

NORTHAMPTON MERCURY
1865 to 1879

1 7 January 1865

NOTICE OF SITTINGS FOR LAST EXAMINATION

January 12 **H Bird**, Moira, Leicestershire, boatman.

2 28 January 1865

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

STEALING A COAT **Charles Simms**, boatman, and **John Walton**, boatman, were charged with having stolen from the railway station, West Bridge, a coat, value 5s, the property of John Henman, porter, on the 24th instant. The prisoners, on Tuesday night, came to the West Bridge station by the last down train. The prosecutor's coat was on the platform on the arrival of the train, but a few minutes afterwards it was missed. In consequence of what he was told, he followed after the prisoners, and came up to them opposite St Peter's Church, when he saw Simms either putting on or pulling off the coat. Walton had hold of the sleeve, and was assisting him. The prosecutor laid hold of the coat and said, "That's my coat ; you will have to go back to the railway station with me". Simms said, "If it's your coat, you take it and be off". The prosecutor, however, would not agree to this arrangement, and he told him that if he did not come back to the station, he should follow him about till he saw a constable. Simms then ran away, and on the prosecutor following him, he attempted to strike him. He, however, kept the prisoners in sight for some distance and, seeing a policeman, he gave Simms into custody. Mr Burgie, the station master at the West Bridge Station, said he saw the prisoners loitering about the station soon after the train came in and, when they went out of the station, he saw that Simms had a coat upon his arm. Both the prisoners said they were drunk at the time, and did not know what they were about. They were committed to prison for one month with hard labour. Simms, whilst at the station, broke a pair of handcuffs and the glass in the window of his cell. On his promising to pay for the damage, Mr Keenan did not press the charge of wilful damage against him.

3 11 February 1865

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

BUGBROOKE - STEALING WEARING APPAREL **George Grant**, a boatman, was charged with having stolen a shirt, a scarf, two pairs of stockings &c at Bugbrooke, the property of **John Evans**, on the 2nd February. The prosecutor is a boatman, and the prisoner was in his employ. On Saturday, the former left his boat at Bugbrooke in the charge of the prisoner, as he wanted to go to Long Buckby. He returned on the following Thursday, and as he was returning he met the prisoner, who said he was coming to meet him. The prisoner, however, did not return with him, and when the prosecutor went to his boat he found that a coat of his had been taken away, and also a shirt, a scarf and two pairs of stockings. Police-sergeant Pool said he apprehended the prisoner at Weedon, wearing the prosecutor's coat. In the pockets were the stockings and the other articles which had been stolen. The prisoner, who pleaded guilty, was committed for trial at the Assizes.

4 18 February 1865

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

HARDINGSTONE – STEALING OATS John Collins, Hardingstone, was charged with having stolen a quantity of oats on the 10th of February, the property of Samuel Thompson at Hardingstone, and **Thomas Dutfield**, boatman of Tipton, was charged with having received them, knowing the same to have been stolen. The prisoner Dutfield, on the day in question, went to Mr Thompson's for the purpose of purchasing some chaff. He was supplied with some, and then went away. In a little time he returned and, as he was leaving, Mrs Thompson, suspecting that something was amiss, asked him what he had in his bundle. He said he had nothing but chaff, but on the bundle being opened, a quantity of oats was found in it. The prisoner Collins is in the employ of the prosecutor,

and he it was who sold the chaff to Dutfield. He was cutting chaff at the time, and there were some oats at the place where he was cutting the chaff. Both the prisoners pleaded not guilty. They were committed for trial.

5 11 March 1865

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LENT ASSIZES

STEALING COAT, SHIRT &c, BUGBROOKE **George Grant** (39), boatman, was charged with stealing a greatcoat, a shirt, two pairs of stockings and a comforter, the property of **John Evans** at Bugbrooke, on the 2nd February last. Mr Latham Brown prosecuted ; prisoner was undefended.

John Evans, the prosecutor, boatman, said on 2nd February his boat was lying at Bugbrooke wharf. The prisoner was in his employ, and he left him in charge of the boat on the 28th of January. When he left the boat his coat was in it, and his other clothes in the boat cupboard. Among the things were the articles in question. When he came back, the coat, the other clothes and the man were all gone. He saw his things again on the 5th of February, when a policeman showed them to him. Police-constable Lewis Poole deposed to apprehending the prisoner on the 2nd February at Weedon. He found on him the coat produced, with the other articles in question in the pockets. He charged the prisoner with stealing them, when he said they were his own. Prosecutor, recalled, identified the coat and other articles as his. He also stated that he had not agreed with prisoner about wages, but had given 5s to get him something to eat. Prisoner, in his defence, said he had had the coat five years, and the shirt and a pair of stockings five months. A verdict of guilty was returned, and the prisoner was sentenced to six calendar months, hard labour, two days in each week to be kept in solitary confinement.

STEALING OATS – HARDINGSTONE John Collins (44), labourer, and **Thomas Dutfield** (61), boatman, were charged with stealing four bushels of chaff and three pecks of oats, the property of Samuel Thompson, at Hardingstone on the 10th of February last. Mr Merewether for the prosecution ; Mr Mills for Dutfield. Collins was undefended.

Samuel Thompson, the prosecutor, keeper of a beershop beside the Grand Junction Canal, and a farmer, said on the 10th of February Collins was in his employ. On that day he had eight sacks of tailing oats in his barn. Collins had orders not to sell any of it. Prosecutor left home about eight o'clock, and returned again about twelve. The granary, in which the corn for sale was, was kept locked. When he came home, from information received, he went to look at the eight sacks of tailing oats. One was in a different condition to what it was when he left, about a bushel being gone. Prosecutor then gave information to the police. By Mr Mills : The tail oats were in the same place as where Collins was working. Prosecutor saw Dutfield with his boat before he left his own land. Collins always had instructions to sell nothing whether prosecutor was in or not. Elizabeth Thompson, wife of the prosecutor, said on the morning of the 10th of February her husband was out. While he was away, witness saw Dutfield with his boats. He left them with a sack under his arm, and went up to the loft where Collins was. He stayed about a quarter of an hour, and then came down again. He came to the front of the house and looked at all the windows. Dutfield could not see witness, but witness could see him. The next time she saw him he had a sack over his shoulder, and went towards his boats. She did not see where he took it from. Witness followed Dutfield, and asked him what he had got. He said three bushels of chaff, and told her he had given her man 2s for it. Witness said that was too much for chaff ; 1s 6d would have been the price. She said to Dutfield he must go back with her. He did so, and she then put her hand into the sack, fetched out some oats, and asked Dutfield what he called them. Dutfield said, "Well, I didn't put them in". When Collins's attention was drawn to the matter, he said he did not put the oats in. Witness then had the oats and chaff put in the lock up place till her husband came back. By Mr Mills : 2s were afterwards taken back from Collins, and Dutfield had four bushels of chaff for them. Inspector Evans deposed that he took possession of the oats and chaff in question, and afterwards took Dutfield into custody. On being charged with the offence, Dutfield said he didn't know there were any oats among the chaff. He bought some chaff of the man and paid him for it.

STEALING ALE, NORTHAMPTON William Sackington, 19, Henry Wykes, 20 and William Sherlock, 20, labourers, were charged with stealing about ten gallons of ale, the property of W G Phillips and others, their masters, at Northampton, on the 23rd of January last. Mr Latham Brown prosecuted ; Mr Mills appeared for Sackington ; Mr Athawes for Wykes, and Sherlock was undefended.

---- Maloney, clerk to Messrs Phillips, deposed that the prisoners were in the employ of his masters to the 23rd of January. On the 10th of January, a cask of 40 strike beer came from Wellingborough. It was gauged in the usual way, and there were 28 gallons in it. George Solomans, foreman to Messrs Phillips, said : The empty casks are brought by water from the washing yard to the brewery, and back again. No barrel ought to be removed from the brewery unless empty, whether having spoiled or good ale in them. These instructions were always given to the men, and it was a known practice of their brewery. On the 26th of January witness ordered some returned beer to be used up in making some of a different quality. He gave those instructions to Sackington. The cask returned from Wellingborough was the only one so used on that day. Witness's attention was called to this particular cask later in the day by the foreman of the barrel yard. It was a 36 gallon cask of 40 strike beer. The following morning he had the cask gauged, and it contained about 10 gallons. It was Wykes's duty to take the empty casks into the boat and round to the other landing. The draymen landed them. Witness called Wykes to him, and asked him what he had taken round in a cask to the barrel yard. Wykes said he did not know ; he told Sackington, who gave it him into the boat, but Sackington said it would not matter. Witness then called Sackington and, in the presence of Wykes, asked him what he had sent to the barrel yard. Sackington said that he did not know that he had sent anything, and denied that Wykes had said anything to him about it. Directly afterwards Mr Phillips came in, and he told him. After the examination of the prisoners, witness examined the cask with Mr Malony, and found two of the X's rubbed off. By Mr Mills : Up to the last two years, there had been a place in the washing yard to deposit beer that had come into the yard in the barrels. William Basil, foreman of the washing yard, deposed that he was in the yard on the day in question. He saw the boat come up under the care of Wykes, and presently afterwards saw Sherlock rolling a cask from the landing. He noticed by the motion of the cask there was something in it, and it was bunged. The casks that come by the boats are not bunged. Witness went and examined the cask, and found it contained ale. He saw a double X upon it. Witness immediately went and communicated with Mr Solomans. It was Wykes's place to take the casks out of the boat, but it was not Sherlock's duty to roll it away. By Mr Mills : Sackington was not in the boat nor near the person rolling the cask. The refuse they had for washing the casks they got from Mr Solomans. None ever came in the boat. This was the case for the prosecution. Mr Mills and Mr Merewether (for Mr Athawes) having addressed the jury on behalf of their clients, Mr Merewether called the Rev J L Roberts of Spratton and Mr Dunkley, Creaton, to speak to Wykes's character, both of whom gave him an excellent one. Mr John Norman, coal merchant of this town, came forward to speak to Sherlock's character. Sherlock had been in his employ four years, and he had known him longer. His character for honesty was very good. The Rev C F Hayden of Helmdon was called by Mr Mills to speak to Sackington's character. His Lordship then summed up, and a verdict of Not Guilty was returned against each of the prisoners.

6 24 March 1865

BANKRUPTS TO SURRENDER IN THE COUNTRY

Buckler N, Chilvers Coton, boatman, April 1

7 27 May 1865

STONY STRATFORD PETTY SESSIONS

COSGROVE – SHOOTING AT A HARE **Samuel Millard**, a boatman, was summoned for shooting at a hare in the parish of Cosgrove. William Eydon deposed : I am a labourer. On the 13th of this month, about six o'clock in the morning, as I was crossing the locks at Cosgrove, I saw defendant come off the steamer called the *Lark* with a gun in his hand ; he went into Mr Graham's

field and shot at a hare ; he was within 30 yards of the hare at the time he fired. In defence, prisoner said he shot from the boat. Convicted in penalty and costs £2 19s 6d, or two months' imprisonment, hard labour.

8 28 October 1865

BOROUGH POLICE, OCTOBER 24

LONG BUCKBY **James Hayes**, boatman, Long Buckby, was charged with assaulting William Holland. Mr Roche for the complainant and Mr Gery for the defendant. Settled out of court, defendant paying the costs.

9 9 December 1865

LINSLADE SPECIAL PETTY SESSIONS, NOVEMBER 30

CHEDDINGTON **Henry Fautham**, a boatman, was brought up, having been apprehended on a warrant at Birmingham by Police-constable Lovett of Cheddington on the 29th of November, he being charged by Eliza Fautham, his cousin, single woman, with neglecting to pay a weekly sum of 2s as ordered by the Ivinghoe Bench some months since towards the support of her child, there being more than £3 due to her. The prisoner agreed to remit 4s per week to the complainant, which she agreed to take. He was therefore set at liberty on his own recognisance, the Bench telling him that if he failed to comply with this renewed order, he would be apprehended and committed to prison for three months.

10 9 December 1865

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

A SALUTARY WARNING **John Ward** of a court in Bridge Street, labourer, was charged with having indecently assaulted Mary Jane Horne, Bridge Street, on the 3rd instant. The complainant, who is a girl 13 years of age, was in Greenough's Yard, Bridge Street, on Sunday evening between seven and eight o'clock, when the prisoner, who is a boatman, assaulted her by endeavouring to throw her down and acting indecently towards her. When taken into custody by Police-constable Hawkins, he said, "It was by the boat it was done, but I only got hold of her frock". The clothes which the complainant wore at the time of the assault were produced, and they were torn in several places by the prisoner. The Bench told the prisoner that they considered the case fully proved, and as it was their duty to protect women and young children from such abominable assaults as that which he had committed, they would commit him to prison for six months with hard labour.

11 23 December 1865

LINSLADE PETTY SESSIONS, DECEMBER 18

IVINGHOE **John Woodhouse** of Ivinghoe, boatman, was charged with stealing one dung fork of the value of 6d, the property of James Webb, labourer on the canal, residing at Seabrooke, Ivinghoe, on the 30th of November last. The evidence given was so unsatisfactory that the Bench discharged the prisoner.

12 20 January 1866

BRAUNSTON William Dickins, beerseller, Braunston, was charged with assaulting **Henry Johnson**. Complainant : I am a boatman. I was on my journey from London. On arriving at Braunston locks I saw the defendant, who said, "I wanted to see you. How was it you did not appear at Daventry County Court?" I replied, "I never got any summons". He said it was put under the door, and he would pay me. He struck me several times, knocking me over the balance pole. I never struck him nor held my hand up to him. Isaac Barnard corroborated the complainant's statement. The defendant said : I trusted the complainant's wife and family. A small portion of the debt he paid and, on his refusing to pay the balance, I entered him in the County Court. He did not appear, and seeing him on the 15th, I spoke to him about it. He then in very coarse language said he would not pay. He had at the time a windlass in his hand, which he so held up that I thought he was

going to strike me with it. In self defence I knocked him down. He got up and assumed the same attitude. I knocked him down again. My father came up and took the windlass away from the complainant. My father, whom I expected, has not arrived. The Bench remarked that the evidence of the father would have been very important but, in his absence, the Court could only act on the evidence adduced. There appeared to have been considerable violence. Fine £1, costs 12s 6d.

13 28 April 1866

MAGISTERIAL SATURDAY LAST

SAVAGE ASSAULT **R Miller** and **P Miller**, boatmen, were charged by **W Odey**, also a boatman, with assaulting him. Complainant stated that about half past four o'clock the previous afternoon, he was on the towing-path of the Oxford canal between Braunston and Hillmorton, when both the defendants fell upon him for ten minutes, kicked him about the body, and one of them bit half his nose off. The defendants pleaded guilty, and R Miller said the first upshot of the row was this : our boats were loaded and Odey's boat was empty, and because we would not square out and let him pass, he became very abusive and challenged us to fight, and Mrs Odey laid the tiller about us. Odey said his wife was first struck on the side of her head and knocked down. Amos Tomlinson, 15, deposed that Odey first struck the defendants because they were passing him, and the complainant's boat held in and tried to stop them from passing, when they got to Willoughby, when all the three men were fighting and upon the ground together. Ordered to pay £1 each, including costs, or to be imprisoned for seven days. Paid.

14 5 May 1866

PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY LAST

HILLMORTON **W Wolf** of Hillmorton, a boatman, was summoned by J Hickman of the same place for assaulting him. **Edward Wolf**, a brother of the defendant, was also summoned for taking part in the fray, but he did not appear owing, it was said, to his having to go with a boat this day. The complainant had a black eye, and from the evidence the assault appeared to have been unprovoked. Ordered to pay £1 3s each, including costs, or one month's imprisonment. Committed.

15 26 May 1866

BANKRUPTS TO SURRENDER IN THE COUNTRY

Withy J, Alvechurch, Worcestershire, boatman. June 22.

16 26 May 1866

LARCENY **William Smith alias Brown**, boatman of Birmingham, was charged with stealing about 1 1/2 lb of pork, the property of James Turner of Stoke Hammond, on the 17th of April. The charge was not proved, and the case was dismissed.

17 30 June 1866

ACCIDENTALLY SHOT – CRICK On Thursday last, an inquest was held at the Grand Union Inn before William Tomalin Esq, deputy coroner, on the body of **James Daken**, a young boatman scarcely 23 years of age. From the evidence, it appeared that **Samuel Slack**, captain of the steam canal boat *Lively*, plying between Leicester and London on the Grand Junction Canal, was talking with the deceased and another man named **James Berry**, when all of a sudden deceased ran along the side of the boat to the front cabin, where the engine driver, **Philip White**, was sleeping, and where a loaded gun was standing. In less than a minute afterwards the report of the gun was heard, and the deceased fell into the water. It was supposed that deceased had picked up the gun and had dragged it out of the cabin, muzzle first, so that the hammer had caught underneath the seat and accidentally exploded. Mr Benjamin Kerr, surgeon, examined the deceased, and found a very extensive gun shot wound in the head of the deceased. The frontal bone was carried away. Death must have been instantaneous. From the evidence he had heard and the appearance of the deceased,

he should conclude that the gun had been discharged close to the face. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

18 11 August 1866

TOWCESTER PETTY SESSIONS, 7TH AUGUST

HORSES STRAYING **James Butler**, boatman, Blisworth, was charged by Police-constable Dainty with allowing two horses to stray on the highway at Blisworth on Sunday the 15th July. Police-constable Dainty said : On Sunday the 15th July, about midday, I found two horses on the highway, belonging to Butler, to whom I took them. He thanked me. I told him I must report it. Defendant admitted the charge, but called William Birch, baker, Blisworth, who said the horses were put into his field on the Saturday night, and the fences and gate were good ; they were 500 yards from the field when found. Butler was cautioned and ordered to pay expenses, 6s.

19 3 November 1866

BANKRUPTS TO SURRENDER IN THE COUNTRY

Simmons T, Bloxwich, Staffordshire, boatman – November 7.

20 5 January 1867

THE JANUARY QUARTER SESSIONS

STEALING CLOTHES, HARDINGSTONE **Thomas Parker** (19), boatman, was charged with having stolen one pair of trousers, one waistcoat and one neckerchief, the property of **William Harding** at Hardingstone on the 10th October 1866. There was no true bill against the other prisoner, John Ward, who was committed for trial. William Harding, boatman, was engaged with his boat at Norman's wharf in the parish of Hardingstone, in the afternoon of October 10th. He left his boat at about five o'clock to go up town, leaving the articles mentioned in the indictment behind him. When he returned at nine o'clock, the things were gone. On going into the Rising Sun, he saw the prisoner with his coat and trousers. Prisoner, directly he saw him, ran off. The things produced were his property, and they were found on the prisoner. John Ashton was in the Rising Sun on the evening in question, and he found there the prisoner, who wished him to pawn his ticket, giving as his excuse that he could get no food. He pawned the jacket for 3s, which he gave to the prisoner, who stood treat, and they went together to the Crow, where they fell in with a man named Ward. He left the prisoner with Ward and went home. He never saw the prosecutor at the Rising Sun, where he was with the prisoner at about seven o'clock. The prisoner had the coat done up in a handkerchief, but what he was wearing himself, he (witness) did not know. Prosecutor, recalled, said it was a little before seven o'clock he went into the Rising Sun, and there saw the prisoner who had on his jacket. Prisoner directly ran out. He was not sure the prisoner was wearing the trousers that night, but he was sure he had the jacket and handkerchief on. Septimus Davis apprehended the prisoner, who said he did not steal the things, but bought them of Hutchins (Ward), who stole them. He found the pawn ticket in the name of Thomas Parker, for the coat and handkerchief, in the coat pocket of the prisoner who, when asked if it was his, answered nothing. He afterwards pointed out a place where he had drowned the trousers, which were recovered. The prisoner had nothing to say, but he wished to call John Ward, the man who was committed to trial with him. John Ward said he helped the prisoner on the afternoon in question, and they walked together up Bridge Street. Prisoner went back however, and he (witness) stayed on the bridge till he was tired, and he then walked on. He had got as far as Phipps's brewery when prisoner overtook him with the things on. They did go together to the Crow, in company with the man who pawned them. The Chairman summed up, the jury returned a verdict of guilty, and the prisoner was sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour.

21 26 January 1867

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

COTTON END Thomas Hoare of Northampton was summoned for having assaulted **Elizabeth**

Phipps at Cotton End on the 8th of January. The complainant said she was the wife of **Thomas Phipps**, a boatman. On January the 8th she went into Mr Thompson's public house in company with her husband and some relations. Hoare came in and partook of the third quart they had. He afterwards struck her husband three times with a whip. He then turned round to her and wanted to shake hands with her. She told him to shake his own hand, and she would shake hers. He called her by a most degrading name. She told him he should pay for it, when he replied, "Then I'll pay for something", and immediately struck her a blow which broke one of her teeth off. By the prisoner : She never struck him till he struck her. Mr Clark of Drum Lane saw the row between the two parties. He saw the prisoner strike the complainant most brutally about the face and the body. Blows passed on both sides. He could not say who struck the first blow, but he could say that the prisoner treated the complainant most brutally. Prisoner said he and complainant's husband had fallen out, and as he could not bear malice, he wanted to shake hands. Then the complainant struck him three times. Henry Johnson, a labourer who works with the prisoner, said the woman struck him three times before he ever held up his hand to strike her. The complainant was drunk, and did not know what she was doing. Thomas Peaker, a lad of 17, also a fellow workman of the prisoner's, corroborated the statement of the preceding witness. Mr Clark, recalled, said the woman had had a little drink, he believed, but she was not drunk. The magistrates were of opinion that the prisoner was guilty, and inflicted a fine of 10s with 12s 6d costs ; in default of payment, 14 days' imprisonment.

22 20 April 1867

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, APRIL 17TH

LONG BUCKBY ---- **Wildsmith**, a boatman, was charged with assaulting William Tomline at Long Buckby Wharf on the 17th of February. Mr Roche appeared for the complainant and Mr Smallbone of Coventry for the defendant. Complainant said : I saw the defendant pass my house on the 17th of February, when I asked him for 18s 9d that he owes me. He had a windlass in his hand, with which he threatened to knock out my brains. He lifted it to strike me, but I caught it and wrenched it out of his hand. He then went towards the boat, when his companions suggested that he put me in the canal. He would have struck me but for my taking hold of the windlass. In answer to Mr Smallbone : I live near a bridge – only a few yards off. I stood at my door when I first saw the defendant. I went to him. I might go round the horse's head. I have repeatedly asked him for the money. I know a captain of a boat named **Hardy**. He may have said to me respecting the defendant, "Why don't you summon him in the County Court?" Ednor Tomline : I am daughter of the complainant. I was standing at my father's door when he asked defendant for some money. I saw the defendant hold up the windlass to strike my father. My father threw the windlass on the towing path. I heard the other men in the boat tell the defendant to put father into the canal. In answer to Mr Smallbone : I did not say, "Don't, father". George Thompson corroborated the testimony of the previous witnesses. Mr Smallbone, for the defence, said there was no case at all before the Court. But if the Bench thought otherwise, he would call witnesses to rebut the evidence. He called **George Jones**, who said the complainant was very abusive, took the windlass off the defendant's shoulder, and so frightened him that he ran away. Witness was steering the boat at the time, and was 60 or 70 yards off, but distinctly saw and heard what took place. The Bench thought the case made out, though it was not a very serious affair. Fine and costs 22s.

23 5 October 1867

LINSLADE PETTY SESSIONS, 30TH SEPTEMBER

STEALING MANGOLD WURTZEL AND POTATOES **Henry Thacker**, boatman from Wolverhampton, was brought up in custody and charged with stealing mangold wurtzel from a field belonging to Mr James Proctor of Pitstone on the 26th September. Having been three days in custody, the Bench discharged the prisoner, on it being promised that the offender should be given to some boatmen plying in the canal to be taken home.

24 19 October 1867

DOG STEALING **John Powell** of Linslade, boatman, was charged with stealing a valuable poodle dog on 22nd September last, the property of James Hadley Esq of Linslade. The prisoner had been traced to London and the stolen dog recovered. On the prisoner being brought to the lock up, he was taken with fits, and could not be brought up this day. The magistrates therefore adjourned the hearing until the next Petty Sessions to be held at Linslade.

25 3 November 1867

A LAD KILLED AT MESSRS WARD AND BEEBY'S TIMBER YARD An inquest was held at the General Infirmary on Thursday evening last before John Becke Esq, coroner, and a jury of which Mr Dunmore was foreman, respecting the death of John Frederick Archer, a lad 16 years of age, who met with his death from injuries received by falling off some timber at Messrs Ward and Beeby's timber yard, Cotton End. The jury having viewed the body, the following evidence was taken :- **Samuel Swinfield**, a boatman living at Deanshanger, said he was at Messrs Ward and Beeby's timber yard on Wednesday last, and the deceased was there lifting some deals, and was standing upon a pile of deals about four feet high. He was moving a deal from the stack when he overbalanced himself and fell backwards into the boat, which was at the side of the canal, and his head struck against a beam across the boat. He was lifted out of the boat directly and put in a cart and sent to the Infirmary. John Archer, father of the deceased, said that his son was in his sixteenth year. He had not heard that anyone was to blame for the accident. Dr F Buzzard, house surgeon, said the deceased was received into the Infirmary about one o'clock on Wednesday, suffering from a fracture of the base of the skull and concussion of the brain. He was sensible, but did not say how the accident occurred. He died about four o'clock in the afternoon from the injuries he had received. The Coroner said the case appeared a pure accident, and the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

26 8 February 1868

A ROW AT THE LOCKS **William Wood**, boatman of Gloucester, was charged by **Mary Johns** with a common assault at Cosgrove on 21st January. Mrs Johns said : On the 21st January I was with my husband's boat. Our boat was in the lock, and defendant's boat was also in the lock. When I stood against the gate, Wood ordered me to go away. When I would not he shook me. I took hold of his neck handkerchief, when he struck me in the face and knocked me down. I went for the constable, but he could not come. I afterwards got out a warrant, and defendant was apprehended today. By defendant : I had not a neckerchief on. The magistrates advised them to settle it, for which purpose they left the Court, but without success. On returning into Court, defendant called his father, who made a long rambling statement. The magistrates ordered defendant to pay all expenses, except what complainant had been put to on that day.

27 14 March 1868

LENT ASSIZES

STEALING DUCKS AT HARDINGSTONE Samuel Hickman (34), labourer, and **Nathan Buckler** (45), boatman, were charged with stealing six tame ducks at Hardingstone on the 20th February, the property of Dr Faircloth. The jury returned a verdict of guilty against Hickman, and he was sentenced to four months' imprisonment with hard labour. Buckler was acquitted.

28 14 March 1868

INQUEST AT THE ASYLUM On Friday last an inquest was held at the Northampton Asylum, before John Becke Esq and a jury, on the body of a patient there named **Maria Letts**. The jury having viewed the body, the following evidence was heard :-

Mr Joseph Bayley, MD, superintendent of the Asylum, said the name of the deceased was Maria Letts, and her age was 41. She was the wife of a boatman, and was brought here about midday on Wednesday March 4 ; removed here under the order now produced from the master of the

Hardingstone Union. The order of admission is signed by the Rev Mr Woolcombe of Wootton, and Mr Coulthart, the relieving officer. The medical certificate is signed by Mr H Terry. The medical certificate states that deceased was partially paralysed and was incoherent ; and that she had made attempts at strangulation, and that the matron could not control her. It appears by the certificate that Mr Terry examined her on the 4th, the same day that she was brought here. I saw her on her arrival here, and assisted in removing her from the cab. She was in a very exhausted state, almost pulseless, and I thought her dying. We carried her to the first bed, and I remained with her some time, and administered brandy and ammonia. In half an hour she rallied a little ; by means of administering stimulants in small doses we kept her alive until half past nine the same evening, when she died. She did not rally sufficiently to speak. In my judgement she was not in a fit state to be removed from the Union Workhouse. If her state, when she was taken from the Workhouse, was the same as that in which she was when brought here, she ought not to have been removed.

Mr John Dorset Old, master of the Workhouse at Hardingstone, said the deceased was brought from the Infirmary to the Workhouse on Tuesday March 3rd, at half past three or four in the afternoon. I saw her on her arrival ; she seemed to be quite insane and very weak. She was taken into the Infirmary, but was not seen by the doctor until about half past nine or ten on the following morning. She was then in the same state. Mr Terry was asked whether she was able to be removed, and he said she was. She appeared very weak. I gave her some brandy, which appeared to revive her. I brought her down to the Asylum about an hour after Mr Terry left. She seemed much in the same state as when she arrived at the Asylum as she was when she came to the Workhouse.

Dr Barr said : Under an order from the Coroner, I have made a *post mortem* examination of the body. I found no marks of external injury. On opening the chest, I found the deceased had been suffering from bronchitis and inflammation of both lungs ; the left lung was adhering to the chest, which shews there had been pleurisy. The other organs were healthy. There was no apparent sign of disease on the brain. I attribute death to exhaustion arising from the brain. I was aware the deceased was paralysed, but it is not unusual in paralytic patients to find no trace of disease on (.....) diseased state of the lungs. The disease of the lungs was of such a character and extent as fully to account for death, and must have existed for some time. I consider it was most undesirable to have removed her in the state she was in ; but I am not prepared to say that the removal hastened her death. The disease was so far advanced that death might have taken place even if she had not been removed.

Deceased's husband, who was present, said that deceased had never been insane.

The Coroner told the jury that he did not think it necessary to follow out this inquiry any further, as the evidence of Dr Barr showed clearly that the cause of death was the disease under which the woman was labouring – inflammation of the lungs. He considered it of the utmost importance that cases of this description should be investigated with strictness. If it had been shown that the death of the deceased had been accelerated, even by one hour, by her being improperly removed from the Workhouse to the Asylum, then it would have been necessary for the jury to have examined into the matter with more minuteness ; but Dr Barr had stated that it was impossible to say with certainty that death had been accelerated by the removal, and the jury must deal with certainties and not with probabilities. At the same time, he confessed that the case presented to his mind very painful features ; he was wholly unable to understand why the woman was taken from the Infirmary to the Workhouse, when she was apparently in the last stages of disease, and such a disease as inflammation of the lungs, nor why she was sent from the Workhouse when apparently sinking from exhaustion. The Master of the Workhouse was absolved from blame, as he acted under the directions of Mr Terry. If the evidence had established the fact that death had been hastened by the removal, it would have been necessary to have adjourned the inquiry in order that Mr Terry might be present and give an explanation. It was clear that from the moment the woman entered the door of the Asylum she received every possible care and attention, but the driving a dying woman about from the Infirmary to the Workhouse, and from the Workhouse to the Asylum, did appear to him a most extraordinary circumstance. It was most important that the jury should consider these facts, for it was necessary for the general welfare to see that the poor, when brought to public institutions,

where they had a right to expect care and attention, were not neglected.

Dr Bayley desired to state that he thought it extremely probable that the authorities of the Infirmary did not consider the woman insane in the proper or medical use of the term, but as labouring under delirium produced by her illness, and in that case they would not have considered hers a proper case for treatment at the Asylum. From all he knew or had heard of the case, he thought the deceased was only suffering from delirium.

The Coroner desired the jury to notice this statement, but he remarked that it left the facts much as they were before. The woman was sent from the Infirmary to the Workhouse, and then sent away from there, when she was not in a fit state to be moved.

The jury returned a verdict that deceased died from disease of the lungs, and they considered it is much to be regretted that she was removed from the Infirmary to the Workhouse, or from the Workhouse to the Asylum, as she was not in a fit state for removal.

29 30 May 1868

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY LAST

HORSE STRAYING **William Barratt**, boatman of Hillmorton, was charged by Police-constable Roberts with allowing a horse to stray on the road leading from Clifton to Lilbourne on the 22nd inst. Defendant pleaded guilty, but said in extenuation that he had turned his horse on the canal bank, but the gate being opened it had strayed on the road ; it had not been there twenty minutes. Fined 2s 6d and 12s expenses.

30 19 September 1868

OUNDLA PETTY SESSIONS, SEPTEMBER 14TH **William Whitehouse**, boatman from Brentford, pleaded guilty to assaulting Police-constable Ingram at Oundle on the 5th inst. Defendant had been previously ordered to pay 18s 6d by the Rev G H Capron after which he was charged with the assault, and liberated on bail. Defendant expressed sorrow for having committed himself. Penalty and costs 10s.

31 17 October 1868

TOWCESTER PETTY SESSIONS, 13TH OCTOBER

ASSAULT **Thomas Inns**, boatman, Shutlanger, was charged by David Boddington, Gayton, with a common assault at Gayton on the 2nd of October. On the application of Mr Whitton, this case was allowed to be settled.

32 16 January 1869

DAVENTRY DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS, JANUARY 13TH

NORTON **Thomas Parkes**, boatman, Wolverhampton, was charged with stealing a scarf, the property of George Thompson, Norton. Prosecutor has charge of the Grand Junction stables at Buckby locks. Prisoner went to the stables for a horse. In the temporary absence of the prosecutor, the scarf was removed from a bin on which the prosecutor saw it safe about nine o'clock on the morning of the 5th instant. Having missed the scarf and suspecting the prisoner, prosecutor inquired of the prisoner if he had seen the scarf. Prisoner said he knew nothing about it. After that, prosecutor heard the prisoner had the scarf, upon which he followed the prisoner who, in the prosecutor's presence, threw the scarf over a hedge. Prosecutor made the prisoner fetch back the scarf, and then walked with him to the lower lock, where he gave the prisoner into the custody of the parish constable of Whilton. The value of the scarf was a shilling. George Thompson, parish constable for the parish of Whilton, said the prisoner was given into custody by the prosecutor on a charge of stealing a scarf. Witness charged the prisoner and searched him. He found the scarf produced in prisoner's pocket. Prisoner at once admitted taking the scarf from the stable. The prisoner pleaded guilty to taking the scarf, but said he did not steal it, as it was only a lark and he intended to restore the scarf. The chairman said there was no doubt prisoner intended to appropriate the scarf. Committed for one calendar month.

33 6 February 1869

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, FEBRUARY 3RD

WELTON **John Thompson**, boatman of Lower Heyford, was charged with assaulting **William Benjamin** of Welton. Complainant said he was a legger at Braunston tunnel. There are twelve leggers, and by an arrangement among themselves, they take their turns in legging. Last Monday week the defendant's boat went to the Welton end of the tunnel, where the complainant was ready to take his turn. The boat was not near enough for him to get on it, and he took a rake to pull the boat nearer. The defendant refused to let the complainant get on the boat, and getting off the boat himself, he dashed the complainant down on his back over a piece of timber, thereby bruising his back and head. A boatman may refuse to have anyone to leg that he objects to. **Thomas Shaw**, another legger, said the defendant came along with his boat Monday week, about six in the evening. It was the turn of witness and William Benjamin to leg the next boat. Benjamin took a rake to pull the boat nearer. Thompson got out of the boat and threw him on his back. The defendant said he didn't choose to have Benjamin to leg his boat, and he was not obliged to have him. He certainly did pull him by his waistcoat, and he fell. The Bench said if the complainant had got on to the defendant's boat and refused to leave, the defendant might have removed him so long as he used no more violence than needful ; but he got off the boat to commit the assault, and therefore must be convicted. As the costs were heavy, the fine would be small. Fine 1s and costs 17s, or 14 days.

34 6 March 1869

STONY STRATFORD PETTY SESSIONS, FEBRUARY 26TH

ALLEGED WATCH STEALING AT OLD STRATFORD Major Richardson, 12 1/2 years of age, appeared before the Bench, charged with feloniously stealing a watch of the value of 15s, the property of **William Tapp**. Police-constable Stirling deposed to apprehending prisoner from the information he had received that Tapp had lost a watch. W Shepherd brought the watch to him, and he then went in search of the prisoner. He went to his house, but he did not come home all night. On the following night he saw him, and asked him why he went away, and he said that the other boy (Shepherd) told him that he was after him, and he had better bolt. Witness charged him with stealing a watch from Tapp's cabin. **William Shepherd**, a boat boy apparently about 14, said : I am a boatman. The watch produced I know to be my master's by the shape of it. I also know it by the No 3 on it. I gave it to the constable on Monday night. Prisoner had been about the boat all day. When my master sent me to the cabin for a feed of corn and the watch, I found the watch was gone. This about six in the evening. I told my master the watch was gone. There had been two men in the cabin, but we could not find anything on them. One of the men was named James Richardson. I went down the street and met the prisoner, and asked him if he had been in our cabin, and he said No. I said somebody must have been, for there was a watch lost. After this, I called him into Thomas's field and asked him again, when he said, if I would not say anything about it and hang the watch in the place again, he would give me the watch. As I was taking the watch to the boat, I met Mr Stirling, and he took it from me. Daniel Holman deposed : I live at Old Stratford, and am a bricklayer. I remember Monday the 15th. Was on the side of the canal between three and four o'clock, and saw the prisoner look down and go into the cabin. The boat belonged to Richard Barter. William Tapp deposed : I am Captain of Richard Barter's boat. I remember Monday the 15th. I told my lad to fetch some corn and the watch, and when he came back, he told me the watch was gone. I'll swear the watch was in the boat when I left it. Prisoner said he was not guilty, and said the boat boy showed him the watch, and said it was his. It was about half past eleven when W Shepherd showed him the watch. They were in the cabin. He said he gave 15s for it at Leicester. The Bench considered there was a doubt, and gave the prisoner the benefit of it. The case was dismissed.

35 10 April 1869

LINSLADE SPECIAL PETTY SESSIONS A special sessions was held in the Magistrates' Room, Linslade, on the 3rd of April, to inquire into a serious charge of rape. George Humphrey (21),

labourer of Stewkley, was charged with having, on the evening of Good Friday, the 26th of March, committed a rape upon a young girl only 15 years of age named **Susannah Ruff**, the daughter of a boatman residing next door to the prisoner's friends. From the evidence given by the complainant, it appeared that her mother sent her to get some eggs from a Mrs Sayell, about nine o'clock in the night of Good Friday, who lives a short distance from Ruff's house, which stands in a garden a little distance from the road. On her going down the path, she met the prisoner, who was going home. He rudely put his arm around her waist, and exclaimed, "Now I have got you ; I have been waiting for you". He dragged her to a stile, and proceeded to commit the offence charged. She struggled and her hair net came off. The prisoner continued the outrage until he heard Ann Humphrey, his sister, coming along the path towards her home, when he ran away. Ann Humphrey then went with Susannah Ruff to fetch her eggs, returning together. The complainant informed her mother when she returned home of what had been done to her. The mother saw the prisoner on the following morning, and asked him what he had been doing to her daughter, when he replied, "Nothing". On her mother telling him again that he had ill-treated her daughter, he began to use bad language and called her a liar. Information was given to the police on Wednesday, on the complainant's father returning home. Police-sergeant Carmint took the prisoner into custody, and took the girl to Dr Wagstaffe, who was of opinion that a most brutal assault had been committed. The evidence given by that gentleman before the Bench was so conclusive that the magistrates then sitting expressed their determination to send the prisoner for trial at the next Assizes for the county of Bucks. The prisoner declared he was innocent. He was taken to Aylesbury Gaol.

36 **1 May 1869**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, APRIL 28TH

WHILTON **John Bayliss**, boatman, was charged with assaulting George Thompson at Whilton while in the execution of his duty. Complainant said he went into the Spotted Cow at Whilton Locks about half past eight o'clock at night on Monday April 10th. The defendant and several others were there. There was some wrangling. The defendant abused his wife, and knocked her down flat on her back with his fist. He then threw her out of the doors, and complainant interfered to check his violence, telling the defendant he was constable. The defendant replied he did not care for any constable, and striking the complainant a blow on the chest, knocked him down. The defendant was not drunk, but his wife was. Complainant went home to fetch his staff, and on his return the defendant struck him with a nose bag, and knocked him down again. The defendant then went away. A warrant was taken out, and he was apprehended yesterday. James Pool, blacksmith of Whilton Locks, saw his master come and fetch his staff, and he followed him out to the Spotted Cow, when he saw the defendant strike him with a nose bag and knock him down. Defendant then went off with his boat. Defendant said he went to the Spotted Cow to pay for the stabling for his horse. He stopped there about two hours. The complainant was there drinking. The complainant was very freely criticising defendant's character, when defendant jumped up to go, and tried to get his wife away, when the complainant said he abused her. He went away, and when he came back he said, "I'll take your life". He held up a nose bag, which received the blow complainant aimed at the defendant. Complainant's staff was broken. **Mary Bayliss**, wife of the defendant, said : We had all been drinking together. My husband caught hold of my arm, and some way I happened to fall. Thompson said he ill used me. I did not see my husband strike Thompson. He did not strike me. Thompson struck the nose bag with such violence that he broke his staff. Thompson, in reply to the Bench, said in attempting to stop another blow from the nose bag, his staff was broken. Fined £1 and costs 19s 9d, in default one month. The money was paid.

37 **8 May 1869**

BANKRUPTS TO SURRENDER IN THE COUNTRY

Taylor William, Wolverhampton, boatman, May 10

38 12 June 1869

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JUNE 9TH

POACHING **James Newton**, boatman, Uxbridge, was charged with poaching on the Stanford Hall Estate. Mr Gery appeared for the defendant. The Court found the defendant guilty of the offence, and fined him £1 and costs £1 3s 1d.

39 3 July 1869

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JULY SESSIONS

WHILTON Frederick Tomalin and Frederick Marks were indicted for stealing six fowls, the property of Elizabeth Emery, on the 11th of April. Mr Bennett was for the prosecution. Elizabeth Emery said on the 11th of April she shut up her fowls in the roost at half past seven at night. There were eleven – all hen birds. Next morning at seven o'clock, she found the door open and blood on the ladder. Looking further, she missed six of her fowls. The rest were out. The missing ones were three silver pencils, one game and two Hamburgs. There were two men's footsteps in the garden adjoining. On the following Wednesday she went to Daventry, and there identified some fowls. She knows the prisoner Marks, who is a native of Whilton, and is a returned soldier. Charles Daniel, a draper at Daventry, said on the 12th of April last he went to a hedgerow near the town, in consequence of a statement made by his son, and found six fowls lying on a bank and a white smock frock. He went to Mr Osborn, who occupies the adjoining field, and then gave notice to the police. Edward Johnstone, a labourer in the employ of Mr Osborne, said a quarter before seven he saw two men cross the field where he was milking. He didn't know who they were, and he couldn't say they were the prisoners. A witness named Wells said he saw Tomalin and another come out of a field into the Weedon road. The last witness (Johnstone) came out with his milk buckets directly after. Elias Cherry said he was going with the last witness and a young man named Carvill along the London road, when he met the two prisoners coming through Mr Osborn's gate. He did not know either of them before. He thought he could speak to Marks ; he could not speak as to Tomalin. The men went up towards Daventry. Bigley, a Daventry chimney sweep, said he knew Tomalin many years, and saw him on Monday the 18th of April, about halfway between the inland stile and the turnpike. **Major**, a boatman at Buckby locks, was working on the 10th of April setting potatoes on the railway bank. Marks had a slop on and a pair of cord trousers. The smock produced is the one he wore ; he knew it by the stain in the back, done, he thought, by osiers. Joseph Tomlinson said he met prisoners at seven in the morning in Harleston Park, going in the direction of Whilton. Thompson, the constable at Whilton locks, apprehended Marks at his mother's house at Whilton. He could swear he had seen Marks wear the slop produced. As he took him to the station he asked him about the fowls, and whether he was guilty, and he said he had sold his smock at Northampton. Inspector Browning said Tomalin was in his cell at Daventry on Sunday, when he heard Tomalin say to another prisoner named Brown, "I've just been thinking what I shall get for this job. I lay it at 18 months, but I wish they'd give me five years. That'ud about set me straight". Brown said, "You'd get a penny a day for that". "A penny a day", replied Tomalin. "How much would that be?", and by a rough calculation, they made it amount to £7 10s. This was the case for the prosecution. Marks, in his defence, said he sold his own slop in Northampton, and consequently that the one produced, as connected with the fowls, was not his. He had sent to his mother to produce this man, but she told him he would not come unless he was paid 5s for his day's work. He stated that the shop was in the Manorhold on a Green, but he did not know the shopkeeper's name. In reply to Mr Hunt, he said he should know the shop again. Mr Hunt said it was now time for the Court to adjourn, and he directed that two policemen should accompany the prisoner to the shop, and bring the shopkeeper with them. The Court then adjourned, the jury being supplied with a luncheon under due surveillance. On the reassembling of the Court, Marks called Edward Marks, a shoemaker of Northampton, who said the prisoner called on him the night before he sold a shirt and a smock. He asked him to give him a lodging, and he did, and the next day he accompanied him to the shop where he sold the slop, in Bearward Street. The one he had on was not stained ; not that he noticed. The man who called with Marks was named Earl, and he had got

work at Kettering. Marks said he had pointed out the shop where he sold his smock, but the man said he could recollect nothing about it. The Right Hon Chairman summed up at great length, pointing out the weak points of the case against the prisoners, and the jury, after a very brief consultation, acquitted the prisoners.

40 3 July 1869

BUCKS MIDSUMMER SESSIONS

STEALING MONEY AT DENHAM **Henry Millard** was charged with stealing a purse and one sovereign, the property of **Thomas Frank**, at Denham on the 6th June. Mr Brown prosecuted. Prisoner, who is a boatman out of employment, was allowed by the prosecutor to come aboard his boat at Uxbridge lock, Denham, upon the night of the 6th of June. When the prosecutor was absent from his boat, the prisoner was seen by the wife of another boatman to leave the prosecutor's boat, and upon the prosecutor going to his boat, he found the cabin all upset, and his money gone. Prisoner was searched, but no money or purse was found on him. He was acquitted.

41 24 July 1869

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY **Joseph Marriott**, labourer, Far Cotton, and **William Smith**, boatman of a court in Bridge Street, were charged with having been drunk and disorderly in Gold Street on the 18th instant. Police-constable Wadhams proved the case, and the prisoners were each fined 5s and costs ; or, in default of payment, seven days' imprisonment.

42 14 August 1869

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY LAST

HILLMORTON **Charles Sunns**, boatman of Hillmorton, was charged with having assaulted Police-constable Print while in the execution of his duty on the 30th of June. This case had been adjourned twice, in consequence of defendant not being able to appear. Police-constable Print said he was on duty at Hillmorton on the morning of the 30th of June. About two o'clock, himself and Police-constable Roberts were called into the Stag and Pheasant Inn to remove some persons who would not leave. Defendant was one of them, and as he would not go, Roberts put him out of the house three or four times, but he insisted in coming in again. After he was put out the last time, he came into the passage and struck witness, making his nose and cheek bleed. Police-constable Roberts corroborated last witness. Defendant said he told Roberts he would go out, but would not be turned out ; he had had some beer, but knew what he was about. He did not strike the policeman. If his face bled, it was done while he was struggling with the other policeman. In answer to the Bench, Sergeant Thomas said he had known defendant for some time, but never knew anything against him before. The Bench said defendant had rendered himself liable to a penalty of £20 for committing this assault. Fined £1 and £1 costs, or one month's hard labour. The money was paid.

43 2 October 1869

LINSLADE **Thomas Ensworth**, boatman from Leicester, was charged with being drunk and incapable of taking care of himself at Linslade on Sunday 26th September. Defendant admitted the charge, and was fined 5s and 6s costs.

44 30 October 1869

STONY STRATFORD PETTY SESSIONS, OCTOBER 22

WOLVERTON **Charles Slater** of Burton-on-Trent, boatman, was summoned by Joseph Parker, station master at Wolverton, with having assaulted him in the execution of his duty on the 4th October. Defendant did not appear, and the service of the summons having been proved, a warrant was put in the hands of the police to apprehend him.

45 6 November 1869

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

A BOATMAN FINED A SILVER CROWN **Charles Atkins**, boatman, Hillmorton, was charged with having been drunk and disorderly in Bridge Street on the 4th instant, and was fined 5s and 3s costs.

46 15 January 1870

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COURT

JOHN ATKINS v GEORGE THOMPSON, WHILTON LOCKS Claim for £7 17s 6d. Mr C C Becke was for the plaintiff. Mr White appeared for the defendant. The plaintiff is a boatman, and made a bargain with the defendant in respect to a horse. He was to give £9 for the horse, to try it on a journey, and if it did not suit him he was to return it and lose a sovereign. He was going to Chelsea, and on his return in 13 days he brought the horse back again, as it did not work to his mind. A little of the hair was rubbed off the horse's ribs, and that was all the damage done. When he returned the horse, defendant would not receive it. The amount claimed was for the £9 less the sovereign that was to be lost, and 2s 6d that was agreed to be paid for a dinner. The defendant alleged that he agreed that the plaintiff should have the horse for a week only, and that at the end of that time, if it did not suit him, he was to return it and lose a sovereign. He did not return it in a week. Thirteen days had elapsed before the plaintiff returned the horse, which was then in a very poor condition. He would have taken the horse if there had been a new valuation. A witness was called on either side, but his Honour considered the probabilities were in favour of the plaintiff, and gave a verdict accordingly.

47 5 February 1870

SUDDEN DEATH, BRAUNSTON On Saturday last an inquest was held at the Cross Guns, Braunston, before William Terry Esq, coroner, on the body of **Thomas Howkins**, aged 81 years, formerly a boatman. The old man lived alone, his daughter residing next door. On Thursday he was unwell, and on Friday morning he did not get up. His daughter gave him a little brandy and desired to procure a doctor, but the deceased declined to have one. Shortly afterwards the old man died. Mr Charles Bennett, surgeon, saw deceased immediately after death, and certified that death resulted from natural causes. A verdict in accordance with the medical evidence was returned.

48 19 February 1870

LONG BUCKBY **William Robinson**, boatman, was charged with stealing a piece of pork, the property of William Barratt, innkeeper, Long Buckby. Prosecutor deposed that the prisoner was at his house, the Horse Shoe, on the night of the 9th of February instant. Witness got home about a quarter before eleven at night, and about eleven o'clock he had occasion to go down the cellar. He then noticed a piece of pork which, with a leg of mutton, hung at the head of the cellar stairs. At that time, the prisoner was in the passage that leads from the bar parlour to the cellar stairs. About five minutes afterwards he went to see if the pork was there, and found it was gone. He turned to go into the parlour, when Police-constable Thacker went into the house. Witness told Thacker of his loss. Thacker said, "Which is the man?" The prisoner replied, "I am the man, and I will show you what I have done with it". The policeman and prisoner then went out, and shortly after returned with the piece of pork now produced. Prisoner said he was very sorry for what he had done, and hoped to be forgiven. The value of the pork was 2s 8d. By Mr Gery, for the defence : I don't know what money he had paid my wife, only by hearsay, but I believe he had paid her none. I did say I would forgive him, for I understood he was very badly off, and I was sorry for him. There were a dozen or more persons present. I don't wish to press the charge against the prisoner, of whom I have heard a very excellent character. Elizabeth Ann Barratt, wife of the prosecutor, said that, soon after her husband came from the cellar, she missed the piece of pork. She told the company, and said if the person who had taken it would admit it, he should be forgiven. The prisoner replied, "I am guilty, and am very sorry". That was before the policeman came. The policeman came in, and

the prisoner went out with him to fetch the pork. By Mr Gery : I made the promise of forgiveness before the prisoner admitted he was guilty. I did not say I will not prosecute. I have known the prisoner about three months. I know he had an accident by which his head was affected. I trusted him for the gin he had, except for one half quartern, for which he paid. He had eight half quarterns. I have since then received the money for the gin, 1s 9d, and 3s for the pork. The prisoner paid me after he was bailed out. Police-constable Thacker said : I went to the Horse Shoe between eleven and twelve o'clock on the night of the 9th instant, when the prosecutor told me he had lost a piece of pork. I told the prisoner he was suspected of stealing a piece of pork. He replied, "I did ; and if Mr Barratt will forgive me, I will show you where I put it". I said, "We'll see about that ; come and let me see what you have done with the meat". He went out of the door, and I followed him round the corner of the house, and there lay the piece of pork produced. The prosecutor identified it. The prisoner had had drink, but he knew what he was about. I then charged him with stealing the pork, and took him into custody. Cross-examined by Mr Gery : I believe Mrs Barratt had spoken to him on the subject before I went in. Mr Gery said it was a rule of law that where a promise of forgiveness had been made to induce confession, no proceedings could be afterwards taken. The Bench asked Mr Gery upon what authority that rule rested. Mr Gery had not the authority with him, and the Clerk was not aware of any such rule. The Bench declined to convict, because there was no evidence against the prisoner but what had been obtained by promise of forgiveness. There were other circumstances in the case, in consideration of which they were not obliged to convict. And in addition to that, there was the very excellent character the prisoner had hitherto borne.

49 23 April 1870

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

HELPLESSLY DRUNK **John Lapworth**, boatman, Nuneaton, was charged with being drunk and incapable of taking care of himself in Horseshoe Street on the 19th instant. Defendant said he did not know anything about it. The policeman found him helplessly drunk in the urinal, and then took him into custody. Fined 5s and 2s costs. A companion of defendant's here stepped forward and paid the money.

50 7 May 1870

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

STEALING LINSEED **James Garner**, a boatman in the service of the Grand Junction Canal Company, was charged with having stolen about two cwt of linseed from a cargo which had been brought to Messrs Blewitt and Shaw of Northampton. Mr Keenan stated that the prisoner absconded from the town, and a warrant was issued for his apprehension, and on that morning he gave himself up to the police. The evidence was not quite ready, and he would therefore ask for a remand, which was granted.

51 14 May 1870

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

THEFT BY A BOATMAN **James Garner**, boatman of Braunston, was brought up on remand, charged with having stolen about two hundredweight of linseed, of the value of £2, the property of the Grand Junction Canal Company, on the 25th inst. Mr A B Markham appeared for the Grand Junction Canal Company ; Mr H P Hensman appeared for the prisoner. The prisoner was the captain of a boat, and had been in the employ of the Grand Junction Company for some eight or ten years. On the day in question he brought in a load of linseed. There were 266 sacks of linseed, and about 3 1/2 cwt was missing. Two cwt 17 lbs of the linseed were found in the prisoner's cabin after the boat had been unladen, and it was this he was charged with stealing. Mr Markham said the company would be satisfied if the magistrates dealt summarily with the case. Mr Hensman, on behalf of the prisoner, said he should be willing for the case to be dealt with summarily ; and if the magistrates decided so to deal with the case, he should recommend the prisoner to plead guilty. The evidence was read over, and the prisoner having pleaded guilty, the magistrates sentenced him to six

months' imprisonment with hard labour.

52 28 May 1870

MARSWORTH **Samuel Benton**, boatman on the Canal, was convicted of assaulting Maria Smith of Marsworth on the 6th of May, and fined 9s 2d and £1 10s costs. Paid.

53 25 June 1870

A BOY DROWNED AT BUCKBY WHARF On Monday last, William Terry Esq, coroner, held an inquest at the New Inn, Norton, on the body of **James Greenway**, a child six years of age, who fell into the canal and was drowned on the previous Saturday night. The deceased was with his brother, **Edward John Greenway**, a boatman who had charge of two barges from Wolverhampton to London. On Saturday night they arrived at Buckby Wharf, and at about eight or nine o'clock deceased, it is supposed, went with his cousin, Edward Greenway, a youth of 16, to take the horse to the stable but, from some unexplained cause, he did not accompany his cousin. At about ten o'clock, the little fellow's cap was observed to be on the canal, and this led to a search. At length the body was found in the canal. It is supposed that the lad was stepping from one boat to another, and thus fell in. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

54 13 August 1870

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 10TH

BRAUNSTON **Charles Slater**, a boatman, was charged with stealing apples, the property of George Williams, and with assaulting the said George Williams, and also with assaulting the police. Though there were three separate charges, they were all heard together. George Williams said about half past five o'clock on Sunday morning last, I saw the defendant getting apples off my trees. I live on one side of the canal at Braunston, and my garden is on the other side. The defendant got over the hedge from the towing-path. I went to collar him, and he struck me on the side of the head. He had a windlass in his hand, and he said if I did not let him alone he would knock my head off. I then sent for the police, and followed the defendant up the locks to No 4 lock. The policeman went into the cabin, and I heard a scuffle. Police-constable Phoenix, stationed at Braunston, said he was sent for by the complainant. He went to prisoner's boat. Prisoner was sitting in the cabin with the windlass in his hand. He got up and told witness if he came in, he would knock him down. Witness went into the cabin, and charged the prisoner with stealing apples and assaulting George Williams. Prisoner said, "You are not going to take me for two or three apples". Witness attempted to get the prisoner out of the cabin, when he said he would not be taken by a ---- policeman and, seizing a poker, attempted to strike witness. He did not strike with the poker, the deck being too low, but he punched his head. Witness called for assistance, and then the prisoner went quietly. Defendant made no defence, but said the evidence was "about true". Fined £3 including costs, or two months.

55 13 August 1870

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNK AND CREATING A BREACH OF THE PEACE **John Garratt**, boatman of no particular residence, was charged with being drunk and creating a breach of the peace in Gold Street on Sunday. The prisoner didn't know that he broke the peace, but he knew that his peace was broken, for he was struck there. Police-constable Henry Grainger proved the charge, and said he saw no blows struck. He merely observed that the prisoner was drunk and creating a disturbance. He gave him the opportunity of getting away quickly, but prisoner, like most drunken men, had taken an enemy into his mouth, which took away his brains, and he still persisted in his conduct. Fined 5s and costs, or seven days' imprisonment in default.

56 8 October 1870

THE LANCASHIRE KICK **Thomas Westley**, a boatman whose head was as bald as the tonsure of a monk, though he was only 27 years of age, was charged with creating a breach of the peace in

Bradshaw Street, resisting PC Poole and giving what he called “the Lancashire kick” to PC Eames. Prisoner's defence was a flat denial to the statement of the constables, but it appeared he had just served two months in the County Gaol for a similar offence. One month's hard labour.

57 October 15 1870

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, OCTOBER 12TH

BRAUNSTON Job Wilkins, boatman, King's Sutton, was charged with stealing six £5 notes at Braunston, the property of Daniel Boswell. Prosecutor said : I am a coal merchant, and live on the Willoughby Road. I left home about five o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday the 8th instant to go to Braunston wharf. I had the notes in my pocket. Five of them were of the Daventry Union Bank, and one of the Banbury Bank. I know the number of the Banbury note, but not of any of the others. I did not miss the notes till Sunday evening. They were in the side pocket of my shooting jacket. On my return home from the wharf, the prisoner came after me and spoke to me. He had been in the habit of hiring boats of me, and our conversation was about canal boats. He walked about 150 yards close to my side, and then turned back. Three of the notes were folded together, the others were loose. I had a pocket handkerchief in the same pocket. I put the same coat on on Sunday, and wanting money, I missed the notes. The following morning I gave notice of my loss to Police-constable Phoenix. In reply to the Bench : It was light when on the way to the wharf. I counted the notes, but I don't think the prisoner saw me count them. William Fall said : I keep the Champion Inn at Braunston Wharf. The prisoner came to my house about five o'clock on Saturday the 8th for a pint of beer, which he said Emmanuel Smith had ordered for him. After that, he asked me if I would trust him for a pint or two. He had altogether five pints. He left when he had two pints for about 20 minutes, and returned and had the other beer. After he returned, he asked me what Bank note one was that he produced. I examined it, and told him it was a Banbury bank note. Elizabeth Fall : While the prisoner was at our house on Saturday last, he asked me to change a note and take for what he had had. I did so, and gave him the change. I did not take the number of the note. I had no other note in the house. I locked it up, and gave it to Police-constable Phoenix on Monday the 10th. Police-constable Phoenix : About eleven o'clock on the morning of the 10th, I received information of the loss of the notes. I went to Mr Fall's, where I received a £5 note of the Banbury Bank. The note produced is the same. I went to Napton locks with Inspector Browning the same evening. Inspector Browning : I went to Napton Wharf on Monday the 10th instant, where I saw the prisoner and his wife in the cabin of a boat. I told him I had a warrant for his apprehension, and cautioned him. Prisoner's wife said, “I expected Mr Boswell would come with you”. I asked the prisoner what he had done with the money he had found. His wife produced three notes of the Daventry Bank, wrapped in a piece of newspaper, under the bed. She also gave me £2 in gold and twopence in coppers, saying that was all there was left. The prisoner told me he found four notes between the Castle and the Champion after he left Mr Boswell. He changed one note at Fall's, and paid to Mr White £2 10s, and £2 8s he gave to his wife. The prisoner said : I came from Cropedy to see if I could get a boat. I saw Mr Boswell going down the road, and I went and spoke to him about a boat. After I left Mr Boswell, I picked up first one note and afterwards three others on the road. Mr Bradshaw knew the prisoner for some three or four years, during which he had dealings with him, and had found him honest. Committed for trial.

58 4 February 1871

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

AN OLD OFFENDER Thomas Westley, boatman, the Green, was charged with having been drunk and creating a breach of the peace in Gold Street ; also with violently resisting PC John Poole while taking him into custody, on the 31st ult. PC Poole found the defendant at the bottom of Gold Street, kicking the bar door of the Alhambra Music Hall, and making a great noise. The constable requested him to go away, and he did so ; but returning and resuming the disturbance, he had to be taken into custody. He then resisted violently, attempted to kick, bite and strike the constable, and the assistance of another officer had to be procured to take him to the station house. He had been

several times previously before the Bench, and was fined 5s for being drunk, 5s for the resistance and the costs, or 14 days with hard labour.

59 11 March 1871

TOWCESTER COUNTY COURT, MARCH 7TH

THOMAS FOLWELL v WILLIAM LEE Claim for £9 7s, the balance of an account for corn. The plaintiff said on July 9th 1870 he sold to the defendant 20 1/2 qrs of wheat, at 56s per qr, to be delivered at Banbury Lane Wharf. On the 22nd of July it was delivered by Mr Geo Harris. He had received £50 on account of the wheat. It was a cheque given him personally at the Towcester market. Defendant said he would pay him the difference. On the 9th of August he sold some beans to him, at 45s per quarter. They were to be delivered to order at Weedon Station. John Messenger delivered them. At Northampton market the defendant gave him a cheque for £30 on the beans, and at Towcester market he had received a cheque for £4 1s. Defendant promised to pay the balance. Invoices were sent with both, he believed. Defendant found fault with the beans after he had had them a month or so. He said they were not so good as the samples. Mr Messenger selected the sample for him. He had not a sample with him. By the defendant : Defendant did not say by what company he wished the wheat to be sent, but it was to go to Banbury Lane Wharf to his order at Birmingham. He (plaintiff) did not agree with the defendant and with Wootton to go shares in the loss that might have been sustained by the want of a prompt delivery of the wheat. Defendant did not say the beans were not worth anything, and he would not have them. He said they were not as good as the sample. He (plaintiff) did not tell defendant to sell them for what he could get, and he would make it right ; he told him to send them back to Blisworth. Defendant said that the £4 1s was the balance due to the plaintiff on the arrangement that he was to sell the beans for what he could get. His Honour asked the plaintiff to explain how it was that he received just the amount of £4 1s. The plaintiff said the defendant paid that amount not by cash, and not by one of his own cheques. It was a cheque he had taken from somebody else, and which he paid over to him. The defendant said the cheque was one he had received from a person of the name of Boughton. His Honour remarked that if £4 1s was just the balance due to the plaintiff, it was rather remarkable that the defendant should have received a cheque from another person of exactly that amount. Mr Geo Harris said he delivered the wheat in question, together with a quantity which the defendant had bought of his father. When the defendant bought wheat from his father, he said it was to go to Banbury Lane Wharf, but he did not say it was to go by any particular Company. This wheat bought of the plaintiff was to go with his father's wheat. Mr John Messenger deposed to delivering the beans at Weedon. He prepared the sample by which the beans were sold to the defendant. He took the sample from the four or five sacks of the bulk, according to the usual custom. The beans were at Litchborough, and were in some sacks which he himself had lent to Mr Folwell. The defendant said, with regard to the wheat, that he had not received the wheat at the proper time. He complained to the plaintiff, who said he had been down to **Wootton** (the wharf agent at Banbury Lane Wharf), and that Wootton had forwarded it. He did not receive the wheat until the 4th of August. When the boatman brought the wheat, he did not forward it according to his instructions. He told the plaintiff he would not receive the wheat because it had not come at the proper time. Plaintiff told him to make the best of it he could, as there would be demurrage and other expenses. He went back home, discharged the boat, and paid the carriage. The loss was to be divided between the plaintiff, Wootton and himself, and they were to meet at Northampton to settle it. Shortly after he told the plaintiff what he had made of the wheat, and handed him the amount due to him. He (defendant) was at the loss of the carriage of the wheat and his own expenses. Wootton said he had not sent the wheat earlier because no Grand Junction Canal Company's boat had come past. He had been informed, however, that they came every day. His Honour : This is Wootton's fault, not Folwell's. The defendant said, if his Honour would adjourn the case, he would bring the boatman. His Honour could not see that any useful purpose would be served by adjourning the case. If the plaintiff had not given the order that the wheat was to go by the Grand Junction Canal Company's boats, how was it that Wootton gave, as the reason of the wheat not having been forwarded earlier, that there

were none of that Company's boats passing that could take it. That showed that Wootton understood the wheat was to go by that Company. Mr Folwell, in answer to his Honour, said the defendant took the sample of beans away with him. Defendant said he had not the sample now. His Honour was of opinion that, with regard to the wheat, the plaintiff had done his part of the contract in delivering it to Wootton at the Banbury Lane Wharf. There might be some claim against Wootton, but as to that he could not say. With regard to the beans, he had no evidence before him to show they were not according to sample. Unless he had the sample by which the beans were sold, and a sample of the bulk delivered, it was impossible that he could arrive at a decision adverse to the plaintiff. Verdict for the plaintiff, payment forthwith.

60 11 March 1871

OXFORDSHIRE ASSIZES These assizes were held on Friday and Saturday last, before Chief Justice Bovill and Mr Justice Smith. **Thomas Parker**, a boatman, was charged with a burglary and rape at Woodstock in August last ; and also with stealing some clothing out of a boat at Banbury a few days afterwards. The prisoner was lurking about Braunston for some time after the robberies, but was apprehended at Kirtlington. He pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to five years for the rape, five years for the robbery, and five years for the robbery at Banbury concurrently with the first five years.

61 29 April 1871

BANBURY BOROUGH POLICE On Monday, **Thomas Taplin**, a boatman, was committed to the Quarter Sessions for stealing a coat, the property of John Smith, clothier, from a shop door in Parson's Street on Friday evening. Taplin had been previously convicted.

62 8 July 1871

BANBURY QUARTER SESSIONS **Thomas Taplin**, boatman, was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment for stealing a coat from a shop in Parson's Street on April 21st. He pleaded guilty to a conviction at Derby for passing bad money.

63 29 July 1871

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JULY 26

WILFUL DAMAGE George Kember, marine store dealer, was charged with wilfully breaking a window of premises in the occupation of the overseers of the poor of the parish of Braunston. **Elizabeth Boyes** deposed : I am the wife of **William Boyes**, a boatman. About a fortnight before Whitsuntide last, my husband, four children and myself fell ill of the smallpox, and we were lodged in a room of an old warehouse at Braunston Wharf. It was a kind of smallpox hospital provided by the overseers of the parish. About midnight May 30th, I was in the house, in bed, when I heard a smashing of glass. I got a light and went to the door, where I saw the defendant, who was very drunk. I called my husband, who told the defendant to go away. The defendant said he wanted to see the smallpox, and if we would let him, he would give us 5s. We refused him, and told him to go about his business. He then offered to treat us with a quart of ale if we would go to the public house. Witness had sold rubbish to the defendant, and knew him so well that she was sure he was the man. He came again about a month ago, and he looked into the room from the door. Mr Watson, one of the overseers, laid the damage at 2s. The defendant protested his innocence, saying it must have been some other man. Fine, damage and costs £1 16s 6d, which was paid.

64 21 October 1871

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

HARDINGSTONE **Henry Chattens**, Hardingstone, was charged with having been drunk in that village on the 28th of October. Superintendent Poole said the defendant was a boatman who had now gone on a voyage ; and his brother-in-law appeared for him. PC Jobbins deposed that he was sent for by Mr W Beeby of Cotton End, on the ground that the defendant was drunk, and had been

abusing Mr Beeby in his yard. The constable went, and found the defendant the worse for liquor in his boat. William Haynes, the defendant's brother-in-law, on being sworn, deposed that his brother-in-law had been offensive to Mr Beeby concerning some money. It was by the canal side. By witness's request he desisted and went into the boat, and nothing more occurred. He was not so drunk as he had seen him. (Laughter). The Bench considered they should have heard nothing about the matter but for the dispute with Mr Beeby. The case was then dismissed, the Bench telling the brother-in-law that, if Chattens ever appeared before them, that charge would be remembered against him. Haynes said he would give his brother-in-law a good lecture.

65 30 December 1871

AYNHOE George Smith, boatman, Eynsham, was charged with stealing a jacket and a pair of trousers on December 20th, the property of Grosvenor Gregory. The complainant worked for Mr Howe of the Great Western House, and left the clothes in the tap room. He missed them, and they were afterwards found in the prisoner's boat by Mr Howe, the prisoner having said he had nothing there but what belonged to him. They were in the cabin of the boat. Police-constable Wallace said that he found the prisoner in his boat, in bed. He refused to get up, and he had to take him out of bed and dress him. Prisoner said the boy should not have left the clothes in the tap room, and he could do six months for it. Prisoner asked to be tried there, and was sent to prison for six weeks with hard labour.

66 23 March 1872

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MARCH 20

AFFILIATION Emma Faulkner, Braunston, obtained an order for 1s 6d per week and the usual costs against **Elijah Brewerton**, boatman, Abingdon.

67 20 April 1872

THE BODY OF THE LOST CHILD FOUND It will be remembered that six weeks ago a child of the name of Hoare was missed by its parents. Notwithstanding its being cried and its description published, the mystery remained unsolved until Saturday morning last, when a shoemaker named Timbs saw the body of a child, which was identified as the one that so mysteriously disappeared, floating on the surface of the river. An inquest was held before C C Becke Esq, coroner, at the Town Hall on Saturday afternoon, when the following evidence was taken. Mr H B Spargin, MRCS, said : By order of the coroner, I have made a post mortem examination of the body of the deceased. It was that of a male child between four and five years of age. It was much swollen and somewhat decomposed. I should judge from the appearance that it had been some considerable time completely under the water. There were no external marks of violence. From the examination I have made, I should attribute death to drowning. George Timbs, shoemaker, Scarletwell Street, said : This morning, about half past seven, I was walking by the river when I saw a dead body floating. I assisted to get it out, and removed it to the Crown and Anchor. Thomas Elliott, 13 Horseshoe Street, said : I am 13 years of age. I knew the deceased, his name was **Albert Hoare**, and his father was a boatman. This day six weeks I saw him in Balmholme meadow. He was by himself, and was throwing stones into the river. It was about a quarter or ten minutes to three in the afternoon. I saw him again some ten minutes later. He was still by himself, but had left the side of the water. **William Hoare**, boatman, 4 Green Lane, said the deceased was his son, and was four years of age. Six weeks today he left him playing with some other children in the yard adjoining his house. He never saw him again. He recognised the body found as that of his son, both by his features and by his clothes. The Coroner having summed up, the jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

68 18 May 1872

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

CHARGE OF CRUELTY **William Neal**, a boatman, was charged with working a horse in an unfit

condition. PC Wright met the horse on Sunday near Brinklow, drawing a boat, with a bandage on its leg covering a sore as large as the palm of his hand, from which matter was oozing. The defence was that the horse was not lame, but was in excellent condition, and the sore resulted from the horse being accidentally staked. It was not where anything could touch it, and the farmer who dressed it recommended that the horse should be worked. Superintendent Palmer said he had had frequent complaints of cruelty on the part of boatmen to their horses, and had instructed his men to be on the look out. The Bench thought this quite right, but they could hardly convict in the absence of veterinary evidence. Dismissed on payment of 8s costs.

69 13 July 1872

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY POLICE

COMMON ASSAULT AT DALLINGTON John Allen Phipps of Dallington was summoned for assaulting **Mrs Esson** on the 6th July. From the evidence of PC Darby, there was no doubt that the defendant, at the time of the commission of the offence, was in drink. Mrs Esson, whom he was pleased to call a "common boatman's wife", went to his house, and he objected to her presence because on a previous occasion she had called him foul names. Some words ensued respecting her lodgers, and the defendant struck her in the face, blackening her eyes, bruising her head, and covering her with blood. The name of a neighbour was mentioned in the row, and on her going in, she saw the complainant on the floor under a bench. She ran and fetched the complainant's husband, and on his entering the house, the defendant gave him a black eye. At this juncture, the heat of the disturbance reached its highest point. Esson redressed the wrongs of his wife by thrashing Phipps, breaking his head against a sink stone, and knocking him under a tap. In the scrimmage his white shirt was torn off his back, and his "Guernsey" was partly saturated with blood. Phipps, who has served six weeks for beating his wife, declared that the complainant struck the first blow, and alleged things against her which, going undenied, leaves her character in a somewhat equivocal position. The statement of Darby, who also was assaulted by the defendant, showed that the defendant was a common disturber of the peace in St James's End and neighbourhood, and he was committed to prison for one month.

70 4 January 1873

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE EPIPHANY SESSIONS

AYNHOO – STEALING MONEY Alfred Castle, 27, labourer, was indicted for having stolen a five shilling piece of the monies of **James Butlin**, on the 17th December. Mr Alfred Hensman prosecuted. Prosecutor is a boatman living at Oxford, and was on the evening in question at the Great Western Arms, Aynho. Prisoner, who had been emptying prosecutor's boat, was there at the time. They were the only two persons in the room. Prosecutor called for a pint of beer, and put down a crown to pay for it. Prisoner took a jug and the five shilling piece, and went for the beer. When he returned, prosecutor asked him for the change, and prisoner offered him threepence. Prosecutor said he wanted 4s 9d, and prisoner said prosecutor only put down a sixpence. He offered to be searched. Mr Howe, the landlord, took hold of him by the throat and chin, and the crown dropped out of his mouth. He then said it was half a crown, which had been given him by Mr Bonner for a day's work. When prisoner was charged with stealing the money in the presence of PC Knight, he denied it, and said the prosecutor had given him 5s for five rabbits. The defence prisoner made was that the prosecutor called him out and proffered him 5s for five rabbits, prisoner to pay for a pint of beer. When the beer was consumed, prosecutor, who was very drunk, wanted the money back, and when he was charged with stealing it, he offered to return it. He attributed the action of the landlord to spite, because he was in the same line of business and would not work for him. The jury found the prisoner guilty, and he was sentenced to six weeks' hard labour.

71 12 April 1873

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

LARCENY AT DAVENTRY William Curtis, 53, labourer, **Samuel Foster**, 45, boatman and

William Dickens, 29, publican, were charged with stealing 11 cwt of iron, the property of William Foster, at Braunston on the 28th of March, prisoners Curtis and Foster being servants in the employ of the prosecutor at that time. Prisoner Dickens was further indicted for receiving the iron, knowing it to have been stolen, and Edward Badger, 42, general dealer, was also indicted on a similar charge with respect to it. The two first named prisoners pleaded guilty. Mr Merewether prosecuted the charge against the other prisoners ; Mr Hensman defended Dickens, and Mr Sills, Badger. Prosecutor is a carrier by canal, carrying on business at Tipton in Staffordshire. On the 22nd March Curtis and Foster, who is a relation of prosecutor's, were entrusted by their employer with a boat load each of iron to take to London for shipment to an Australian customer. The bars were marked with a private mark, "F inside a diamond", and were of the very best quality. On the following Wednesday night they arrived with the boat at Braunston, where they put their horses up at prisoner Dickens's public house. Having put the horse into the stable, they went into the house. A conversation took place between the men and the landlord respecting the iron, and in answer to a question put by one of them, Dickens replied that he could do with a bit of iron, and soon afterwards he and another man assisted them to take five bars out of Foster's boat, and two bundles and twenty bars out of Carter's boat. The iron was placed at Dickens's warehouse, and he gave them 35s for it, saying at the same time that when they came that way again he might give them a shilling or two more. It was worth £16 a ton in the market. The quantity taken was between 11 and 12 cwt, and was valued at over £11. Early the next morning the iron was fetched away by prisoner Badger, a general dealer of Daventry. He gave, so he alleged, £4 10s for it, and the learned counsel who defended him contended that that was a fair price for a man in Badger's position to give for such a lot of iron, and that no suspicion could attach to his fetching the iron away early in the morning, because it was not at all unusual for general dealers in a small way of business to be about their work between six and seven o'clock. It was, however, shown in evidence that Badger gave a false account as to where he obtained the iron, by saying that he had it from the Northampton Iron Works in exchange for scraps. It was also shown that Dickens went to Badger's house between six and seven o'clock on the morning in question and, on knocking at the door, called out, "Holloa, Ted, are you not up yet?", and that they went back to Braunston together. On returning from Braunston, Badger was met by a man named James Bradshaw, who asked him what he was going to do with the iron he had on his cart. He replied, "Sell it", and further that he had sold some at Daventry the week before. He offered to sell it him, but he answered that he didn't do much in smith's work ; his brother did that, but he was away from home. Badger said he would leave it until his brother returned, to which Bradshaw replied that he could do as he liked, but he would not promise that his brother would buy it. Badger left the iron on Bradshaw's premises, secreting it under a number of planks and tarpauling. On the boats arriving at Brentford, the number of bars taken from them was missed. Prisoner Foster confessed the robbery to the son of his employer, and soon afterwards the whole of the prisoners were apprehended. Dickens was taken into custody while attempting to conceal himself under some fleeces of wool in a house at Flecknoe, about a mile distant from Braunston. When apprehended he denied stealing the iron, and alleged that he bought it from Foster, on his asking him to do so, thinking it was right. A great number of witnesses were examined, the trial lasting upwards of four hours. Prisoner Dickens was found guilty on both counts, of stealing and receiving, and Badger for receiving. Foster and Curtis were sentenced to nine months' imprisonment with hard labour, and Dickens and Badger to six months' imprisonment with hard labour.

72 3 May 1873

NORTHAMPTON PETTY SESSIONS

ROBBERY BY BOATMAN **John Norris**, boatman, no residence, was charged with stealing from the coal wharf of Mr Higgins, near Weston Street, a piece of coal, value 2d, on the 1st inst. Mr A J Jeffery prosecuted, and said it was not so much a question of the value of the coal as of stopping the practice. Mr Higgins was being continually robbed by boatmen who ran their boats under people's premises to take their property. A man named Corcoran, in the employ of the Gas Company of

whom prosecutor rents the wharf, was watching the yard, by which the canal runs, when he saw the prisoner take a lump of coal from a stack and throw it into his boat. He was then going to loose the boat, when Corcoran called out to him and said he saw him. Prisoner denied taking anything, and his father came out and offered Corcoran a shilling not to say anything about it, at the same time bringing out the lump of coal, which the prisoner carried back to the stack which he had taken it from. Prisoner was apprehended in Commercial Street by PC Stewart, when he said he had no coal and knew nothing about any. Corcoran afterwards pointed out the lump, which weighed about half a cwt, to Stewart. At the Station, prisoner said it was the first time he had done it. As the charge was not pressed, he was sentenced to 14 days' hard labour.

73 15 November 1873

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, NOVEMBER 12

STEALING SALT **Enoch Smith** was charged with stealing, and George Dickins and Frederick Dickins were charged with receiving twenty squares of salt, the property of John Corbett, Stoke Prior Salt Works, Worcestershire. PC Phoenix said he, with PC Vickers, were watching about half past four on the morning of the 5th. Witness, when he saw the boat rising in the lock close to Dickins's house, and a few minutes later he saw Charles Dickins, a lad of eleven or twelve years, and son of the prisoner George Dickins, and another lad about the same age named Hall, a nephew, carry lumps of salt to the door of George Dickins's salt warehouse, where Frederick Dickins received them. At the same time the prisoner George Dickins was standing on the bridge. Witness saw twenty squares of salt carried from the boat to the warehouse. He saw George Dickins go from the bridge into the house. Witness followed, and asked for the invoice of the salt. George Dickins replied, "Smith will show you that". PC Vickers showed witness the invoice, and he charged and apprehended Dickins. Frederick Dickins came from the direction of the warehouse, crying. Witness afterwards, with Inspector Browning, apprehended Frederick Dickins, and charged him with being concerned in stealing salt. Prisoner replied, "My father told me to help to get some salt in". In reply to Mr Roche, who appeared for all the prisoners : I know the prisoner Frederick to be weak minded. Smith did not tell me he took the salt into Dickins's warehouse because the boat was top heavy. PC Vickers corroborated Phoenix. William Morris, a weigher at Mr Corbett's works, deposed to loading the boat with 28 tons of salt. Smith's boat was named "*Maria*". There was room on her for two tons more, but she would only carry 28 tons. Richard Westall, one of the managers of the Stoke Prior Salt Works, produced a duplicate of the invoice and the pay note. He said the prisoner worked his own boat, and contracted to carry the salt to the City Basin. If a boatman found the boat leaked, he would be justified in lightening the boat to save the bulk and the boat from sinking. Mr Roche, for the defence, called **Gabriel Archer**, a boatman in the employ of Mr Clayton of Saltley, Birmingham, who met the prisoner's boat and considered it top heavy. **John Parrott**, boatman, Droitwich, was of the same opinion. He had had to leave some of his cargo of salt at Blisworth. He had thrown as much as four tons into the canal. He had had four boats sunk "nigh enough". The prisoners were all committed for trial, bail being allowed, themselves in £100 each, and two sureties in £50 each.

74 15 November 1873

BANBURY BOROUGH POLICE **James Hone**, a boatman, was fined 10s and costs for assaulting Thomas Ward, and a like sum for an assault upon Mrs Taylor of the Fox.

75 10 January 1874

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE EPIPHANY SESSIONS

BRAUNSTON – STEALING SALT **Enoch Smith** (on bail), boatman, was charged with stealing twenty squares of salt, the property of John Corbett, at Braunston on the 5th November 1873, and George Dickins, innkeeper and Frederick Dickins, labourer, were charged with receiving the same, knowing them to have been stolen, on the 5th November 1873. Mr Merewether prosecuted ; Mr Ewins Bennett defended Smith, and Mr Sills defended George and Frederick Dickens. The first

witness called was PC Joseph Phoenix, who said that, in company with PC Vickers, he watched Smith's boat on the day in question, and while watching he saw someone go from Dickens's house to the boat, and take salt from it. Prisoner Dickens received the salt at the warehouse door, while prisoner George Dickens was watching on the bridge. In cross-examination, he said that Frederick Dickens was considered to be a person of weak intellect. PC Vickers corroborated the statement of the previous witness. Mr Sills submitted that there was no case against the prisoner Frederick Dickens, as he was innocently called up by his father in the morning to help to carry some salt to his warehouse. Mr Merewether said that he did not press the charge against him. The jury then acquitted him. Mr Bennett then contended that the only evidence against his client was that he contradicted the policeman's statement as to there being twenty squares of salt in the warehouse, instead, as he himself stated, there were only eighteen squares. It was contended that the boat leaked, and that the salt was taken out to lighten it. Evidence was also called to show that the boat had been repaired. Frederick Dickens was acquitted ; the other prisoners were sentenced to six months' imprisonment each.

76 20 June 1874

AYLESBURY MAGISTRATES' CHAMBER, SATURDAY 13 JUNE **William Dorman**, a boatman, was charged with having cruelly ill-treated a horse by beating it with a piece of iron called a "windlass" at Marsworth. Fined £2 and, in default, was committed for one month.

77 27 June 1874

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JUNE 24

LEAVING SERVICE **John Goodman**, boatman, Kilsby, was charged with unlawfully leaving the service of Clement Pear Percy Ditcher, coal merchant, Kilsby. Mr Roche for the complainant. Complainant said he hired the defendant some months ago as a carter at 18s a week. Four or five weeks ago, defendant became a boatman at £1 a week. On Sunday last, having come back from Leicester, complainant said to him, "Well, Jack, how have you got on this time?" Defendant replied, "All right". The captain of the boats wanted to go to his club on Monday, and to accommodate him it was arranged that the boats which were at Watford locks should be taken to Crick station at three o'clock in the morning, the defendant agreeing to be there at that time. About half past nine o'clock the same evening, complainant met the defendant in the street, when defendant said he should leave. Complainant said he would have to take the boats and unload the next morning. Defendant said he would if complainant would bring his things back. Complainant said if defendant gave him a week's notice he would bring his things back. The defendant never went to the work. Complainant said he in consequence lost £4 or £5. It was customary to have a month's (*sic*) notice from boatmen and a month's from captains. **Thomas Gascoigne**, captain of two boats belonging to the defendant, knew his master had been put to inconvenience through defendant's leaving. All the conversation he heard on Sunday was that the defendant would go on Monday morning. Witness has been a captain some time. The custom was for a week's notice for a boatman, and a month for captains. There was no special arrangement when the engagement was by the trip. The defendant said there was no agreement, and he did not like the job, so he said he would rather not go again. The Bench inquired if he wished to go back. He said he did. The complainant said he did not wish him to go back, as he had made other arrangements. It appeared there was 16s due to the defendant as wages. The Bench decided that the costs, 10s 6d, were to be paid out of the 16s, and the complainant to hold the balance. The contract to be annulled.

78 18 July 1874

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **James Ward**, boatman, Bell Barn Court, Birmingham, was fined 7s 6d and 6s 6d costs for being drunk, creating a breach of the peace and resisting the police on the 14th inst. Defendant stated that he had been a teetotaler for 13 months until this occasion.

79 10 October 1874

THE REGENT'S PARK EXPLOSION No more bodies have been found at the scene of the explosion, and an inquest on the three men who were killed was opened on Saturday. A boatman, who was on board the *Limehouse*, described the circumstances of the explosion, and another man gave an account of the loading of the *Tilbury* at the City Road Wharf, but neither of them threw any light on the cause of the disaster. **Edward Hall** of Braunston, Northamptonshire, said : I am a boatman. I know the deceased **Taylor**, who was a hand on the boats. I saw him last on Friday morning at Camden Town top lock, about 4.30 a.m. He was not a married man, but was about 25 or 26 years of age. He was on a boat then lying above the lock, waiting for our boat, the *Limehouse*, to be pulled through the top lock. He was in tow by the *Ready*, the steam tug. I did not speak to him. He had a general cargo on board his boat, the *Tilbury*, and went through the lock before us. The *Ready* and the *Jane* were before him, the *Dee* was butting the *Tilbury*, as we were going through in pairs. We hung on behind, and went up to the bridge where the explosion took place. We got there about five or six minutes to five. I was in the cabin of the *Limehouse* and had undressed to go to bed as the explosion occurred. I felt a tremendous concussion, which I thought was lightning. My boat was knocked all to pieces, and sunk. I was thrown out of bed against the stove. I was stunned, and was in the water when I came to myself. I did not see anything more of Taylor after Camden Town top lock. I knew he must be one of the sufferers when I afterwards heard which were the boats above the bridge, and that he was missing. I have identified the body here. His father and mother work for Price and Co, Brierley Hill, Staffordshire. By a Juror : I had a general cargo for Northampton. Other evidence showed that the *Tilbury* carried five tons six hundredweight and a small package of gunpowder, besides a quantity of benzoline and other goods, that there was gunpowder also in some of the other barges, that there had been a good deal of lightning during the night, and that just before the explosion someone in the *Tilbury* had called for the steam tug to stop, as the barge was on fire. Much evidence was also taken as to the system of loading and conveying gunpowder on the canal, and it was shown that the orders and measures of precaution are only of a general character, and that the loading and conveyance are not conducted under any official inspection. The inquiry was ultimately adjourned till Monday next.

At a meeting of inhabitants of houses damaged by the explosion, a committee was appointed, on the motion of Mr Joseph Hatton, to wait upon Mr Gestenberg respecting a communication he had made to the Lord Mayor for the purpose of opening a subscription for the sufferers.

Mr Joseph Hatton of Titchfield Terrace gives the following account of his experience of the explosion :- The clocks in my house stopped at ten minutes to five, so far as I can judge by their present condition. At that time myself and family were aroused by the most terrible sensation of ruin and destruction which it is possible to imagine. Falling timbers, the smashing of glass, the mingled cries of a township – dying into a distinct wail of misery. Darkness was made visible by a lurid light that came, with howling wind, through openings all around us. Covered with broken glass, hampered with blinds and curtains, blocked in by fallen roof and doors, our situation was too alarming for description. Every door and window was blown in ; drawing, dining and bed rooms – chaos ; hardly a whole thing in the place. Two little children sleeping in one bed were covered with the debris of a roof and two windows ; yet they escaped with the few slight scratches. My servants appeared on the scene with blackened faces, but without a bruise. The strangest freaks of destruction are apparent ; here a cumbersome article of furniture in splinters ; there a piece of china perfectly whole. The top of a silver cruet twisted off and flung a distance of some yards, while a spirit stand and bottles close by remain entire. Part of the front door, two inches thick, blown up the stairs. A pair of statuettes, one standing within two inches of another, which is broken into a dozen pieces. Fortunately I slept with my wife in a back room, while a front one is being repaired. The bed in the front room is covered with window sashes, blinds and broken glass. From kitchen to attic the ruin is equally distributed through every apartment. In the drawing room the ceiling is stripped away with the chandeliers, while a small whatnot filled with china and trifling ornaments remains intact. Standing in the roadway at five o'clock this morning, I could see but one track of ruin, extending as far as the bright gleam of the burning gas main at the bridge lighted the dim and still

falling ruins of terraces and houses. No assistance of any kind, police or otherwise, appeared for hours, and at eight o'clock the district was filled with sightseers, many of whom were "tickled to death" at the appearance of the devastated houses. There was quite a merry crowd contemplating the ruin of the beautiful house of my neighbour, M Tadema. I must do them the grim justice to say that they seemed a little saddened when a dead body was presently carried by the spot.

Regent's Canal was opened for traffic on Tuesday, the wreck left by the explosion at North Bridge having been sufficiently cleared away to allow the passage of boats. At the meeting of the City Commissioners of Sewers, and also at the Paddington Vestry, particular attention was called to the necessity for further legislative action on the storage and carriage of explosives.

80 24 October 1874

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

STEALING (FROM) A SHIP AND OTHER ARTICLES **William Hawks**, boatman, Tewkesbury, **Daniel Barry**, boatman, Thomas Street, Oxford, and **James Grain**, boatman, Netherton, Staffordshire were charged with stealing from a ship, while lying in the Thames, two sacks containing barley, the property of Mr Simpkins, sack contractor, London, within the last fortnight ; also having in their possession a quantity of porter &c supposed to have been stolen. Mr Becke appeared on behalf of the prisoners. Detective Smith stated that he apprehended the prisoners in a boat, while lying in Mr Higgins's wharf yard. He also found the barley, some maize and two cases of porter in the boat. Adjourned for a week.

81 31 October 1874

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

ALLEGED ROBBERY FROM A SHIP **William Hawkes**, boatman, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, **Daniel Barry**, boatman, Thomas Street, Oxford, and **James Grain**, boatman, Netherton, Staffordshire, were charged on remand with stealing from a ship lying in the Thames, two sacks containing barley, the property of Mr Simpkins, sack contractor, London ; also having in their possession a quantity of porter &c, supposed to have been stolen. Mr C C Becke defended the prisoners. Detective-inspector Smith said that on Friday the 16th, he received a warrant to search a boat lying at Higgins's Wharf. There were two boats lying there belonging to the prisoner Green (sic), who was the owner and captain. He went there accompanied by Detective Rogers, and on searching the boat *Tilda*, he found one sack of barley, and concealed in Green's cabin a bag of linseed. In the boat named *Joseph* he found two sacks of barley, and two cases of porter containing four dozen of porter, each quart bottles. They were concealed under some tarpaulin, and in the cabin were two sacks of split maize, six empty bottles which had contained porter, and one full, the latter being in the coal hole. On examining the cases, he found one case from which four or five bottles had been taken. The prisoners Barry and Hawkes, and Mrs Green, were present at the search. Green had left the yard. He first apprehended Hawkes and told him he would have to go to the station, and he replied that he did not know anything about what had been found ; the captain put in the berth just what he liked, he was only employed by the captain, who boarded and paid him. About four o'clock he took Barry into custody, and he said he did not know anything about the things ; he had only been employed by Green about a fortnight. On the 17th he apprehended Green. When charged he said he knew there was one sack of barley too many delivered in his boat from the brig. The two sacks of maize he brought long ago, the linseed six months ago, and the porter he did not know anything about. Witness produced a sack, which appeared to belong to the Grand Junction Canal Company, the porter was marked 158 and 167 D N and Co, Blood, Wolff and Co, Liverpool. Mr J W Simpkins, sack contractor, 30 Wharf Road, said the sack produced and marked Grand Junction Canal Company was his property. On October 7th he sent 1060 sacks to the West India Docks to the order of Henry Higgins, Northampton, 530 qrs of barley. The quantity worked was 44 qrs less than the sacks were ordered for, and he ought to have had 88 sacks returned to him ; 86 sacks were returned. The sack produced was his property, and neither of the defendants had any right to it. He had frequently lost sacks sent down to Mr Higgins in this way. By Mr Becke : When

he let out sacks he charged so much per week, and so long as the hirer chose to keep them he had to pay. He let out thousands during the year, and could not tell where all of them were. Mr Becke urged that the case of the sacks had broken down, and the prisoners ought to be discharged. The Bench thought there was sufficient evidence to justify their detention until further information had been received. Inspector Beattie then handed in a letter which he had received from the firm at Liverpool, stating that they had missed the cases of porter marked. He asked for a remand in order to obtain evidence as to this robbery. Mr Becke contended there was no evidence against Hawkes and Barry, they were the servants of Green. He therefore asked that they might be discharged. Inspector Beattie said the men were in the cabin in which the porter was found, and must have known of it. Mr Becke submitted that they were not liable. Green boarded them, and it was not expected they would ask where the porter was obtained. The magistrates, however, would not dismiss the men, but agreed to accept bail for the appearance of the prisoners, Green in £50 and two sureties of £25, and the others in £20 each, and two sureties in £10. Remanded until Monday next.

82 31 October 1874

DAVENTRY

CHARGE OF STEALING A GREYHOUND **John Thacker**, a boatman, and **John Draper**, assistant, were charged with stealing a greyhound, the property of Mr Jinks Howkin, farmer, Lilbourne Furze. Mr Roche said Thacker was one of the oldest servants of the Grand Junction Company, and had an excellent character. The evidence was not sufficient to show that he had committed a felony "picking up" and taking care of the dog. The Bench were of opinion there was no criminal intent, but thought the defendant did very wrong in keeping the dog so long.

83 7 November 1874

NORTHAMPTON PETTY SESSIONS

ALLEGED SHIP ROBBERY **William Hanker**, boatman, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire ; **Daniel Berry**, boatman, St Thomas, Oxford ; and **James Green**, boatman, Netherton, Staffordshire, were charged on remand with having stolen two sacks of barley from a ship, while lying in the Thames, within the last fortnight ; and also having a quantity of porter in their possession, supposed to have been stolen. Additional evidence having been given, they were committed for trial at the Sessions.

84 28 November 1874

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, NOVEMBER 25

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT AT BRAUNSTON **John Birch**, **Benjamin Birch**, **Margaret Birch** and **Jane Birch**, boat people, Spoke Pound, were charged with committing an aggravated assault on **William Drakeford**, boatman. Complainant said he was at Braunston the previous day when, having come through the tunnel with his boat, he went through the top lock, and then sent his wife on to shut the gate at the second lock. She did so, and got the paddle up, when the defendant Benjamin Birch who, with the other defendants and two boats, were coming in the opposite direction, ran to the lock and hindered complainant's wife in filling the lock. Complainant went to assist his wife as, according to the rules of the canal, the lock was his. The other three defendants then came up and a general struggle ensued, during which one of the women wrested the windlass from the hand of complainant and struck him over the head with it, which stunned him and cut his head open. The whole of the defendants struck and kicked him. **John Kelsey**, boatman, said he was at Braunston on the 24th. He was with a boat behind Drakeford's. He saw Drakeford's wife go to the lock. He saw the defendant Benjamin Birch run to oppose Mrs Drakeford in filling the lock. It was Drakeford's turn to have the lock. Drakeford went to the lock to help his wife. Drakeford pushed Benjamin Birch away, and then the other defendants ran up and they all fell on Drakeford. He saw the windlass up, but was not sure whether it was in the hand of Margaret or Jane. When Drakeford got up his head was all over blood. Witness did not interfere. **Hannah Drakeford**, wife of complainant, gave a similar account of the fray. Defendants had no answer to the charge. Fined 11s and costs 9s 11d each, or one month. The money was paid.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LENT ASSIZES

COSGROVE – ATTEMPT TO MURDER **John Berry**, described as a boatman of the age of 35, was put into the dock under the charge of having, on the 1st of March instant, at Cosgrove near to Stony Stratford, discharged a loaded pistol with intent to murder John Cashmere. Mr Sergeaunt appeared for the prosecution ; Mr Hensman and Mr Hall for the defence. Earlier in the day, Mr Hensman had given notice that he intended to base his defence on the ground of insanity. In opening the case for the prosecution, Mr Sergeaunt briefly stated the case as follows :- The prosecutor, who lives at Stony Stratford, was walking from Cosgrove, about two miles distant, about five or half past in the evening of the 1st of March, by a footpath which leads across the Grand Junction Canal, and had gone into a spinney just after crossing the canal, when he met the prisoner and a man named George Moore. The prosecutor had his hand in the breast of his coat, and the prisoner said to him, “Are you going to pull out?” He replied that he did not know what he meant, and the prisoner repeated his question and took out a revolver, and fired at the prosecutor. Fortunately he was not hit, and subsequently gave information to the police, when the prisoner and Moore were taken into custody. The Grand Jury, however, had not found a true bill against the latter and he was discharged, but against the prisoner a true bill was found. John Cashmere said he was a gasfitter and resided at Stony Stratford. He was walking from Cosgrove to the latter place by the footpath on the evening in question, and on going into the spinney he saw prisoner and Moore there. One of them spoke to him, but he did not know which spoke first. The prisoner then asked him if he was “going to pull out”. He then took a revolver out of his pocket and pointed it straight at him, and fired it off. He stood five or six feet from him. He (prosecutor) whistled and jumped on one side. He had never seen the prisoner before. William Smith said he was in the employ of the agent of the Grand Junction Canal Company. On the day in question, he was milking a cow in a hovel near to the spinney, when he heard the report of a pistol and a whistle. Two men then came to the hovel, and the prisoner said, “There's a boy milking here”, and then, addressing the witness, said, “Have you seen a man go by?” He answered, “No”. Then the prisoner said, “I have just shot at one ; did you hear me fire?” Witness said he did. The prisoner had a pistol in his hand. PI Jabez Webb said he apprehended the prisoner in a boat at Linford Wharf, when he said, “I hope you have got the vagabond locked up”. He produced the revolver, which the prisoner had reached down from a nail in the cabin. Five of the chambers were loaded with ball cartridge, and the other was empty. On telling the prisoner on what charge he apprehended him, he said, “I did shoot at him, but it was in self defence. I saw him take a pistol out of his coat. I was not going to let him shoot me. I shot him first, or shot at him. I do not know whether I hit him or not”. PC Alexander deposed to having gone with the Inspector to apprehend the prisoner, and testified to the accuracy of his statements. He searched the prisoner, and found a blank cartridge on him, which fitted the empty chambers. Cashmere, recalled, said he did not know the prisoner, and had not a pistol, nor anything like one, about him. Mr Hensman, in introducing the case for the defence, said that there was no doubt the man was a mad man, as he should be able to show most clearly. He was under the delusion that he was being pursued by enemies, who were continually lying in wait for him to destroy his life by shooting or any other means. He then called as a witness **James Hughes**, agent for the Grand Junction Canal Company in this town. He said he had seen the prisoner at various times during the last 12 months. About the 18th of February last, the prisoner brought a cargo of casks from London. Two of the casks were missing, and on being interrogated about them, he said they had been taken away without hands. He then went on to say that he was bewitched. He knew who had done it ; it was a relation of his. But he had got something now which would prevent them from doing him any harm. Witness then went on to state that the prisoner had gone with his little boy into Fenny Simpson Churchyard, at twelve o'clock at night. He took from the grave of the last unmarried female buried there a handful of earth, and instructed his little boy to do the same. This earth prisoner showed to him in a canvas purse, saying this and the Prayer Book, which he also brought out of his pocket, would protect him from the people who had bewitched him. He likewise told witness a story about some burglars whom he had prevented in an attempt to commit a robbery, and

that ever since they had been plotting his life. His (prisoner's) master had told him that he was the best, most honest and hard working man he had. Dr Barr, surgeon to the gaol, said he had frequently seen the prisoner since he had been in the prison. He had had long conversations with him, and the result of these conversations was that he considered the prisoner insane. He was suffering from a number of delusions. It should be said that the prisoner asked if he might put a question to the first witness, and as permission being granted, commenced a rigmarole about a minister. Mr Hensman said it was useless prolonging the matter by calling further witnesses, unless his Lordship desired. His Lordship agreed with the learned counsel that it was unnecessary to produce further evidence as the case was quite clear. Then addressing the jury, he briefly pointed out that if they thought the prisoner was a mad man, but with lucid intervals &c when he knew perfectly well what he was doing, and that the offence for which he was indicted was committed during one of these intervals, then it would be their duty to find him guilty. But if, on the other hand, they considered such was not the case, but that he was perfectly insane and incapable of judging between right and wrong, then it would be their duty to find an opposite verdict. After a few minutes conversation, the jury returned a verdict of Not Guilty on the ground of insanity, and the Judge sentenced the prisoner to be detained and kept in strict custody during her Majesty's pleasure. The prisoner had a troubled and perplexed look which increased from the moment he was put in the dock until he was removed.

86 15 May 1875

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MAY 12TH **Thomas Conway**, boatman of Leicester, had been locked up because he was found wandering about in the streets of Weedon, and not capable of taking care of himself. Superintendent Bailie said the man seemed all right now, and he asked for his discharge. Dismissed on payment of 1s 8d for his meals.

87 19 June 1875

BANBURY

POLICE At the Borough Police Court on Monday, **James Horne**, a boatman, was fined 10s and 11s 6d costs for using abusive language in Bridge Street.

88 14 August 1875

BANBURY BOROUGH POLICE, MONDAY **Elizabeth Beauchamp**, the wife of a boatman, was fined 5s and 6s costs for being drunk on Saturday evening.

89 14 August 1875

PROMPTED BY HUNGER A young man who gave the name of **William Jones**, and described as a boatman, was charged with having stolen 1 1/2 lbs of cake, value 9d, the property of Thomas Adkins, Stretton-on-Dunsmore. On Monday morning about half past seven, prosecutor saw prisoner coming from his doorway, and on going into the house he missed the piece of cake. He followed prisoner, and found part of it upon him. Prisoner said he went in to buy a penny loaf and, seeing the cake, he was tempted by hunger to take it. He said he was making his way to London, where he had heard of work. When taken into custody, prisoner had one penny upon him. Discharged with a caution.

90 13 January 1877

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JANUARY 10

SELLING BEER WITHOUT A LICENCE John Norman, Barby Wharf, was charged with selling beer without a licence. Mr Andrews conducted this case. Jesse Frost of the county police, stationed at Spratton, said he went to the defendant's house with a boatman named **Thomas Pearsell** on the 20th of November, about nine o'clock at night. It is a private house at Barby Wharf. Pearsell put his horse in the stable, and he and witness went to the door of the house. Pearsell said to the defendant's wife, "I will pay for the horse, and I want a pint of beer". She replied, "Very well, come

in and shut the door". She fetched the beer and received a shilling. She gave Pearsell 6d out, taking for the horse and the beer. They drank the beer, and Pearsell called for a second pint, and afterwards for a third, for each of which he paid. After these were drunk, witness called for a pint, which was brought, and for which he paid. Pearsell then said he should want to start early in the morning, so he would have a quart to take to the boat. Witness said he would like a pint to go with the quart. It was served to them, and they took it to the boat in a tea kettle. Mr Andrews said the defendant, who is a coal dealer and occupies about ten acres of land, has no licence to sell beer. Superintendent Baillie said he had a warrant to search the defendant's house on the 21st of November. He saw the defendant, and told him, when the defendant said he would not find any beer. Witness found 14 empty beer barrels, some of them had cards upon them showing they were sent from Lewis and Ridley, Leamington. Two of them were dated November 12, only nine days before witness found them empty. These two had taps in them. The defendant had, some years ago, a licence to sell beer off the premises ; but was convicted of three offences under that licence. He had now no licence at all. Mr Andrews said that before reporting the case, it was his duty to see the defendant, which he did, and then the defendant admitted the offence. He wished, with all deference, to suggest to the Bench not to exercise in this case their mitigating powers. The Bench said the defendant should be fined in the full penalty of £20, for there was not one extenuating circumstance in the case.

91 24 February 1877

TOWCESTER Enoch Wood, boatman of Tunstall, was charged with stealing a nose basket, value 4s 6d, at Stoke Bruerne on the 21st of October. Mr T Sheppard for the defendant. Jesse Tomlinson said he lost a nose basket at Stoke Bruerne on the 21st of October. Some time after, he saw it on the defendant's horse. He told him it was his basket, but he refused to give it up. Mr Bradshaw said he gave the basket to Tomlinson to use. Some time after, he told me he had lost one. Richard Timms, saddler, Old Stratford, said he put a strap on a nose basket for the witness Tomlinson. He believed the one produced was the same. Sergeant Howard, stationed at Weedon, apprehended the prisoner on the charge on Thursday last. The witnesses were cross-examined at some length by Mr Sheppard, when the Bench said they should send the case for trial. Mr Sheppard objected until he had called a witness for the defence. **Sarah Ann Lewis** was then sworn, and said she was daughter to the prisoner. She remembered going into the stable to tackle the horse. It was dark. The basket stood behind the horse, and she thought it belonged to her father. It was like his. He had three baskets. Was sure her father did not know anything about it. Committed for trial, bail accepted, himself in £20 and one surety for £10.

92 3 March 1877

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LENT ASSIZES

STOKE BRUERNE – ALLEGED ROBBERY Enoch Wood, on bail, was indicted for stealing a horse feeding tin and strap, the property of Thomas Bradshaw, at Stoke Bruerne on the 21st of October last. Mr Hare prosecuted ; Mr Hall defending. A boatman in the employ of the prosecutor was working a boat and, on arriving at Stoke Bruerne, he placed his horse in a stable, in which were two other horses, one of which belonged to the prisoner, also a boatman. The man, who appeared as witness, placed the feeding tin and strap in the stable. On the following morning, when he went to fetch them, they were missing. He did not see the prisoner there, although he saw his boat lying in the wharf. Subsequently he saw the tin in prisoner's possession. His Lordship here stopped the case, pointing out to the prosecuting counsel that unless he could bring a witness to prove prisoner was seen near the stable about the time the tin &c were missed, his case would drop through. Mr Hare, not having a witness to prove this, withdrew from the prosecution. The jury, under the direction of the learned Judge, returned a verdict of Not Guilty.

93 7 April 1877

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY Edward Barnwell, boatman, was charged at the

instance of the Hillmorton School Board with not causing his children, aged respectively 12, 10 and 6 years, to attend school. Mr Fuller appeared for the School Board. Defendant said his wife assisted him in driving the boat, and the two children sometimes drove the horse. Mr Fuller said for that he was liable to a penalty under the new Act. In reply to the Bench, defendant said he would try to send the children to school. The Bench then made an order for the children to attend school, and said if they did not the penalty would be enforced.

94 16 June 1877

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JUNE 11

LEAVING CHILDREN CHARGEABLE **Edward Hall**, boatman of Braunston, was committed for three months with hard labour, in default of paying £3 0s 1d, the amount due to the Guardians of the Daventry Union, and costs.

95 14 July 1877

A BOY SHOT BY A BOATMAN On Monday at Lee Bridge, Dudley Road, a number of lads were on a canal bridge, when a boat in charge of a man named **Boswell** was proceeding along the Birmingham and Wolverhampton Canal in the direction of Spon Lane. As the boat approached the bridge, Boswell fired a gun in the direction of the lads, and a portion of the charge struck a boy named John Conner (15). At Queen's Hospital whither the lad was taken, it was found that two shots had lodged in his nose, two in his forehead, one in his ear and one in the left eye. The latter is the most serious injury, it being feared he will lose the sight of the eye. Boswell was apprehended at the Smethwick Stop. He informed the constable that the boys were stoning him, and he merely fired the gun to frighten them. On reaching Dudley Road, the constables had great difficulty in preventing the crowd of persons which had assembled by this time from throwing the boatman into the canal. The accused, who is about thirty years of age, is a native of Braunston, Northamptonshire.

96 21 July 1877

A MAN FOUND DROWNED AT FAR COTTON On Tuesday Mr Terry held an inquest at the Rose and Crown, Far Cotton, on the body of a man named John Warwick, aged 57 years, a paper hanger who lately lodged in Broad Lane, Northampton. William Warwick, plumber of Northampton, brother of the deceased, deposed that he (deceased) had no settled residence, and had not worked lately. On Thursday last he started on a job of paperhanging at Blisworth, for Mr Watkin of Sheep Street, but left it on the same day. He last saw him alive on Saturday morning in the Drapery, but he did not see him. He was walking with his head bent down, and to all appearances he was very low in spirits. From his childhood he had been subject to fits, and had suffered from them in the streets. He had been addicted to drink, and had been in the Workhouse, but not for more than a month or six weeks. About three weeks ago, he went to his (witness's) house for sixpence to pay for his lodging, and at that time he appeared very low and "down". Annie Minards, who lives at the Lock House, recognised the body of deceased as that of the man whom she saw on Monday morning. About twenty five minutes to eight o'clock he went to the door of the house, and asked for some water. Her mother gave him some, and he said, "Thank you, missus ; I was so thirsty". He then went towards Blisworth, walked very slowly with his hands in his pockets. Her mother remarked to her that he looked rather peculiar, but she (witness) thought he was quite sober. Annie Carter, living at the second Lock House, said about 11.30 on Monday morning, a boatman going through the locks to Northampton – **Fred Warren** – told her that a man was in the water just below Thrupp Bridge, but he said nothing about trying to get him out. She told her father, and he informed the police. PC Atkins, stationed at Far Cotton, found the deceased's body floating in the canal at the place indicated. With the assistance of two other men, the body was recovered, placed on a boat, and taken to the Rose and Crown. He could not find deceased's hat nor, when he searched him, could he find anything whatever about him. Mr H Terry, surgeon of Northampton, said he had examined the body of the deceased, but found no marks of violence or

anything to cause any suspicions of ill-treatment or unfair play. From the evidence given by his brother, he inferred that his mind had been in an unsound state. The jury returned an open verdict of "Found drowned".

97 29 September 1877

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

ALLEGED THEFT OF A CHAIN **John Barratt** of Bedworth Hill, a boatman, surrendered to his bail to answer a charge of stealing a chain, value 10s, the property of Henry Hewitt of Rugby, coal merchant. The Bench considered there was no evidence against defendant and dismissed the case.

98 27 October 1877

BANBURY BOROUGH QUARTER SESSIONS, MONDAY **Thomas Taplin** (69), boatman, Banbury, a returned convict, was charged with stealing, on the 5th of September last, one rug of the value of 12s, the property of Thomas Henry Heath, publican, Westbury. He was also charged with stealing, on the same day, one piece of cloth of the value of 16s, the property of Richard Scott, draper, Bridge Street, Banbury. Mr Stockton prosecuted. The prisoner pleaded guilty to both charges. He also pleaded guilty to three previous convictions. Prisoner begged hard for one more chance, but he was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude.

99 27 October 1877

THRAPSTON COUNTY COURT, THURSDAY OCTOBER 25

G F LEETE, FARMER, THORPE v **WILLIAM CORNWALL**, BOATMAN Mr Rawlins, for plaintiff, and Mr Atter for defendant. This was a claim for £1 made under the following circumstances :- Plaintiff occupies land in the parish of Titchmarsh, near to the river Nene, and the defendant, who was a bargeman, had, it was alleged, in his work trespassed off the towing-path on to the grass. Plaintiff had cautioned him before, and defendant told him he might summon him when he pleased. Mr Atter, for the defence, explained that there had been some mention of the advisability of giving over a certain bridge, and said that defendant was on the land by permission of someone for whom he acted as agent. Defendant undertaking not to go upon the grass again, a verdict was entered for the plaintiff of 1s, together with any costs he might be out of pocket.

100 17 November 1877

THE WINTER ASSIZES

BIRMINGHAM – ATTEMPTED MURDER **Henry Smith** (22), boatman, was indicted for having, at the borough of Birmingham on Saturday the 23rd June, feloniously wounded and caused grievous bodily harm to George London, with the intent in so doing then and thereby to kill and murder him. Mr Amphlett for the prosecution, Mr Lloyd for the defence. It appeared that on the 23rd June last, about half past five in the afternoon, the prisoner, who was a bargeman, was fighting with another man by the canal side at Birmingham, when London, who was a police-constable in plain clothes, came up and interfered. The prisoner got angry, and went into his barge and brought out a poker, with which he struck at the constable who, however, had a stick with which he warded off the blow and, striking the poker out of his hand, knocked it into the canal. The prisoner was not satisfied, and went back to his barge, returning with an axe, which his wife took from him and placed in the barge. Prisoner however again obtained possession of the weapon, and coming out of the barge, said, "I'll (. . . .) you", at the same time inflicting a most dangerous wound on the hand. The prosecutor said he had been under medical care since the occurrence. PC Thomas Bird apprehended the prisoner who, when charged, said, "What has London or the canal to do with you?" He informed him that he was a police-constable, and took him to the station house. The prisoner was found guilty of wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm, and was sentenced to five years' Penal Servitude.

101 8 December 1877

HUSBAND'S BOSWORTH An inquest was held on Friday on the body of **Edward Bramley**, a boatman, who met with his death in a long tunnel on the Grand Union Canal. On Wednesday morning the deceased had charge of a canal boat, with two men named **Smith** and **Mattock**. Smith and Bramley had some words and fought, but they became friendly before reaching the tunnel. The deceased and Smith lay on their backs to push the boat through with their legs, but on coming out at the other end Bramley was missing, and Smith stated that he had fallen into the water. Smith afterwards told a woman that he must have fought with Bramley in the tunnel, adding that the deceased caught hold of his hand when in the water, saying, "Goodbye, Sam ; God bless you. I am going", and then sank like a stone. Smith was drunk when he made this statement, which he afterwards contradicted. The body, when recovered, presented the appearance of death by drowning, there being no injuries whatever. Smith's face bore several marks, as if caused by fighting. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

102 16 February 1878

TOWCESTER SPECIAL SESSION, FEBRUARY 12

CHARGE OF EMBEZZLEMENT AT OLD STRATFORD **Stewart Rose**, boatman, was charged with embezzling the sum of £2 15s, the money of William Austin Robinson, his master, on the 22nd January. Prosecutor stated that he was a coal merchant and farmer, and lived at Old Stratford. The prisoner was in his employ as captain of a boat. On the day named he gave him £2 15s to pay tonnage on the Oxford Canal. He was to take the money to Stretton Stock on the 28th January. Prosecutor had business in the neighbourhood of Wyken, and went to look at the boats, knowing they were there. He had sent the prisoner there to bring back a cargo of coals. When prosecutor got to the boats the prisoner was absent, and had taken the money with him. Inspector George Wallace said on the 9th of this month he went to a brickyard near Crick railway station, and saw prisoner at work there. Told him that he (witness) held a warrant for his arrest, and he at first denied being the man. He then said, "What a fool I was I did not go and see Robinson ; but it was the fault of the engine driver ; he kept stopping to drink and have the engine repaired. He had no money so I had to find it". Prisoner added that he left the boat at Wyken Colliery and went to the Three Bells public house, Coventry, where he stopped drinking whiskey, and when he awoke in the morning he had no money. The prisoner, in reply to the charge, said he had to pay 8s 6d for coal, 3s for blacksmith and advanced 6s to Davis, and he did not know how much he laid out for victuals for them. He was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions.

103 23 March 1878

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LENT ASSIZES

COSGROVE – FELONY **Stewart Rose** (27), boatman, was indicted for stealing, or converting to his own use, the sum of £2 15s, the monies of William Austin Robinson, his employer, at Cosgrove, on the 22nd of January. Mr Ward prosecuted. Prosecutor, a coal merchant and farmer living at Old Stratford, stated that he gave prisoner the money to pay dues on the Oxford Canal, he then being about to go on a journey to Whiting Colliery. Prisoner had not given him any account of the money, and he had to pay the dues over again. Prisoner's father and another man were also in the boat. Subsequently he found that prisoner had paid two sums amounting to 11s 6d, connected with other expenses of the journey. He advanced prisoner 10s in wages before he started on the journey. **William Davis**, driver of the boat on which prisoner was engaged, said they arrived at the colliery on the 26th of January. They coaled at Braunston, and prisoner paid for it. Witness wrote to prosecutor, telling him they had lent some money, and asking for a sovereign in order to bring the coal back. At Whiting Colliery, prisoner paid him 1s 6d, and went away from the boat and did not return. Inspector Wallis of Towcester apprehended the prisoner at the brickyard near to the Crick railway station. At first he said he was not the man mentioned in the warrant, but then went on to attach the blame to Davis, saying that he continually stopped to drink, for which he had to pay. When they got to Whiting Colliery, he said he went to Coventry, got drinking whiskey in a public

house, and added that when he awoke in the morning after the carouse, he found he had no money. Prisoner was found guilty and was sentenced to two calendar months with hard labour.

104 30 March 1878

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MARCH 27

DISREGARD OF VACCINATION ORDERS **Thomas Monk**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with neglecting the vaccination of his child. Mr Kilburn deposed to having given the requisite notices, all of which had been disregarded. The defendant's wife appeared, and said the child was sickly, but she produced no medical certificate. Fined 5s and costs 9s 6d.

105 13 April 1878

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

A SUSPECTED "SMASHER" **William Cox**, boatman, Wolverhampton, was charged with passing a base shilling in payment for a glass of ale, in a booth belonging to Mr Charles Catling, Market Street, on the Racecourse on the 9th instant. Mr Catling, who occupied a temporary stand on the Racecourse on Tuesday and Wednesday, stated that about half past four on Tuesday afternoon he was engaged at his booth, when prisoner went there to be served. He obtained from the waiter a glass of ale, and had tendered in payment a shilling. The waiter had the coin in his hand, as witness went up from laying another charge against another man, and he called witness's attention to it. After examining it, prosecutor was satisfied that the coin was a base one, and he immediately charged prisoner with passing a bad shilling. He replied that he was not aware that he had a bad shilling, and immediately offered another one for it. Prosecutor kept possession of the coin and, as prisoner did not give a satisfactory account of himself, he gave him into custody. Prosecutor said he had that afternoon received five bad shilling pieces ; a sixth coin, of a similar description, was tendered. Witness discovered that at the time, but freed the man who offered it. Prisoner asked no questions. He declared he had changed a half sovereign on the course in the morning, and received the shilling which he was charged with passing. Mr Keenan remarked that the one prisoner passed and two of the others previously passed were from the same mould.

ANOTHER CASE John Simpson, brass finisher, who gave his address as 84 Ethel Street, was charged with passing a base shilling at the same booth on the same afternoon. Mr Catling deposed that a short time prior to the time when the last prisoner went to his stall Simpson went there, and called for a cigar. A waiter, whom witness was near, served him, and prisoner tendered the shilling produced in payment. The waiter showed it to witness, who inspected it, and immediately discovered it was a bad one. The man waiting upon prisoner was proceeding to give the change, but prosecutor stopped him, and charged prisoner with attempting to pass bad money. He offered a second coin, a good one, remarking that if it was a bad one he had had it off some betting man. Prosecutor retained the bad coin but accepted the second shilling, giving prisoner the change. Prisoner, in answer to a question put to him by Mr Catling, affirmed that he belonged to the town, but on being asked whether anyone was near that he knew, replied, "No". Doubting that he belonged to the town, Mr Catling watched prisoner from the booth, followed him, and seeing him beckon to another young man, gave him into the custody of Detective-inspector Smith. Both this and the last prisoner were remanded for a week. The cases were connected indirectly. Both coins, although tendered at an interval, were from the same mould. A third coin, previously tendered, was from the same mould. Another suspicious fact was that one of them gave his address as Wolverhampton, forgetting the name of the street ; while the second stated that he lived in the town, and gave his address as Kendal Street. There did not happen to be a street of that name in the town. Trying again, he hit upon Ethel Street, but it had since been ascertained he did not live there. Mr Gurney : There is no doubt it was a preconcerted thing.

106 20 April 1878

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

SUPPOSED "SMASHERS" John Simpson, brass finisher, 84 Ethel Street, and **William Cox**,

boatman, Wolverhampton, were charged with passing base coins at the booth of Mr Catling, licensed victualler, Market Street, on the Racecourse on the 9th inst. The coins, shillings, were tendered, the one in payment for a cigar, the other for a glass of beer. Mr Keenan informed the Bench that prisoners were remanded from last week in order that further inquiries might be made. The men, although not jointly charged, were connected by the coins, which were both from the same mould. Mr Catling received five or six base shillings on the first race day, and on examining the coins tendered by the two prisoners, some ten minutes intervening between the tender of each coin, they were found to be from the same mould. The men were evidently working together. It was the custom of "smashers" working the one with the other, for one of the men to carry the coins and the second to attempt to pass them, having them delivered to him singly, so that if he were detected and searched, no second coin would be found upon him. A witness would be called to prove that Simpson had previously attempted to pass a base shilling at another stall. Mr Catling, after the evidence he gave at the last hearing had been read over, remarking upon that portion relating to prisoner Simpson beckoning to another man just before his apprehension, said he was of opinion, although he could not positively swear, that it was the person who a short time before attempted to pass a base shilling ; that was of the same mould as the one which Simpson tendered. Eliza Savage, wife of Thomas Savage, beerhouse keeper, Fish Street, stated that she had a booth on the Course on the race days. On Tuesday afternoon about three o'clock, the prisoner Simpson went to the back of her booth and called for either a glass of ale or a cigar, she could not say which, and tendered in payment a shilling. Witness looked at it and immediately saw it was a bad coin, and she refused to take it. He then took it back and gave her a two shilling piece. She asked him where he had obtained it ; he replied that he had had it from a bookmaker. During the two days, they took five bad shilling pieces ; one of three given to the police was of the same mould as those the prisoners were charged with passing. The one Simpson offered her was darker than either of the coins produced ; she bent it with her teeth, and returned it to him. Detective-inspector Smith spoke to taking Simpson into custody at the instance of Mr Catling, on the Racecourse on Tuesday the 9th inst, in the afternoon between four and five o'clock. Mr Keenan produced three shillings received from Mr Catling at the police court last Wednesday morning. Prisoners were remanded for a week in order that the depositions might be submitted to the Mint authorities for them to decide whether the prosecution should be proceeded with or not.

107 27 April 1878

BRAUNSTON

SUDDEN DEATH On Saturday last, Mr Tomalin, deputy coroner, held an inquest at the Ship Inn relative to the death of **George Ward**, a boatman, 50 years of age. It transpired that deceased had been suffering from heart disease. On Friday, while assisting to unload a boat, he expired suddenly and, as the medical evidence went to show that he died from natural causes, a verdict to that effect was returned.

108 27 April 1878

HARDINGSTONE LOCAL BOARD A letter was read from the medical officer (Mr A Haviland), who had previously intimated that he intended to wait upon the Board at this meeting with respect to a death from smallpox, which occurred some time since in a boat at St James's End, stating that in consequence of a misunderstanding as to the date meeting of the Board, he was unable, on account of being so much engaged in preparing his annual report, to attend. Mr Norman said he saw Mr Haviland one afternoon, and understood from him that he should have to make a serious complaint against their officer, Mr Brown, for not destroying the bed and bedding upon which the boatman suffering from smallpox lay. The result, it was stated, was that the disease had been taken down into Staffordshire. He suggested that the Board should ask Mr Brown to give some explanation. Mr Brown said everything was burned except the bed. They had taken the outside shell of the bed off, cleaned out the cabin, disinfected the bed, and burned the remainder of the things. They also steamed the cabin with four pounds of sulphur. The infection did not, he opined,

rest so much with the clothing as with the persons who had come into contact with the man when he was suffering from smallpox. Mr Cogan was satisfied with what had been done, and gave a certificate for the boat to pass on. Mr Norman thought the bed on which the man had laid should have been destroyed. The Chairman thought so too. However, he did not see that they could entertain the matter until they had the report from the medical officer. The subject then dropped.

109 27 April 1878

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

SUPPOSED "SMASHERS" John Simpson, brass finisher, 84 Ethel Street, and **William Cox**, boatman, Wolverhampton, were again brought up on remand, charged with passing base coins at the booth of Mr Catling, licensed victualler, Market Street, on the Racecourse on the 9th inst. The coins, shillings, were tendered, the one in payment for a cigar, the other for a glass of beer. PC Mills produced a shilling given up to him by the witness Charles Catling. Thomas Coles, licensed victualler of the Mitre, King Street, who in company with his brother rented a booth on the Course during the races, deposed that he took seven base shillings on Tuesday. The prisoner Simpson went to his stall about three o'clock on that afternoon. He called for a glass of ale from one of the waiters, and tendered a shilling in payment. The waiter took the coin to witness who, after examining it, perceiving it was a bad one, went across to the prisoner and said to him, "Where did you get this from?" He replied, pointing towards the betting men, "I have just taken it across there". Prosecutor said, "Have you another of these?" Prisoner answered, "No". Witness rejoined, "Than you'd better get off. If I thought you had I should give you in charge". Prisoner received no change. One of the seven coins produced was the one he received from Simpson. He did not see prisoner from that time until Thursday evening, when he selected him from several others at the gaol. William Knight, who acted as waiter at the booth of his brother-in-law, Mr Charles Kightley of the Red Lion in the Horsemarket, on the first race day, deposed to having a base shilling offered by Simpson to him in payment for a glass of ale. He had previously to that obtained a glass of ale, and tendered a shilling for that ; that one was passed, and change given. The second coin witness told him was a bad one, and wouldn't do. He said he had just had it from a betting man, and gave a good florin in exchange. Mr Kightley received three bad shillings that afternoon. Detective-inspector Smith produced the ten counterfeit coins – seven from Mr Coles and three from Mr Kightley. Of the seven received by Coles, there were four of the date of 1871, and appeared to be from the same mould as those produced by Mr Catling. Kightley's were all of different dates, but one only of 1871. Prisoners were again remanded for communication to be made with the Mint authorities.

110 4 May 1878

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

ALLEGED PASSING OF BASE COIN **William Cox**, boatman, Wolverhampton, and John Simpson, brass finisher, 84 Ethel Street, were charged on remand with passing base shillings at booths on the Racecourse, the former by the payment for a glass of ale, and the latter by the payment for a cigar, on the 9th inst. Mr A J Jeffery prosecuted. The evidence taken at the former hearings of the case was read over, and the prisoners were then committed for trial at the next Quarter Sessions.

111 11 May 1878

BANBURY An inquest was held at the Leathern Bottle Inn on Tuesday evening, before Mr T Pain, borough coroner, touching the death of a youth named **John Brown**, nine years of age, son of **John Brown**, boatman of Hartshill, Warwick. The boy's father left him in the boat in the afternoon, and when he returned, in an hour's time, the boy was missing. Search was made, and the body was found in the water close to the boat. It is supposed the deceased fell into the water whilst getting into the boat. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

112 8 June 1878

BRAUNSTON – A CHILD DROWNED On Saturday last, Mr Coroner Terry held an inquest at the Admiral Nelson into the circumstances attending the death of **John Boden**, aged six years. The child was the son of **Phoebe Vaughan**, wife of **John Vaughan** of 13 Barker Street, King Edward Road, Birmingham (a boatman working for the Birmingham Gas Co), by a former marriage. Deceased's father-in-law left Birmingham for Braunston with a quantity of galvanised sheeting in a barge, taking his wife and deceased with him. Having arrived at the bottom lock, he took deceased on to the towing-path, and left him there while he went for a walk. During his absence, Mrs Vaughan saw him playing about, but soon afterwards when she met her husband on shore, she found his hat. Judging what had occurred, Vaughan proceeded to search for the body, and in a few minutes recovered it by means of a shaft. Mr Charles Bennett, surgeon of Braunston, said there were no marks of violence on the body, and nothing to lead to any suspicion that there was any other cause of death than drowning. A verdict of “Accidentally drowned” was therefore returned.

113 15 June 1878

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JUNE 12

THEFT Samuel Scattergood, boatman, was charged with stealing seven pieces of brass, a pilot coat, a pair of shoes and two sheets at Norton Locks on June 11th, the property of **Samuel Warwick**. Prosecutor said he left his boat at Norton Locks at four o'clock on Tuesday morning, and went to Braunston, returning at eight at night. When he returned he heard what had occurred, and he asked the prisoner if he had been in his (prosecutor's) cabin, and he said he knew nothing about them. Witness told him if he had them to put them back and he should go free, but if not, he should send for a constable. Prisoner made no further answer, and witness sent for the police. The things produced were those he lost, and were worth about 8s. Inspector Browning was going from Buckby to Daventry on Tuesday night, between eleven and twelve, when he met three boys and, in consequence of what they said, he went to Norton Locks and to the prisoner's boat, when the prisoner pointed out the things as those he took from prosecutor's cabin. He took him into custody. Prisoner elected the summary jurisdiction of the Court, and pleaded guilty. He could not tell why he took the things, but he was “put out”. He did not want to take them right away. Committed for six weeks.

114 29 June 1878

BOROUGH QUARTER SESSIONS

ALLEGED PASSING BASE COIN William Cox (50), boatman, was indicted for uttering and putting off to Charles Catling a counterfeit shilling, at the parish of St Giles's on the 9th of April. The jury returned a verdict of not guilty and prisoner was acquitted.

115 21 September 1878

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, SEPTEMBER 18

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS Phillip Mellor, a boatman, was charged with cruelty to a horse. Inspector Duncan said he was at Weedon on the 9th instant, when he saw the defendant driving a grey mare attached to a cart laden with coals. He examined the horse, and found a large suppurating wound under the collar. It was through the skin and into the flesh. The wound was two and a half inches in length, and two inches wide. To all appearance, it was a wound of old standing. He advised the accused not to work the horse and, as far as he knew, he had not worked it since. PC Inns corroborated. Defendant declared he was not aware of the existence of the wound. The Bench could not accept that statement, but thought it was in the defendant's favour that he ceased to work the horse. Fined £1 and costs 10s 6d. As to the penalties in these cases, the informer is entitled to half the penalty, but the society never allow their agents to take it, and it was ordered to be paid to the Police Superannuation Fund.

116 19 October 1878

TOWCESTER PETTY SESSIONS, OCTOBER 15 **William Hewing**, Nuneaton, boatman, charged with being drunk at Blisworth on the 5th October, was fined 2s 6d and costs 9s 3d.

117 30 November 1878

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, NOVEMBER 27

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Emanuel Pearsall**, boatman, Tring, was charged with cruelty to a horse at Whilton on the 11th of November. Mr Roche for the defendant. Andrew Duncan, an inspector of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, said he was on the canal bank in the parish of Whilton on the 11th inst, when he saw a black mare walking lame. He examined the animal, when he found it had a diseased fetlock. It was much swollen, inflamed, and it suppurated. Under the collar he found two large and raw wounds, from which blood and matter adhered to the collar. PC Dell, who was with the last witness at the time, corroborated his statement. Mr Roche, for the defence, admitted the existence of the wounds, and pleaded hard for the defendant, but at the close the Chairman said there was ample and clear evidence that the horse was not in a fit state to be worked, and that it was a great act of cruelty to work it. Fined £3 and costs 19s 10d, or two months.

118 21 December 1878

ACCIDENTALLY DROWNED On Saturday last, the body of Mr Harry Barratt, late a clerk in the employ of John Becke Esq, solicitor, was recovered from the river Nene, close to the South Bridge, under circumstances which scarcely admit of a doubt that the unfortunate young man was accidentally drowned. The facts of this sad case will be found fully detailed in the evidence taken by C C Becke Esq, coroner, at the inquest held on Monday morning at the Town Hall, Mr J S Norman being the foreman.

John Franks, the first witness sworn, said : I live at Oldbury, Staffordshire, and am a boatman. About one o'clock at midday on Saturday, I was coming up from Wellingborough with a boat, and was on the top of the boat pulling the rope up just before getting to the South Bridge, when I saw a body standing upright in the water. After going under the bridge, I went back to where I saw the body and brought it to the side. That is the spot near where the horses go in to drink, and the body was about ten or a dozen yards from the towing-path.

Detective-inspector William Smith said : On Saturday, having received information, I went straight to the wharf on the South side of the bridge, and there saw a body which I recognised to be that of Harry Barratt, late of Palmerston Road, who has been missing since the 1st of November. I found the body lying on its back, the right hand in the outside coat pocket, and the left hand grasping a quantity of mud and weeds ; the head and face being completely covered with mud and weeds. The body was considerably decomposed, particularly one of the hands. I searched the pockets, and found in them a silver watch, which had stopped at 10.22, and gold guard, 14s 9 1/2d in gold, silver and copper, a cheque book, several receipts, private and business letters and a bunch of keys with a label on - "H Barratt, 12 Alexandra Road, Northampton". I know the towing-path referred to by the last witness, which leads to the locks, and would be the shortest way for anyone going to Palmerston Road. The towing-path is unprotected, and is not a very even one. There is a sudden curve, and of a dark night a person not well acquainted with the path might easily walk into the river.

John Francis said : I live at 30 Sheep Street, and am a butcher by trade. I remember the night of the 1st instant. I had been to Weedon, and when I got to Blisworth I went across to the hotel to wait for the next train. As I was coming out I met Barratt. That would be about a quarter past nine. I spoke to him, asked him where he was going, and he said to have a glass of beer. I went and got in the train, and shortly after he came and said, "I'll go back home". He got into the same compartment with me. He was perfectly sober. When we got out of the train he said, "Will you have anything?", and I said, "I don't mind if I do". We went into the Crown and Anchor and had two glasses of beer each. He paid for the first two, and I paid for the second two. We left at ten minutes past ten. He was sober then. I am sure of it. At the door I shook hands and said, "Good night", and he said, "I

think I shall go across the Meadow ; it will be my nearest way home". I went up Bridge Street. I did not notice when he left me that he had one of his hands in his pocket. He walked across to the towing-path as if he meant to go across the meadow. He was cheerful enough and in Mr Norman's was laughing and joking about the steam fire engine. Across the meadow would be the nearest way home for him. To the best of my recollection it was a dark and cold night.

John Becke, solicitor, said : The deceased was a clerk in my employ. He was 25 years of age on Lady Day last, and has been missing since the 1st of November. I expected him to meet me at my house late that night. I waited up for him till after eleven, but he did not arrive. In the morning he was not at the office, and after making inquiries at his house and finding that he had not been home, and that all his keys, including the keys to the strong room, were missing, I had all his drawers opened. I found his papers in sad confusion. His accounts were not made up, and there were large sums of money, £800 or £900 in notes, lying loose among his papers, contrary to order, and contrary to his custom. He ought not to have kept any money at the office ; but if he did, it should have been put in the strong room. I have examined his accounts and, although about £20,000 or £30,000 had passed through his hands, there is not more than £20 or £30 unaccounted for, and that he may have paid away, as I have found several things paid of which he had not made an entry. I don't think there is actually any deficiency, and there was nothing in the accounts to induce me to think there was anything wrong. The result of the examination was to lead me to think there was nothing wrong – nothing to induce me to think that he had been in the least dishonest, though he may have been careless, and I have complained of that in the course of the last four or five months. The Coroner : You have not examined the papers found in his pockets? Witness : No. The Coroner : They may account for some of those missing? Witness : Well, I think you (Detective-inspector Smith) have a cheque there for £80 or £90. The Coroner : Have you examined his bank book? Witness : Yes, and he had a considerable balance to his credit at the bank. The Coroner : To his private credit? Witness : To his private credit. The Coroner : What was the cheque you spoke of? Witness : It was a cheque payable to the order of one of our clients, the payment of which was stopped. It has never been presented, and no doubt it has been lost.

The Coroner then said he did not think it necessary to pursue the inquiry further. He thought the evidence before them would enable them to arrive at a right conclusion as to the cause of death of the deceased. In the first place he presumed they were satisfied that it was the body of Harry Barratt, and he thought the documents, papers and other things clearly established the identity. That being so, it was for them to say how deceased came into the river. There was little doubt that he had been in the river since November 1st. The Coroner called attention to the evidence in support of that, and then proceeded to address himself to the more important question as to how the deceased got into the river. There were only three ways in which that could have happened. He was pushed in, or he deliberately threw himself in, or he walked in accidentally. As to the first, there was not the slightest evidence of violence. There was not a particle of evidence that anyone was seen following him, or that he had had a quarrel with anyone. Besides, all his valuables were found upon the body, and there was nothing missing. With regard to the second theory, that he deliberately walked into the river, it was important to observe the state of the body when found, one of the hands being in the coat pocket. He (the Coroner) did not know what the jury might think, but to his mind it seemed very unlikely that a man would deliberately walk into the river with one of his hands in his pocket ; and he thought that the fact of one of the hands being there should have weight with them when they came to consider the possibility of the deceased's having committed suicide. There was also evidence as to the state of his mind just before, for he was cheerful and chatty and, as Francis said, "full of jokes", which would scarcely be the state of mind of a man who was about to walk into a river deliberately. Apart from that, there was no possible reason for it. They had heard that his accounts, though carelessly kept and the books not posted, did not show a deficiency of more than £20, which might be accounted for by the papers found upon the body, as he had paid money for which there were no receipts, and possibly they and others might be among the papers found. But even if it were not so, he had a private banking account, and having £140 to his credit he could easily have made good a small deficiency of £20, so that there was apparently no reason

why he should have committed suicide. There was yet a third theory – that he might have accidentally walked into the water. It was always of advantage to have a local jury at such inquiries, and most of them would know the place that had been referred to, and which would be the nearest way home for the deceased. He would turn from a blaze of light on to a perfectly dark path, with no lamp, and no protection between the path and the river. There is, too, as he would go from the South Bridge, a sudden turn in the path, so that anyone walking along with his hands in his pockets might easily fall in and, unable to get out, would flounder into the middle of the river and be drowned. It had always struck him (the Coroner) that that was an exceedingly dangerous path. It was not even, there were large stones on the edge of the river bank, and there were often the ropes of boats crossing the pathway, which was very narrow, and anyone going along it on a dark night might easily walk into the river. Taking all these facts into consideration, it was for them (the jury) to say whether they were satisfied as to the way in which the deceased got into the water. If they were not, then there was another course, and that was to return an open verdict of “Found drowned”. But if they were reasonably satisfied that the deceased had come by his death in the way he (the Coroner) had pointed out, they would return a verdict accordingly.

The jury retired, and after a short absence the foreman handed in the following verdict : “Accidentally Drowned ; and the jury wish to recommend to the proper authorities that the pathway should be fenced in some way. They also wish to inform you (the Coroner) that there are no river drags in the town”. The Coroner said he would draw attention to both these matters.

119 **11 January 1879**

BRAUNSTON

A SAD CASE OF DROWNING has occurred at this village, two little girls named Amy and Ada Emily Reynolds, sisters aged 13 and 11 respectively, losing their lives through incautiously venturing upon the ice last Sunday. An inquest was held at the Castle Inn the following day by Mr W Terry, coroner, when the Rev Algernon L Oldham, assistant curate, stated that the deceased were the daughters of **Thomas Reynolds**, who is in the employ of the Oxford Canal Company. The previous afternoon they were at the children's service at church, which was over at half past three. Five or ten minutes afterwards witness and his children passed the deceased in a field between the church and the Castle Inn. They had a little brother with them, and were going towards their home, to reach which they would turn on to the towing-path of the canal near the Castle Inn. Witness spoke to them, and went on his way home, about a quarter of a mile off, but had not been in the house many minutes before a messenger came to tell him they had fallen into the canal. He at once hastened back, half an hour having elapsed from the time he reached the spot where he had passed them, but they had then been recovered from the canal and taken to the Castle Inn, where every effort was made to restore animation, but without avail. George Reynolds, aged nine, brother of the deceased, said they were going home alongside the canal, when his younger sister Ada asked Amy to hold her hand while she tried to see if the ice would bear. She did so, and as soon as Ada put her foot on the ice it broke, and she dropped in ; and as Ada was stooping down, Amy got her arm round her neck and she also slipped in. Witness ran home as fast as he could, and told his father what had happened. Thomas Reynolds said that about a quarter to four in the afternoon, his little boy came to tell him what had occurred, and he at once ran to the spot, and saw the little girls both on the top of the water. There was some movement of the hands. They were nearly in the middle of the canal. He at once threw off his coat and jumped in, and, with the assistance of a boatman named **Watson**, recovered both little girls. They were taken to the Castle Inn by the boatman and others, to whom the bereaved father desires greatly to acknowledge their kindness and assistance. He had warned the deceased not to go on the ice. Mr Charles Brewster, surgeon, who was sent for, reached the Castle Inn at five o'clock, and found the unfortunate children stripped and before the fire. The attempts made to restore animation were judicious, but fruitless, the coldness of the weather decreasing the chance of life being restored. There were some abrasions of the skin, but they were probably caused by the ice. A verdict of “Accidentally drowned” was returned.

120 18 January 1879

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JANUARY 15

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE **Edward Bennett**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with not providing sufficient elementary education for his child, his son **Joseph**, aged 10, having made only 16 out of 200 attendances up to 1st July last, and since the 1st of November the child had made only 14 out of 57 attendances. An order was made.

121 1 February 1879

NORTON

FATAL ICE ACCIDENT On Saturday last, Mr W Terry, coroner, held an inquest on the body of a lad named Thomas Hughes, aged 15 years, who met with his death the previous day through the breaking of the ice on the canal while he was sliding. The deceased was the son of a railway labourer living at Buckby Wharf, and it seems, from the statement of Richard Whitehouse, that the two had spiked sticks and were going down the middle of the Grand Junction Canal, between two bridges, in the direction of Crick. The boys were about fifteen yards from the second bridge when the ice gave way, and both were in a critical position. Whitehouse made for the near side, while the deceased tried to reach the other side, on which the towing-path was. The former was the more fortunate, as someone tied a belt and handkerchief together and threw towards him ; he seized it, and was drawn to the side, after having been in the water about ten minutes. When he had been rescued, he saw that his companion was still in the water, breaking the ice with his hands, and vainly trying to reach the side. Whitehouse at once ran off for help, but help came too late for, when a boatman named **Phipps** recovered the body, in the presence of deceased's father and mother, there was no chance of restoring animation, it having been suspended for at least half an hour. Mr A Cox, surgeon, was sent for, but his services were of no avail. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

122 3 May 1879

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

THE ALLEGED MALT ROBBERY **Joseph Hale**, Phoenix Street, West Bromwich ; **Thomas Webster**, 7 Court, Bridge Street, Northampton ; and **John Chater**, Long Buckby, boatman, were charged on remand with stealing from the brewery of Messrs P and R Phipps, Bridge Street, four sacks of malt, value £7, on the 15th April. Mr A J Jeffery prosecuted, and Mr Sheppard of Luton appeared for Hale. The depositions of the witnesses examined on Monday last were read over. Detective Rogers, cross-examined by Mr Sheppard, said the prisoner Hale was in the cabin of the *Lark*. The other two prisoners were in the *Emblem of Peace*, in which the malt was found. The two boats were in the locks together. Hale said he knew nothing about the malt. Mr Jeffery said he only proposed to call one or two witnesses, and then ask for a further remand. The prosecution had had ample time to get up the evidence. William Tipler, foreman in the employ of Messrs P and R Phipps, said it was part of his duty to keep an account of the malt put in the malt stores at the brewery. On the 17th April, 70 sacks of malt were brought from the brewery at Towcester, in Messrs Phipps's sacks, which had the name of the firm upon them. They were all put in the malt store at the top of the brewery. Witness saw the men getting them in, but did not see them in the store until the next morning, when he went to the malting with Detective Rogers. There were then only 66 sacks in the store. He did not count the sacks as they came in from Towcester, but had every reason to believe there were 70. At the back of the brewery was a door, in the kiln hole, about four feet from the water. From the malting to this doorway, a person would have to go down about 80 steps. Malt was never sent out through this door. It was only used for the purpose of taking in coke from the boats. Witness noticed on Friday morning some red marks on the sill of the doorway ; there were also some fibres, which might be left by a hempen sack being drawn over it. The sample of malt produced was similar to that found on the boat. By Mr Sheppard : All malt is very much alike. I cannot undertake to say, of my own knowledge, that any sacks were missed. George Gamble, foreman cooper employed by Messrs Blewitt and Co, oil merchants, Northampton, said on the 17th

April the prisoners came to the mills, with two boats, for some oil. Witness saw some of the oil put into the boats, and left the mills about half past seven in the evening. They then had about six or seven tons of oil in the first boat. Prisoners ought then to have ceased loading. Next morning, however, he found another five ton had been put in the boat, and that it had gone. Prisoners Webster and Chater went with it, Hale remaining with the other boat. In going from the wharf to the canal, the boat would have to pass Phipps's brewery. The second boat was loaded on Friday morning, and went away before dinner. Cross-examined by Mr Sheppard : Did not know whether either boat had anything on board except the oil, when they were loading. There would be seventy casks of oil on the first boat when it went away. The casks would weigh about 3 cwt each. There were also fifteen larger casks. There was not room to put anything between or under the casks. Could not say whether there was anything except oil on the second boat. There were about sixty casks on board. By Mr Jeffery : It was usual to leave the centre of the boat free for stores or anything else. The whole of the bottom of the boats was not covered. Detective Rogers, recalled, said the *Emblem of Peace* was loaded at each end. There was a space about three yards long in the centre. This was filled up with a number of sacks and a number of trusses of hay, which was covered with a tarpauling. Underneath the hay were four sacks of malt. Mr Jeffery said that was as far as he proposed to carry the case today, and upon that he should ask for a further remand. Mr Sheppard contended that there was no case whatsoever against Hale, and that therefore he ought to be dismissed at once. All three prisoners were at the oil mills on Thursday ; they helped to load one of the barges, and one witness left about half past seven in the evening. The next morning he found that another five casks had been put in the boat. The malt was safe on Thursday afternoon, and was missed on Friday morning, so that it must have been taken between Thursday night and Friday morning. There was no evidence that Hale knew the malt was on the boat. He produced a large number of testimonials giving the prisoner an excellent character. The Bench decided to remand the whole of the prisoners for a week. Mr Sheppard then applied that Hale might be admitted to bail. The Mayor said they had never admitted a prisoner to bail until they had heard the whole of the evidence. Mr Sheppard said it was never too late to mend, and he hoped the Bench would break their custom in this case. The magistrates refused to accept bail, and prisoners were then remanded for a week.

123 10 May 1879

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

THE ALLEGED MALT ROBBERY **Joseph Hale**, boatowner, Phoenix Street, West Bromwich ; **Thomas Webster**, 7 Court, Bridge Street ; and **John Chater**, Long Buckby, boatmen, were charged with stealing from the granary of Messrs P and R Phipps, Bridge Street, four sacks of malt of the value of £7, on the 18th ult. Mr A J Jeffery again appeared for the prosecution ; Mr Sheppard of Luton defended Hale. The depositions of the witnesses were read over, after which Mr Tipler was recalled. He said two of the men employed at the brewery, viz James Aldridge and William Gibbons, had lately absconded. They were at work up to Saturday April the 19th, when they left. Aldridge was a maltster, and the other man was a labourer employed about the brewery. He believed Aldridge was formerly a boatman. By Mr Sheppard : We suspect that these men were concerned in the robbery. I have not seen either of the men since the malt was discovered on the boats. They had both been at the brewery for a considerable time. Mr Jeffery then applied that the prisoner Chater might be discharged. He had made an important statement which, if true, entirely exonerated him. He had made a statement with a view of bringing to justice the implicated parties. He therefore withdrew against Chater, and proposed to call him as a witness. Mr Sheppard said the prisoner had doubtless made the statement on the understanding that he should be discharged. Chater was then set at liberty. **Thomas Kibble**, boatman, Emscote, Warwickshire, said he was in the employ of Messrs P and R Phipps, on a boat called the *Champagne*. On Thursday night, the 17th ult, he went to his boat, which was lying on the Canal about 200 yards from the brewery. About a quarter to twelve he heard a boat in the lock. Witness got out of bed, and saw the prisoner Hale pulling a boat out of the locks. There was a tall man with him. Had known Hale previously. They

pulled the boat to the side of the river and fastened it up. Witness went to bed again. About a quarter past four the next morning, witness saw Hale standing in the hatches of the boat. Witness left with the *Champagne* about five o'clock, leaving Hale's boat behind. Did not see the name of the boat. By Mr Sheppard : Was quite sure it was Hale's boat. There was only one boat. John Chater was then sworn. He said : I live at Long Buckby, and am a labourer. On Tuesday night, the 15th ult, I came to Northampton. On the following morning I went to find employment, and in the evening saw the prisoner Hale, who said he would give me work on the following morning. On Thursday morning I entered prisoner's employ as boatman. We "shoved" the boats, *Emblem of Peace* and the *Lark* up to the oil mills. We commenced loading between twelve and one in the afternoon. The *Emblem of Peace* was first loaded. The foreman at the oil mills left about eight o'clock, and shortly afterwards left the prisoner Hale at the mills with both boats. Webster and me went back to the boats about a quarter past eleven o'clock. The *Emblem of Peace* had gone, and we went to bed in the *Lark*. We got up about six o'clock the next morning and went round towards the locks, where we found the prisoner in the *Emblem of Peace*. In order to get to the locks prisoner would have to take the boat past Phipps's brewery. Hale said, "You had better have your breakfasts, so that you can start". After breakfast, Hale said, "You had better get some oilcloths and cover them bags up". The boat contained some oil, and four full sacks. I covered the sacks over as directed. Hale then went back to the *Lark*, and we took the *Emblem of Peace* on up the canal, as far as Rothersthorpe Lock. Hale's daughter was on the boat. We tied the boat up at Rothersthorpe, and came back to the oil mills at Northampton, where we found the prisoner Hale on board the *Lark*. He said, "I shall go by rail to Blisworth, and you and Webster can bring the *Lark* on". We then took the *Lark* to Rothersthorpe where we joined the *Emblem of Peace*, and took both boats up to Blisworth, where the prisoner Hale met us. Before we entered the tunnel, Hale went into the cabin of the *Emblem of Peace* and brought out four empty sacks. He said, "Jack, you had better empty those full bags into these". We (Webster and myself) emptied them. We could not see what the sacks contained. It was corn of some kind. Hale wrapped the empty sacks up, and took them into the cabin of the *Emblem of Peace*, the full bags being put in hatches. The sacks which we emptied were marked with red paint. Going down the locks, Hale said, "What had we better do with these bags?" I said, "Chuck them in the old lock". Hale said, "No, that won't do". I offered to fetch some stones to put in them, but Hale said, "Never mind, they are all right". I then said, "You can do as you like with them". He said, "I'll put them in the cut". They were thrown in the canal just below Stoke. By Mr Sheppard : I made a statement to Mr Rogers between six and seven at night. Mr Sheppard asked that the statement might be read. It was accordingly read, and was in substance the same as the evidence he had given. Detective-sergeant Rogers, recalled and cross-examined by Mr Sheppard : I took the statement down from Chater's own lips. I did not question him. Chater cross-examined by Mr Sheppard : Hale did not come on the *Lark* after half past 11 at night. Mr Sheppard here contended that the witness had given evidence which directly contradicted the evidence of Kibble. The magistrates endeavoured to explain to Mr Sheppard that he was suffering under a misconception of the evidence, but failed to make it clear to him. In the course of a somewhat excited altercation, the Chairman hinted that the magistrates had made up their minds that there was abundant evidence on which to send Hale for trial. Mr Sheppard : Oh, if the magistrates have made up their minds, it is no use for me, as an advocate, to proceed further. The Chairman : I must object to such an observation as that. The magistrates simply desire to see justice done. Mr Sheppard : I repeat what I have said. After a practice of nearly sixty years, I am satisfied that when the magistrates have made up their minds, it is useless for an advocate to go on. You have made up your minds to commit ; that is quite enough. The Chairman : You have no right to say that. Mr Sheppard : You recollect I have not cross-examined the witness. The Chairman : You are quite at liberty to do so. Mr Sheppard : No, no ; I know my duty better than that. The Chairman : We have no wish to stop the case. Mr Sheppard : I put before the magistrates the character which this man has borne for the last fifty years, and I ask, is it at all probable that a man of that character, who has risen from nothing to be the owner of boats, would place himself in the hands of a perfect stranger as, according to the evidence of Chater, he had done? Mr Peirce : I should be sorry to say Webster was guilty on the

evidence we have before us. Mr Jeffery : I don't press the case against Webster. Mr Peirce said, with reference to the remarks made by Mr Sheppard, he hoped he, with his brother magistrates, had come there to do their duty. They had not previously made up their minds, but no man could listen to the evidence that had been read over without being satisfied that there was sufficient evidence to commit the prisoners for trial. Mr Sheppard : Will you kindly read those characters? Mr T Sheppard: When the trial comes on, the parties who gave these characters may appear and give them personally. Eventually the prisoners were committed for trial. The magistrates agreed to take bail for Hale, viz three sureties of £50 each, and himself in £200.

124 24 May 1879

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY MAY 20 Jesse Morris, miner, was brought up on remand, charged with stealing a watch and chain, the property of **William Jones**, boatman, at Rugby Wharf. Prosecutor stated that he was now living at Northampton. In May 1878, he was working a boat for Mr Hewitt, which was lying at Rugby Wharf. He engaged with prisoner to help in unloading a boat. On the night of the 29th, prisoner slept in the boat along with witness. Prisoner saw witness put his watch in the cupboard. Next morning witness woke up at about three o'clock, and found that prisoner had gone. It at once struck him that his watch had gone too, and on looking in the cupboard, he found that was the case. Prisoner had been convicted on two previous occasions for larceny. Committed for six months' hard labour.

125 7 June 1879

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **William Timms**, boatman, no residence, was charged with being drunk and incapable of taking care of himself in Bridge Street on the 2nd inst. Fined 7s including costs, or seven days.

126 21 June 1879

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS **Samuel Barlow**, boatman, Bedworth, was summoned for causing two donkeys to be worked whilst in an unfit state at Easenhall on June 7th, and pleaded guilty. Sergeant Webb proved the offence, and the defendant was fined £1 and costs 18s 6d.

127 12 July 1879

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH QUARTER SESSIONS

THE MALT ROBBERY AT MESSRS PHIPPS'S BREWERY The last case heard at the Borough Quarter Sessions on Friday the 4th inst, before the Borough Recorder, J H Brewer Esq, was that in which **Joseph Hale**, boatman, **Thomas Webster**, boatman, on bail, James Aldridge, labourer, and William Gibbins, labourer, were indicted for stealing four sacks of malt, the property of Messrs P and R Phipps, Bridge Street, on the 17th April. Mr A P Hensman prosecuted, and Mr E P Monckton defended. Gibbins pleaded guilty. In opening the case, Mr Hensman stated that the prisoner Hale was in charge of two boats which, on the night preceding the robbery, were stationed outside Blewitt's oilery, a little below Messrs Phipps's premises. He was accompanied by the prisoner Webster, and another man named Chater. It seemed that on the evening of the 17th April the two boats were nearly loaded with oil casks, and the two men, Webster and Chater, quitted the boats to go into the town, leaving the prisoner Hale in charge. Late the same night or early the following morning, one of the boats left for Blisworth, and on the way would have to pass Messrs Phipps's premises. On the boat approaching the locks, it was seen by a man who happened to be awake. Seventy sacks of malt had been received in Messrs Phipps's premises on the 17th April, and on the following morning four of the sacks were missing. In addition to Messrs Phipps's initials, the sacks were usually marked with red paint, and on the following morning, some red marks, as well as some hemp as if from a sack, were seen on a door facing the river. This was not the door at which the sacks were generally taken in, and the circumstances attracted suspicion. Hale's boats were followed to Blisworth, and at a spot where a long tunnel passed along the ground, they were caught

by Detective-sergeant Rogers of the borough police. Hale's name was on both of the boats, and on one of them were found four sacks of malt, similar to that belonging to Messrs Phipps, but in different sacks. Detective-sergeant Rogers took Hale, Webster and Chater into custody ; but Chater was dismissed by the magistrates. In consequence of certain statements made by Chater, he was taken up the canal by Detective-sergeant Rogers, and on searching in the water at a certain point, he found four sacks belonging to Messrs Phipps, which had been sunk to the bottom. The prisoner Hale had asked Webster and Chater what he was to do with the malt, and one of them suggested that Messrs Phipps's sacks should be thrown into the water, and the malt placed in other sacks. Thereupon this was done. Two of Messrs Phipps's men – Aldridge and Gibbins – seemed to have assisted in the robbery. Gibbins had pleaded guilty, and Aldridge not guilty. With regard to Aldridge, he did not see how he could sustain that plea, as he had made statements to the police in which he really confessed his guilt. He admitted that he had been hired by Hale to assist in getting rid of his master's property, by passing it out to Hale ; and for that he received a certain sum of money. Mr Hensman called Thomas Barber, W and F Tipler, George Gamble, Thomas Gamble and John Chater, who repeated the evidence given by them before the magistrates. The prisoner William Gibbins who, having pleaded guilty, was also called upon by Mr Hensman to give evidence, made a similar statement to that which he had given before the magistrates on the previous Wednesday. He stated that he had been drawn into the affair by Aldridge who, having made a previous agreement with the prisoner Hale, asked him to help him in getting the sacks into the boat. In cross-examination by Mr Monckton, Gibbins stated that he did not know whether Hale was on the boat at the time the malt was put into it ; but he afterwards went round to the boat and saw Hale, who was on board, give Aldridge a sovereign. Hale also gave him (witness) 4s, saying that the sovereign must be changed and the money divided equally between them. Cross-examined by Aldridge : You were on the premises and led me into the matter. This Aldridge stoutly denied. He was not, he said, on the premises at all. William Clark, foreman maltster at Messrs Phipps's, deposed to locking the premises safely on the evening preceding the robbery, and to putting the keys in their proper place. Aldridge and Gibbins left their employ a day or so afterwards without giving notice. Questioned by Aldridge, witness said Gibbins did not know where the keys were kept, but he (Aldridge), whose work lay near the spot, might easily have known. Detective-sergeant Rogers stated that on receiving information of the robbery, he followed and overtook the two boats at Stoke Hammond Locks. The prisoners Hale and Webster and the witness Chater were in charge of them. He asked Hale whether there was any malt on board, and he replied, "There is none on board that I know anything about". Witness went into the cabin and found a bushel of malt in a barrel. He afterwards searched the other parts of the boat and discovered four sacks of malt under some trusses of hay. On seeing this, Hale said, "I know nothing about it ; I did not know it was there. These two chaps (pointing to Webster and Chater) brought this boat, the *Emblem of Peace*, up ; I came up on the *Lark*". Chater denied all knowledge of the sacks being on board. He took the three men into custody ; but Chater, in consequence of an offer to turn Queen's Evidence, was discharged by the magistrates. In consequence of statements made by Chater, witness afterwards accompanied him to Stoke Locks and, on searching in the canal, he found the four sacks (produced) belonging to Messrs Phipps. There were four bricks in them, which had been used to cause them to sink. He apprehended Aldridge on the 6th May at the Militia Barracks. When charged with the robbery, he stated that he knew nothing about it. He had been in London, but he should not have gone away had it not been for Gibbins. On the way to the station, he said, "I would not have been in this scrape for a thousand pound. I was never in such a scrape before in my life. Joseph Hale asked me to shove his boat down to the malting. I said, "What malting?" He said, "Down to where you work". I asked him, "What for?" He said, "I want you to lend a hand to put some malt into my boat". I did not want to go, and said, "I have a good mind to split". He said, "For God's sake don't. I will give you a sovereign". Aldridge, on the 20th June, made another statement to the same effect, which witness took down in writing. This concluded the evidence for the prosecution, and Mr Hensman then addressed the jury. In the course of his remarks, he stated that he must admit that he considered the evidence against Webster was very slight, and not sufficient for them to return a

verdict of guilty. The Recorder endorsed these remarks, and he thought that the jury might at once find a verdict of not guilty against Webster. There was no evidence against him as to his dealing with the malt, but that he simply, by the commands of his master, shot the malt from Messrs Phipps's sacks into those brought from the cabin by his master. The jury consulted, and at once returned a verdict of not guilty against Webster. He was therefore discharged. After going over the evidence, Mr Hensman said that as regarded Aldridge and Hale there was a clear case, more especially against the latter prisoner. Mr Monckton, in defence of Hale, said he was a man of hitherto unblemished character, and if he lost his character he would lose everything. Was it likely that he would risk that for the sake of a bag or two of malt? Was it not more probable that the prisoners Gibbins and Aldridge, having stolen the malt, went to Hale, knowing that he was a good natured old fellow, and asked him to allow them to put it on his boat? The learned counsel asked the jury to adopt the hypothesis which he put before them, that Hale was simply carrying the malt which had been stolen by the prisoners to some other place, and that he had been led away by his good nature to do them what he considered a kindness – that the prisoner, although he had acted foolishly, had acted honestly. Aldridge had nothing to say, except that he helped to carry the sacks to the boat, but did not go on the premises. The Recorder summed up, pointing out to the jury that it was for them to see whether the prisoner Gibbins and the man Chater were corroborated in any material particulars before accepting their evidence. The corroboration was in the fact that the police went and found the sacks in the canal, where the prisoner and witness said they were dropped in. The jury found both prisoners guilty, and Mr Monckton, having put in testimonials to Hale's previous good character, expressed the hope that the learned Recorder would look upon the prisoner's part in the matter in much the same light as it had been put for the defence. Gibbins said he was sorry he was implicated in the matter, but he should not have been had not Aldridge sent for him in the name of the foreman. He had never been in the hands of the police before. The Recorder, addressing Hale, said that but for such men as him, others would not be charged with stealing. It was not the first time that he (the learned Recorder) had had to try cases of this sort, and there was this to be considered now, that the prisoner had induced two men to go into their master's premises, and to take their master's property, that he (the prisoner Hale) might make a profit by the transaction. But for his age (65), a much more severe sentence would be passed, and he (the Recorder) had been considering whether he should not pass a sentence like that which a learned judge passed at the last Assizes on a receiver of stolen property – one of five years' penal servitude – as he (the prisoner Hale) was by far the worst of the party. The sentence of the Court was that he be imprisoned and kept to Hard Labour for two years. If, as the learned counsel had stated, he was suffering from some complaint, the medical attendant would relieve him from the latter part of the sentence. Aldridge, who appeared to have been led away by the other men, would be sentenced to one year's hard labour ; and Gibbins, who had tried to some extent, after pleading guilty, to bring the crime home to the others, would be sentenced to hard labour for nine calendar months. This was the last case.

128 2 August 1879

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JULY 30

NEGLECTING TO HAVE A CHILD VACCINATED **William Wright**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with neglecting to have his child vaccinated. Defendant's wife's mother attended, and said the child was vaccinated the previous day. As the law had been, though tardily, complied with, the Bench did not wish to increase the costs, and adjourned the case for a week, to allow time for the defendant to pay 7s costs.

129 6 September 1879

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, SEPTEMBER 3

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE **Edward Bennett**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with disobeying an order of the Bench to send his son to school. Defendant's wife appeared. The school attendance officer, John Birch, said the child had made 56 attendances out of 115 during the last three months.

Fined 15s including costs. Allowed a fortnight to pay.

130 27 September 1879

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS

STEALING A BRIDLE, BIT AND REIN **George Boughton** was charged with stealing a bridle, bit and rein, the property of **Abraham Cleaver**, at Braunston on the 21st of September. Prosecutor said he is a boatman and arrived at Braunston on Saturday night, and put up his horse at the Castle. On Sunday morning, he missed his bridle, bit and rein, and knowing that only another party with a boat had been in the stable before him, he followed them along the canal. He overtook a boat, which the prisoner was steering, near Hillmorton. He asked the prisoner if he had his bridle, bit and rein. Prisoner said he did not know anything about it. Prosecutor told him he had better give it up. Prisoner threw the bridle to prosecutor on the towing-path. Prosecutor put the matter into the hands of the police. The value of the articles was 2s 6d. William Stopford of the Warwickshire police, apprehended the prisoner at Clifton on Sunday. When he told him the charge, he said, "Oh". On the way, he said, "I took the bridle, bit and rein. I hid the bit somewhere, and he does not know where it is". He said he thought it was one taken from him some time ago. Prisoner, who had been convicted of stealing a brooch in June last, was committed for three months with hard labour.