumbled with a tremendous crash into the main basin of the docks. The total loss is estimated at from £20,000 to £25,000, which is covered by insurance in various offices.

93 September 4 1875

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY

John Wood, innkeeper, **James Merrell**, boatman, Thomas Pittaway, saltmaker and Thomas Evans, labourer, were severally fined 5s including costs for neglecting to send their children to school, after being required to do so by the Droitwich School Board.

94 September 11 1875

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

THREATS **William Rawlings**, boatman of this city, was brought up on a warrant, charged with using threats towards Caroline Benbow, cook at the Rein Deer Hotel, on the previous evening. Bound over to keep the peace for three months in recognisance of £10.

95 September 18 1875

BEWDLEY PETTY SESSIONS

John Greenwood Fox, of Severn Side, innkeeper, summoned **Charles Southan**, Coals Quay, boatman, for driving a horse on the Severn horse towing-path without the consent of the company of proprietors, contrary to the bye law, on the 20th August. Defendant, who admitted the offence, was fined £1, with 15s costs.

96 September 25 1875

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CRUELTY **William Allen**, boatman, was summoned for ill-treating a horse at the canal side near Tallow Hill bridge on the 5th inst. The defendant was seen beating the animal about the head with a whip stock in a very ferocious manner. Defendant had nothing to say in defence, and he was fined 15s.

97 October 2 1875

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

FELONY Charles Cund and his wife, Mary Cund, were charged with stealing a pair of cotton sheets and a blanket, the property of **Sarah Gunnell**, wife of a waterman, of Diglis. Mr Tree appeared for the female prisoner. The prosecutrix stated that the prisoners had been lodging at her house about a fortnight, and on the 20th instant she saw the male prisoner leave the house with a parcel. As neither of the prisoners had brought any articles to the house, her suspicion was excited. The male prisoner returned at about eleven o'clock. In the evening, she went to the room occupied by the prisoners, who were out, and she missed a pair of sheets and a blanket. She gave information to the police, and the male prisoner was taken into custody. Prosecutrix stated that she had also missed a quantity of feathers from the bed in the prisoners' room. Mr Dower (Messrs Finch and Dower), Lowesmoor, stated that on the 18th instant, the female prisoner pledged a blanket at his shop, giving the name of Ann Thomson, Silver Street, for 1s 6d. On the 20th instant, the female prisoner pledged a pair of sheets for 2s 6d. The male prisoner waited for her outside the shop. The

articles were identified by the prosecutrix. In reference to the female prisoner's second visit to the pawnshop, Mr Tree submitted that she was acting under the coercion of her husband ; and he asked the Bench to assume that she was also acting under his coercion on the 18th instant. The male prisoner, whose father, it was stated, lived near Bromsgrove and was in a very respectable position, pleaded guilty. He was given an unfavourable character, and was committed for three months' hard labour. The female prisoner was dismissed.

98 **October 23 1875**

WORCESTERSHIRE MICHAELMAS QUARTER SESSIONS

FRAUD AT UPTON-ON-SEVERN Samuel Gurney, on bail, was charged with unlawfully converting to his own use £2, of which he was the bailee, the money of Edwin Cottrill, Upton-on-Severn, on 19th August. The prosecutor, who is a boat owner, gave prisoner two sovereigns to take to the captain of a boat named **Richard White**, also in the employ of the prosecutor, who was at Stourport. Prisoner failed to give White the money. The police were communicated with, and the prisoner was apprehended. He stated to Superintendent Checketts that if prosecutor had kept him in his employ, he would have "worked it out" and paid all expenses. Prisoner had no defence ; he merely asked to be leniently dealt with. A verdict of guilty was returned. The learned vice-chairman said the Court were inclined to take a lenient view of the offence as the prosecutor had to some extent tempted the prisoner by giving the money into his charge, as he had reason to believe that prisoner was not to be trusted. Sentenced to two months' hard labour. Mr King prosecuted.

STEALING MONEY AT BROMSGROVE **Phillip Langford**, 37, boatman, was charged with stealing two shillings and sixpence from the person of William Rollings on 13th August at Bromsgrove. Prisoner, prosecutor and a boatman named **Groves** were at the Queen's Head, Stoke Pound, and Groves stated that he saw prisoner put his hand into prosecutor's waistcoat pocket and take out his purse. Prosecutor was asleep with his head upon the table, and upon being awakened, he missed his purse. Prisoner made a statement to the jury. He was found guilty. He had been many times previously convicted. Sentenced to ten years' penal servitude, and at the expiration of that term, to be subject to seven years' police supervision.

99 **November 20 1875**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY [Before the Mayor (Mr John Bradley) and Mr William Nott]. **Maria**, the wife of **James Price**, bargeman of the Vines, was charged with assaulting her daughter, **Elizabeth Price**, aged 17, on Saturday afternoon. Complainant said she was employed at the salt works earning 10s per week. She lived with her mother, and gave her all the money she earned. On Saturday last she was sitting in her sister's house, when her mother came in and said, "Betsy, where's your money?" She refused to give it up because her mother was drunk, but promised to do so when she became sober. Defendant then took up a basin from the table and threw it violently at her, and struck her on the right temple, inflicting a severe wound. PS Colley said he went to the house, taking with him Dr Mahony. Afterwards he went to the prisoner's house and took her into custody. She was quite drunk. **Mary Ann Harrison**, the sister of complainant, came forward to give evidence on behalf of defendant who, she stated, was sober. In consequence of her statements, the Bench ordered her to leave the witness box. Mr Mahony said he found complainant in a fainting condition from the great loss of blood, and on the right temple was a clean cut, which must have been caused by a broken portion of the basin. If the cut had been slightly deeper it would in all probability have caused death by severing the artery. The Mayor said the Bench were disposed to think that this outrageous act must have been the result of drunken unconsciousness, otherwise they should have inflicted a very severe punishment. They sentenced defendant to seven days' hard labour.

100 November 27 1875

BEWDLEY PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

PC Fisher charged Richard Baynham of Bewdley with stealing at the Fox Inn, Load Street, on the 23rd September, a watch and chain worth £2 10s, the property of **Joseph Priest**, waterman. The evidence showed that Priest went to his lodgings at the Fox Inn on the evening of the 23rd September last, and after having his supper fell asleep, the prisoner being the only one in the room with him. Some time afterwards he awoke and went to bed, and when upstairs he missed his watch and chain. Priest next morning gave information to PC Fisher who apprehended the prisoner on Friday last, with the stolen property upon him. Prisoner was committed for trial at the next assizes.

101 November 27 1875

CITY POLICE **William Whitehouse**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged with stealing 13 cwt of hay, the property of his employer, **Richard Dayus**, hay straw and coal dealer, John Street. It was alleged that defendant was sent with a number of trusses to deliver at Tipton, but that he failed to deliver 26 of them. Mr Meredith prosecuted, and Mr Clutterbuck defended. Remanded.

102 December 4 1875

CITY POLICE **William Whitehouse**, 21, boatman, Birmingham, was charged on remand with fraudulently converting to his own use 12 cwt of hay, the property of his employer, **Richard Dayus**, hay straw and coal dealer. Mr Meredith prosecuted, and Mr Clutterbuck defended. Committed to the Sessions.

103 December 4 1875

On Monday the Liverpool Stipendiary Magistrate sent a woman named **Margaret Pignall** to gaol for six months for neglecting her child. She was not in want of money, as her husband, a boatman at the Landing Stage, gave her from £2 to £3 at a time. Dr Lowndes stated that the child, when found, weighed only six pounds, while the average weight of an infant of its age was twelve.

104 December 25 1875

WORCESTERSHIRE WINTER ASSIZES

WATCH ROBBERY AT BEWDLEY Richard Baynham, 28, labourer, was indicted for stealing from **Joseph Priest**, on the 23rd September at Bewdley, a watch and chain. Mr J Amphlett prosecuted. Prosecutor is a waterman, and on the above date returned from a journey and lodged at the Fox Inn, Bewdley. After he had had some supper, he fell asleep in the kitchen. On going to bed, he found his watch was gone, and at once instituted a search for it. Prisoner, and some other men who were in the kitchen during the time prosecutor was there, had gone, and nothing could be heard of the watch until the 19th November, when the police apprehended the prisoner and found the watch in his possession. Prisoner told the policeman that it belonged to his "gaffer", and he was taking it to be cleaned. Prisoner's only defence was that the watch was given him by another man. The jury found him guilty. He pleaded guilty to three previous convictions, the last in 1868 for horse stealing, when he was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude. He was released in July 1874 on licence. His Lordship sentenced him to ten years' penal servitude.

ROBBERY WITH VIOLENCE AT TARDEBIGGE Walter Pulley, 28, groom, and George Carter, 16, needle maker, were indicted for robbing with violence William Clarke of a silver watch and chain, two lockets, twelve shillings in money and a leather purse, on the 25th October at the parish of Tardebigge. Mr R H Amphlett prosecuted ; the prisoners were not defended. Prosecutor is a salt maker at Stoke Prior. On the above day, he had been to see some relatives at Withey Green, Alvechurch, and on returning called at the Plymouth Arms, Tardebigge, where he had two pints of ale. Whilst there, he purchased from a hawker a watch guard and locket, and attached it to his watch. The prisoners were also there. Prosecutor left soon after six, and proceeded on his way home by the canal side. He had gone but a short distance when he heard footsteps behind him, and

soon after two men came up, and without saying a word commenced striking him. One of them struck him with a weapon on the face, and putting up his hand, prosecutor felt it had some teeth upon it. It was very dark, and prosecutor could not identify either of the men. After striking him upon the face, the men bore him down the bank, kicked him on the thigh, held him by the throat and rifled his pockets of his money, and his watch and chain were also snatched from him. One of them during the scuffle threatened to kill the prosecutor and throw him into the canal, whereupon the other man said, "Pulley, don't kill the man". They shortly after left, and prosecutor went to the lock house. **Thomas Colledge**, a boatman, stated that on the evening in question he heard a man crying out for mercy, and also heard another voice which he distinctly recognised as Pulley's. He was going to the spot when he met Pulley and "collared" him, and conveyed him to the lock house to the prosecutor, whose face was bleeding very much, but he could not recognise Pulley as one of the man who had robbed him, and Colledge let him go. PC Powell, being informed of the robbery, went to the place and found there a pool of blood, and received from a boatman named **Shepherd** part of a watch guard. The same night, he apprehended Pulley, who stated that he heard a man groaning on the canal side and went to help him, when Colledge took him to the lock house. On the night of the robbery Carter showed the watch, which had not been found, with part of the chain attached, to two men named Daniells and Middleton, who were called as witnesses. Daniells's statement was that Carter met him about seven o'clock and asked him for a match to see the time, and Carter had also with him a horse clipper, which he wished to sell. Carter afterwards went to Middleton's house to borrow a key for his watch, as he said he had lost his. This witness also stated that he had the watch in his hand, and the piece of chain attached was exactly like the piece found by the canal and produced in court. When taken into custody, Carter said that after leaving the Plymouth Arms he heard a row on the canal side, but thinking he should get into trouble if he interfered, he went home. Carter made no defence, and Pulley merely repeated his statement to the policeman. Prisoners were found guilty. Two previous convictions for felony and fraud, in 1868 and 1872, were recorded against Pulley, and he was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude. Carter was sentenced to penal servitude for five years. His Lordship said he was very pleased with the part Colledge had taken in this case, and awarded him £3.

105 **January 8 1876**

CITY QUARTER SESSIONS

STEALING HAY AT CLAINES **William Whitehouse**, on bail, was indicted for stealing twenty four trusses of hay on the 8th November at Claines, the property of **Richard Dayus**, his master. Mr C Griffiths prosecuted ; Mr R H Amphlett appeared for the prisoner. Prosecutor is a hay and corn merchant at Lowesmoor, and the prisoner was a boatman in his employ. On the above date, prisoner had 293 trusses of hay loaded into his boat to take to Mr Parsons at Tipton. When they arrived at their destination, Mr Parsons found there were twenty four trusses missing. He asked the prisoner how this was, when prisoner said, "Mr Dayus knows all about it". Mr Dayus deposed to the loading of the boat, which occupied two or three days, and to the prisoner saying, on his asking him, that he had the right number of trusses in the boat. Mr Parsons spoke to the quantity of hay delivered him by the prisoner. The consignment note given the prisoner by Mr Dayus, and which stated the weight of the hay, was not given to Mr Parsons by the prisoner as it should have been, and it had not since been found. Mr Amphlett, in defence, said that the evidence for the prosecution was weak from beginning to end, and suggested that the hay had been lost in transit or had never been put into the boat. Again, the hay had not been traced, and it would have been impossible for the prisoner to dispose of it during the short time it was under his charge. Several witnesses as to character were called on behalf of the prisoner. He was found guilty, with a recommendation to mercy on account of his youth and previous good character. Sentenced to four months' hard labour.

CHARGE OF STEALING A LEG OF MUTTON AT NORTHFIELD **Thomas Guest**, 40, boatman, was charged with stealing a leg of mutton on the 28th October at the parish of Northfield, the property of William Hollis, and **Joseph Lawton**, on bail, was charged with having feloniously

received the same. Guest pleaded guilty. Mr R H Amphlett prosecuted, and Mr Streeten defended Lawton. The facts of the case are that on the evening of the above date the prisoner Guest went to prosecutor's shop for some liver, and after he had gone, a leg of mutton was missed. PC Eades, in company with prosecutor's son, visited the boat of which Lawton was captain, and in the cabin found the two prisoners and another man eating what appeared to be mutton. The constable observed Lawton put something behind him, and on searching found it to be the shank end of a leg of mutton, which was recognised as belonging to the prosecutor. When charged with receiving it, Lawton said he sent Guest for some liver and bacon for which he gave him 1s 6d ; he knew nothing of the mutton, and did not tell him to steal it. Mr Streeten characterised the charge against Lawton as of a very trivial nature, and submitted that Lawton did not know that the mutton had been stolen. Mr William Lowe, sand merchant, Oldbury, gave the prisoner Lawton an excellent character. The jury found Lawton guilty with a strong recommendation to mercy on account of his previous good character, and he was sentenced to be imprisoned for 14 days. Guest was sentenced to one month's hard labour.

106 **January 29 1876**

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

CRUELTY **Edward Wood**, boatman, Gloucester, was summoned for cruelly treating a donkey on 10th inst, by neglecting to provide it with sufficient food. Mr F H Jeffery prosecuted. Mr E Waldron, clerk to the Sharpness New Dock and the Birmingham Canal Company, deposed that defendant hired two donkeys in good condition from him, and that when the donkeys were returned in about a month, one of them fell down, apparently from want of food. This evidence was corroborated, and Mr Shaw, veterinary surgeon, London Road, spoke to the extent to which the animal had been neglected. Defendant said the donkey would not eat. The Bench very much commended the Company for their efforts to suppress cruelty to animals. Fined, with expenses, £2 3s 4d, in default 21 days' imprisonment.

107 **February 19 1876**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK &c **Arthur Hughes**, boatman, Stoke Prior, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Silver Street ; and Charles Matthews, aged 19, Birdport Street and Samuel Lea, aged 25, Charles Street, were charged with attempting to rescue Hughes from custody, and with assaulting the officer, PC Cole. Hughes was fined 5s, and the other defendants 13s 6d each, including costs.

108 **February 26 1876**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNKENNESS **William Davis**, 66, waterman, Brinscomb, Gloucester, was fined 5s and 2s expenses for being drunk in the yard at the police station on Saturday night.

CRUELTY **Thomas Mayo**, boatman, Newent, Gloucestershire, was summoned for working a horse whilst in an unfit state on Monday. The proceedings were taken by the Worcester Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The horse, which was in an exceedingly poor condition, was being worked on the canal. Fined 10s and costs.

109 **April 1 1876**

SERVICES FOR WATERMEN A work, which cannot fail to commend itself to general sympathy, has been successfully accomplished at Diglis Locks, arrangements having been made for a service to be held on Sundays for watermen. The service has been held from three to four o'clock in the timekeeper's room, which afforded accommodation for about 60 persons, for the past four months, and there has been a numerous attendance of watermen and their wives and children. That they appreciate the efforts which have so praise worthily been made on their behalf is evident, for in addition to the regular attendance they are singularly attentive, and the work is bearing good fruit,

there being, it is stated, a marked improvement in the conduct of the men. The attendance has been so large as to necessitate the enlargement of the room which will, when the work is completed, provide accommodation for about 120. A platform has been erected at one end of the room, and a reading desk or pulpit will be provided. A flag is hoisted to denote the time of service. Mr Leader Williams has evinced much interest in the work, and the efforts of **Mr Bradley** (the toll collector) cannot be associated with too much praise. Mr Bradley has been enabled, through the liberality of those who take an interest in the welfare of watermen, to distribute upwards of 160 New Testaments and 45 Bibles amongst those employed on the river.

110 **April 8 1876**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **George Pittaway**, bargeman, was fined 25s for keeping a dog without a licence.

111 **April 22 1876**

THE BODY OF A MAN FOUND IN THE RIVER An inquest was held at the Anchor Inn, Diglis, on Saturday, on the body of a man (who has not been identified) found in the river on the previous Thursday morning. PS Cook deposed to having received information of a body being in the river at Diglis cutting from **William Darke**, a waterman, and to having recovered it. Deceased appeared to be a bricklayer. Amongst the things found on deceased was a pocket book, in which was written "William Jones, his book, Jan 7th 1874". There were also three pawn tickets, one being issued from Messrs Finch and Dower's, Lowesmoor, and dated March 27th 1876. One of the other tickets bore the name of "George Jones". William Darke and Mr Dower, however, were called, and the latter stated that he issued the Worcester pawn ticket found on deceased, but he could not identify the man. Deceased pledged a pair of boots in the name of "John Jones, Diglis". In answer to the coroner, PS Cook stated that he could not find anyone of that name who had lived at Diglis. Mr J Randle Buck deposed to having examined the body externally. There was evidence of an old fracture of the left leg, and there was a large wound under the right ear. The whole of the lower part of the ear was missing, and the wound extended to the angle of the jaw. Deceased had been in the water 12 or 14 days. The wound was of an oval character, two inches by one inch, and an inch deep. Such an injury might be caused by vermin, or from injuries received in the water after death. There was no evidence of it having been received during life. The face and head were very much bruised. In his opinion, death was caused by drowning. Deceased was about 45 years of age. A woman named Withey, who had not seen her husband for three years, and who had seen the body, was called in. She said she believed deceased was her husband, but she could not say so with absolute certainty. Deputy Chief Constable Phillips, who stated that handbills describing deceased had been widely circulated, and that diligent inquiries had been made to identify him, also expressed a belief that the deceased was Withey, who formerly lived at Hallow. The Coroner, however, did not think the evidence as to identity quite conclusive. The verdict was "Found drowned".

112 **April 22 1876**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Eliza**, wife of **James Ewers**, boatman, was charged with refusing to leave the Hole In The Wall Inn, and violently assaulting the police. Fined £1 and 7s 6d costs for the first offence, and committed for six months for the assault.

113 **April 29 1876**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNK **Mary Ann Smith**, 25, boatwoman, was committed for seven days, in default of paying a fine of 10s, for being drunk and riotous in Mealcheapen Street.

114 **May 6 1876**

THE WATERMEN'S CHURCH On Wednesday the annual sermon was preached, and a collection

made, at the Watermen's Church. The service commenced at three o'clock. The prayers were said by the Rev F H Richings, rector of St Clement's, and the lessons read by the Rev W H A Wilcox. The preacher was the Rev J Haviland, rector of Fladbury. The collection amounted to nearly £9.

115 **May 20 1876**

A GIRL DROWNED Ellen Lamb, aged 14 years, who lived with her mother in the White Lion Road, Stourport, died on Monday afternoon from drowning, and the event has created much excitement in the neighbourhood in consequence of rumours as to the manner in which the girl had been treated at home. On Wednesday afternoon Mr Hughes from Worcester held an inquest on the body at the Bird In Hand Inn. Mr Mantle of High Street, Stourport, was foreman, and the following witnesses were examined :-

John Walters, rug weaver, said he was lodging at the Bird In Hand Inn, and on Monday morning, when coming from Kidderminster along the canal side, he saw the body of a girl in the centre of the canal. He ran home and obtained assistance, and then he got the body out of the water. He believed the girl was dead at the time, as she did not breathe. He went to fetch Sergeant Ganderton and Dr Ormsby. Walter Whitley, 15 years of age, said he was left in care of the body by the last witness, and a boatman named **J Blunt** came up to him. Soon after Walters had gone the girl began to groan and, with the assistance of the boatman, he got her up and helped her to the Bird In Hand Inn, a distance of 400 yards. She said she was cold and wet, and asked him to make haste, as she wanted to meet her mother, who had gone to purchase a jug. He afterwards found a hat, shawl and scarf, which were identified as the girl's property, on the side of the hedge opposite where the body was found in the canal. Emma Meecham, landlady of the Bird In Hand, said when the girl was brought to her house she administered to her some brandy, and wrapped her up in some blankets, but did not remove her clothes. She placed her before the fire, and some neighbours commenced rubbing her about the body. Deceased could speak, and told her that her foot slipped and she fell into the water. Dr J Ormsby of Stourport said he found her in an apparently dying state. He ordered her to be undressed, and administered the usual stimulants. He remained with her about half an hour, and she appeared so far recovered that he could leave her with safety under the care of the landlady. He had known persons die two days after they had been got out of the water, having apparently recovered. Ellen Lamb, mother of the deceased, said her husband was now serving a sentence of seven years' penal servitude. Her daughter lived with her. On the morning of the death, she did not have any words "to speak of" with the deceased. They did quarrel a little about purchasing some boots for the girl, and she told her daughter that she was not going to buy them that morning. The girl then left the house hastily, and said she should not go to work again. She had always been kind to the girl, and had not been in the habit of thrashing her. Ellen Cox, aged 15 years, said she worked with deceased who, on Monday morning, made a statement to her which frightened her. She told witness that her mother had been beating her because her master did not give her more money, and she was very cruel to her. It was her intention to go to Kidderminster to see her sister, and if she would not have her, she should make away with herself. She was very unhappy at home. A statement was made to the jury as to the habits of the mother. The jury returned a verdict "That the deceased died from the effects of immersion in the water" ; and the coroner, at the request of the jury, censured the woman for her conduct towards her daughter. He said the more the jury inquired into the facts, the clearer did it become that she was very cruel to her daughter, and that she had to some extent been the cause of her death. He hoped that event would have its proper effect upon her.

116 **June 3 1876**

RELIGIOUS EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF BOATMEN Mr C Jones of Portland Street in this city, who describes himself as unsalaried agent of the Protestant Electoral Union, writes to acknowledge the help afforded him in distributing the tracts of the Religious Tract Society, and those of Mr Drummond and other religious publications, among the boatmen employed on the Severn and their families. He says the result of the works are very encouraging ; refers to a grant of New Testaments made by the Worcester Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society ; and speaks of the

religious services held on Sundays for the boatmen as a specially gratifying feature of the work.

117 June 10 1876

UPTON-ON-SEVERN PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY

William Alfred Griffin, waterman of Upton-on-Severn, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Court Street, Upton. Superintendent Checketts said defendant was very drunk and fighting. He took him into custody. Defendant had more than £10 in his possession. He did not deny the offence, and asked the Bench to be lenient with him. Fined 10s and costs.

118 July 8 1876

STOURPORT

A WOMAN CHARGED WITH WOUNDING HER HUSBAND – POLICE COURT, MONDAY (Before Mr B Danks) **Mary Ann Blunt**, aged 19, was charged with maliciously wounding her husband, **James Blunt**, by striking him on the head with the kitchen poker. The complainant, who is a boatman, and appeared in Court with his head bandaged, seemed very weak from loss of blood. He stated that on Saturday last he returned from a voyage, and found that during his absence his wife had sold a portion of his furniture, so he made up his mind to sell the remainder. She interfered with him in taking it out, took up the poker and struck him a severe blow on the head, which knocked him down and caused the blood to flow freely. Upon cross-examination he admitted that he struck her sister, but not defendant, when she went to prevent him taking the things away. His brother, George Blunt, corroborated. He said complainant had no weapon in his hand, and did not threaten his wife ; he saw her knock him down. Dr Moore said that he was sent for to the police station, where he found complainant suffering from an apoplectic fit, and he had a large scalp wound. The brain had a very severe shock, which most probably caused the fit. He considered at the time that the complainant was in great danger, but he was now making very fair progress, and he thought nothing more serious would occur. PS Ganderton stated that the complainant came to the police station about 7 pm, seriously wounded. Witness applied cold water to his head, which was bleeding very fast, and he fainted. He then sent for Dr Moore. He took the woman into custody, and charged her with maliciously wounding her husband. She replied that she did it in self defence, and called her sister, who said that she saw the disturbance, and that complainant threatened to kill his wife and struck her and her grandmother, whereupon defendant struck him with the poker. He had no weapon in his hand. Prisoner was committed for trial at the next Assizes, being admitted to bail.

119 July 29 1876

HORSE, PONY AND DONKEY SHOW IN WORCESTER The second show held in connection with the Worcester Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals took place in the yard adjoining the Saracen's Head Inn, Tything, on Tuesday, and was fairly successful. The Society has been in existence only fifteen months, and during that time 59 persons have been proceeded against and 47 convicted. The society seeks not only to punish persons guilty of cruelty, but in various excellent ways to encourage the kindly treatment of animals, and in this direction also much good has been done by its promoters. Head Constable Power was not only instrumental in forming the society, but in the position of honorary secretary has since rendered signal service, and he is to be warmly congratulated on the results of his efforts. Tuesday's proceedings commenced at two o'clock with the judging of cab horses. Mr John Tustin, Newtown, and Mr E Woodhouse undertook the duty of awarding the prizes. In the class for cab horses, there were seven entries. William Hill of London Road took the first ; William Lloyd of the Butts, who was first last year, gained second prize ; and Thomas Price, who received second prize for best horse with harness and carriage, was third. The judges awarded extra prizes in this class to John Edwards, John Fowles and Thomas Clarke. In the class of ponies, Henry Walker, Friar Street, took first and second prizes with two animals in capital condition. There were eight prizes for donkeys, and first honours were given to Isaac Small, Hylton Road, John Evans, Upper Henwick being second and Benjamin Holland third. For the prizes to

boatmen six horses were entered, and first prize was taken by **William Pagett** of Stourport, and **Isaac Small** was second, **William Prosser** third, and **Noah Davis** (?Dayus?) fourth. Nine donkeys were entered, but only three competed. Three fine mules, the property of the Severn and Canal Carrying Company, were exhibited, but not for competition. John Middleton of Quay Street obtained Mrs Middlemore's prize. The donkey race produced nine starters and caused much amusement. It was won by Benjamin Holland's donkey. The prizes were distributed at four o'clock by Lady Diana Pakington, after which Mr Power proposed a vote of thanks to her Ladyship for her kindness in undertaking the task. He said that those who had read the bill would have seen that a prize was given by a lady for the best horse, carriage and harness. When that prize was offered, the lady was on the continent, but he did not think it right to withhold her name any longer, as she had taken great interest in the society. He had great pleasure in giving the name of Mrs Middlemore as the donor of the prize. (Applause). Three cheers were then given for Lady Diana Pakington. The Hon J S Pakington said it gave them the greatest pleasure to come there to distribute the prizes. Lady Diana had from the origin of the society taken great interest in it. He was very pleased to hear of the good the society had done. The animals shown that day had evidently been well treated. Towards horses and other animals driven into market a great deal of unnecessary beating is administered. He thought they could prevent this, and he would give a prize for next year, but would leave the arrangements in the hands of Mr Power.

120 August 5 1876

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY **Jeremiah Leek**, boatman, was summoned for non compliance with an order to provide for the maintenance of his mother. On defendant paying the arrears, 25s, and the costs, he was discharged.

121 August 12 1876

REDDITCH PETTY SESSIONS, FRIDAY **John Aston**, boatman, was charged with being drunk and disorderly at Hop Wood on the previous day. Fined 10s and costs 6s, or 14 days' hard labour. He said he must go to prison.

122 August 19 1876

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **James Price**, bargeman, for neglecting to send his son Samuel regularly to school, was fined, including costs, 5s.

123 August 19 1876

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

KEEPING DOGS WITHOUT LICENSES **Henry Bunn**, boatman, was summoned for keeping two dogs without licenses on the 9th inst. Mr Farrington prosecuted. Mr Jordan, Excise Officer, said he saw defendant driving a horse along the Severn side by the Ketch, and he then had four dogs with him. Two of the dogs were over twelve months old. He was fined 25s, with a recommendation that it be reduced to 15s.

124 September 2 1876

BEWDLEY

CHARGE OF ABDUCTION At Bridgnorth Petty Sessions, **Francis Preece** of Bewdley, waterman, was charged with having taken an unmarried girl of the name of Emily Payne, of the age of thirteen years, out of the possession and against the will of Thomas Payne, her father. It appeared from the evidence that on Sunday the 20th of August Preece was proceeding from Bridgnorth to Bewdley by the river Severn in a boat, and he had not gone far before he overtook Emily Payne and Julia Perks, who were on the banks. A little boy named Rogers, who was in the boat with Preece, asked Preece if he would take the two girls for a ride, as he knew them. He consented, and promised to put them out with Rogers at Quatford, about a mile down the river. He put the boy ashore there, but would not put the girls, and took them on to Arley, promising to send

them back by train. He was told by one of the girls that there was no train from that place on Sunday evenings. He got out there, and found that there was no train to Bridgnorth that evening, and then took the girls to his house at Bewdley, promising them a good bed and plenty to eat. The girls asked him many times to put them ashore so that they might return to their homes, but he would not, and took them on to Bewdley ; and when they arrived there it was quite dark. He also asked them to call him "Uncle" to his housekeeper. The girls slept in the same room as Preece and his housekeeper, but in a separate bed. He took them the following morning to Arley, left them a short distance from the station, and told them to go on the platform. When they got there, they found Mrs Payne, who had that morning been to Bewdley and then to Arley in search of them. The parents of both children had wandered through the streets and neighbourhood the whole night in search of them ; and, with the assistance of Chief Constable Cole, information was obtained of the direction in which they had gone. The magistrates committed the prisoner to take his trial at the next Assizes, and consented to take bail, prisoner in £40 and two sureties in £20 each.

125 September 9 1876

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ASSAULT Edward Edmonds, boatman, Severn Street, was charged under a warrant with assaulting George Smith on the 26th ult. Remanded until Wednesday.

ASSAULT Edward Edmonds, boatman, Severn Street, was charged under a warrant with assaulting George Smith at the Albion Inn, Bath Road, on the 26th August. Complainant said on the day in question he went to the above inn about some billet money which he was to receive. As he was going out of the house, defendant came up to him and struck him in the face, and made use of obscene language. Defendant said complainant commenced the assault, and the case was dismissed.

126 September 16 1876

KIDDERMINSTER

FATAL ACCIDENT John Wyer, a boatman of Clensmore Lane, was on the side of the canal moving his boat with a long boat hook. The wooden shaft broke off in the middle, and Wyer fell against the jagged end of the pieces and was pierced to the heart, falling dead instantaneously.

127 October 21 1876

WORCESTERSHIRE MICHAELMAS QUARTER SESSIONS

PLEADED GUILTY John Lyons, 35, boatman, to stealing eleven fowls on the 20th August at Northfield, the property of Edgar Brooks. Prisoner was convicted of felony in 1869, and also sentenced to 15 months' hard labour with police supervision for seven years for robbery with violence at Warwick. He was now sent to penal servitude for seven years, and a like term of supervision.

128 November 4 1876

SHOCKING CASE OF STARVATION At the Newton Petty Sessions, **John and Martha Ellen Birkenhead**, husband and wife, were charged with neglecting to provide adequate food for their daughter, aged ten months, whereby the child's health was endangered. Mr Sutton, clerk to the Warrington Board of Guardians, prosecuted. From the evidence given, it appeared that the father of the child is a boatman, and is frequently away from home for a fortnight or three weeks at a time. The child was born in November 1875, and was remarkably healthy. About three months ago, the mother of the male defendant saw the child and remonstrated with the mother for neglect. On the 14th of October, hearing the defendants quarrelling, she went into the house, when her son came downstairs with the child, and said, "Take it mother, for it's starved". He had only returned that day after being away for a fortnight. She took the child to the workhouse. It was not in a fit state to be brought into court. The mother had hardly ever been sober for the last three months. The child, one

witness remarked, "was lost in dirt, and not fit for a Christian to handle". Henry Foy, relieving officer, said the child was brought to him, and he had it weighed. With its clothes, which were three quarters of a pound, its weight was only 5 1/2 lb. He had weighed a pauper child between eight and nine months old and its weight was 21 lb, and another eight months old weighed 20 lb. The Bench characterised the case as the most painful one that had ever been before them. It was the duty of magistrates to protect children, and the female prisoner would be sent to the house of correction for the longest term of imprisonment they could inflict, namely six months. The husband was discharged.

129 November 11 1876

BEWDLEY BOROUGH BENCH, MONDAY **John Parmenter sen**, waterman of Welshgate, was summoned by Head Constable Fisher for being drunk and riotous on Sandy Bank on Saturday evening week, for which he was fined 10s and costs.

130 December 23 1876

STOURPORT PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY A boatman named **Joseph Mallard** was summoned by Sergeant Mathews for being drunk and refusing to leave the Fortune Inn, Stourport, when requested. The defendant was causing a disturbance at the public house and PC Mayrick was called to eject him. Fined 10s and costs.

131 December 23 1876

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

USING A DOG FOR TAKING GAME **Henry Holland**, a boatman, was convicted of using a dog for searching for game on land of Mr Prosser, and the property of Mr H Allsopp MP, on the 10th December. The case was proved by Samuel Stephens, gamekeeper, who saw the man encourage the dog to hunt about for game, and eventually saw him run a rabbit. Fined 10s and 8s 8d costs, which was paid.

132 December 30 1876

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY **Joseph Laughton** and **Thomas Strain**, boatmen, were charged with stealing twenty bricks, the property of the Canal Company, value 1s 3d, on the 24th inst. The bricks were wanted for the purpose of repairing the floor of a stable, and were taken from the towing-path. The defendants, who received excellent characters, were sentenced to three days' hard labour each, and to pay costs.

133 January 6 1877

BEWDLEY BOROUGH BENCH, MONDAY **Charles White**, waterman, was charged with being drunk and riotous in Load Street and also assaulting Head Constable Fisher whilst in the execution of his duty. The defendant was challenging another person to fight, when the officer interfered and was assaulted by White. The Bench fined defendant 20s and costs, or one month in default.

134 January 13 1877

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

STEALING COAL **Thomas Hinett**, boatman, was charged with stealing one hundredweight and a half of coal, the property of Thomas Walker, retail coal dealer. Mr R Handforth stated that he had an office and coal stack upon Lowesmoor Wharf, and on the previous afternoon at about half past four o'clock, he looked out from his office and saw prisoner with a wheelbarrow going in the direction of prosecutor's coal stack. Shortly afterwards, he saw prisoner with a hundredweight and a half of coal in his wheelbarrow, which he took to Lion Row. The prosecutor said he had a stack of coal on Lowesmoor Wharf, and prisoner had been employed by a man who worked for him. Prisoner pleaded guilty. Committed for one month.

135 **January 13 1877**

PERSHORE

INQUESTS An inquest was held at the Coach and Horses Inn on Monday by Mr J Martin, deputy coroner, on the body of **W R Rice**. **J Moore** said : I am a waterman and reside at Gloucester. I worked with deceased on board the steamer *Bee*, belonging to Jacob Rice and Co, trading as carriers on the rivers Severn and Avon. On Sunday the 10th December, we had anchored in the Avon just below Messrs Goodwin's mill. He and I were the only persons on board, and at three o'clock, or soon after, he left the steamer. I did not know where he was going, nor did I ask him. He was not in the habit of leaving the steamer on a Sunday. The vessel was moored by the flood gates, upon which he stepped when he left. That was the last time I saw him alive. About 10 o'clock, thinking it strange he had not returned, I went up to Mr Swains at the mill and asked if he had been there, and upon being told no, I said, "Then something has happened". I said so because I knew he would not go away. His health was generally good, except that he was subject to fits. I saw him in one some months ago, but I cannot tell the sort. I was present on the following morning when the drags were used. I saw and traced foot marks from the steamer, and was present when the clog produced was found, and can identify it as one of deceased's. It was found about 60 yards from the steamer in the cleft of a stick, and about three feet from the water's edge, which had gone down in the night about eighteen inches. There was another mark nearer the water, as though he had fallen towards the river and left the clog behind. There were no other foot marks whatever on the side of the river. He had neither jacket nor vest on at the time. In reply to the foreman and others, witness said : I had not heard that he had any unpleasantness with anyone, or at home. He would have fallen straight into the water, which then was about eight feet deep, and there was a sufficient current to draw him from the bank. George Young of Great Comberton said that on Saturday morning he found deceased in a meadow at Birlingham, in about six inches of water. Superintendent Stanton said that round deceased's neck was a silver chain to which a silver watch was fastened. He found it had stopped at 19 minutes after three o'clock. In the trousers' pocket was a purse containing a florin and two shillings. Jacob Rice, Offenham, gave evidence to the effect that the body was that of his son, W Richard, 22 years of age ; that he had left a widow and one child, and was his partner in the carrying business. He health up to a year ago was very good, since which time he had been subject to epilepsy. The last fit he had was four months ago, making in all five. In consequence of this, witness tried every means to persuade him to stop at home, but without avail. He had been a total abstainer from childhood, and was not much of a sufferer either before or after a fit. Dr Grewcock, Pershore, said : I examined the body of deceased on Saturday, and found it had been in the water a long time, but was not much decomposed. On the forehead was a large bruise, which I am of opinion was caused after death. There were no other marks of violence on the body. I am also of opinion that death was caused by drowning, but whether preceded by a fit I cannot tell. The Coroner said that from the evidence adduced, and the state of deceased's clothes when found, there could be little doubt that he had had a fit and had tumbled into the water. The jury at once returned a verdict that deceased was accidentally drowned in the river Avon.

136 **January 13 1877**

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

ASSAULTS **Henry Wilmott**, lock-keeper, Diglis, was charged with assaulting William Cairns, carpenter, on 2nd December. Mr Tree appeared for complainant and Mr Bentley for defendant. The complainant, who lives in Spa Gardens, said he was employed by **Mr Waldron**, publican, Fort Royal Hill, formerly a lock-keeper (who, it was alleged, had a right to fish in Diglis Basin) to fish for eels. When he arrived at the canal basin, he saw defendant, who told him he should not put a net in the basin, and then struck him upon the nose and upon the temple. His nose bled profusely. Samuel Prosser, leather stainer, who was with complainant, corroborated. Complainant did not offer the slightest provocation. Mr Waldron having been called, Mr Bentley opened defendant's case, and said that defendant made no objection to complainant putting in the net. Complainant was under the influence of drink, and defendant, fearing he would fall into the lock, pushed him back,

and he fell over a mooring post. Complainant thereupon became excited, was abusive, pushed his fist against defendant's mouth and "squared" at him. It was also denied that complainant was assaulted in the violent manner described. Joseph Wilmott, son of defendant, was called to prove these facts. There was a cross summons, and defendant, being now complainant, gave evidence similar to that given by his son. He said both men staggered from drink. Prosser was called by Mr Tree, and he stated that both he and the defendant were sober ; and Mr Waldron made a statement to the same effect. Both cases were dismissed.

ALLEGED OFFENCE AGAINST THE WATERMAN'S ACT **Edward Waldron**, Fort Royal Hill, was summoned for having unlawfully and wilfully unmoored a boat lying in the Worcester and Birmingham Canal at Diglis. Mr Bentley appeared for complainants, and Mr Tree for defendant. Proceedings were taken under the 24th bye law of the company. A man named **Green** deposed to being the captain of a boat which was lying in Diglis basin on 2nd December, and to finding himself adrift on the following morning. **Wilmott**, the lock-keeper, stated that defendant (as stated in the above case) and several other men came to the locks at about midnight on 2nd December. Defendant said Green's boat was in the way of his net. He then began to untie the boat. Defendant was formerly lock-keeper. Joseph Wilmott jun also saw defendant untie the boat. Mr Tree, in defence, said he was under the impression that the boat was not properly moored. He then called several witnesses, who said that defendant merely pushed the boat back and tightened the chain. The case was dismissed.

137 February 10 1877

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ALLEGED THEFT **John Harman**, 20, boatman, was charged with stealing an iron bar, the property of Mary Ann Spares, widow, Dolday. PC James said that at about twelve o'clock on the previous night he saw prisoner and three men in Dolday. Prisoner was carrying the bar produced in a way that excited his suspicion, and he took him into custody on suspicion of stealing it. The other men ran away. Prosecutrix said the bar was used to secure the shutters, but on the night in question it was left under a window. She heard several drunken men in the street. The officer said prisoner was not drunk. Prisoner said the bar was given him to hold by some men. Prosecutrix said she thought the bar was only taken for a "spree" ; she did not wish to press the charge. The case was accordingly dismissed.

138 February 17 1877

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

The following persons were fined for being drunk :- **John Birch**, boatman, in Worcester Street on the 31st ult, fined 2s 6d and costs.

Richard Birch, boatman, was charged with infringing one of the bye laws of the Sharpness, Gloucester and Birmingham Canal Navigation Company, by taking his boat through the tunnel at Tardebigge otherwise than by the aid of the company's steam tug. Mr Holyoake appeared for the defence. Defendant pleaded guilty. It was stated that there was no intention to defraud, as defendant had paid the toll, and the bye law only came into operation on the 1st of January last. Defendant having signed an apology, the charge was withdrawn on payment of costs.

139 March 24 1877

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

ASSAULT **Thomas Strain**, waterman, pleaded guilty to assaulting Mr E Marston, Diglis, on 20th February. Complainant said he had known defendant a long time, and wished him to be leniently dealt with. Fined 5s and 7s 6d costs.

140 March 31 1877

SAD EFFECTS OF OVERCROWDING Dr Hardwicke held an inquest at Providence Hall,

Paddington, as to the death of **George Hambridge**, 70, a bargeman, who was found dead on his barge early on Sunday morning. Mr Wise, MRCS, said the cause of death was inflammation of the lungs, inducing failure in the heart's action, accelerated by the foul atmosphere of the boat cabin. Further inquiry showed that there were four adults living and sleeping on the boat, the cabin being only nine feet long, seven feet wide and five feet in height. The deceased paid 10s per week for the hire of the boat, which plied between Warwickshire and London with blue lias lime. The Coroner observed that it was satisfactory to know that there was a bill before Parliament in reference to our canal population. In this instance, the deceased had undoubtedly been stifled through want of fresh air. The jury agreed to a verdict on accordance with the medical testimony.

141 **May 12 1877**

The Bishop of Lichfield, seeing the futility by present means of arousing from religious indifference the multitude of boatmen in his diocese, has constituted the canals as a kind of water parish, and appointed a special and permanent missionary or chaplain for their spiritual care. The Rev M Graham of Sedgley is chosen for the office. A floating church will be provided.

142 **May 12 1877**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

MURDEROUS ASSAULT **William Weaver** (20), boatman, Lion Row, Lowesmoor, was brought up in custody, charged with violently assaulting **David Brace** in Lion Row on Saturday evening. Sergeant Preece hearing cries of "Police", went to complainant's house, and there found him severely wounded on the head. From enquiries, he elicited that the complainant and defendant had been fighting, and the latter getting the worst of the encounter, he entered his house and, returning with a hatchet, struck complainant upon the head, inflicting severe injuries. Complainant was conveyed to the Infirmary, where it was ascertained that his skull was fractured, and he was consequently unable to attend. Remanded in custody for a week.

143 **May 26 1877**

TEWKESBURY

INQUEST An Inquiry was held at the Town Hall on Tuesday before Mr C W Moore, borough coroner, touching the death of **Selina Shakespeare**, aged four years, daughter of a waterman named **William Shakespeare**. The evidence showed that the deceased child was on Sunday afternoon playing with others near to a barge moored to the bank of the river Avon, and in trying to climb from a small boat into the barge, the former floated from under her, and she fell into the river and was carried down the stream some 150 yards, when she was taken out by a man named George Hodges with a boat hook. Medical assistance was at once obtained, but although every remedy was adopted animation did not return, and the medical evidence showed that the child was dead when taken from the water, although she never sank, and was only in about five minutes.

144 **May 26 1877**

WATERMAN'S CHURCH On Wednesday next, the annual sermon on behalf of the funds of the Watermen's Church will be preached by the Rev Hugh Bennett MA, Rural Dean of Pershore and Vicar of Elmley Castle. A correspondent says : No one can deny the advantage of such a church in Worcester, it being entirely free and unappropriated, and situated in one of the worst localities in the city, and where a person entering with a shawl thrown over the head would meet with as ready a welcome as one attired in a smart Sunday bonnet, or a child with bare feet would have as good a seat as one with well blacked boots. Still, such persons cannot afford to pay for these privileges, and besides an extra amount of labour on the part of the clergyman in whose parish it is situated, there is necessarily expense connected with the services and fabric, and which the wealthier classes ought to be willing to bear. It is sincerely hoped that many citizens will attend the service, and a liberal response be made to the appeal, and that the Watermen's Church may long be numbered amongst the institutions of Worcester.

145 **June 2 1877**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

THE ASSAULT WITH A HATCHET **William Weaver**, boatman, was brought up in custody charged on remand with violently assaulting **David Brace**, waterman, in Lion Row, Lowesmoor, on the 5th May. Mr Pitt appeared for prisoner. The case had twice been remanded in consequence of prosecutor's inability to attend. He was now able to give evidence, although not yet fully recovered. He now said he did not wish to press the charge, but upon the Mayor informing him that they must hear the evidence, he stated that on the night in question the prisoner entered his house, and some words ensued about a bet. As prisoner refused to leave the house, witness put him out, and in so doing kicked and struck him. Prisoner got away and went into his house, which is next door. They still kept "haggling" and witness was about entering prisoner's house, when he received a blow upon the head ; he was under the impression that he was struck with a poker. By Mr Pitt : He was entering prisoner's house for the purpose of renewing the assault ; it was dark, and he could not see who struck the blow, nor the weapon used. Prosecutor's wife corroborated. Sergeant Preece said he was called to prosecutor's house, and there saw him with his head badly cut. He took him to the Infirmary, and also charged prisoner with the assault, when he said that Brace and himself had been fighting, and he cut him down. From the nature of the wound witness inferred that it had been inflicted with some sharp instrument and he searched the house, and the hatchet produced was found under prisoner's bed. There were no marks upon it. Mr L J Wilding, house surgeon at the Infirmary, said he examined prosecutor on his admission, and found that he had received an incised wound about three inches in length upon the forehead, and which penetrated the skull. Prosecutor was still a patient, and would need attention for some time. In his opinion, the axe produced would have inflicted the wound ; it could not have been done with a poker. Prisoner reserved his defence and was committed to the Sessions, the Mayor intimating that they would accept bail, prisoner in £50 and two sureties in £25 each.

146 **June 16 1877**

MAN DROWNED A fisherman named John Ferriday, aged 45, of Upton-on-Severn, was drowned in the Severn at Pixham on Tuesday evening. It is supposed that deceased was getting on to a boat loaded with coal, and that he slipped and fell into the water. **John Trotter**, boatman of Upton-on-Severn, was in the boat at the same time, but could not get a small boat in time to save deceased. The body was recovered on the following morning, and an inquest was held at Pixham yesterday (Thursday), and the usual verdict was returned.

147 **June 30 1877**

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH POLICE, FRIDAY [Before the Mayor and Messrs C W Moore and Prosser] **Joseph Hodges**, boatman, George Sweet, carpenter, and **George Organ**, boatman, were summoned for assaulting Charles Stone of Bushley, labourer, on the 18th inst. Hodges only appeared, but service of the summonses having been proved, the case was heard. Complainant stated that shortly after six o'clock on Monday evening last, he was going along the Mythe Road when the defendants came up to him, knocked him down and kicked him. Mr E L Cave, solicitor, said he saw the defendants hitting and kicking complainant on the ground. The assault only lasted half a minute, and the defendants then ran away. It was one of the most cowardly assaults witness had ever seen. Fined £1 and 8s 6d costs each.

148 **June 30 1877**

ASSAULTING THE POLICE A canal boatman named **Henry Smith** was charged at the Birmingham Police Court on Monday with a violent assault upon Police Constable London, on the banks of the Warwick Canal on Saturday evening. London had interfered to protect Smith's wife against the prisoner's drunken violence, when the latter attacked him with an axe, which struck him on the right side of the head, fracturing his skull. As London lies at the hospital in rather a precarious state, the prisoner was remanded.

149 **July 7 1877**

WORCESTER CITY QUARTER SESSIONS

THE ASSAULT WITH AN AXE **William Weaver** (20), boatman, was indicted for unlawfully and maliciously inflicting grievous bodily harm with an axe upon **David Brace**, in the parish of Claines on the 5th May. Mr Selfe prosecuted. On the night in question, prisoner was in prosecutor's house in Lion Row, Lowesmoor, and a quarrel arose over some small bet that had been made between them. Brace asked the prisoner to leave the house, but he refused, and the former thereupon put him out. When outside a fight ensued, and prisoner had the worst of the encounter. Eventually he got away from the prosecutor and entered his own house close by. Brace followed in about ten minutes, and when entering the house was struck a violent blow upon the head, which caused him to fall into the arms of his wife who was behind him. Finding he was badly wounded, she went in search of the police and returned with Sergeant Preece, who bound Brace's head up and conveyed him to the infirmary. He also charged prisoner with the assault, and the latter said, "We were fighting and I cut him down". Preece produced the axe, a formidable weapon, which he said was found under the prisoner's bed ; there were no marks upon it when handed to him. Mr L J Wilding, house surgeon at the infirmary, described the injuries. The wound was an incised one, and must have been inflicted with a sharp instrument. The prosecutor was an inmate of the infirmary for a month, and suffered a great deal. After a careful summing up, the jury found the prisoner guilty of the offence, but added that it was committed under great provocation. The learned Recorder said he should give effect to the opinion expressed by the jury by passing a lighter sentence than he otherwise would have done, as they were the persons responsible for the verdict. But in his opinion no amount of provocation would justify an assault of such a nature, especially considering that the prisoner after the first attack had had time for his passion to cool. The sentence was nine calendar months' hard labour.

150 **July 28 1877**

PERSHORE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **George Kinchin**, boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing three cabbages from the garden of William Harris at Cropthorne on the 9th July. Fined 20s, with 16s 6d costs.

151 **August 4 1877**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **James Price**, bargeman, for neglecting to send his boy Thomas to school, was fined 4d and 4s 6d costs.

152 **September 1 1877**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CRUELTY **Henry Rice**, boatman (for whom Mr Pitt appeared) was summoned for cruelty to two donkeys belonging to Edward Willis, Park Street, by beating them on the 28th inst. Fined the costs, 5s 6d.

153 **September 15 1877**

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS TUESDAY **William Wright** of Stoke Prior, boatman, was summoned by the Sharpness New Docks and Gloucester and Birmingham Canal Navigation Co for a breach of the bye laws of the Gloucester and Birmingham branch, by placing bricks within 4ft of the water of the canal. Upon the application of the engineer, and upon defendant promising not to offend again, he was let off on payment of costs.

154 **September 22 1877**

BOY DROWNED On Saturday morning, a boy named **William Walker**, aged eight, son of **William Walker**, boatman, Bridge Place, Rainbow Hill, was drowned in the canal at the Arboretum. Deceased with another boy named Humphreys was in a flat bottomed boat, which upset, and the two boys were seen by a woman named Elizabeth Davis, Chestnut Street, struggling

in the water. Deceased laid hold of Humphreys, who could not swim, but who succeeded in reaching the bank, while his companion was drowned. An inquest was held at the Guildhall on Monday, and a verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

155 **October 20 1877**

WORCESTERSHIRE MICHAELMAS QUARTER SESSIONS

NO BILLS **Job Flavell** (20), a boatman, with stealing two jackets, two shirts, part of two hams and other articles, on the 20th May at Oldbury, the property of James Drinkwater.

ALLEGED ROBBERY AT STOURPORT William Hook (19) and David Hook (21), miners, were charged with stealing two shillings on the 31st August at Lower Mitton, the moneys of **Benjamin Cox**. Mr John Amphlett was for the prosecution. Cox, the prosecutor, is a waterman living at Stourport, and prisoners lodged at the same house and occupied a bed in the room prosecutor slept in. On the night in question, after hearing suspicious sounds in the room, prosecutor examined his trousers and found (he alleged) he had been robbed of two shillings. Search was made for the money but it was not found, and information was given to the police the following morning. William Hook denied being in the room at the time the money was missed, and on this point prosecutor was not positive. The other prisoner denied all knowledge of the money. The jury returned a verdict of not guilty against both prisoners, and they were discharged.

156 **November 10 1877**

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Thomas Nicklin**, boatman of Stoke Prior, was fined 2s 6d and 8s costs for being drunk in Worcester Street.

157 **November 17 1877**

LEDBURY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY Edwin Lewis, a labourer from Stourbridge, was charged with stealing one cheese, value 8s, the property of the Great Western Railway Company. **George James** deposed : I am a boatman living in Ledbury. I helped to take some cattle to the Ledbury Railway station between 11 and 12 o'clock last night. The prisoner helped me with them. We were in the goods shed, and I saw the prisoner take the cheese from a number of others. I then went to put the cattle into the truck. Soon afterwards the prisoner came to me with a cheese in his hand. I told him to take it back, or I should inform against him. He then put the cheese behind a cattle pen. He said the cheese had been given to him. I saw one of the porters, and told him about it. James Stowe corroborated the last witness, and said the prisoner was drunk at the time. The prisoner, in defence, said he was drunk and knew nothing of what had taken place. Committed for one month with hard labour.

158 **November 24 1877**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNKENNESS **Joseph Groves** (17), boatman, Foundry Alley, was fined 10s (or 14 days' imprisonment) for being drunk and disorderly and using obscene language in the Corn Market last night.

159 **December 8 1877**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY [Before the Mayor and the Rev John Topham] **Benjamin Smith**, a boatman in the employ of the Droitwich Salt Company, was charged with neglecting his service. He was engaged to work a canal boat, for which he was paid per voyage, 10s per week being deducted for boat hire. On 25th July last, he was sent to London with a load of salt, and this task should have occupied him from three to four weeks. He however did not return until a few days since, having been plying between London and Birmingham for other traders. Defendant argued that boatmen had always been allowed to use the Company's boats for back freights, and that he stayed away because the trade was bad. Mr Smith admitted that the

men were allowed back freights if they got home in reasonable time ; but the defendant had been away 15 weeks, and his whereabouts could not be found. The Bench considered that the defendant had acted most improperly, and ordered him to pay the full amount claimed (£5) and 10s costs, which he was allowed to do by instalments.

160 **December 22 1877**

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

STEALING OIL CAKE **Thomas Gunnell**, boatman, Diglis, was charged with stealing a quantity of oilcake, the property of Mr J J Davis, farmer, Grimley, on the 16th November. Mr Tree appeared for prisoner. Prosecutor deposed that about two tons of oil cake arrived at Grimley Quay for him from Messrs Foster of Gloucester, on the 16th of November. Prisoner was captain of the vessel. The oilcake was unloaded and placed in his granary on the same night as it arrived. The next morning a police officer came to him from Stourport and asked him if he had missed any oilcake, as some had been found in a vessel that had arrived at Stourport. The cake was weighed, and there was a deficiency of about 22 lbs. Sergeant Matthews of Stourport deposed that whilst searching the trow of which the prisoner was captain, he found a bag of oil cake (which he was not in search of) concealed behind some barrels. Some of the cake bore the name of "Foster", and the whole weighed nearly a quarter of a hundredweight. Prisoner appeared perfectly willing for him to search the vessel, and procured a light for him. He told prisoner he should charge him with stealing the oilcake, to which prisoner answered that he knew nothing of it (and this proved to be the case according to the testimony of a subsequent witness). Mr Tree said the case was a very painful one, prisoner having held a responsible position and a good character for 20 years. He then explained that after the load of cake had been unshipped at Grimley and the trow had resumed her journey, the pieces of cake were found amidst some barrels and bags when some of the latter were unloaded at Lenchford. Prisoner had not been informed of this, and he had not the least intention of stealing the cake. Several witnesses were called in defence, and the case was dismissed.

161 **January 5 1878**

UPTON-ON-SEVERN PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **Thomas Blake**, a Gloucester boatman, was charged by PC John Sharpe with cruelty to a horse by working it in an unfit state, and beating it with a stick. Complainant said that on the 21st December he was near Upton Bridge, and saw a horse, with harness on, lying down on the towing-path. He went to it, and saw defendant's man strike it twice with a stick. The horse could not get up till assisted by the constable and others. The constable told defendant, who was steering his boat in the river, that if he proceeded with the horse towing the boat, he should lock him up. Defendant did not attach the towing line to the horse then but afterwards, by the instructions of Sergeant Turner, Sharp proceeded to the river at a point lower down, and found the horse again at work, and defendant's man beating it with a stick. He brought the horse back with him to Upton, and fed it. Defendant pleaded that the animal was a very old one, and promised not to work it again. The Chairman said he could not see that the age of the animal was an excuse for ill using it, and defendant was fined 5s and costs.

162 **January 5 1878**

WORCESTERSHIRE EPIPHANY QUARTER SESSIONS

PLEADED GUILTY **Thomas Fisher** (48), boatman, to obtaining by false pretences one pint of ale from Sarah Hall, from Isaac Elwell another pint of ale, and from the wife of Isaac Elwell three ounces of bread and one ounce of cheese, at Dudley on 28th October. It appeared that this was not the first time prisoner had committed such an offence ; he was sent to prison for two months, with hard labour.

163 **January 19 1878**

STOURPORT

FATAL OCCURRENCE An inquest was held at the Bell Inn on Monday before Mr W S P Hughes,

coroner, on the body of **Catherine Williams**, found on the surface of the basin on the previous Friday morning. The deceased was the wife of a boatman, and on Thursday evening they were staying in the boat cabin, near the lock. About nine o'clock, she complained of being ill, and asked her husband to go to the Swan Hotel for some whisky. He left the cabin, and knowing that his wife had been strange for some time past, he resolved to watch her for a short time. No sooner had he left the cabin than she got up and also left, and walked down York Street. He followed her, but suddenly lost sight of her. He made the police acquainted with the circumstances, and on the following morning Sergeant Matthews found the body as stated above. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

164 January 19 1878

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CANAL NAVIGATION ACT **William Giddings**, boatman of Swan Lane, Westgate Street, Gloucester, was summoned for causing an obstruction in the Worcester and Birmingham Canal on 18th December, by allowing a boat of which he was in charge to remain in a certain place for an undue length of time. Mr Bentley appeared to prosecute and Mr Pitt for defendant. The offence was committed at the King's Head lock, St Peter's parish. Fined 7s 6d and costs.

165 January 26 1878

DROITWICH BOROUGH MAGISTRATES' OFFICE, WEDNESDAY **Frederick Harris**, bargeman, was summoned for assaulting his neighbour, Ann, the wife of Thomas Harris, on the 27th December last at New Town. The case had been adjourned until today, when the case was withdrawn on the defendant paying the costs, 6s.

166 February 16 1878

UPTON-ON-SEVERN PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **Charles Butler**, a boatman from Newent, and **Mary Ann**, his wife, were summoned by PC Sharpe for being drunk and riotous at Upton on the 15th inst. Neither of the defendants appeared. Fined 5s and costs each.

167 March 2 1878

TEWKESBURY COUNTY POLICE **James Walker** and **James Surman**, boatmen, were summoned by Mr J F Reeve of Twyning Park for damaging the herbage of his meadow whilst bow hauling a long boat down the Avon. Mr W H Gray, borough surveyor, produced a plan of the place. The men argued that they had a right to pass along the land for the purpose of towing their boat, but the evidence showed that before arriving at Mr Reeve's property they should have "roved" to the other side of the river, the towing-path for that part being on the opposite side to complainant's property. The defendants were prepared with a number of witnesses (boatmen) to prove the use of the meadow, but the first they called stated the right was only in times of adverse winds, and admitted having asked and obtained permission. Fined 1s each, and costs 12s 2d each.

168 March 16 1878

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **Mark Pittaway** and **John Pittaway** of this borough, boatmen, for being drunk and disorderly in Queen Street on Monday, were fined 5s and 10s 6d costs each.

Ann, the wife of **Thomas Harris**, bargeman, for using obscene language in Hanbury Street on Tuesday evening, was fined 1s and 9s 6d costs.

169 March 16 1878

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

STEALING FROM THE PERSON Ellen Davis (40) and Jane Hemming (28) were charged with stealing £5 7s 6d from the person of **William Groves**, Bristol Road, Gloucester, on the previous day (Tuesday). Prosecutor is a boatman, and came into this city the previous morning. He met with

some friends, got drunk, and lost his train at Shrub Hill. He returned to the city, had some more beer, and at an early hour this morning found himself in Dolday, and with only ninepence in his purse, which not long before contained £5 7s 6d. He heard Davis, who was lying in front of the fire, say, "I have got three pound". PC Joyner found three sovereigns and other money on Davis. Prisoners were committed to the assizes.

170 **March 23 1878**

THE ASSIZES Ellen Davis and Jane Hemming, women of bad character living in Dolday, were tried for stealing £5 7s 6d from the person of **William Groves**, boatman, Gloucester, in Dolday on 5th inst. Mr P F Evans prosecuted. Hemming, the younger prisoner, was acquitted, but Davis, who had been previously convicted, was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment. The learned Judge remarked that, but for a defect in the indictment, he should have sent prisoner to penal servitude.

171 **March 23 1878**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **Maria**, the wife of **James Price**, bargeman, who had been before the Bench on several previous occasions, was charged with drunkenness in the Vines on Saturday. She was sent to gaol for ten days.

172 **May 4 1878**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **James Price**, bargeman, was summoned for neglecting to send his son, **Thomas Price**, regularly to school, for which he was fined, including costs, 5s. Defendant's son is a most incorrigible boy, and will not go to school. A further summons was issued against the father, and heard today, for offending against the School Board Bye Laws, for which he was fined a further sum of 5s. The latter proceedings were instituted with a view to the boy being sent to an industrial school.

173 **August 10 1878**

DROITWICH BOROUGH POLICE, THURSDAY Isaac Harris, hallier, Ann Bond, widow, and **James Price**, bargeman, were summoned for neglecting to send their children to school. Bond was fined 5s, including costs ; the other cases were adjourned.

174 **August 24 1878**

DIPSOMANIACS What appears to be an almost hopeless case of dipsomania has just been before the Birmingham Magistrates. A boatman 46 years of age named **William Pool** was charged with drunkenness and disorderly conduct. A police sergeant having proved the case, the magistrates' clerk said it was useless speaking to the prisoner, as he had previously been convicted in that court no fewer than 90 times for drunkenness. Prisoner admitted the truth of this, and told the Bench that during the last 30 years he had spent upwards of £200 in paying fines imposed upon him in the Police Court. The magistrates said he would have to pay another fine of 20s and costs, or in default go to gaol for a month.

175 **September 7 1878**

POLICE INTELLIGENCE

DRUNKENNESS **William Cull**, a boatman of Gloucester, for being drunk and riotous in Union Street on Thursday night, was fined 10s 6d.

176 **September 7 1878**

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

ASSAULTING A POLICE OFFICER **John Pittaway** and **George Pittaway**, watermen, Droitwich, pleaded guilty to assaulting PC Haynes at Claines on 16th ult, and were fined 10s each and 10s 3d costs.

177 **October 5 1878**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **William Harris**, bargeman, summoned for using obscene language, was dismissed on paying the costs, 6s.

178 **October 12 1878**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **Mark Pittaway**, boatman, on remand, charged by PS Colley with having been drunk and disorderly on Tuesday afternoon in Friar Street, was fined 2s 6d and costs 5s 6d.

179 **October 26 1878**

TEWKESBURY COUNTY POLICE, MONDAY [Before Mr J P Sargesant and Col Cormack]
William Bicknell, **Thomas Price** and **Rufus Halling**, of Tirley, boatmen, were charged with stealing from the premises of John Collins at Tirley on the night of Thursday, three hen fowls ; also from the premises of Stanby Staite at the same place, five tame rabbits ; also with breaking into an outhouse on the premises of Frederick Wells at Tirley, and stealing seven tame rabbits. Evidence was adduced showing that the prisoners were engaged in the neighbourhood of Tirley discharging stone from the boat *Thor* on Thursday, and were to have taken the boat behind a tug to Upton at night, but the tug did not arrive until the following morning, and the boat remained moored to the shore all night. About dusk on Thursday evening, the prisoners went to the Haw Bridge Inn, and remained drinking until closing time, when they left together. On the following morning, the fowls and rabbits were missed by their respective owners, who had seen them safe on Thursday evening, and the police were communicated with. On Saturday morning PCs Stinchcombe and Tanner proceeded to Upton, where they found the *Thor* discharging cargo and the prisoners on board. On searching the boat, they found under a bed in the captain's cabin three fowls, and in a hole in the men's cabin three rabbits. They also found a coat belonging to Halling covered with rabbit fur, and a pair of boots belonging to Price, which on comparison with footprints in the garden of the prosecutor Collins were found to exactly correspond. The three fowls found in the boat were identified by John Collins, two of the rabbits by Miss Wells, and the other rabbit by Mrs Staite. Prisoner Bicknell stated he went to the boat to sleep when they left the Haw Bridge Inn, and was asleep when the others returned. The other prisoners stated they did not wish to say anything. The Bench committed prisoners for trial at the ensuing assizes on all the charges.

180 **November 30 1878**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY Jane, wife of William Harrison, saltmaker, **Maria**, wife of **James Price** and C Smith, for drunkenness, were fined, Harrison and Smith 5s and costs, and Price, an old offender, 10s and costs.

181 **December 7 1878**

KIDDERMINSTER

OFFENCE BY A BOATMAN **William Cooke** was charged before the Borough Bench on Saturday with having infringed the regulations of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company by refusing to unload a boat when ordered to do so. He was also charged with having used threatening language to a lock-keeper named **Banks** ; and there was a third charge against him for having assaulted the latter. Three fines were inflicted, with costs, in all £2 17s 6d.

182 **December 28 1878**

Mark Addy, the Salford boatman who was lately awarded an Albert medal of the first class for saving persons from drowning in the river Irwell, was yesterday instrumental in rescuing a woman named Mary Ellen Doyle, who attempted to commit suicide in the Irwell. This makes the fortieth person whose life has been saved by Addy.

183 **January 25 1879**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY Ann Broad, widow, Ann Solloway, widow, **James Price**, boatman, and Alfred Crowther, carpenter, summoned for neglecting to send their children to school, were fined 5s each, including costs.

184 **January 25 1879**

STOURPORT

DEATH OF A STOURPORT MAN AT BRISTOL Intelligence was received on Wednesday that the dead body of **John Baines**, a waterman in the employ of the Severn and Canal Carrying Company, had been found that morning in the docks at Bristol. The deceased had left Stourport with a boat for Bristol.

185 **February 1 1879**

KIDDERMINSTER

THE EDUCATION ACT At the Police Court on Friday, **Henry Morgan**, against whom there were three charges of neglecting to send his child to school, was ordered to pay 5s in each case ; in default seven days' imprisonment in each case. Morgan is a boatman, and he previously was under a penalty of 5s or seven days for a similar offence.

186 **February 22 1879**

THE CANAL BOATS ACT Mr George Smith of Coalville writes :- "A few days since, at the Worcester Wharf, Birmingham, I counted nearly 40 canal boats, not one of which had been registered as the law directs. A number of the boatmen grouped around me, and warmly expressed their desire to have their boats done at once, if they only knew how to go about it, while they were "tied up". Last Saturday I was at Oakthorpe and Measham, and counted over 70 boats, not one of which bore the registration marks and number. I am told a similar state of things exists at Worcester. At Stoke upon Trent, 40 only out of 400 boats have been registered, and the officer appointed has been prohibited going beyond the borough more than a mile ; thus, with the exception of Stoke borough, boats plying between Rugeley and Runcorn are left as they were before the passing of the Act. This state of things exists, more or less, all over the country, in the face of an Act which has been in operation more than a year".

187 **March 1 1879**

DODDERHILL

A BOY ACCIDENTALLY DROWNED On Wednesday, Mr Hughes, coroner, held an inquest at the Bowling Green Inn, Dodderhill, upon the body of **Albert Goddard**, 16 years of age, son of John Goddard of Gloucester. Deceased was engaged in one of Messrs J and C Sturge's boats, which left Stoke Works on Sunday for Gloucester. When the boat had proceeded about half a mile, the boatman, **Thomas Russell**, missed the deceased, who had left the boat to draw one of the lock paddles to allow the boat to pass. The boatman, on looking out, saw the boy's cap floating on the water. A drag was procured, and in about ten minutes deceased was taken out of the water. He then appeared quite dead. Efforts were made to restore vitality, but in vain. Messrs Sturge's labour master, living at Stoke, said that their workmen were all instructed not to work the boats on Sunday. Russell said he had not received these instructions, but he was acquainted with them. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

188 **April 12 1879**

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, APRIL 10 **James Price**, bargeman ; John Knight, saltmaker ; and Reuben Sparkes, saltmaker, were severally fined 6d with costs for neglecting to send their children to school.

189 **April 19 1879**

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH POLICE, THURSDAY Samuel Hodges, pipe maker, was charged with assaulting **George Spiers**, waterman, on the 4th instant ; and a cross summons charged Spiers with assaulting Hodges at the same time. The parties are neighbours, but were not on friendly terms. On the day in question, a boy in the employ of Hodges was wheeling in coal, and crushed the fingers of Spiers's boy between the wall and the barrow. This led to an altercation between the parties, when Hodges rushed at Spiers and struck him twice with an iron trowel, inflicting a severe cut across the bridge of the nose. Hodges was fined 5s and costs, and the summons against Spiers was dismissed, Hodges being ordered to pay expenses.

190 **May 3 1879**

CITY POLICE COURT

KEEPING A DOG WITHOUT A LICENSE **Henry Bunn**, boatman of Dent Street, was charged by Detective Phillips with keeping a dog without a license. He was fined 2s 6d and costs.

191 **May 3 1879**

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

CHARGES OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS **Samuel Bradley** and **Thomas Mayo**, bargemen, Newent, were charged with having worked a horse in an unfit state on the 20th inst. PC Hill of the city police said that he stopped a horse drawing a barge near the Ketch Inn. Bradley was driving, Mayo was on the boat. On lifting the horse's collar, he found two raw wounds, each nearly the size of a two shilling piece. The horse seemed in great pain. The horse was examined by DCC Checketts, who said that the wounds were scabbed over. One of them was still tender. Mayo was fined 10s and costs, or a fortnight's imprisonment. The charge against Bradley was dismissed.

192 **May 10 1879**

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH POLICE COURT, FRIDAY William Brown, umbrella maker, was summoned for assaulting **George Hawker**, waterman, on 22nd March. A number of witnesses were examined, and the evidence was very contradictory, but it appeared that the defendant was creating a disturbance in the Oldbury on the night in question, and was advised by complainant to go home, when he knocked complainant down and attempted to throttle him. Fined 5s and 15s costs. A summons against complainant for assaulting defendant's wife, at the same time and place, was dismissed.

193 **June 14 1879**

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **James Williams**, boatman, charged with cutting and wounding John Bryan at Stoke Prior on the 6th inst, was remanded on bail to appear when called upon, prosecutor being too ill to attend.

194 **June 21 1879**

KIDDERMINSTER PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY **Samuel Johnson**, boatman, was charged with cruelty to a donkey, near Cookley on Friday last. The donkey was drawing a boat load of bricks along the canal, and the defendant was seen by PC Dunn to strike the animal with a thick rope in a most brutal manner. The Bench fined him 10s and 8s costs, and Mr Brinton said that in his opinion it was cruelty to compel one donkey to draw a boat load of bricks.

195 **June 21 1879**

ACCIDENTALLY DROWNED On Monday, Mr Rea, City Coroner, held an inquest at the New Inn, George Street, respecting the death of **Ernest Meddlins**, a boatman 30 years of age. Walter Dolloway, labourer of No 2 Court, Bath Road, said that he had known the deceased as a boatman who was living in his boat on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal. On Friday night shortly after eleven o'clock, he heard someone coming down the passage, and ascertained that it was the

deceased, who was drunk. Witness accompanied him to the cabin of his boat, and left him. Deceased closed the cabin doors, and said, "I am right". **Daniel Bozward** of the *Rose* coal boat, plying on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, said that on Friday night he was on board his boat on the side of the pound next the Royal Porcelain Works, between eleven and twelve o'clock. He was lighting the cabin fire, and went to the fire hole at the works. As he did so, he saw the deceased at the stern of the boat. Witness went into the cabin and had his supper. Shortly after that he heard a splash, and thinking that deceased had fallen into the canal, called out, but received no answer. He then gave an alarm, and called for assistance. Witness afterwards got deceased out of the water. The verdict was "Found drowned".

196 **June 28 1879**

CITY POLICE COURT

CRUELTY TO A DONKEY **William Wood**, boatman, Tirley, for working a donkey while in an unfit state, was fined 27s 6d, including costs.

197 **July 12 1879**

COUNTY POLICE NEWS

DRUNKENNESS **Mary Corbett**, wife of a bargeman, for having been drunk at Diglis on May 22nd, was fined 5s and 13s 6d costs.

198 **July 19 1879**

COUNTY POLICE NEWS **Henry Darke**, waterman, St Peter's, was charged with assaulting his wife. The case was adjourned to the Petty Sessions.

199 **July 19 1879**

BROMSGROVE PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Thomas Nicklin**, boatman, who did not appear, was fined 2s 6d and 9s costs, or 14 days' hard labour, for being drunk at Stoke Prior on the 2nd inst. **Annie Smith**, boatwoman, did not appear to answer to a summons for being drunk, and a warrant was ordered for her apprehension.

200 **July 26 1879**

COUNTY POLICE NEWS

CHARGE OF FORGERY **Thomas Rigby**, waterman, Gloucester, was charged with having, by means of a forged invoice, obtained 7s 6d belonging to his employers, the Severn Canal Carrying Company. Mr Warren Tree defended. Henry Weaver, agent for the company, said that on June 15th prisoner, who was captain of the boat called *Stourbridge*, was sent to Birmingham from Diglis with the boat. On the 23rd ult, he returned to Worcester, and handed in a bill head which purported to be an invoice from Mr Webb, corn dealer, Delph near Stourbridge, for 7s 6d for corn and hay supplied to the prisoner. He represented that he had been told to purchase the corn and hay by Mr Millington, an agent of the company at Stourbridge. On the faith of this representation, witness paid prisoner 7s 6d. When the captain of a boat left Diglis, he was supplied with corn and hay sufficient for the voyage out and home. If he should happen to run short of corn or hay, his instructions were to apply to one of the company's agents at Tipton, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Stourport or Stourbridge, who would supply him, or give an order to get supplied. In either case this should be entered in a book. There was no entry in the prisoner's book of corn or hay supplied on the day in question. Luke Leek, superintendent of horses and corn, in the employ of the company at Diglis, said that on June 15th prisoner was supplied with three bags of corn and one truss of hay to last his journey, which would occupy a week. He returned on the 23rd, bringing a small quantity of hay and corn. In cross-examination witness said there was about a peck of corn and chaff, and less than half a truss of hay brought back by the prisoner. The hay was not of the same kind as the prisoner took with him. Edward Millington, agent of the company at Stourbridge, said that on June 20th prisoner called upon him and told him that he wanted some corn. Witness

asked him when his time would be up, and his reply was that it would be up on Sunday. Witness replied, "You will have enough corn, as you will be at Stourport by that time". Witness refused to give him any order for corn, and did not give any order to go to Mr Webb. Witness considered that prisoner had sufficient corn to have lasted till he got to Stourport, where he could have obtained more if he had required it from the agent for the company. The distance of Stourport from Delph was 12 or 14 miles. Henry Webb, corn dealer, Delph, said that the invoice produced was not his. He had no blue ink on his premises. Some of the figures on the invoice were written in blue ink. He did not supply articles at prices agreeing with those of the invoice. Mrs Webb said she did not supply any fodder to the prisoner. On June 19th, a woman came to the shop and made a purchase. In consequence of a conversation she had with her, she gave her a blank bill head. Before giving it to her, she tore off the lower part of it. It was about the size of the invoice produced. DCC Checketts said that when he served defendant with the summons, he replied, "It is about that corn. I bought both hay and corn on my return journey to Worcester, and gave it up to Mr Leek". Defendant was committed to the Assizes, bail being allowed.

ASSAULTING A WIFE **Henry Darke**, waterman, St Peter's, pleaded guilty to assaulting his wife on the 12th inst. The Bench adjourned the case for a month, to see how defendant behaved in the meantime.

201 August 2 1879

STOURPORT PETTY SESSIONS **Robert Taylor** was charged with assaulting his wife on the previous Saturday. The defendant is a waterman, and he went home drunk. He began to quarrel with his wife, and blows followed. A warrant was obtained by the wife, and the man was apprehended and then admitted to bail. The wife now wished to withdraw from the case, which the magistrates allowed her to do upon payment of the costs.

202 August 23 1879

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

CHARGE OF ASSAULTING A WIFE **Henry Darke**, waterman, St Peter's, was charged with having assaulted his wife on July 12th. The case had been previously adjourned in order to test the defendant's conduct towards his wife in the meantime. Complainant now said that her husband had behaved properly. He was ordered to pay costs, 11s.

203 August 30 1879

CITY POLICE COURT

DRUNKENNESS **William Brace**, boatman, Lowesmoor, was charged with having been drunk and riotous early on Saturday morning. He was ordered to pay 5s 6d.

204 September 13 1879

COUNTY POLICE At the County Magistrates' Office on Saturday, **John Smith**, a boatman of Gloucester, was convicted of cruelty to a donkey by beating it at Claines on the 5th instant, and was fined 7s including costs.

205 September 13 1879

DROITWICH BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Maria Price**, wife of **James Price**, bargeman, was charged with the old offence of drunkenness, and committed for a fortnight, in default of paying a fine of 5s and 10s 6d costs.

206 September 20 1879

KIDDERMINSTER COUNTY COURT, WEDNESDAY [Before Mr Rupert Kettle, Judge]. **Leonard Darke**, a waterman residing at Lincomb, sued Enoch Baldwin for the recovery of £10, reward offered by the defendant for the finding of the body of his son, who had been drowned in the

river Severn. Mr M Corbett was for the plaintiff and Mr Graham for the defendant. Defendant's son was a member of the Stourport Institute Boat Club, and on the 18th of June last was rowing, in company with three others, in a four oar outrigger on the river Severn, when an accident occurred and he was drowned. On 25th June, plaintiff heard some women shouting, and on going some 500 yards up the river they pointed out to him the body of the deceased floating on the water. He got the body out and conveyed it to Stourport, and afterwards gave evidence at the inquest. His Honour said the reward was for "finding", and the plaintiff was certainly not the person who found the body. He read a letter which was written by defendant when applied to for the reward. This stated that three other persons saw the body floating in the water, and he should like to have it settled definitely to whom the reward belonged before he paid it. His Honour gave a verdict for the defendant.

207 **October 4 1879**

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS **George Hemming**, boatman, Gloucester, was charged with having worked a horse whilst suffering from wounds in the shoulders. PC Wall said that on going to Lowesmoor, he found in charge of the defendant a white horse, which had three wounds on each shoulder. It had either been severely strained or ill used. Defendant pleaded guilty, but said that another man had hired the horse. He was fined 10s and 25s 8d expenses.

208 **October 11 1879**

CITY POLICE COURT

STEALING MONEY Harriet Hincks (19), Dolday, was charged with having stolen 7s 6d from the person of **William Green**, boatman. Prosecutor, who was in prisoner's house, missed the money. She was sent to gaol for three months.

A DESERTER **Alexander Veal**, boatman, Diglis, pleaded guilty to having deserted from the 7th Regiment of Foot at Portsmouth on November 18th 1871. He was arrested by PS Summers. He was remanded to await the orders of the military authorities.

209 **October 18 1879**

CITY POLICE COURT, MONDAY

BOATMEN CHARGED WITH STEALING COAL **Daniel Bozward** and **Joseph Hopkins**, boatmen, were charged with stealing a quantity of coal, value 5s, the property of the Royal Porcelain Works Company. Mr E P Evans, secretary to the company, stated that on Saturday afternoon he was walking round the works, and saw prisoners with an empty boat in a siding, where it had been unloaded in the morning. It was the duty of persons in charge of boats to unload all the coal, and then each man was allowed 56lbs for cooking &c. Witness looked into the cabin, saw a small lump of coal, and asked whether that was all that was on the boat. The prisoner Hopkins said it was, and that they had not had their allowance. Witness went to the fore deck, and under some tarpaulin found a stack of coal, weighing 8 cwt 3 qrs 16lbs. Mr E Knight, who happened to be in Court, was called into the witness box, and he said that coal was never kept on the fore deck of a boat. The case was adjourned till Tuesday.

TUESDAY

CHARGE OF STEALING COAL The case against **Daniel Bozward** and **Joseph Hopkins**, commenced on Monday, was again taken. Mr Wood (from the office of Mr Southall) prosecuted, and Mr F Bentley defended. Mr E P Evans repeated his evidence, and in the cross-examination, he said that the boats were not bound to be unloaded by any particular time. Prisoners had borne a good character. James Goodyear of Sidbury stated what the arrangement with the Porcelain Works Co was with regard to coal, and Amos Bosworth said he helped to unload the boat, and did not know there was coal in the fore part ; it was not usual to put any there. Prisoners were committed to the Sessions held yesterday.