

**NORTHAMPTON MERCURY**  
**1880 to 1895**

**1      3 January 1880**

NEWPORT PAGNELL PETTY SESSIONS

ASSAULT **Thomas Boswell** was summoned for assaulting Christopher Johns at Fenny Stratford on 26<sup>th</sup> December. The complainant, landlord of the Navigation at Fenny Stratford, stated that after the house was closed the defendant, who is a boatman, was outside his house, and abused and struck him. Fined £2 and 11s costs, or 21 days with hard labour in default.

**2      3 January 1880**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, DECEMBER 31 **John Carter**, boatman, Braunston, against whom a warrant was ordered to issue last week, was charged with being drunk and disorderly on the 13<sup>th</sup> December. PC Sorrill said he saw the defendant about at night. He was on the ground in the street, and several persons were trying to get him up. He was swearing and making a disturbance. He was very drunk. The defendant said he was very sorry, but he had been ice breaking and had but little to eat, so the beer took effect on him. Captain Stopford said it was a poor excuse saying he had but little to eat when he could find money for drink. The expenses were heavy for which, however, the defendant was to blame in not appearing to the summons. Fined 1s and costs 15s.

**3      17 January 1880**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JANUARY 13

APPLICATION Mr Roche applied for a transfer of the Champion at Braunston from William Vorley to **William Boys**. The Bench refused the application, on the ground that Boys, being a boatman, could not have proper control over the house.

**4      24 January 1880**

TWO CHILDREN SCALDED TO DEATH An inquest was held at the Bucks Infirmary on Thursday week, on the bodies of **Eliza Jane** and **Joseph William Merchant**, the former three years and the latter fifteen months old. The father is a boatman on the Grand Junction Canal ; and on the previous Tuesday, when entering the lock at Slapton near Leighton Buzzard – his wife being with his horse, and he in charge of the boat, and the children being in the cabin by themselves for the time being – the rope broke, and shook the boat. Subsequently, observing steam issuing from the cabin, he at once went down and found that a pot, which had been on the fire, was upset over the children. Medical assistance was at once procured from Leighton, and the children were ordered to be sent to the Infirmary at Aylesbury, where they were admitted about five in the afternoon. Neither of them rallied, the eldest dying soon after one, and the younger about seven in the morning. Verdict : “Accidental death”.

**5      17 April 1880**

COSGROVE An inquest was held at the Falcon Inn, Old Stratford, on Friday, touching the death of **Jane Monk**, wife of a boatman, who died suddenly the previous Wednesday. Mr Francis, surgeon of Fenny Stratford, attributed death to heart disease, accelerated by confinement. The jury returned a verdict of death from natural causes.

**6      8 May 1880**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MAY 4

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE **Robert Warwick**, boatman, Braunston, was summoned for neglecting to send his son, **James**, to school. The School Attendance Officer said the lad, who is eleven years old, had not been to school since he was six. An order was made for him to attend the Church School.

## 7 15 May 1880

### BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

**CRUELTY TO A HORSE** **William Ward**, boatman, Brockmore, Stafford, was summoned for cruelly ill-using a horse while in an unfit state, at Northampton on the 17<sup>th</sup> April. Inspector Ford of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals said on the day in question, on the towing-path near the South bridge, he saw the defendant with a brown horse drawing a boat. One of the legs of the horse was very much swollen ; the animal was very lame, and walked with great pain. Mr Garratt, veterinary surgeon, examined the horse, and found it suffering from an enlargement of the fetlock joint, which was attended with great heat and pain. It would be cruelty to work it. Defendant did not appear, and in his absence was fined 10s and costs, £1 12s 6d, or one month with hard labour.

## 8 18 September 1880

**FOUND DROWNED** Much excitement has been caused in Wellingborough this week, in consequence of the mysterious disappearance of John Edwards, a journeyman currier residing in South Row, Spring Gardens, who left his home early on the morning of the 9<sup>th</sup>. Some days having elapsed, and he not making his appearance, on Monday morning the river was dragged by the police near the stanch as, it was alleged, a hat supposed to have belonged to the missing man had been found near the spot. In the evening the body of the deceased was found by a passing boatman, and conveyed to the Crown and Anchor Inn, Irchester, where an inquest was held on Tuesday morning before J T Parker Esq, and the following evidence given :- Ellen Edwards, South Row, widow of the deceased, deposed he was 26 years of age. She saw him last on the night of the 8<sup>th</sup>, when he went to bed a little before nine o'clock, complaining of being a little bilious. She went to bed a little before eleven, he was then fast asleep ; she woke him up and asked him if he wanted anything. He said, No", and she went to sleep. About ten minutes to six the following morning, she found he had dressed as usual, with the exception of his stockings, scarf and waistcoat, and had gone out. He did not come home to breakfast as usual, and she went down to the shop he worked at, but he was not there. He did not come home to dinner, and she saw him no more alive. He never complained of illness before he said he was poorly on Wednesday night. He was in good work and apparently in good health. He was not in difficulty about money or otherwise that she knew of. Had never heard him threaten to destroy himself. About Christmas time he was very particular about fastening the house up because of tramps, but he was not strange. He was not in the habit of going for early walks, nor to go fishing. Samuel Ekins, 21 Hatton Terrace, shoe finisher, deposed that on Monday he was by the river, about half past five, near the stanch. Saw a boat going down. The boy who was leading the horse said, "Here's a man drowned". Witness went to the place and assisted the boatman to get the deceased out. He knew deceased. Had seen him several times before. His clothes were not torn, and there were, as far as he could see, no marks of violence on the body. Deceased had no stockings or vest on, and his shirt collar was undone. Did not know he was in any trouble of any kind. Henry York of 3 Redwell Terrace, currier, worked in the same shop with deceased. Had known him for 13 years, and he and deceased were friends. Saw him at the shop on Wednesday. He seemed in his usual health and did his work as usual. When the bell rang at six o'clock, he seemed in a hurry to get away. Witness asked him if he should come down town in the evening. He said no ; he thought not. He did not feel just the thing. Never heard him say at any time he would destroy himself, and was very surprised when he heard he was drowned. **Charles Condor**, a boatman of Northampton, deposed that on the previous evening he was taking a boat down the Nene, and about half past five he was near Wellingborough stanch. He saw a body close to the side, on the top of the water. He was on the Irchester side. Gave information to some men on the Wellingborough side. He drew the body to that side, and got it out, and then went on with his boat. PC Knight deposed that from information received on the previous evening, he found the body lying on the bank and Ekins with it. He searched the body, and found twopence halfpenny and three letters, but the letters had no bearing on the case. Knew the deceased. Examined the body. Found no marks of violence on it, nor were his clothes torn, he seemed to have been dead some

days. Had him conveyed to the Crown and Anchor. The jury returned a verdict of “Found drowned, but how deceased got into the water there was not sufficient evidence to show”.

**9 20 November 1880**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

ILL-TREATING A DONKEY **James Blagrove**, a boatman, and **Thomas Davenport**, a youth, were charged with cruelly ill-treating a donkey by working it whilst in an unfit state on the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. Blagrove was fined 2s and 15s 6d expenses ; and in default committed for 14 days. The boy was let off on payment of 15s 6d expenses. Samuel Beachy, the owner of the animal, was dismissed.

**10 27 November 1880**

RUGBY MAGISTERIAL, WEDNESDAY

ALLEGED CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Enoch Simpson**, boatman of Foleshill, and his son, were brought up in custody charged with working a horse while in an unfit state. Prisoners were remanded on bail till Tuesday.

**11 5 February 1881**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Charles Sims** of Hillmorton, boatman, was charged on remand with being drunk and disorderly at Rugby on Saturday night. There was a second charge against him for assaulting Mr John Stannard of the Wine Barrel, Rugby. One month's imprisonment with hard labour.

**12 5 March 1881**

SUPPOSED CASE OF SUICIDE A report was received at the Police Station on Thursday morning to the effect that a boatman saw a woman jump from the South bridge into the river about half past one a m. Our reporter has been making inquiries in the locality, but has not been able to obtain definite information. At the Police Station, **John Chambers**, the boatman, in the employ of **C Bromage**, captain of one of the barges belonging to Messrs C Nelson and Co, Stockton, stated that about 12.15 a m, while smoking his pipe on the boat, he saw a woman get on the bridge wall. A moment or so afterwards, he saw her jump from the bridge wall into the river. Heard her scream twice, and “all was still”. He then went below, and turned in. On rising in the morning, at four, he told his captain of what had taken place. The captain afterwards gave information to the police. Detective-inspector Rogers, who has the matter in hand, has not been able to obtain any information which would confirm the story which, on the face of it, appears very improbable.

**13 19 March 1881**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MARCH 16

REFUSING TO PRODUCE CERTIFICATE **John Baylis**, boatman, was summoned for refusing to produce the certificate of the registry of his boat at Braunston on the 25<sup>th</sup> February. William White, inspector of the Daventry rural sanitary authority, proved the case, which was taken in the absence of the defendant, who was fined 20s and costs 10s 6d.

**John Lines**, boatman, for a like offence on the same day and at the same place, was fined 20s and costs 9s 6d.

**14 2 April 1881**

SUPPOSED SUICIDE IN NORTHAMPTON Shortly before five o'clock on Wednesday, the dead body of a woman was found by a boatman named **Job Clifton** floating in the water near the locks in the Cow Meadow. It may be remembered that on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March last **John Chambers**, in the employ of **Charles Bromage**, captain of one of the barges belonging to Messrs Nelson and Co of Stockton, reported at the Police Station that at a quarter past twelve o'clock in the early morning of that day, while smoking his pipe on the boat, he saw a woman get on to the wall of the South Bridge and jump into the water. The woman screamed twice and then, said the man, “all was still”. He then

went below, and turned in. On rising in the morning, he told the captain of what he had seen and heard, and Bromage then gave information to the police. Little credit was attached to the man's story at the time. When questioned by Inspector Rogers, Chambers said he was afraid to raise an alarm at the time of the occurrence for fear he should have been charged with throwing the woman into the river. Soon after this occurrence, it was reported that a woman of the name of Emily Clarke was missing from her home, No 3 Angel Street. The body found in the water has been identified as the body of this woman, and there is very little doubt that it was she whom the boatman saw jump into the river. The inquest on the body will be held tomorrow (Friday), when it is to be hoped that the boatman who coolly turned in after "all was still" will be forthcoming, and able to give some more satisfactory account of his apparently inhuman conduct. The unfortunate woman had been separated from her husband, who is now living at Leicester, for some time, and had been living with two men in Angel Street.

## **15      2 April 1881**

**BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS    John Williams**, boatman, no residence, was charged with being drunk and creating a breach of the peace in Bridge Street ; also with assaulting PC Battison while on duty, on the 29<sup>th</sup> inst. The constable stated that the prisoner was using bad language and, being admonished, threatened to smash his (witness's) mouth in. Witness took him into custody, and he said he would go quietly, but they had not gone many yards before he tripped him up, and kicked him as he lay on the ground. Herbert Palmer, one of the county constables, said he was assaulted before Battison came up. Witness saw the prisoner bite the constable and kick at him. Prisoner was fined 10s and costs ; in default, he was committed for 14 days' hard labour.

## **16      9 April 1881**

**SUPPOSED SUICIDE**    An inquest was held on Friday week before C C Becke Esq, borough coroner, at the Town Hall, on the body of the woman Emily Clarke, found by a boatman in the river near the South Bridge, Northampton, shortly before five o'clock on Wednesday morning last. The following evidence was taken :-

**Job Clifton** said he was a boatbuilder. On Wednesday last, March 30, at a few minutes to five, he was proceeding towards Cow Meadow with his boat, when he saw deceased floating in the river. Deceased appeared to have been dead some time. The body was brought to the mortuary.

**John Chambers**, boatman of Warwick, said at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 2<sup>nd</sup> March he was in his boat near Mr Hill's wharf. On the morning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst, witness was called up, and on going to the river he saw deceased on the bank. She shouted once or twice and then jumped into the water. This was at the South Bridge. Witness said it was of no use rousing his mate as he was drunk. He spoke about the affair at six o'clock the next morning. He showed his mate the place from where deceased jumped. He told the police of what he had seen, and also some people who were standing about. Could not distinguish the woman in the water.

George Luck said he recognised the body as that of his daughter. Her name was Emily Clarke, and she was married to Henry Clarke, clicker of Leicester. Deceased was 31 years of age. Witness had not seen his daughter for three years. He was sorry to say that she was addicted to drink, which seemed to affect her mentally.

Samuel Barker, shoemaker, 3 Angel Street, deposed that he knew the deceased, who kept his house for him. She had been his housekeeper for the last three years. She had been addicted to drink. Witness did not see her again alive after bidding her goodbye on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March. On that date, he left her at home in company with a lodger. Witness heard the deceased say from time to time that she would rather do away with herself than go back to her husband. Witness gave her money on different occasions. Except when she was in drink her health was good, and she appeared right enough. Deceased was sober on the morning witness parted with her. By a Jurymen : I have never supplied deceased with money for drink.

John Page, finisher, Angel Street, stated that the last time he saw deceased was at 6.30 at night. She was quite sober at that time ; and was, in fact, singing. He knew nothing against the moral character

of deceased. She used to earn a little money by sewing.

Detective-inspector Rogers said that information of deceased having jumped into the river was given to the police a long time after the body had been in the water.

The Coroner remarked that in his opinion the two witnesses, Baker and Page, might have given their evidence more satisfactorily, and thus assisted the jury in finding a verdict. It was apparent that all that was known about the matter was not communicated to them, and this was much to be regretted. The unfortunate woman had led a dissipated and immoral life, and preferred death as an alternative.

A verdict that "Deceased destroyed herself whilst in a state of temporary insanity" was returned.

The Jury gave their fees to the Homeopathic Dispensary.

### **17 9 April 1881**

BANBURY PRISONERS AT OXFORD William Barnett of Willscott and William Hunt of Cropredy were charged with stealing a gun at Cropredy, the property of **Thomas Wills**, boatman. Barnett was committed for six weeks and Hunt for 21 days.

### **18 7 May 1881**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

CRUELTY TO A DONKEY **Amos West**, boatman, was charged with cruelly ill-treating a donkey, by working it whilst in an unfit state at Hillmorton on the 27<sup>th</sup> April. Fined 5s 6d and costs 13s 6d, or 14 days' imprisonment.

### **19 7 May 1881**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

ILLEGAL FISHING **George Sims**, boatman, Stoke Bruerne, was summoned for attempting to take fish in the river Nene at Cogenhoe on the 21<sup>st</sup> inst. Charles Smith, a keeper in the employ of the Nene Angling Club, said on Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup> he saw the defendant in a boat on the river with an eel spear, with which he was attempting to catch fish. Fined 10s and costs 11s.

### **20 28 May 1881**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MAY 25 **Edmund Bennett**, boatman, Braunston, was summoned for employing his child, who was not exempt from school. Defendant's wife appeared. J Birch, school attendance officer, proved the charge. Fined 5s and costs 10s 6d.

### **21 25 June 1881**

BANBURY COUNTY POLICE, THURSDAY **William Grantham**, boatman, Lower Heyford, was charged with stealing a fishing rod, value 1s 6d, the property of Robert Haskins of Banbury. The prosecutor, a boy, was fishing in the canal, when the prisoner came up with his boat and took the rod off the ground. Mr Kilby, who defended, said the prisoner took the rod because the boy was fishing in the canal without permission. He was fined 5s and 23s costs.

### **22 2 July 1881**

DEATH ON A CANAL BOAT On Monday the county coroner, W Terry Esq, held an inquest at the Chequers Inn, Rothersthorpe, on the body of **Thomas Buckler**. The deceased was a boatman who resided at Chilvers Coton, near Nuneaton, and was about 32 years of age. He had been taking a boat load of timber to Mr Beeby's, Northampton, and was going back empty. On Sunday night, he and his brother, **John Proctor**, lay with their boats at the top lock of the Northampton Branch, and next morning they proceeded on their way. The deceased was noticed by his brother to be leaning over the side of the cabin on his chest as if in pain. His brother asked what was the matter with him, and he said, "I thought I should have died". He was trying to put the helm on, as it had come off, and he seemed to have overstrained himself. He was advised to go into the cabin and lie down, but he said he would go on, and did so for a distance. When at the third lock, he called out to his

brother, "Jack, come and steer". Proctor went and called the wife of the deceased, and he went into the cabin and lay down. As they were going into the next lock, witness called the lock-keeper, who helped to take deceased's waistcoat off, when he gave a gasp and died immediately. Mr Thompson, surgeon, Blisworth, was immediately sent for to see the deceased, who was lying in the boat at No 9 lock, Rothersthorpe. From inquiries made and the appearance presented, he (Mr Thompson) concluded that death had ensued through aneurism of the aorta – that is, through the rupturing of a large vessel of the heart – through some extraordinary exertion. This would not necessarily cause any blood to be seen externally. A verdict was returned in accordance with the medical evidence.

### **23 23 July 1881**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JULY 20

DISOBEYING JUSTICES' ORDER **William Stangs alias Stanger**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with disobeying an order of the magistrates to contribute 2s 6d a week towards the support of his father and mother. The order was made on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 1880. John Birch, the relieving officer, said the defendant paid 10s, and was again summoned in December last, when he absconded and returned only a few days ago, when a warrant against him was executed. At that time, defendant owed £1 7s 6d. In February, the defendant's father died, when the debt had increased to £2 17s 6d. There was nothing asked for the support of the mother. The defendant said he could not pay the £1 7s 6d and £1 4s 8d costs, so he was committed for six weeks.

### **24 30 July 1881**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Benjamin Johnson**, boatman, was charged with ill-treating a horse, by working it whilst in an unfit state at Hillmorton on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, and pleaded guilty. Fined £1 and 16s expenses.

### **25 27 August 1881**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

ILL-TREATING A HORSE **James Chater**, canal boatman, Foleshill, charged with ill-treating a horse by working it whilst in an unfit state at Hillmorton on the 22<sup>nd</sup> inst, was fined £1 and £1 4s 6d expenses.

### **26 22 October 1881**

BARBY

CASE OF DROWNING On Saturday, W Terry Esq, coroner, held an inquest at the Arnold Arms, Barby, on the body of a man unknown, discovered in the canal by **Charles Watson**, a boatman, near Wiggins's Bridge. The body appeared to have been in the water some two or three days. Mr Charles Bennett, surgeon, stated that the deceased had a wooden left leg. There were no external marks of violence sufficient to account for death. PC Sorrell described the deceased as a man 5 ft 11 in in height, with dark hair, sandy coloured moustache, and the rest of his face clean shaven. He was dressed in an old coat, waistcoat and trousers of dark cloth. On the right foot was an elastic side boot. In his pockets were the *Sporting Life* and *Sporting Almanac* for 1881, a small pocket knife and comb, but no money. Witness's wife saw a man answering to that description singing in the street at Braunston last Thursday week. A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

### **27 19 November 1881**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY **Charles Taylor**, boatman, Bletchington, Oxfordshire, was charged on remand with cruelly working a horse when in an unfit state at Newbold on the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. The case was a very bad one, and the defendant was fined the full penalty of £5.

## **28 26 November 1881**

### **LONG BUCKBY**

**A MAN DROWNED** On the 18<sup>th</sup> instant, W Terry Esq, coroner, held an inquest at the New Inn, Norton, on the body of a man believed to be Edward Mullis, a tailor of Birch Bridge, near Coventry. Last Wednesday he called at the New Inn about half past seven in the evening, and while in the tap room offered a waistcoat for sale. He said he was going to Bowers of Brockhall to make some clothes. The landlord, Mr Thompson, bought the waistcoat for 3s 6d and a quart for the good of the house. Deceased also offered a pair of trousers for sale, but could not find a customer. He remained about half an hour, and then left, wishing the company "Good night". As he was leaving, Joseph Tyrell, a waggoner, said, "Hulloa, Kersley, are you here?" That was the place from which the deceased was supposed to have come. He said he was going to Brockhills, and Mrs Thompson saw him go as far as the bridge over the canal. He was not the worse for drink. On Thursday Joseph Dowrett, butcher, Long Buckby, was informed by a boatman that there was something in the water, and a young man named Clayton having fetched a dog, a body was got out about twelve yards from the bridge where deceased was last seen. PC White of Long Buckby examined the clothes and found some pawn tickets, several of them bearing the name of Edward Mullis of Kersley. There was also a box of needles, a thimble, tape, pocket book for measures and 4s 5 1/2 d in money. Deceased was apparently 50 years of age ; height 5ft 4in or 5 1/2in ; sallow complexion, dark hair and whiskers meeting under the chin. Mr Cox, surgeon of Long Buckby, said the deceased had a scalp wound, such as would be probably caused by a passing boat, and drowning was, no doubt, the cause of death. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

## **29 18 March 1882**

**WINSLOW PETTY SESSIONS, MARCH 15** **John Edwards** of Tring, boatman, was fined 20s with 22s 8d costs for travelling on the London and North Western Railway, from Bletchley to Winslow, on the 9<sup>th</sup> inst, without having paid his fare and with intent to avoid payment thereof, and was sent to gaol for 14 days in default of payment. The same defendant was also committed for six weeks' hard labour for assaulting PC Alfred Clifford, into whose custody he was given for the above offence.

## **30 10 June 1882**

**STONY STRATFORD** **Daniel Berry**, boatman, was charged with stealing 60 lbs of coal belonging to Mr William Adams, Old Wolverton. Committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions.

## **31 17 June 1882**

**SAD DROWNING CASE AT ROTHERSTHORPE** An inquest on the body of Charles John Hughes, who was found drowned on Monday evening in the canal near Rothersthorpe, was held on Tuesday at the Chequers Inn, Rothersthorpe, by the county coroner (W Terry Esq). The jury were :- Messrs J Payne (foreman), J Billing sen, W D Manning, W Fisher, J Billing jun, R Elliott, A Bonsor, J H Howes, C Sibley, J Allen, G Cox and J Garrett. The following evidence was given. Sarah Ann Howes, sister to Mr J H Howes, landlord of the Chequers, said the deceased was a stranger to her. He called at the house on Monday afternoon about two o'clock, and asked for a glass of beer. She served him with it, and after he had drunk it he left the house. He was in the house perhaps two or three minutes. He appeared to be perfectly sober at the time, and she noticed nothing particular or unusual the matter with him. He inquired after Mr Manning, but was told that he was not in the house. He did not tell her that he was going to Mr Manning's. Elizabeth Maria Howes, sister to the last witness, deposed to seeing the deceased in the house again at about three o'clock. He had one glass of ale, and remained about five minutes. He seemed to be sober, and she did not notice anything unusual in his manner. He came in again later on – about a quarter to five o'clock – with Dr Haslam, and he then had two glasses of ale, and remained in the house about twenty minutes. That was the last she saw of him. He went out of the house alone, Mr Haslam having gone into the village to see a patient. She did not see him go out of the door, but she had seen him a minute

before, and she could not perceive that he was drunk, or otherwise than sober. There was no conversation passing whilst he was in the house. He did not say where he was going. He did not have any other liquor besides ale. Mr J Payne, foreman of the jury, said that the deceased was at his house between half past three and four o'clock. There was not much conversation, but as he left he said he hoped that he should live a few more years yet. He had one glass of ale. He appeared in good spirits, and was quite sober. Witness's wife gave the deceased two oranges which he said he should take home to his daughter. He said he was going to Mr Manning's house. Mr Manning, a juryman, said the deceased was at his house at about four o'clock. He remained about twenty minutes or half an hour. He had one glass of beer, and when he left he said he was going home. He seemed quite able to take care of himself, but he appeared as though he had had plenty to drink. Witness did not know how much beer the deceased had had before, and so far as witness could judge he appeared as though he would be able to get home all right. Witness watched him to the top of the hill, and he then appeared to be walking all right. Mr William Haslam, surgeon of Blisworth, spoke to having met the deceased on the road after he had left Mr Manning's. It was about half past four o'clock, and he met the deceased on the Rothersthorpe side of the canal, proceeding in the direction of Blisworth. Witness was driving at the time, and being near the village he asked the deceased to go back with him and have a glass of ale before he went home. The deceased said he would, and getting up into the trap by himself, went back with witness to the Chequers. The deceased had two glasses of ale, and witness left him in the house, he having a patient to see to. On returning to the Chequers he saw, through the window, the deceased in the street. There were two women with him, but whether they were assisting him or only talking to him, witness could not say. Witness did not look out for the deceased, as he did not know that he was going back to Blisworth. He started home about ten minutes afterwards without speaking to or again seeing the deceased. He heard of the deceased being found drowned at Blisworth about half past seven o'clock the same evening. He went at once to the bank of the canal, and there saw the body of the deceased. He was quite dead. Witness had examined the body externally, and found one bad cut over the left eye. From appearances the wound had been inflicted immediately before death, as there was no swelling. If the wound had been caused about half an hour before death, there would have been a considerable swelling. The blow would no doubt have stunned him. The wound might have been caused by a fall. The cause of death would be from drowning. There were no other injuries on the body, so far as he could see. Mrs May Paul said she had known the deceased some time. He was an independent gentleman living at Rothersthorpe, and was 69 years of age. She saw him on Monday about half past five o'clock. She was with a friend standing in a doorway and looking out into the street. There was a quantity of loose stones lying by the side of the road and the deceased had got to them, when he seemed to slip, and he fell face downwards on to the stones. She and her friend assisted him to rise, and she then saw he had cut himself severely on the nose just under the eyes. The wound bled very much, and the deceased used his handkerchief in wiping off the blood. The deceased did try to get up himself, but did not succeed. She asked him whether he was going home, and he said, "Yes". She said to him, "What will your wife say when she sees you like this?" He said she would not say anything. It did not appear to her that the deceased was intoxicated, and she only meant to ask him what his wife would say with regard to the wound on his nose. He stopped two or three minutes, and then went in the direction of Blisworth. She saw him go to the top of the hill (about 200 yards), and he appeared to be walking all right. Abigail Allen, living at No 1 Lock, Rothersthorpe, said she saw the deceased about half past six o'clock ; he was on the towing-path of the canal. He was walking in the direction of Blisworth, and when she first saw him he was striking the hedge at the sides with his stick. He seemed to be walking very unsteady. Witness did not speak to him, but from the way he was walking she did not think it was safe for him to be on the path of the canal by himself. A barge came up shortly afterwards, and she remarked to the boatman that there was an old man gone up the towing-path, and said she hoped that he would not fall into the water. The boatman said he hoped not, but he did not like to see old men by themselves on the towing-path. About a quarter of an hour later someone came for the drags, and said that a man was in the water. She went to the spot, and found it was the deceased. **William**

**White**, boatman of Stoke Bruerne, said he passed the No 1 lock about seven o'clock. About ten minutes afterwards, when about 150 yards from the lock, his son, who was driving the horse, observed a stick lying on the path. Witness looked back, and then saw on the water a dark substance. He did not notice which side of the bank the body was before he passed it, as he did not see it until the boat had passed. He at once stopped the horse and boat and, running back, got the body out as quickly as possible. The body was in the water nearly opposite the stick. The towing-path was very narrow at the spot, but there was no obstacle in the way which anyone could stumble over. The bank was very steep, and anyone falling off would go into the water directly. The water was very shallow at the spot, it being only about a foot deep. He could see no marks on the bank. Juryman Allen said he had examined the spot, and found some scrapings on the bank where he went into the water. He appeared to have slipped in. If he had jumped in, there would have been no marks on the bank. If the deceased could have kept upright, there would not have been enough water to drown in. White, continuing, said there were no signs of life in the body. He turned it over on to the stomach, but no water came out. The Coroner, in summing up, said there could be no doubt that the deceased had met his death by accident, but if the jury considered there had been neglect or want of common humanity in any of the persons who met the deceased and saw the state he was in, they could add a rider to the verdict. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**32 1 July 1882**

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **Thomas Jordan alias Brandon**, boatman, no residence, was charged with being drunk and incapable in Weston Street on the 25<sup>th</sup> inst. Fined 5s and 6s 6d costs ; in default 14 days' hard labour.

**33 1 July 1882**

AYLESBURY MIDSUMMER QUARTER SESSIONS, MONDAY **Daniel Berry** (43), boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing 60 lb of coal, value 8d, the property of William Adams, at Wolverton on May 24<sup>th</sup> last. Three months' hard labour.

**34 19 August 1882**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 16 **John Higgins**, boatman, Braunston, 5s and 9s 6d costs for being drunk and disorderly.

**35 19 August 1882**

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **Daniel Wickson**, boatman, no residence, was charged with being drunk and creating a breach of the peace in Weston Street on the 14<sup>th</sup> August, and was fined 7s including costs. PC Green proved the case.

**36 2 September 1882**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Edmund King**, a boatman, was charged with working a horse which had several sores on the shoulders, and after the magistrates had viewed the animal, which they said was in a dreadful state, defendant was fined £2 and 13s costs, or 14 days' hard labour. **Robert Chamberlain** of Marsworth, Bucks, was similarly charged with causing a horse to be worked. He was fined £2 and 13s 6d costs. **John Finney**, the boatman in charge of the same, was fined 10s and 13s 6d costs for working the animal whilst in the above state.

**37 4 November 1882**

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COURT

T B WELLS v **CHARLES COOKSEY** This was an action brought by the plaintiff, an ironmonger and oil merchant of Sheep Street, Northampton, who sued defendant, boatman of Watford, and engaged on the canal from London to Northampton, for £7 9s 2s breach of contract. Mr Andrew appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr A Jeffery for the defendant. The learned gentleman representing the plaintiff stated that the defendant agreed with the plaintiff to carry for him from

Palmer's Wharf, Bethnal Green, London, 110 gallons of oil, to be delivered at Northampton on the 28<sup>th</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup> of August. Plaintiff, at his request, forwarded to him the note by which he could obtain the oil from the wharf, and although it was important he should receive the oil at the time mentioned, no oil came. Consequently he had to employ Messrs Hurst and Co, the usual carriers on the canal, to carry the oil, and their charge exceeded that of the defendant by £3 17s 4d. Plaintiff's damages included this item, and he also claimed £1 10s 8d for wharfage, 10s 8d loss on the sale of the oil, and 11s, the difference in the carriage on six barrels of oil. Plaintiff was called, and bore out his advocate's statement and, in reply to Mr Jeffery, who cross-examined, denied that the defendant said that if the oil was lying in the river he would not remove it. He also said the defendant was not the employee of another man, but worked for himself, his name being on the boat he used. He also denied that the bargain was made between them on the Sunday, or that any prices were then mentioned. A witness named Johnson stated that, while standing in the plaintiff's shop, he heard defendant undertake to effect the removal of the oil by the 28<sup>th</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup> August. Mr Jeffery said his defence to the action was a denial of the contract. Defendant was not his own master and, although he might use his own boat, he was under a contract to work for another person. That was the practice with such boats on the canal, as with coal waggons which were simply hired, although bearing the name of those in charge of them. Defendant declined to enter into any contract with the plaintiff. His time was not his own, but the property of the people who employed him, and he said he had no power to remove the oil from Bethnal Green. The learned gentleman added that the plaintiff had no real cause to complain, as he got his oil removed at the price charged by the ordinary carriers, and he said plaintiff, in his course of conduct, had endeavoured to do the defendant's master a gross injustice, and the trade an injury. Mr Andrew said Mr Jeffery had no right to make such an assertion, as it was a free country, and each could make their own bargains. The defendant was called, but he admitted that he had contracted to remove the oil, though he had specified no particular time. His Honour gave a verdict for the plaintiff for the full amount claimed.

### **38**      **6 January 1883**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JANUARY 2

FALSE PRETENCES    **Emma Millard**, boat woman, was charged with having, by false pretences, obtained a sovereign from Samuel Mason at Braunston on the 6<sup>th</sup> October last. Henry Mason said he lived with his father at the Nelson Inn, Braunston Locks. In the early part of October last, the defendant who, with her husband, with a passing boat went into his father's house with a letter (produced) which, under the signature of **James Ewers**, asked his father to advance to her or her husband the sum of £1, on behalf of the writer. He handed her a sovereign, relying on the letter as being correct. He asked her no questions. **Henry Elliott**, toll clerk at Braunston Canal Office, said the defendant asked him to write a letter for her, which he did, signing it as she directed. He signed the name she told him, and did not know that he was doing wrong. The letter produced was the one he wrote. It was in the autumn, about seven o'clock at night. She said, "I'll give you twopence another time". She had not done so. James Ewers, boatman and boat owner, said he lived on his boat. He knew defendant very well. She had never worked for him, nor he for her. He did not owe her any money. He had never authorised her to receive any money for him. He had seen the defendant twice since the 6<sup>th</sup> October, but she had never told him that she had drawn the money. He first heard of it from Mr Mason about three weeks ago. Committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions.

### **39**      **20 January 1883**

NORTON    Mr Terry, county coroner, held an inquest at the New Inn on Monday on the body of **Martha Monk**, daughter of **Henry Monk**, boatman of Stockton, aged four months. The mother stated that her husband and herself, with deceased and two other children, were on their way by canal from Stockton to London, the boat being laden with lime. On Saturday they stopped at Norton Locks for the night, and she retired to rest about eleven o'clock, the child lying at her side. About a quarter to four in the morning witness woke, and found the child lying on her arm, dead. Mr A Cox, surgeon, Long Buckby, was called in, and on examining the deceased came to the

opinion that it had died through being overlaid. A verdict to this effect was returned, the jury adding that the accident which led to death arose from the small space available for sleeping accommodation in the cabin.

**40 3 February 1883**

**SUDDEN DEATH OF A NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BOATMAN** An inquest was held at Moira, Leicestershire, on Monday by Mr Deane, coroner, as to the death of **John Bayliss**, aged 62, boatman living at Braunston. Deceased and his wife arrived at Moira Colliery with their boat, and the deceased complained of the cold, although he was in his usual good health. After supper he went to bed in the cabin, but next morning at four o'clock, his wife found him cold and dead. He was always, she said, a sober, steady, good husband. Mr G Moore, surgeon, said he had examined the body, and found nothing suspicious or unusual, and he thought that death had probably resulted from heart disease. A verdict of "Death from natural causes" was returned.

**41 3 February 1883**

**NORTON** An inquest was held at the New Inn by the county coroner (W Terry Esq) on Monday, touching the death of **Lucy Morris**, aged nearly two years, the daughter of **William Morris** of Braunston, boatman. The father said he was a boatman on the Grand Junction Canal. On Sunday he was going from Northampton to West Bromwich with a load of pig iron. In the boat were himself, his wife and deceased. When at the fourth Buckby lock, he got out to fill the lock, which would take him nine or ten minutes. He left deceased playing at the far end of the cabin, and when he returned there after starting the boat, he found she was not there. He at once stopped the boat and got assistance. After two hours dragging, the body was got out. It was possible for deceased to get out of the cabin on to the hatchway. Mr R Tew, a jurymen, deposed to finding the body in the hole below the bridge. He had known the father and mother for many years, and they were very respectable and steady people. A verdict of "Death from drowning" was returned.

**42 24 February 1883**

**BERKHAMSTEAD PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY** **Charles Court**, a boatman, was fined, with costs, £1 1s for cruelty to a horse at Northchurch on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

**43 3 March 1883**

**TOWCESTER PETTY SESSIONS**

**CRUELTY TO A CANAL HORSE** **William Hodgetts**, a boatman, was summoned for working a horse in an unfit state at Stoke Bruerne on February 10<sup>th</sup>. The prosecution was promoted by Inspector Rowe of Northampton, officer of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. PC Darby stated that, being on duty at Stoke Bruerne near to the canal, he saw the defendant working a horse on the towing-path. The animal was pulling a boat laden with corn, but was in a poor condition and was unable to put its fore foot to the ground for the purposes of pulling. Witness stopped the horse and had it put in the stable, and as soon as it got in, the animal fell down. Superintendent Norman deposed to going with Mr Davis, veterinary surgeon, Towcester, to Stoke Bruerne, and to there seeing the defendant, who was present when Mr Davis made an examination of the horse in question. At that time it was standing on three legs, and it was with difficulty that the animal managed to stand at all. There was a large gathering just above one of the knees, the result of an affection of long standing, and defendant was told by the veterinary surgeon that the horse was unfit for work. Hodgetts had since sold the animal to James Woodward of Stoke Bruerne. Inspector Rowe stated that as late as the 22<sup>nd</sup> February the horse was still in a lame condition. The society which he represented would, however, be willing to accept a nominal fine, as the costs were heavy, and there was no desire to press the information. Defendant told the Bench that he had had the horse only a week, and as soon as the constable called his attention to the state of the case, the work has ceased. Hodgetts added that he belonged to Worcester, and that he had of late had very "bad luck". The Bench inflicted a fine of 1s 6d with £1 3s 6d costs ; in default 14

days' imprisonment.

**44 24 March 1883**

PETERBOROUGH

FOUND DROWNED IN THE NENE On Sunday morning the dead body of a boatman named **Henry Allen** was found upright in the river between two lighters. Deceased left the Boat Inn shortly after ten o'clock on Saturday night, and was not seen again alive. It is thought that he must have slipped and fallen between the lighters when stepping from one to the other. An inquest was held on Monday on the body, when a verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

**45 31 March 1883**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MARCH 28

NEGLECTING TO SUPPORT PARENTS **James Sanders**, boatman, was charged with neglecting to contribute towards the maintenance of his parents, **William and Sarah Sanders**, at Braunston. The defendant for some time paid 1s 6d a week, and two brothers contributed – one 1s 6d and the other 1s a week. The other brothers kept on, but the defendant had lately neglected to pay. Ordered to pay 1s 6d per week and 18s 6d costs. Defendant paid 4s on account.

**46 14 April 1883**

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **Thomas Jordan**, boatman, no residence, was charged with being drunk and incapable in Bridge Street on the 12<sup>th</sup> instant. Prisoner admitted the offence, and was fined 7s including costs, or seven days in default.

**47 5 May 1883**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MAY 2

LEAVING SERVICE **George Wood**, boatman, was summoned under the Employers' and Workmen's Act for leaving his work on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April without giving notice, for which £2 was claimed as damages by William Boswell of Braunston. Complainant stated that he hired the defendant about twelve months since to take charge of a boat, and paid him a certain amount per ton. Defendant continued in his service up to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, and on that day he settled up with him. Defendant promised to start with an empty boat on the Monday following for Blisworth to fetch a load of wall stones, but on Friday morning he took back 10s, which he had received in advance, with the key of the boat, and told witness that he would not go out with the boat again. In reply to the Bench, witness said he made a distinct arrangement with the defendant to start with the boat at five o'clock ; he had lost more than £2 owing to the boat lying still for a week. The defendant alleged that the boat was unfit for use ; that it leaked all over, and his brother, who had been with the previous voyage, refused to go out any more in consequence of the leakage. He had complained to Mr Boswell on several occasions, but did not on the 31<sup>st</sup>. The Bench suggested an arrangement, as there was not sufficient evidence to enable them to come to a decision, and eventually the summons was withdrawn.

**48 9 June 1883**

BANBURY

INQUEST Mr C D Faulkner, county coroner, held an inquest at the Temperance Hall on Saturday morning, touching the death of **John Windsor**, infant son of a boatman from Oldbury. The child was with its parents on the 31<sup>st</sup> ult in a boat halting near the Castle Wharf, and the next morning, when the mother woke about two o'clock, she found the infant dead in her arms. Dr Hudson was of opinion that death was caused by convulsions, and the jury returned a verdict accordingly.

**49 16 June 1883**

ROTHERSTHORPE

DROWNED An inquest was held at the Chequers' Inn on Wednesday before Mr W Terry, on the

body of **Mary Palmer**, eleven years of age, the daughter of a boatman belonging to Foleshill, near Coventry. Deceased, when near the lock in the parish of Wootton, accidentally fell into the water. Before the body could be got out, life was extinct. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**50 23 June 1883**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Thomas Lapworth**, boatman, Tusses Bridge near Coventry, was charged with working a donkey in an unfit state at Brownsover. Fined £1 and costs 14s 6d.

**51 30 June 1883**

BRAUNSTON

DROWNED Mr W Terry, county coroner, held an inquest on Tuesday at the Castle Inn, on the body of **Thomas Roberts** aged 14 years, son of **Samuel Roberts**, boatman of Uckleston, near Coalville, Leicester. Deceased was engaged in a boat belonging to his uncle, **Thomas Lapworth** of Tusses Bridge near Coventry. On Monday, while the boat was proceeding along the Oxford Canal in the parish of Flecknoe, Warwickshire, deceased, who was steering, fell into the water. The boatman was unable to rescue him, and the dead body was shortly afterwards found. It was conveyed to Braunston, and examined by Mr C Bennett, surgeon. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

**52 30 June 1883**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JUNE 22 **John Millard**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with assaulting John Hanson on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June. Complainant said he lived at Eastcote, but was at Braunston on Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup>, when he saw the defendant at the top locks. He was on the towing-path, and defendant was on the boat of which he is captain. Another person invited the defendant to go ashore, and then asked him if he had said that the complainant had brought some poison from Warwick, and that Julia Edwards had poisoned his (defendant's) ducks with it. Defendant denied that he had done so, and upon defendant (*sic*) contradicting him he struck complainant and knocked him down, and struck him while down. Mary and Julia Edwards, mother and daughter, corroborated the complainant. The defendant admitted he struck the complainant, who was his nephew, not because he contradicted him, but because he set it about that the defendant owed him £2. The Bench said it was a serious assault, but as the defendant had a good character, he was fined only 10s and costs 8s 6d.

**53 21 July 1883**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Richard Shakelston**, Stoke-upon-Trent, boatman, was charged with cruelty to a horse at Hillmorton on July 10<sup>th</sup>. He pleaded guilty. Fined £2.

**54 11 August 1883**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 8

FALSE PRETENCES **William Gould**, boatman, Stoke-on-Trent, was charged with obtaining 6s by false pretences from William Nurser, Braunston, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July. Prosecutor said the prisoner went to him on Thursday the 26<sup>th</sup> of July and said he had, when passing Buckby Wharf, received a letter from Mr Williams directing him to ask prosecutor to help him to Etruria Station, as the prisoner's wife was dead. Prisoner was in the employ of Mr Williams, whom prosecutor knew. He asked the prisoner to show him the letter. Prisoner said he would fetch the letter from the boat. In about a quarter of an hour he returned with the letter produced. Prosecutor said, "This is not all the letter ; I think you have torn some of it off". Prisoner said it was as it came to him. Prosecutor, believing the statement, lent the prisoner 6s. **Lewis Guildford**, a boat lad, Weedlock, Cheshire, said he was at Braunston in the prisoner's boat. The prisoner was captain. Between eleven and twelve the prisoner, who had been away, came on the boat and told witness he must write him a paper. He said his wife was dead, and he told witness what to write. Witness wrote the letter

produced. Prisoner then told witness not to say anything about it. He then left the boat, taking the letter with him. **Edward Williams**, canal carrier, Etruria, near Stoke-on-Trent, said he had known the prisoner for some years, and had employed him about fifteen months. He knew Mr Nurser, and on one occasion requested him to advance £2 to the prisoner. He then wrote to Mr Nurser by post. It was early in July last. He had not since authorised him to make any advance. He did not send the prisoner word that his wife was dead. She was alive, and witness saw her two days ago. Witness gave the prisoner into custody. PC Sorrell produced a note that was handed to him by Mr Nurser on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The prisoner, who had nothing to say, was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions.

**55 18 August 1883**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 15 **Matthew Evitts**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with neglecting the education of his son, **John**. Mr Birch said the boy was ten and had not passed any standard. He had attended seven times out of 70 during the last seven weeks. The defendant had been warned several times. Fined 5s, including costs.

**56 25 August 1883**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

THEFT OF BOOTS BY BOATMEN **James Archer**, boatman of Northampton, was charged with stealing a pair of shoes, value 4s, in the parish of Hardingstone between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of July ; and **Thomas Webster**, also a boatman of Northampton, was charged with receiving the same. Mr A J Jeffery defended. The prisoners were employed by the prosecutor, who missed a pair of shoes on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July last, which he last saw safe on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of that month. He saw the prisoner Webster wearing them, and gave information to the police. Webster, when apprehended, inculpated Archer, who admitted taking the boots, saying that he put them on the bank and Webster took them away. Prisoners were sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour.

**57 6 October 1883**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 3 **John Swales alias James Smith**, boatman, Burslem, was charged with insulting Sarah Ann Loomes, a girl aged 11 years, at Kilsby. The complainant said she was on the road between Watford and Kilsby on the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> September picking blackberries, when the prisoner came up and speaking of blackberries, looked over a gate and said there were plenty inside. Witness got over the gate and got some, and the prisoner also went in and got some. He then caught hold of her and committed the offence with which he was now charged. She cried, "Murder", and the prisoner then walked away very fast to Kilsby. Alice Prestidge, Sarah Loomes and Thomas Sharp gave evidence connecting the prisoner with the offence, and Superintendent Barwell, who took him into custody, stated that he was a returned convict on ticket of leave, liberated from Pentonville on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, six days before the committal of the present offence. Prisoner denied that he had committed the offence with which he was charged. The Bench sentenced him to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. The prisoner was also charged with a breach of his licence, by failing to report himself to the police, and neglecting to produce his licence when called upon to do so, and the Bench ordered a certificate of his conviction on the former charge to be forwarded to the Home Office, upon which his licence might be withdrawn, and he himself recommitted to prison to complete his term of imprisonment, which had not fully expired on his release.

**58 20 October 1883**

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

FALSE PRETENCES AT BRAUNSTON **William Gould** (42), boatman, pleaded guilty to obtaining 6s by false pretences from William Nurser at Braunston on July 26<sup>th</sup>. Prisoner, whose master stated that he pilfered the goods on the boat, represented to Mr Nurser that his wife was dead, and by that means obtained the money. Sentenced to six calendar months' hard labour.

**59 27 October 1883**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, OCTOBER 24 **Thomas Webb**, boatman of no fixed residence, was charged with having assaulted **George Henry Tilley** at Whilton Locks. The complainant is lock-keeper, and has orders to detain single boats for two hours for a second to go through the lock at the same time, and to thus save a waste of water. The defendant, with a single boat, refused to wait, and attempted to open the gates, and when resisted by the complainant threatened him and threw him down. William Plester said he saw the defendant throw the complainant down. The defendant said the complainant took the law into his own hands. He called a witness, who said she did not see the defendant throw the complainant down. She said however that she did not see much of the altercation. Fined 2s 6d and costs 15s, or 14 days.

**60 3 November 1883**

WATFORD Mr W Terry (county coroner) held an inquest on Wednesday at the Stag's Head on the body of William Coleman, a labourer 70 years of age, who was found drowned in the canal on Tuesday morning. **John Botterill**, lock-keeper at Watford Locks on the Grand Union Canal, deposed to finding the body (after having received information from a boatman) near to the second bridge in the parish of Watford. Around the shoulders was tied a piece of wood about ten feet long. Charles Seaton said he saw deceased wandering along the canal for some time about six o'clock on Monday night. Sarah Coleman, wife of deceased, said he left home about nine o'clock on the morning of Monday, and he did not then say where he was going. He had been very low and out of spirits for several days. That morning, a man came and accused him of taking some straw. Deceased admitted he had used a little for making bands, and the man said, "I will make you pay for it". He had previously been depressed. George Wood (a juryman) saw deceased about half past four on Monday evening at the Stag's Head, and he seemed very depressed. Mr A Cox, surgeon, certified that the cause of death was drowning. Deceased had a son who shot himself about 12 or 14 years ago. A verdict of "Suicide during temporary insanity" was returned.

**61 3 November 1883**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

ALLEGED THEFT OF COAL **John Thompson**, boatman, Lower Heyford, was charged with stealing coal from a boat at Lower Heyford on the 9<sup>th</sup> instant. Mr Roche, Daventry, defended. Mr G Savage, farmer of Stoke Bruerne, said he was the owner of several canal boats, and he engaged prisoner to convey coal to and from his wharfs. He allowed prisoner a certain quantity of coal for cabin consumption ; he had no authority to dispose of coal off the boat. PC Hands said that on the day named he saw the prisoner throw some coal from the boat over a hedge into a field. He then went into the field and, loading a barrow with the coal, took it to his mother's house. Witness, having suspicions, then went up to him and asked him where he got the coal from, and who it belonged to. He said, in reply, that it was what his masters allowed him to do what he liked with, and he was going to give his mother it. Both Mr Savage and the manager of the coal collieries, where he was in the habit of attending, allowed him a bag of coal, and if he knew witness was going to make a bother about it, he should have told him before. Mt Roche produced a letter from the manager of the colliery showing that such was the case and, with the consent of the prosecutor, the case was withdrawn.

**62 3 November 1883**

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

DESERTING HIS WIFE AND CHILD **William Jewell**, boatman, no residence, was charged with deserting his wife and child on the 25<sup>th</sup> September, whereby they became chargeable to the Northampton Poor Law Union. Mr Abell (Master of the Workhouse) proved that the prisoner's wife and child, being destitute through the desertion of the prisoner, became inmates of the Workhouse on September 25<sup>th</sup> and had remained so ever since, the cost of their maintenance to the ratepayers being £4 7s. A warrant was issued for the prisoner's apprehension, and he was arrested at Aylesbury

by Detective-inspector Rogers, when he said he had left home to seek employment. He sent his wife money but, hearing she had contracted drinking habits, he ceased doing so. Mr Abell, recalled, said the prisoner left his wife some time before she became chargeable. He had sent her £2, and the woman had to sell her furniture to support herself and child, and when that failed she had to go into the Workhouse. Prisoner said he left his wife with £2 when he first went away, and while he was in work he continued to send her something. Prisoner was sentenced to six weeks' hard labour.

**63 10 November 1883**

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **William Wood**, boatman, no residence, was charged with being found in the house of Herbert Smedley, Bridge Street, for a supposed unlawful purpose, on the 8<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr A J Jeffery prosecuted. The prisoner was found by the servant in the coal cellar when she came down in the morning. Prisoner said he went in the house for the purpose of searching for a man who he heard had entered. Mr Smedley said he had no wish to press the case, and the Bench, taking a lenient view of the case, discharged the prisoner.

**64 17 November 1883**

RUGBY

ALLEGED THEFT OF A HORSE At the Police Court on Monday, **David Allen**, boatman, Kettlebrooke, Tamworth, and William E Draper alias "Dipper", labourer, Birmingham, were charged with stealing a black cob, the property of Mr George Taylor, publican, Hillmorton, on the 8<sup>th</sup> inst. The animal was missed from a field, and it was alleged that the prisoners were seen driving it towards Coventry. They were arrested on suspicion at Nuneaton ; but they told a plausible story, and were allowed to depart. Subsequently Allen was arrested at Kettlebrooke and Draper in Summer Lane, Birmingham ; but all efforts to trace the horse failed. They were remanded.

**65 1 December 1883**

Most of us must have been struck with the dull life of canal boat people and the entire absence of any kind of amusement among a class which spend long and only partly occupied hours on the boat. Our old friend at Welton (George Smith of Coalville) has been writing on this aspect of his favourite subject, and remarks that during many years travelling in the Midland districts, he has only once come across a boatman playing a musical instrument, and that was a few weeks since, when he saw one whiling his time away by trying to draw music from a concertina as the boat glided along the canal by Watford Park. These and other facts which he mentions ought, as Mr Smith thinks, to show the great amount of civilising work yet to be accomplished among that class.

**66 15 December 1883**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY John Kilworth, secretary of the Hillmorton Friendly Society, was charged by John Newitt with paying £5 on May 14<sup>th</sup> to the widow of **Thomas Barnwell**, boatman, Hillmorton, on behalf of the Hillmorton Friendly Society, of which the deceased was a member, before he had received a certificate of death from the said John Newitt, contrary to the above Act. The Hillmorton Society was established in 1813, and upon referring to the Act it was found that the rules of societies established before the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1850 were not affected by it. Case dismissed.

**67 2 February 1884**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY **James Sanders**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with disobeying a justice's order made 12<sup>th</sup> April 1883, to pay 1s 6d a week towards the support of his mother. Defendant was not present. John Birch, relieving officer, said he had received a letter from him saying he did not intend to appear, as he was going with his boat to West Bromwich. On the 28<sup>th</sup> March 1883, witness obtained an order against him for 1s 6d a week towards the support of his mother. For some months, defendant complied with the order. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of December there was £1 13s owing. Witness had sent letters to him, and they were returned

as “No address”. Defendant was captain of a canal boat, and in constant work. Yesterday morning he had a letter from him stating that his employers would pay. Defendant had done the same thing before, and then left his place. Ordered to pay £1 13s and costs 9s 6d. A warrant for his apprehension to issue, and be stayed if the money is paid.

**68 1 March 1884**

**LOWER HEYFORD**

**DROWNING CASE** Mr Terry, coroner, held an inquest at the Bricklayers' Arms on Friday February 22<sup>nd</sup>, on the body of Thomas Russell, blacksmith, about 55 years of age, who was found drowned in the Grand Junction Canal, Lower Heyford, that morning. **James Bucknell**, boatman, Braunston, working at the iron furnaces, deposed that about quarter past two a m he got out his boat and saw a man on the path about 30 yards away. He had no coat on, and was standing still. Could not say if deceased was the person. No one else was on the path at the time. James Baker, landlord of the Bricklayers' Arms, deposed that at half past seven that morning a boatman called out that there was a man in the “cut”. Witness went to the water and saw a body, which was that of deceased. Witness and a young man got it out. George Newton of Stowe recognised him, and witness afterwards did so also. His wife lived with him, but was just now nursing her daughter at Bozeat. Witness had known Russell (who had been working for Mr March at Heyford and Weedon, but was now out of work, he was told) for a long time. Henry Field of Stowe said deceased was in his house on the previous night, and had two pints of beer. He seemed cheerful and all right. He said he expected his wife back on Saturday. PC Joseph Hinde, stationed at Bugbrooke, also spoke to seeing the body, and added that he found in deceased's house an envelope addressed “Mrs T Russell”, and containing a letter dated February 10<sup>th</sup>, asking her mother to go over to Bozeat. There was some mention of a half sovereign in this. Mrs Tomalin, a neighbour, had told witness that she saw deceased fall down in his yard a few days since, and he afterwards said he hurt his arm very badly. Mr Walker, surgeon, Bugbrooke, who examined the body, expressed the opinion that it had not been in the water many hours. The jury returned a verdict of “Found drowned”.

**69 10 May 1884**

**BANBURY BOROUGH POLICE, MONDAY** An old woman named Anne Maria McCluse, of no fixed abode, was charged with picking pockets in the Market Place on Tuesday afternoon, and stealing a purse containing £2 15s, the property of **Edward Grantham**, boatman. Prisoner was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions.

**70 31 May 1884**

**SAD DROWNING CASE** On Wednesday morning, a boatman named **James Bryan**, aged 23, was accidentally drowned while winding up the sluices at the “Stanch” locks. It appeared he was in the employ of **James Pepper** of Boxmoor, near London, and was on the way with a long boat to Higham, to fetch a cargo of tar. His wife was in the cabin when the accident occurred, and although she did not actually see it, there is every reason to believe that as he was winding one of the sluices up, the winch slipped off, and he fell in and was drowned. The accident happened at half past seven in the morning, and the body was not recovered till half past ten when, under the direction of PS Andrews, it was conveyed in his own boat to the Crown and Anchor Inn to await an inquest. The poor fellow had only been recently married, and for several hours his wife was inconsolable.

**71 14 June 1884**

**SCALDED TO DEATH** An inquest before C C Becke Esq, borough coroner, was held at the Infirmary on Saturday afternoon, touching the death of **Thomas Robinson**, three years of age, whose death occurred that morning from the effects of a scald on the previous Sunday. **Mary Gee**, wife of **Thomas Gee**, boatman, said the deceased was her nephew and the son of **Charles Robinson**, boatman, Wednesbury. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, as witness was cooking dinner, her husband, who had been amusing the child on the boat, was carrying deceased through the hatchways, when a

whip the latter was carrying became entangled with a bowl of boiling water, throwing the contents over him. The accident happened near Leamington. Witness had medical advice and did the best she could for deceased, and on arriving at Northampton brought him to the Infirmary. She would receive no money through the child's death, and to the best of her belief its life was not insured. Mr Oswald Lane, house surgeon, said deceased was admitted to the Infirmary the previous day, suffering from old scalds, and died early that morning. The wounds, although they had the appearance of not having been properly dressed by a surgeon, had evidently not been neglected. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**72 28 June 1884**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JUNE 25 **William Busby**, boatman, Long Buckby, was charged with assaulting George Henry Tilley at Whilton on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May. The complainant asked the Bench to allow him to withdraw the charge. Request granted on payment of costs, 5s.

**73 30 August 1884**

DAVENTRY DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 27 **John Millard**, boatman, Braunston, and Alfred Stanton, labourer, Byfield, were each fined 5s for the irregular attendance at school of their children.

**74 6 September 1884**

DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

ALLEGED CRUELTY TO A HORSE **George Simpson** jun, boatman, Foleshill, near Coventry, was charged with working a horse in an unfit state at Bugbrook on August 6<sup>th</sup>; and **George Simpson** sen was charged with causing the same to be worked. Defendants are father and son. PC Hinds said that the horse was drawing two boats, and as it appeared very weak, he stopped it, and on examination found a raw wound on the off side of the shoulder under the collar. The animal was also sweating. Witness saw the younger defendant, who admitted the animal was suffering, but said that they were obliged to work it in consequence of the illness of another. On his remonstrance, however, the horse was not further worked, and defendant said that the collar was eased when the journey was commenced. The elder defendant, who owned the animal, was not present. The magistrates thought the defendants had acted very well, and on payment of costs, 9s 6d each, the case would be disposed of.

**75 13 September 1884**

STONY STRATFORD PETTY SESSIONS, SEPTEMBER 5 **William Willins**, boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing a pair of driving reins, the property of William Adams, Locomotive Inn of Old Wolverton, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August last. Fined 20s, or one month in default.

**76 25 October 1884**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, OCTOBER 22 **John Millard**, boatman, Braunston, was charged on two separate summonses with neglecting the education of his daughters, Sarah Ann and Emma. Charge withdrawn.

**77 10 January 1885**

BANBURY COUNTY POLICE, THURSDAY JANUARY 8 **John Arnold**, boatman, Dutton Courtney, was charged with trespassing on land in search of game, in the occupation of William Cherry, at Copredy on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Defendant pleaded guilty, and was fined £1 and 10s costs.

**78 24 January 1885**

NORTON Mr W Terry (county coroner) held an inquest at the New Inn on Tuesday, on the body of **Elizabeth Smith**, aged 39, wife of **Thomas Smith**, a Braunston boatman, who was drowned in the canal on Monday. On the evening of that day she went to the New Inn, where he husband and other

boatmen were staying. She remained till closing time, but there was no quarrelling, and the parties seemed on the most friendly terms. At ten o'clock they left, the deceased, who had only had two pennyworth of whisky, going out first. To get to the boat she would have to cross the bridge over the canal, go up the towing-path the other side, and get over one boat, which was moored alongside her husband's, close to the bank. Her husband followed directly afterwards, but when he got to the boat his wife was not to be found. They were close to the locks, and one of them, situated between the public house and the boats, was emptied, but the body was not there, and it was subsequently found in the canal a short distance below the boats. It is conjectured that in getting into the boat she slipped into the water, and was washed lower down by the current. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

#### **79 24 January 1885**

##### **BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS**

**NEGLECTING TO SUPPORT CHILDREN** **Henry Johnson**, boatman, 3 Court, Bridge Street, was summoned by the Chief Constable for neglecting to pay £2 3s arrears on a magistrates' order to contribute weekly to the support of his daughter, an inmate of the Girls' Reformatory. The order was for 1s a week, and Mr Keenan said they had had considerable trouble in getting any payments. He consented to pay 1s per week on the original order, and 6d a week on the arrears.

#### **80 14 February 1885**

**DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, FEBRUARY 11** **William Stango**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with stealing a ham, two loaves and a bag, of the value of 18s, the property of Thomas Thompson, baker, Willoughby, Warwickshire. Prosecutor said he was returning from Daventry on Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> instant, and he called at the Ship at Braunston Wharf. He engaged the prisoner to mind the horse and cart. He stayed at the Ship about twenty minutes. When he left, the prisoner was minding the horse. Witness gave the prisoner two glasses of beer and half an ounce of tobacco for his services. He then went to deliver the ham, when he discovered it was gone. He informed the police, and some time after, with PC Sorrill, went to the prisoner's house. The bag containing the ham and loaves (produced), and which he identified, were beside the prisoner. He charged him with stealing them, and the prisoner said, "I did it ; I took them out of the cart". The value was 18s. The prisoner elected the summary jurisdiction of the Court, and pleaded guilty. Committed for six weeks with hard labour.

#### **81 14 February 1885**

**DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY FEBRUARY 9** **William Poultney**, a boatman from Staffordshire, was charged with stealing a quantity of hay, the property of Mr Roberts of Stowe-nine-churches, on the 7<sup>th</sup> inst, and was remanded till Saturday.

#### **82 21 February 1885**

##### **EARL'S BARTON**

**DEATH BY DROWNING** An inquest was held on Tuesday at the Woolpack Inn, Collycroft, near Bedworth, on the body of **Samuel Streeton** of Earl's Barton, who came to his death by drowning on the previous day. **Job Clifton**, boatman, Cotton End, Northampton, said deceased had been in his employ for a fortnight, though he had known him for years. On Sunday afternoon they arrived by boat at Marston Lock. Next morning, witness called him at about five o'clock to prepare for going through the lock, but he did not again see him alive. **George Johnson**, also of Northampton and working in the same boat, said that when deceased was called he went towards the stable, while witness remained to get the boat in position. **George Humphries**, another boatman, deposed to hearing a splash in the water, and to pulling out the body of deceased. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**83 21 February 1885**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

**THEFT OF HAY AT LOWER HEYFORD** **William Pountney**, boatman, Brierley Hill, was charged with stealing a quantity of hay, value 1s 6d, from a rick at Lower Heyford, the property of Edmund Roberts, Stowe-Nine-Churches, on the night of February 6<sup>th</sup>. James Collins, in the employ of the prosecutor, said his master occupies land at Lower Heyford where he had, on February 6<sup>th</sup>, a rick of hay. Witness saw it safe on that morning, but on the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> he found that a quantity was missing. He gave information to PC Hinds. The hay that had been taken was not loose, but was cut from the rick. PC Hinds said that after seeing the rick, and noticing that hay had been cut from a corner, he went to the canal, and in the body of prisoner's boat found a sack of hay covered with a large cloth. In answer to witness, prisoner said he bought the hay from a man – whose name he did not know – at Buckby Locks on the previous Friday, but on being charged with stealing it, he admitted the theft. Subsequently he pointed out the rick to witness. Prisoner, who was in charge of the boat, pleaded guilty and, wishing the case to be settled now, was sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour.

**84 14 March 1885**

**SAD DEATH OF A BOATMAN** Mr W Terry (county coroner) held an inquest on Saturday at the Half Moon Inn, in which evidence was given touching the death of **Thomas Smith**, a bargeman, who died under circumstances reported below. **George Varney** of Water Eaton, Fenny Stratford, said he and the deceased were taking an empty boat from Stoke to Nuneaton. They had to hurry to catch the tug, which comes through the tunnel at five o'clock in the morning. Deceased dragged the boat himself from the top lock to Stoke village. Witness left him there, and went to fetch the horse round and take it over the Blisworth tunnel, and when he got to the end on the Blisworth side he was told that Smith had been found dead in the cabin of the barge. It was about half a mile that he had to drag the boat. He was 62 years of age, and lived at Fenny Stratford. Witness searched the cabin, and found 14s 5d therein, which sum he handed over to Police-constable Scott. Varney had worked with deceased since Christmas, and he had always found him in good health. **Richard Dyke**, driver of the steam tug on the Grand Junction Canal, deposed to starting at about six or seven minutes before five o'clock from Stoke Bruerne, and passed Smith as he was hauling his boat. He asked witness to wait for him. He was in a hurry, and would have to catch the tug at the tunnel. When he came up, he said, "Dick, this has given me quite a "bellowsin"". He did not say more, and seemed quite exhausted. Witness saw him go into the cabin as soon as they got inside the tunnel, although he usually kept outside to help to steer. The tunnel is about one and three quarter miles long, and it took them about half an hour before they reached the mouth. The air was quite clear, as it was their first journey through, and the wind met them all the way. At the end, he called to deceased to steer clear of the head, but he did not respond. Witness then turned his tug round, and unfastened the rope of the barge. On entering the boat's cabin he found Smith inside, with his mouth on his knees, as if sitting. Thinking he was asleep, witness set him up straight, but on striking a match he found he was quite dead, and at once gave notice to the parish constable. Mr Thomas W Pepplewell, MRCS, Blisworth, said he was called at the Half Moon to see deceased, and found no signs of violence. He presented a very livid and congested appearance, and there were evidences of fatty degeneration of the heart. From the evidence given, witness had no doubt that the cause of death was "failing of the heart's action, hastened by congestion of the lungs". The exertion he had used in drawing the boat, and also the coldness and rawness of the air in the tunnel, would contribute materially in the cause of death. A verdict in accordance with the medical evidence was returned.

**85 14 March 1885**

**FOUND DEAD IN A CANAL** On Saturday an inquest was held at the Navigation Inn, Blisworth, by Mr W Terry, on the body of a male child found in the canal at Gayton. PC Scott, stationed at Blisworth, said about 10 a m on Saturday morning, he was informed by Mr Brown, the manager of

the Gayton Brickyard, that an infant child had been drawn out of the canal by Edward Griffin, a young man in his employ, at half past nine, midway between the two bridges on the Grand Junction Canal. Witness went and found the child in a shed on the brickyard premises. It was a male child, and appeared to have been in the water some considerable time. It had on no clothing of any description. The body was too decomposed to enable the constable to discover whether any violence had been used, but there was a slight wound at the bottom of the back. He had not heard of any child in the neighbourhood being missed. Me T W Pollewell, surgeon, deposed to inspecting the body. As far as external appearances went, it did not seem to him that the lungs had been inflated. It was also impossible to say whether deceased was born alive or not, and witness did not think that a *post mortem* examination would lead to any reliable evidence. There were appearances of the child having been sunk into the water by a string rope with a weight, and it had probably been in the water about six weeks. Edward Griffin spoke to finding the infant at about 10 minutes past nine, in the middle of the canal some 200 yards from the works in the direction of Gayton. A boatwoman told him a child was in the water. The jury returned a verdict of "Found dead".

**86 28 March 1885**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

STEALING COAL AT LOWER HEYFORD **William Bromage**, boatman, Lower Heyford, was summoned for stealing a quantity of coal, value 4d, from an outhouse, the property of the Heyford Iron Company, on the 14<sup>th</sup> inst. Joseph Oliver, foreman for the company, said late at night on the 14<sup>th</sup> inst he was on duty in the coal yard, near which some boats were fastened, when he saw defendant go to a heap of coal and carry away a lump. The Chairman said they did not believe it was the first time defendant had taken any coal and, as they were determined to protect such property, he would be imprisoned for 14 days with hard labour.

**87 9 May 1885**

SPECIAL DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY MAY 6

ALLEGED THEFT OF CORN **Joseph Ward**, boatman in the employ of Messrs Price and Son, canal carriers, Brierley Hill, Staffordshire, was charged with stealing two bags of corn, the property of Messrs Westley and Sons, on the 1<sup>st</sup> inst. John Dunkley, publican, Lower Heyford, was also charged with receiving the same, well knowing them to have been stolen. Prisoners were remanded till Saturday.

**88 16 May 1885**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

ALLEGED LARCENY AS A BAILEE **Joseph Ward**, boatman, no fixed residence, was charged with stealing two sacks of wheat, value 30s, at Hardingstone on the 1<sup>st</sup> inst, and John Dunkley, publican, Lower Heyford Furnaces, was charged with receiving the same, knowing it to have been stolen, on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr J Sheldon of Wednesbury appeared for Ward, and Mr C C Becke for Dunkley. Samuel Westley, a partner in the firm of Messrs Westley and Sons, millers of Blisworth and Northampton, deposed that some time ago the firm purchased a quantity of Calcutta wheat. That arrived in London sometime in the month of April, and portions of it were brought to the mill by boat. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, the prisoner and his brother brought a boatload of wheat to the mill. At the request of Mr Sheldon the consignment note of the load was produced, and Mr Sheldon added that he would admit his client took a quantity of wheat. Witness, proceeding, said the wheat referred to was part of the Calcutta wheat before mentioned. He saw the load at the mill, and 169 bags were delivered, the amount named in the invoice. He looked in the boat before it left, and saw no corn in it. He had gone through the whole of the bags received at the mill from the ship, and he believed the two bags produced to be part of the cargo, but they did not form part of the 169 bags mentioned in the invoice. He had missed two bags from the whole cargo. By Mr Sheldon : Bayliss brought the first load, and he had the consignment note. Davis brought the second load, which was two bags short, the man signing for the full quantity when there were two bags short. They never

discovered the missing of the two bags till they heard that some had been sold, and the whole of the consignment of which that should have formed a part had then been ground. The bags were made in India, and the wheat was also foreign, being bought in Calcutta. He could identify the bags by the number, but there might be the same number on other bags. They had a London agent named Sanders, who was their carrier, and was empowered to engage to deliver anything for them. Sanders would be entrusted with the loading of the cargo, and the captain of the boat would be liable to Sanders for any deficiency on the road. It was a fact that Sanders was accustomed to retain a portion of the tuggage or carriage to answer for losses, but he could not say if it was done in this instance. When he said he looked in the boat and saw no corn, he did not look in the cabin, and could not swear that there was nothing in the boat. If he had seen two or three bags, he should have claimed them, if they had the same number, because there were other bags to come. There had been previous deficiencies in Sanders's consignments, and he had had to account for them. In fact, if there was a deficiency, it was the custom for Sanders to account for it. The Bench objecting to these questions, Mr Sheldon resumed his seat, remarking that perhaps they would not do so when they heard his defence. Mr Becke submitted that a great deal of latitude was allowed in cross-examination, but Mr Sheldon did not further question the witness, although he informed the magistrates that his defence would be that the men, knowing they had to account with Sanders and not going to London frequently, finding two bags too much, sold them, intending to settle with Sanders. By Mr Becke : A great deal of Calcutta wheat was sold in this country, and was of different quality altogether to English wheat. They could not have recognised the wheat, because it was in the bags, marked 211. He presumed that with the cargo for his firm came consignments for other firms, and might have been in bags of the same number. By Mr Sheldon : The bags were not counted until the first consignment was ground. **Francis Ward**, brother to the prisoner, said he assisted his brother to bring the consignment of corn from London. When they delivered the corn at the mill, they found there were two more bags than the number in the consignment note, and the two bags were kept in the hay hole. On May 1<sup>st</sup> they arrived at Lower Heyford with the boat, and had still the two bags of corn. They pulled up at Mr John Dunkley's wharf, and witness asked him if he could "do with a bit of wheat". He replied in the affirmative, and agreed to 12s as the price of the two bags. They then went to the public house, and had three quarts of ale (laughter), and Dunkley gave witness 10s 6d. By Mr Sheldon : If there had been two bags short he and his brother would have had to pay Mr Sanders, who retained part of the tuggage to make good losses. He had money in hand on that account now. They intended to keep the money received for the wheat and tell Mr Sanders, who would stop it out of their wages. They had not been to London to see Mr Sanders since. It would have cost them about £1 to send the two bags back to London, and they did not go very often. They had only been once this year, and their return was so very doubtful that they thought they had better sell the corn. Asked by Mr Wake if the idea never suggested itself to him to deliver the two bags at Mr Westley's, witness said, in answer to Mr Sheldon, that he had delivered all his master (Mr Sanders) had ordered him, and did not think it right to leave more. PC Hines, stationed at Bugbrooke, said that on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst he saw Mr Dunkley, and asked him as to the boats that called at his wharf on the previous night. He said that none of Price and Son's boats called, and that he saw no other men in the yard. He then went to Floore Mill, where he saw the two bags of wheat produced, and he asked Mr Addison, the miller, not to use the corn. Robert Addison, miller of Floore, deposed to the receipt of the flour and the visit of the constable. About an hour afterwards the defendant Dunkley arrived, and asked if the wheat was ground. Witness replied in the negative, and he said, "Let it be ; I expect I shall be in a mess about it". By Mr Becke : The wheat was collected in the ordinary course, and he received it about midday. DI Swain deposed to visiting the prisoner's house in connection with this case on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. He remained there until late without seeing Dunkley, and on Sunday came to inquire if any boatmen had left anything at his place. He said, "Yes ; two boatmen left two bags of stuff". Asked if he bought it, he said, "Oh, no, I should not buy anything from boatmen". Witness said, "Well, if you wish to give an account, I will write down what you say", and he then said, after being cautioned, "On the ----- (he could not give the date) two boatmen called at my house and said that they had two bags of stuff to

be kept at our place, and I was to pay them 2s. I had it put in my warehouse. They gave me a paper stating that I was to give them 2s, and I was to have the two bags of stuff. I gave them 6d and three quarts of beer. I do not know their names, and do not know where the stuff came from. I don't know if I should be able to identify the men if I saw them again. One of them I have never seen before. It was three or four o'clock in the afternoon. I sent the stuff to Floore Mill to be ground. I did not ask the men any questions as to where the stuff came from. I was perfectly satisfied. They had but two quarts of beer themselves, and I was to give another quart to a friend. "The friend" was two or three boatmen lying at the iron works. One of the boatmen is called "Curley". He is the man that was convicted of stealing coal. I am positive only two bags were put out at my place. I did not go near the boat. I refuse to show anything I got from the boatmen for the two bags. I do not wish to say what stuff it is. I have not seen the men since". Witness took possession of the two bags at Floore Mill, and on Monday found prisoner Ward and his brother at an iron works at Greet's Green, Staffordshire. He cautioned them both, and the prisoners said, "You have made a mistake ; we are not the men". He afterwards gave a similar account of the transaction with Dunkley as was given by his brother on oath. Prisoners were committed for trial at the next Quarter Sessions for the county, bail being allowed in both cases.

## **89 27 June 1885**

### **BLISWORTH**

**A BOATMAN DROWNED** An inquest was held at Mr F Chester's public house on Wednesday, before Mr Terry, on the body of **Samuel Nutt** (52), a boatman, who was drowned while going through the tunnel on Tuesday. **Hannah Nutt**, living at Foxton Locks, said her husband had been employed by the Midland Carrying Company, and left home on Sunday morning week. Mr G Mawbey, surgeon, Blisworth, saw the body of deceased on Tuesday, and had no doubt the cause of death was drowning. There were some wounds on the right arm, but these were, in witness's opinion, sustained after death. **Henry Allen**, driver of the steam tug at Blisworth Tunnel, said the deceased came to the Stoke end of the tunnel at three o'clock on Tuesday with his boat. Another boat was there also, and witness took them both through the tunnel, and did not hear anything till he stopped his engine at the end, when he heard the man halloing. He went back to where deceased was supposed to have fallen, but could see nothing until just as he was turning the tug the propeller caught the body and brought it to the surface. The deceased appeared to be the same as usual before he entered the tunnel, and witness had never known him to be the worse for liquor. When he was found, his trousers were hanging down by his heels. **William Whitehouse**, a lad on deceased's boat, said he was in the cabin asleep, and was awakened by deceased calling out. Witness then called out to the man in the first boat, and the tug was stopped. Just before witness went into the cabin, he saw deceased sitting on the hatch side with one hand on the tiller. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

## **90 18 July 1885**

### **BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS**

**THEFT OF COAL** **Benjamin Taylor**, boatman, Brierley Hill, and George Jones, labourer, court 5, Bridge Street, were charged with stealing two cwt of coal, value 1s, the property of James Hughes, from a yard in Weston Street. A lad named Chapman said he saw two men, who he believed were the prisoners, taking pieces of coal from a stack and putting it in a boat. It was so dark he could not recognise them, and when they threw a lump of coal at him, he retired. PS Green received information of the last witness, and found the coal in a boat of which Taylor was the captain. Jones admitted to witness that he had been in a boat with a man whose name he did not know on the previous night, but he denied taking any coal, and said Taylor took it. The coal corresponded with what had been taken from the dock, and Mr Hughes had no doubt that it was his. Jones was discharged and, placed in the witness box, said he was in the stern end of the boat when it was pulled up at Mr Hughes's wharf, and he saw no coal put in the boat. He reluctantly admitted telling Green that prisoner put the coal in, and was told that he was giving his evidence very badly. Mr

Hughes said that to the best of his belief the coal belonged to him, and it was evident that a boat had been near to one stack, from which about two cwt had been removed. Prisoner pleaded guilty and, asking that the case might be settled now, was sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour. Mr Hughes asked for lenient treatment, and the Mayor explained that the severity of the sentence was influenced by the position prisoner had as captain of a boat.

### **91 5 September 1885**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, SEPTEMBER 2 **John Stevens**, a boatman, was summoned to answer the charge of being the father of the two illegitimate children of Emma Hollis of Long Buckby. The complainant said she about four years ago went through the ceremony of marriage with the defendant at the registry office, Daventry. At that time she did not know he had a wife alive. She had two children, a girl named Elizabeth born January 31<sup>st</sup> 1882, one named Sarah Caroline, now aged 6 months. Defendant paid the rent of a cottage, and partly supported her and the children. He sometimes allowed her £1 a week and sometimes 10s a week. He was tried and convicted of bigamy at the Assizes at Northampton in April last, and was imprisoned for three months. Complainant was a witness against him at the trial. Defendant admitted he was the father of the children, and he was quite willing to support the children and the mother for he understood he was quite free to live with her now. The Clerk said the defendant could not be tried again for the same offence. He was not free to be married again, and if he lived with the complainant he would live in adultery. The Bench ordered that the defendant pay 2s a week for each child till 15 years old, and the costs, 17s.

### **92 3 October 1885**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNK ON THE HIGHWAY **Job Clifton**, canal boatman, Hardingstone, was summoned for being drunk on the highway at Hardingstone on the 5<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr Baron Matthews appeared on behalf of defendant, who was unable to attend as he was engaged with his work, and the charge was admitted. A fine of 2s 6d with costs was imposed.

### **93 10 October 1885**

DAVENTRY

FATAL FALL IN THE WORKHOUSE HOSPITAL Mr W Tomalin, the deputy coroner, held an inquest at the Workhouse, Daventry, on Wednesday, touching the death of **Sarah Lewis**, wife of a boatman, whose death was caused by rolling from a bed in the infectious diseases hospital, where she had been treated for smallpox for some days. Edward John Statham, one of the relieving officers of the Daventry Union, deposed to giving the deceased an order of submission to the workhouse on the 25<sup>th</sup> September. She being then afflicted with smallpox, she was removed to the fever ward. She was 26 years of age, was the wife of **Henry Lewis**, a boatman, and was removed from a boat at Weedon. She was destitute. Witness took every precaution for her safe removal, and had a medical order. John Ashwood, master of the workhouse, said deceased had been attended since her removal to the workhouse by the last witness, by the nurse (Raine Cross) and the Medical Officer (Mr W H Masson). Yesterday morning he was informed that the woman was dead, and he sent for the doctor. The nurse had told him at a quarter to six o'clock that the deceased appeared to be very ill. Two of her three children also had the smallpox. Mr W H Masson said he had attended the deceased since the 26<sup>th</sup> ult ; she was suffering from smallpox, well developed but not a malignant form, and although very weak she was doing as well as could be expected. Responding to the master's request for his attendance on Tuesday morning he found the deceased lying with her legs and part of the body on the bed, and the head and shoulders and upper part of the body on a chair by the side of the bed. The nurse voluntarily informed him that the woman had rolled off, and by the time she could lift her up she was dead. There were no marks of violence, and the nurse, who was about sixty years of age, had been very attentive. He thought she was competent to take the sole charge of the deceased and the three children. At present the nurse was not in a fit

condition to attend and give evidence. She had only to give the patients food and medicine, and these were properly handed to her from without. In witness's opinion, the cause of death was suffocation caused by allowing the head to get below the other part of the body. The following verdict was returned :- "We find the cause of death was suffocation caused by accident, and the jury are of opinion that the nursing was lamentably insufficient inasmuch as it appears to them utterly impossible that a woman of 60 years of age could for twelve days and nights without intermission properly attend to a woman and three children suffering as these were ; and that this want of proper nursing was not reported by the doctor appears to them exceedingly strange".

**94 17 October 1885**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, OCTOBER 14 **Thomas Jeffery**, boatman, Bugbrooke, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it when it was unfit to work, at Whilton on the 28<sup>th</sup> September. PC Sorrill said he saw the defendant about 2 pm on the day in question. The horse was attached to two empty boats. Witness noticed that the horse flinched and he went to look at it. He found on the off shoulder a raw wound one and a half inches long and one and a quarter inches wide. He told defendant it was not fit to work. Defendant said, "I had better take it home then". Witness took the horse to Mr Dix, a blacksmith, who measured the wound. William Dix, blacksmith, Whilton Locks, said his attention was called to a horse by the last witness. There was a raw wound on the off shoulder. It appeared to have been pinched by the collar. Defendant said, in consequence of having had a horse drowned, he had used that horse which had gone only seven miles, and he was not aware of the wound. He called as a witness John Baines Dawson, veterinary surgeon, Floore, who said the defendant took a horse to him on the 29<sup>th</sup> to examine. He examined the horse, and found it suffering from a cutaneous disease, for some years past. There was a pimple on the shoulder that had been chafed. He covered it with a shilling. It was raw. The horse would not suffer. It was a wound of no magnitude. He thought the wound had been caused within a few hours. The horse was fit to work. Fined 5s and costs 18s.

**95 31 October 1885**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, OCTOBER 28 **David Marlow**, boatman of no fixed residence, was charged with assaulting **George Henry Tilley** at Whilton on the 16<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr Roche for the complainant, a lock-keeper, who said the defendant was improperly pulling up a paddle at the lock, by which the company's water was being wasted. Complainant went to prevent it, and the defendant struck him a violent blow on the face. John Bates corroborated the complainant's statement, which the defendant did not deny, but said he was aggravated to do it. Fined 10s and costs, £1 5s 6d.

**96 14 November 1885**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, NOVEMBER 11 John Webster, shoemaker, Foster's Booth ; James Webster, shoemaker, Astcote ; John Kirton, labourer, Astcote ; and **Thomas Jeffery**, boatman, Pattishall, were charged with trespassing in search of conies on land in the occupation of William Hurley, Stowe-Nine-Churches, on Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup> October. The prosecutor said he saw the four defendants ferreting for rabbits. They were at a hedgerow that divided his farm from the adjoining land. There was a fifth man, whom he did not know. He asked them by whose authority they came there. One of them told him he had better go off while his shoes were good. John Webster threw a stone at witness, but it missed him. There were some rabbit holes there. The defendants ran away at first, but returned, apparently to get the ferret. They did not catch it. It was caught a few days after. Thomas Hurley, son of the prosecutor, said he saw the four defendants on his father's land about half past four on Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup> October. They were ferreting at some rabbit holes. He did not see any ferret there. John Webster threw a stone at his (witness's) father. He was certain Jeffery was there. He did not know Jeffery until that day. William Earl, farmer, Farthingstone, said he was with the prosecutor at the time. He was certain Jeffery was there. He had not seen Jeffery before. Witness saw a stone thrown at the prosecutor. It was a sharp stone. He

was sure Jeffery was there. Witness found a ferret at the place on the 28<sup>th</sup> October. The ferret was at his house. Jeffery said he was not there at all, and the other defendants said he was not. The other three all admitted they were there, but said they were not rabbiting. John Webster said they never lost a ferret. The Bench were willing to allow a week for Jeffery to prove an alibi, but the defendant said he could not do it, as he had no witness but his wife, so the Bench found the defendants all guilty, and fined them each 20s and costs 9s 6d.

**97 16 January 1886**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JANUARY 13

STEALING OIL CAKE **John Major**, boatman, was charged with stealing a quantity of oil cake at Whilton Locks on the 4<sup>th</sup> December, the property of Thomas Henry Reynolds. **John Mellor**, Weedon, said the prisoner was in his employ on the 4<sup>th</sup> December. On that day, witness, with two boats, assisted by the prisoner and a boy, left Weedon and arrived at Whilton Locks about two o'clock. They were detained for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour to allow other boats to go through the locks. Witness saw Major come over the stile as from Mr Reynolds's premises. As he got over the stile he held his pocket up, but witness saw nothing. Major went to the boat which witness steered. From Whilton they went on to Polesworth, where they arrived on the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. Prisoner said to witness, "Governor, our horse has got a fine cough". Witness said, "I think the mistress has put a bit of oil cake in the cupboard here". Prisoner said, "Never fear, old Tommy Reynolds went along the road and I fetched it". Witness asked him how he came to do so. He replied, "I have fetched several lots before this". Witness let the oil cake remain where it was. He brought it up to Weedon, where he showed it to the police, and subsequently he left it at Mr Reynolds's. Thomas Clements, a lad in the employ of the prosecutor, said he was grinding oil cake on the 4<sup>th</sup> December, when the prisoner went to the door and spoke to witness, who left for about three minutes to go for an empty sack, and when he returned the prisoner went away. Witness did not miss any oil cake. There was a large quantity in the granary where he was grinding. Thomas Henry Reynolds produced a sample from his warehouse. It corresponded with the cake produced. The prisoner elected to be tried by the Bench, and pleaded not guilty. He was convicted, but in consequence of the prisoner having been in custody eight days, he was committed for only a fortnight, with hard labour.

**98 20 March 1886**

DAVENTRY BOROUGH POLICE, MARCH 15

DESERTING CHILDREN **Thomas Lewis**, boatman, was charged with leaving his children chargeable to the Daventry Union. Case dismissed.

**99 10 July 1886**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JULY 7 **Thomas Hewins**, boatman, Braunston, with being drunk and disorderly at Ashby St Ledgers on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June, was fined 5s and costs 9s 6d, there being nothing against him before.

**100 14 August 1886**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 11

CRUELTY TO HORSES **Thomas Simpson**, boatman, Foleshill, and **William Deeman** of the same place, were separately summoned for cruelty to a horse. Simpson was the owner, and Deeman was in Simpson's employ. PC Scotney said he was at Braunston Locks about 5.20 a m on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, when he saw Deeman driving a horse with two boats laden with coal. Witness told Deeman to stop, and on looking at the horse he found two wounds on the off shoulder, and one on the near shoulder. Each wound was about the size of a crown piece. Two of them were quite raw, and the other was drier and older. Witness asked Deeman how long they had existed. Deeman replied, "As long as I have worked for him – about a month". Simpson, who was in the boat steering, then came ashore. He admitted knowing of the wounds, and said he washed them the previous night. Witness

told him he must not work the horse in that condition, and it was then put in a field, and on Monday last was not fit for work. The horse was otherwise in fair condition. James Brown, Inspector of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Northampton, said he saw the animal on the 23<sup>rd</sup> at Braunston. He saw three wounds about the size of a five shilling piece. They all suppurated. They were very bad wounds. Superintendent Barwell said the wounds were fully as large as described by the former two witnesses. Simpson admitted the wounds were there, but said he thought they were not so large as described. Deeman said the wounds were about the size of a shilling. Simpson was fined 30s and costs 10s. Against Deeman the charge was withdrawn on payment of costs, 10s 10d.

**Thomas Bate**, boatman, West Bromwich, was charged with cruelty to a horse at Braunston on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Joseph Brown (*sic*) said about 3 p m he saw the defendant with a horse attached to a boat laden with copper. The horse was in fair condition, but very lame on the near fore leg, which was much inflamed. When standing the horse raised the leg and evinced great pain. Ernest Rivett, veterinary surgeon, said he was called to see the defendant's horse. It was very lame on the near fore leg, and was not fit for work. Fined 40s and costs £1 14s 7d, or a month.

**Frederick Warren**, boatman, Blisworth, was charged with cruelty to a horse at Braunston on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July. PC Scotney said about 3.45 he saw the defendant with a horse drawing two boats laden with coal. The horse was wearing a breast collar. Witness stopped the horse and lifted the collar, under which there was a string of wounds. It was like a mass all raw. The defendant did not say how long it had been bad. The defendant said it was bad when he started. He was in the employ of the Gayton Brick and Tile Company, and had been to Bedworth. Fined 50s with costs 12s 7d.

### 101 28 August 1886

#### DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS

DISOBEYING JUSTICE'S ORDER **James Sanders**, boatman of no fixed residence, was charged with habitually disobeying an order made upon him on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 1883, to pay 1s 6d towards the support of his mother, **Sarah Sanders**, Braunston. Mr Birch, relieving officer, said that the defendant having now paid the money, the summons would be withdrawn.

### 102 28 August 1886

#### TOWCESTER PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

A HARD CASE **George Simpson**, boatman, was charged with causing a horse to be worked at Blisworth on the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst, while in an unfit state ; and **Alfred Lenton**, a youth, was charged with working the said horse on the date named. The proceedings were taken at the instance of the RSPCA. Both defendants admitted the offences, but said that they had had an accident and were only trying to get the horse home. They had no intention of inflicting pain. Veterinary evidence as to the unfit state of the animal, which was employed in drawing two boats, was tendered by Mr Marriott of Northampton, and the Bench, expressing the determination to put a stop to the barbarous cruelties inflicted on the animals employed on the canal, fined the employer 10s and £1 4s 7d costs, and the lad 1s and £1 4s 7d costs.

### 103 2 October 1886

RUGBY MAGISTERIAL, MONDAY **John Hennessey** of Polesworth, boatman, drunk at Hillmorton on Monday night, was fined 2s 6d.

### 104 9 October 1886

#### DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 6

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS **William Bryant**, boatman, Napton, was charged with cruelly ill-treating an ass at Braunston on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September. The prosecution was taken up by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Defendant's donkey was drawing a boat laden with stones, and he was seen to beat it cruelly with the butt end of a short whip. The boat contained 29 tons of stones. Fined £1, costs £1 5s 10d, or one month.

ANOTHER CASE OF CRUELTY **Thomas Barnett**, boatman, Stockton, was charged with cruelly working a horse in an unfit state. PC Scotney saw the defendant driving a horse drawing a boat laden with corn. Witness found, on lifting up the collar, a wound as large as a shilling, and another as large as a half crown ; from them blood and matter were flowing. The horse flinched on the wounds being touched. Fined £1 10s and costs 16s 6d.

**105 16 October 1886**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY

ASSAULT **Harry Earl**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with assaulting Elizabeth Louise Maltby of the same place on the 5<sup>th</sup>. It appeared from the evidence that the two parties were not on good terms, and meeting on the occasion in question, some abusive language passed between them, and according to the prosecutrix, the accused struck her and pulled up her clothes. This was denied by the only witness of the occurrence and by the defendant, and the Bench dismissed the case.

**106 16 October 1886**

TOWCESTER COUNTY COURT, MONDAY OCTOBER 11

**JOSEPH PILGRIM**, MOUNTSORREL, BOATMAN v **LUDDINGTON AND SONS**, SILVERSTONE Claim £1 18s 0d for drawing timber. This case came before the registrar, and as no one appeared for the defence, payment of the money in seven days was ordered. At a later period of the day Mr Sheppard applied for a stay of execution in order that he might apply for a new trial, as the defendant was absent from the Court through not knowing the time when his case would be called on. The application was granted.

**107 11 December 1886**

DAVENTRY BOROUGH POLICE, DECEMBER 7

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Philip Mellor**, boatman, Dodford, was charged with cruelly ill-treating a horse at Walton Wharf on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Mr James Brown, inspector to the RSPCA, was the complainant, and having briefly stated the case, he called George Henry Tilley, who said he lived at Whilton Locks and was wharfinger to Mr Reynolds at Whilton Lock. He was at the wharf about half past one on November 10<sup>th</sup>, when he heard a horse going along the towing-path. The defendant beat the horse on the head with a doubled rope, and when under the bridge hole tried to push the horse into the canal. He continued beating the horse for as much as fifty yards, when it fell into the canal. The defendant said he bought the horse in Northampton market, with a good character, but it turned out a regular brute. Fined 10s and costs £1 8s 6d.

**108 25 December 1886**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, DECEMBER 22

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **John Johns**, boatman, Droitwich, was charged with cruelty to a horse by causing it to be worked while in an unfit state, and **Thomas Wilson**, his servant, was charged with cruelty by working the said horse when in an unfit state, on the 20<sup>th</sup> inst at Braunston. PS Scotney said about 7 a m on the 20<sup>th</sup> he, in plain clothes, visited the shop at Braunston Lock, where he waited until ten, and saw defendant Wilson take the horse from Cope's stables in the direction of the Oxford Canal. Witness went across some fields and secreted himself. About eleven, a horse drawing two boats both laden, attended by Johns, came up. Wilson then attached the first mentioned horse to a boat containing 25 tons of whiting and sand. Both horses then moved on, drawing separate boats. Witness saw the horse Wilson was in charge of was very lame, and the off fore leg was bandaged, and on removing the bandage he found the knee very much swollen and blistered. The near hind leg also was swollen, and there were two large wounds on the off shoulder. Ernest Rivett, veterinary surgeon, found the horse in very poor condition and quite unfit for work. In his opinion it would never be fit for work again. Defendant offered no defence. The Chairman said it was a very bad case, and showed great brutality. They must give the defendant Johns three

months, Wilson to be fined 5s and costs 18s 8d.

### **109 5 March 1887**

#### **LEIGHTON BUZZARD**

**MURDEROUS OUTRAGE** On Sunday morning about nine o'clock, a dastardly outrage was perpetrated along the Grand Junction Canal, and at a point near by where Mr Robert Fergus was recently shot at three times by poachers. It appears three men, one of whom was carrying a double barrelled gun, and accompanied by two dogs, were on the towing-path near Old Linslade Church, and near the tunnel on the London and North Western Railway, when a barge containing traffic from Birmingham to London was proceeding up the canal towards Leighton. A boatman named **Smith** was at the helm, and one of the men made some remarks about shooting at a teapot or can on the boat, and before Smith could get into the cabin one of the fellows levelled the gun and deliberately fired at him. The shots entered his cheek, forehead and eye. The men then ran away. Upon arrival at the Linslade wharf, the wounded man was at once attended to by Dr Pratt, and information was given to the police, and from the description given to them, this morning they arrested a man named Cotchin alias Kirby alias Baines, upon suspicion, at the Railway station just as he was going to Bletchley to work on the line. About eleven o'clock this morning, PC Ruffhead (Leighton), Sergeant Pearman and PC White of the Bucks police, succeeded in seizing two guns, which they found at the house occupied by the man now in custody. From what we can learn, the police hope to arrest the other two fellows on suspicion very shortly. The two dogs are missing, and the fellows also, whom the police suspect of being implicated in the matter. The man Cotchin, who is under remand until Monday next, was identified by a man in company with the one who was shot as being the man who fired the gun. The other two men are still at large.

### **110 12 March 1887**

#### **THE SHOOTING OUTRAGE AT LEIGHTON BUZZARD**

**THE PRISONER COMMITTED FOR TRIAL** At the Linslade Police Court on Monday, William Cotchin alias Kisbey Draper, labourer aged 22, was charged before Major Levi with unlawfully wounding **William Smith**, a boatman, while travelling on the Grand Junction Canal at Linslade, by shooting him with a gun loaded with powder and shot on February 27<sup>th</sup> last. The first witness called was William Smith, boatman, who said : I am a boatman on the Grand Junction Canal, and reside at Oldbury. On the 27<sup>th</sup> February last I was in my boat on the canal at Linslade, about 8.20 in the morning. The barge was coming up the canal. We met three fellows, and one of them had a double barrelled gun. I was steering. I had a teapot in my hand, and one of the three men said, "Put the teapot on the chimney, and see if we can knock it off". I said, "You could not hit me, much more the teapot". One man then fired at me. I was struck in three places, forehead, cheek and eye. I gave information to the police. Several shots struck the funnel and the cabin door. By prisoner : I did not hold the teapot up for you to fire at. **John Wright** deposed : I am a boatman and live at Stockton, near Rugby. On the 27<sup>th</sup> February I was steering a boat on the canal, following and near to the boat in which the last witness was. I saw three men on the towing-path, and one of them fired a gun. He aimed it at William Smith. The prisoner was about 40 yards off Smith's boat when he fired. The three men then ran away. I saw the prisoner on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March at Linslade Police Station, and picked him out from several men who were there ; and I have no doubt whatever as to the prisoner being the man who fired the gun. Joshua Spiers deposed : I am a beerhouse keeper, and reside alongside the canal, about half a mile below Hollock's Lock. On the day in question I saw three men pass my house about a quarter past eight in the morning. They were running down the canal side. One of them had a gun. Sergeant Pearman spoke to receiving the information from the man Smith, who he found had received several gun shots in his face. I went to the wharf and saw the boat, and found several shot marks on the side of the boat. I apprehended the prisoner on Monday morning, and charged him, when he made no reply. I searched him at the police station, and found upon him two gun caps and a cardboard wad. At his home in Leighton the same day, I found a quantity of shot, some of which are similar to those found in Smith's forehead and boat ;

also some gun caps and wads similar to those found by me in the prisoner's pockets. On the 1<sup>st</sup> inst, I placed the prisoner with three other men in the guard room here, and John Wright identified him. PC J White, Linslade, spoke to seeing the shot marks in the boat. He also said the prisoner made a statement to him. "On March 1<sup>st</sup>, I was coming along the towing-path, and the boatman was coming up the canal, he was emptying a teapot and shouted out, "Hit this". I said, "I could do it". He replied, "Not you, nor yet hit me". I up with the gun and fired". The prisoner did not wish to ask this witness any questions. PC T Ruffhead, Leighton Buzzard, spoke to accompanying PS Pearman and PC White to prisoner's house, and to finding in a cupboard on the top shelf a double barrelled gun (produced). It looked very dark round the muzzle, and smelt strongly of powder. The nipples and hammer were also very dark, as if it had been recently discharged. Dr Pratt spoke to attending to the wounded man and extracting several shots from his forehead. He said he found three contused wounds on the face, one in the middle of the forehead, one on the right upper eyelid, and one on the right cheek ; the wounds were such as would be caused by shots fired from a gun at a long distance. When the charge was read over to the prisoner, he said he had nothing to say. He was then committed for trial at the Aylesbury Quarter Sessions, bail being refused. The other two men have not as yet been arrested.

### **111 12 March 1887**

#### DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS

KEEPING A DOG WITHOUT A LICENCE **John Seymour**, boatman, Brierley Hill, was charged with keeping a dog at Braunston, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February, without a licence. PC Scotney said he was by the canal side in plain clothes on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February, when he saw a dog, which he found belonged to defendant. He asked the defendant for his licence, when he admitted he had none. Some further evidence was produced to prove that the dog belonged to the defendant, and he was fined 5s and costs 19s 8d.

### **112 19 March 1887**

#### DAVENTRY BOROUGH POLICE, MARCH 11

LEAVING CHILDREN CHARGEABLE **Edward Lewis**, boatman, was charged with leaving his three children – **Elizabeth, Thomas and Edward** – chargeable to the common fund of the Daventry Union. In September 1885, the defendant was working his own boat, when his wife and one or more of the children fell ill of the smallpox. The wife and children were taken to the Daventry Union, where his wife died. John Ashwood, the master, said the children had been chargeable ever since, and the cost of their maintenance amounted to £35. The defendant said the boat he had at the time the sad affliction befell him required repairs, the cost of which he had not been able to pay, and consequently he could not redeem it. He would however take the children away and maintain them if allowed to do so. The Mayor said the case appeared to have been a very hard one, and if the defendant took the children away, he would dismiss the case.

### **113 23 April 1887**

ACCIDENT AT BLISWORTH **William Boyes** of Braunston, a boatman in the employ of Messrs Westley of Blisworth, was on Monday evening working at Blisworth Arms, when he slipped and sustained a compound fracture to the leg. He was taken to Northampton Infirmary where he is going on comfortably.

### **114 7 May 1887**

#### DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MAY 4

STEALING EGGS **Albert Edwards**, Braunston, a child aged eight, the son of a boatman, was charged with stealing two hen's eggs, value 1 1/2d, the property of Henry Luck, carrier of the same place. Job Luck said that from a communication made to him about four o'clock on the afternoon of Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup> April, he went to his brother's hen roost. When he got there, the defendant was just coming out of the hole through which the fowls go in and out. Witness took hold of him by the

collar, and an egg fell out of his bosom. Witness took another egg from him. He asked him what he was going to do with the eggs. Prisoner said he was going to take them to Mrs Luck (prosecutor's wife) ; she had sent him for them. Witness detained him and sent for his brother. Henry Luck said that he was sent for between four and five o'clock on the 26<sup>th</sup> ult. He found the prisoner shut up in a stable. He asked him what he was going to do with the eggs, and he said he was going to take them to his mother. He said he had been and had two before, and said he took them to his mother. He afterwards saw prisoner at PC Scotney's house, and Mrs Edwards was present. The boy then said he got the eggs for a boy named Kendal. His mother said he had never taken any eggs home. The prisoner made several contradictory statements. Mrs Edwards, for her son, elected the summary jurisdiction of the Court, and after refusing to speak for some time, the prisoner pleaded guilty. Prosecutor said he did not wish to press the case against this child, but he wished the injurious practices of boys damaging his fowls put a stop to. The Bench ordered three strokes of a birch rod to be inflicted, and hoped it would be a warning to others as well as to the prisoner.

**115 4 June 1887**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **Louisa Coles**, wife of **Thomas Coles**, canal boatman, was charged by Ann Hambridge with using threats towards her, at Rugby Wharf on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Defendant, on entering the box, said she was a stranger to the job, and they must put her right. (Laughter). Case dismissed.

**116 13 August 1887**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 10

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Alfred Simpson**, boatman, Foleshill, and **William Harban**, his servant, were charged with cruelty to a horse at Braunston on the 10<sup>th</sup> July, by working it when in an unfit state. Harban did not appear, and the charge was heard in his absence. PC Scotney said in consequence of information he received, he watched by the canal side on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July. He saw William Harban driving a horse attached to two boats laden with about 55 tons of coal. He stopped the horse and examined it, when he found on the off shoulder three raw wounds, and on the near side two wounds under the collar, about the size of a shilling. There were a lot of others not raw. Simpson was on one of the boats, and he came ashore and said the horse was his property. He said he was not aware it was so bad, as there was only one wound the day before. Witness detained the horse. He found the wounds had been dressed with black lead. Inspector Lovejoy of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, said he accompanied Superintendent Barwell to a field at Braunston on the 12<sup>th</sup>. He there saw a dark brown gelding, aged and in poor condition. On the off side there were three wounds, two about the size of a shilling, two and a half inches by half an inch. On the near side there were two wounds, one about the size of a shilling, and the other an inch and a half in length. All were suppurating at the time. It must have caused great pain to work a horse in that condition. Defendant admitted there was a little wound on the shoulder, and it was aggravated by a hot day. The Bench thought it a very bad case, and inflicted a fine of £1 14s and costs 10s 6d on Simpson, and dismissed the charge against the servant on payment of 6s costs by Simpson the master.

**117 20 August 1887**

RUGBY SPECIAL PETTY SESSIONS, THURSDAY Emily Gascoigne of Newbold on Avon, widow, and George Tomes, also of Newbold, labourer, who lodged with her, were brought up in custody charged with stealing £3 from the person of **Philip Miller** of Weedon, boatman. Prosecutor stated that about eight o'clock on the evening of the 16<sup>th</sup> inst, he was at Newbold, where he met the female prisoner and went with her to the Crown public house. The male defendant afterwards came in, and they all drunk together. They left together at ten o'clock, and all went to the "lady's" house. Witness slept in the house, and about two o'clock in the morning missed his purse. He taxed the woman with robbing him, but she denied it, and Tomes then came into the room, and he also denied knowledge of the robbery. Witness subsequently went out and gave information to PC Bracebridge.

In reply to the Bench, witness said he was not so far gone that he did not know what he was doing. The prisoners were committed for trial.

**118 27 August 1887**

SAD CASE OF DROWNING The County Coroner, Mr Terry, on Monday conducted an enquiry at the George, Long Buckby, into the circumstances attending the death of a lad named **Thomas Stevens** of Buckby Wharf. **James Stevens**, a boatman and father of the deceased, stated that on Sunday he was coming up the Grand Junction Canal with his unloaded barge, on the way from Stow Hill towards Leicester. About 11 a m, as the boat approached the third lock which was full at the time, witness sent his son, who was on a holiday and pleased to help, forward to open the gates and let out the water. When Stevens sen, who was steering, reached the spot, a man named Essen told him that Tom had slipped in, and a younger brother who was present said that the deceased was pulling at the staple when he feet shot up and he fell back into the river, which was 15 feet deep just there. **William Jones**, canal agent, heard the boy cry, and tried to rescue him with a pole and afterwards with a rake, but could not, and saw him gradually sink. The work in which deceased was engaged at the time of the mishap was usually done by lads, and according to the statement of the father, it was not too hard. The body was recovered by means of a boat. No special appliances except those used on the present occasion were kept at the locks for emergencies. Thomas Essen was called, and said he did the best he could in the matter. Mr Dix, surgeon, said he found life extinct between twelve and one o'clock when called, and was told that everything that could be had been done to restore animation, but in vain. Death was from suffocation by drowning. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

**119 17 September 1887**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 14

BASTARDY ORDER **John Stevens**, boatman, Long Buckby, was charged with being in arrears to the amount of £7 16s. Ellen Hollis, Long Buckby, said that she obtained an order on the defendant in September 1885 for 4s a week for the support of two girls. He had paid her nothing at all under the order. In December last he was sent to gaol for two months for default. The amount accruing since then was £7 16s. The defendant, who had been arrested on a warrant, said he had had three calendar months for bigamy. His wife having disappeared for seven years, he considered himself a free man, and had in consequence married the complainant, but had been imprisoned for it. He was willing to live with the complainant and support the children, or to have the elder one away and leave the younger with her, but this offer she would not accept. She was now living with another man, and under the circumstances he would not pay a farthing. Committed for two months.

**120 12 November 1887**

BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS

NO JURISDICTION **Frederick Wilkins**, boatman, Kingswell Terrace, sued George Hurst and Son, Bridge Street, canal carriers, for £8 16s ; the claim being £4 8s for nine days wages due on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, and £4 8s for wages due in lieu of the usual notice of dismissal. Mr G J Phillips for the plaintiff, and Mr Becke for defendants. Mr Becke stated that his clients had a counter claim of £44, and as this would bring the sum at issue to more than £10, the matter would be beyond the jurisdiction of the Court. This the magistrates upheld, and the case was withdrawn.

**121 26 November 1887**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, NOVEMBER 23

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **William Dawson**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged with cruelty to a horse, by working it when in an unfit state. The defendant did not appear. PC Scotney said he served the summons on the 22<sup>nd</sup> at Braunston. The defendant admitted his guilt, but said that he should not appear to the summons. PC Thomas said he was on duty on the towing-path at Buckby Wharf on the 4<sup>th</sup> inst, with PC Chapman, when he saw a bay mare drawing a boat laden with 26

tons. Noticing that the mare flinched, he stopped it and examined it. He found on the off shoulder three raw wounds, one about the size of half a crown and two about the size of a shilling. On the near shoulder there were two raw wounds about the size of a shilling. The wounds were suppurating, and the collar was soiled with the discharge. PC Chapman corroborated. Fined £2 and costs 11s 6d, or one month.

## 122 24 December 1887

### COUNTY COURT

**FREDERICK WILKINS**, BOATMAN, NORTHAMPTON v MESSRS HURST AND SON, CANAL BOAT CARRIERS Claim £4 8s wages for a journey to London, and £4 8s in lieu of notice. There was a counter claim for £44 6s for damages caused by the sinking of a boat while in charge of plaintiff. Mr G J Phillips (Messrs Pugh and Phillips) for plaintiff, and Mr C C Becke for defendant. Plaintiff said on October 5<sup>th</sup> he started for London with a boat, and on the return journey the boat sank at Stoke Bruerne Locks. Most of the cargo was paraffin oil, and that did not get much damaged. The boat went underneath the “bumper” at the lock, the water being more than ten inches under its usual height. (Mr Becke here produced a wooden model of the locks). The water should have been above the “bumper”, and to its being too low he attributed the accident. He and the man with him had taken all the usual precautions. In most locks there were three “bumpers”, but in this particular one there were only two. When the barge sank he informed **Mr Mercer**, the overseer of that length of canal, and then went to Northampton to tell Mr Hurst. When they reached Stoke Bruerne again, they found the boat had been raised, and some of the goods taken out. Mr Hurst told Mr Mercer that he had him to thank for it, as it was through his servant's neglect. He was paid for that journey, and on October 17<sup>th</sup> he was sent on another with the same boat. His wages should have been £4 8s, but he had never been paid, as Mr Hurst told him he must leave if he could not pay for the injury done to the goods. He was dismissed without notice, though there was supposed to be a journey's notice. In answer to Mr Becke, plaintiff said he had been in the employ of Mr Hurst about seven years. Mr Becke here produced the “road note” given to the captain of every boat, on which it set forth that in the case of loss or damage, whether by negligence or any other cause, the Captain should pay his employers the amount they had paid, or for which they might become liable. If unpaid the amount could be deducted from his wages. In further cross-examination, plaintiff said he did not delay the starting of the boat in London because he was drunk. When he got to the lock, it was too dark for him to see if there was enough water. He was supposed to have two men with him, but one had left on the other journey. Mr Hurst said nothing about enquiring into the matter before he started again for London. There was also a complaint that he had not accounted for some money, but he told Mr Hurst what he had taken, as it could be stopped out of his wages. **Samuel Mumford**, a man who was with the plaintiff at the time the boat sank, bore out plaintiff's statement as to how the accident occurred, and denied that there was any negligence on the part of Wilkins. If he was Captain, he would have to give a trip's notice if he wanted to leave. **Henry Cox**, another boatman who was by, gave similar evidence. Mr Becke submitted that according to the rules of the “road note” it was not necessary that the plaintiff should be in default. His Honour : It is a question whether it was *ultra vires* or not. The rules must be read reasonably between master and men. George Hurst, one of the defendants, denied telling Mr Mercer that he was to blame. He told plaintiff his damage was very heavy, and he would settle with him on his return. Wilkins was also a day behind time. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of October plaintiff admitted being liable, but said he had no money. He paid Wilkins £5 for the journey, which was to be accomplished in three days, and for that sum he had to hire two men. Plaintiff should have seen that the boat's nose was free from the “bumper” before letting any more water in the lock. The damage would amount to the sum named in the claim. By Mr Phillips : From that sum he had not deducted the amount realised by the sale of the damaged goods. The boats ought not to travel by night. His Honour said he considered defendant had condoned the offence by paying plaintiff after the journey. Mr Becke therefore withdrew the counter claim, and judgement was given for the payment of £4 8s for wages with costs.

**123 24 December 1887**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **David Allen**, boatman, Kettlebrook near Tamworth, was charged with working a pony whilst in an unfit state at Easenhall on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Defendant said in defence that he was a poor man, and if he had done wrong, he had done it in ignorance. Ordered to pay costs only, 11s 6d.

**124 31 March 1888**

ALLEGED THEFTS BY A BOATMAN At a Special Division Sessions before Mr J Becke on Monday, a boatman now "lying" at Lower Heyford Wharf – **James Badley** – was brought up charged with stealing a quantity of hay and two cords from a hayrick at Lower Heyford, during the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> inst, the property of Mr Roberts, farmer, Stow Hill. Evidence was give by W Warwick, shepherd in the employ of the prosecutor, and PC Hines ; and prisoner was then remanded until Saturday next.

**125 7 April 1888**

DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

THEFT OF HAY **James Badley**, boatman, Wolverhampton, was charged with stealing a quantity of hay and two cords, value 3s, the property of Edmond Roberts of Gayton, from a field in Lower Heyford during the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> ult. George Roberts, son of the prosecutor, deposed that he examined a rick of hay in a field adjoining the canal on the 25<sup>th</sup> ult, and on the evening of the same day he saw some in prisoner's boat which was the same as the hay in the field. William Warwick, shepherd in the employ of prosecutor, identified the ropes found in prisoner's boat as being those with which he had tied up some hay on the previous day. Prisoner said that he had bought the hay. John Staples, landlord of the public house at Leighton whence the prisoner stated that he had bought his hay, said he did not sell it, and prisoner, who had several previous convictions, was committed to the Quarter Sessions.

**126 7 April 1888**

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

STEALING HAY AT HEYFORD **James Badley**, aged 44, a boatman, was charged with stealing a quantity of hay and two foddering cords of the value of 3s, of the goods of Samuel Roberts, at Lower Heyford on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 1887. He pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to nine months' hard labour.

**127 28 April 1888**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, APRIL 25

KEEPING A DOG WITHOUT A LICENCE **George Albritt**, boatman, Tadbrook, charged with keeping a dog without a licence at Braunston on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, was fined 10s and costs 9s 6d each. Allowed 14 days to pay, or in default 14 days.

**128 11 August 1888**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY **William Wills**, boatman, Hartshill, charged on remand with cruelty to a donkey by working the same when in an unfit condition at Brownsover on August 4<sup>th</sup>, pleaded guilty, and was ordered to pay £1 including costs.

**129 11 August 1888**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

KEEPING A DOG WITHOUT A LICENCE **John Thompson**, boatman, Stoke Bruerne, was summoned for keeping a dog over the age of six months without a licence at Lower Heyford on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April last. Mr J P Tinney, Excise officer, proved the case, and the defendant was fined 5s and costs 11s.

**130 25 August 1888**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 22

ANOTHER CASE OF CRUELTY **George Bayliss**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged with cruelty to a horse at Braunston on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August. PC Scotney said he saw defendant with a horse drawing a boat laden with 25 tons of bricks. On examining the horse he found the shoulder very tender, and on lifting the collar there was a wound two and three quarters of an inch across. As he lifted the collar, the centre of the wound came with it. He called the defendant's attention to it, and he said it was bitten by a horse. Inspector Lovejoy said he saw and examined the horse on Monday, and he gave a description of it, agreeing with that of PC Scotney. The horse was produced and viewed by several of the magistrates, including Captain Stopford, who said it was in a shameful condition. Fined £5 and costs 11s, or two months with hard labour.

**131 1 September 1888**

LINSLADE PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 27 **George Betts**, boatman of Linslade, was charged with having deserted his three children leaving them chargeable to the common fund of the Leighton Buzzard Union, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 1888. The Bench imposed a penalty of 5s and 12s 6d costs, or 14 days' hard labour.

**132 1 September 1888**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, AUGUST 29

SCHOOL CASES **Daniel Kendal**, boatman, Braunston, charged with neglecting to send his ward **John Bland** to school, and on a second summons with having employed the said John Bland without a certificate of exemption from school attendance, was fined 5s in the first case, and the costs – 5s – in the second case.

**133 29 September 1888**

MIDDLETON CHENEY PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY SEPTEMBER 24

DRUNK **Thomas Wilkins**, King's Sutton, boatman, was fined 2s 6d and 9s 6d costs.

**134 24 November 1888**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, NOVEMBER 21

VACCINATION CASE **Emanuel Stevens**, boatman, Braunston, was charged with neglecting to have his son William vaccinated. John Birch, Vaccination Officer, said the child was born on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August 1877, and was registered, and a vaccination notice had been served. The defendant's wife appeared, and said she took the child to Mr Masson several times. Once he operated on the child and it did not take, and he several times deferred operating again. The defendant had since then left Braunston and was now living at West Bromwich, where the child had been vaccinated. Mr Birch said he would ask the Bench to adjourn the case for a week, and if the defendant sent a certificate within that time, there would be an end of the matter. Adjourned for a week.

**135 8 December 1888**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY

VACCINATION **Emanuel Stevens**, boatman, Braunston, charged with neglecting to have his child vaccinated, procured the certificate and the charge was withdrawn.

**136 2 March 1889**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, FEBRUARY 27

SCHOOL CASES **William Wright**, boatman, Braunston, was summoned for neglecting the education of his son **John**, aged 11. John Birch, School Attendance Officer, said the defendant was fined 5s last year. Fined 2s 6d, and allowed a week to pay.

**137 30 March 1889**

NORTHAMPTON DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNK AND ASSAULTING THE POLICE **William Boyes**, publican and boatman, Braunston, was summoned for being drunk and disorderly at Far Cotton on the 20<sup>th</sup>; and also for assaulting PC Shaw while in the execution of his duty. The constable stated that he was sent for to eject the defendant from a public house. Defendant turned round on him, and kicked and tried to bite him. Defendant said he had worked for Messrs Westley and Sons for 17 years, and had never been summoned before. PS Scotney also gave defendant a good character, and the Magistrates, taking into consideration an injury that the defendant had sustained in his head, which made him easily affected by beer, fined him 2s 6d and 6s 2d costs or one month in the first case; and £1 and 3s costs, or one month, in the second case.

**138 30 March 1889**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MARCH 27

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Henry Webb**, boatman, Brierley Hill, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it while in an unfit state at Whilton on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March. The defendant did not appear, but a letter was received expressing regret, and asking the Bench to deal with the matter in defendant's absence. PC Thomas and Inspector Lovejoy proved the charge. Fined 20s and costs 12s. Allowed a fortnight to pay or, in default, 21 days.

**139 11 May 1889**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, MAY 8

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Thomas Jeffrey**, boatman, Bugbrooke, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it while in an unfit state at Braunston on the 17<sup>th</sup> April. Inspector Lovejoy of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, laid the information. PC Chapman, stationed at Braunston, said he saw a horse attached to two boats, and noticing the manner of the animal he examined it and found three raw wounds – two on one shoulder and one on the other. The wounds appeared to have been dressed with black lead. The defendant told witness the horse had rested since the previous Monday night. On the following day, witness saw the horse again, in company with Inspector Lovejoy. Inspector Lovejoy corroborated the former witness. The horse was otherwise in very good condition for a boat horse. Fined 10s and costs 16s 1 1/2d.

CRUELTY TO A MULE **Henry Wyles**, boatman, Longford, was charged with cruelty to a mule by working it while in an unfit state at Braunston on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April. PC Chapman saw the animal drawing two boats laden with 51 tons of coal. He noticed the mule seemed weak and had great difficulty in drawing the load. On examination he found on the off shoulder four raw wounds, and part was very much swollen. The wounds had been treated with black lead. Inspector Lovejoy said he saw the mule on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April. The sores were as described by the witness, but independently of the sores the animal must have been overloaded. Fined 10s and costs 10s 6d.

**140 8 June 1889**

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COURT

A BOATMAN IN A DIFFICULTY **Ephraim Mocklow**, boatman, Brierley Hill, Staffordshire v Joseph Westley and Sons, millers, Nunn Mills, Northampton. The claim was for £2 10s 7d demurrage on account of unloading of two boats. Mr J Banks for the plaintiff, and Mr G J Phillips for the defendants. Plaintiff said in February last the plaintiff had two boats loaded with wheat, from London, to be delivered to the mills of the defendants at Northampton. He arrived at the bottom lock about three quarters of a mile from the mills about four o'clock on a Friday afternoon. There were several other boats waiting to be unloaded. The plaintiff went to the mills, and saw the foreman, who said they had no room for the plaintiff's boats and he was to wait where he was, and take his turn with the rest. One boat was not unloaded until the following Thursday, and the second boat not until the following day, the 15<sup>th</sup> February. Two clear days were allowed for unloading a

boat, and any delay beyond that was counted as demurrage, which was paid at the rate of 10s a day. The plaintiff claimed three days demurrage for one boat, and four for the second boat, less 19s 4d for corn. There was no frost at the time, and the traffic was not stopped by the ice. By Mr Phillips : His arrangement was made with Messrs Hughes and Co, London, and not with the defendants. It was the practice of the receiver to pay demurrage, and not the sender. Mr Phillips submitted that the defendants were not liable for the demurrage, and his Honour agreed. Messrs Hughes were the proper defendants, he said. He had no objection if desired to join with them as defendants. But the plaintiff would not agree ; and his Honour then non suited him. Mr Phillips consented to forego the 19s 4d for corn which was supplied to the plaintiff, and applied for costs. His Honour consented to grant costs, but not to exceed 19s 4d.

**141 15 June 1889**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JUNE 12

KEEPING DOGS WITHOUT LICENCES **John Wilkins**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged with keeping a dog without a licence. PC Thomas and PC Chapman gave evidence. Defendant said he had not had the dog more than three months, and no one had told him or asked him to take out a licence, and as he had no fixed residence he did not know it was a requisite. Fined 2s 6d and costs 10s 6d.

**John Lapworth**, boatman, Nuneaton, was also charged with keeping a dog without a licence. PC Thomas proved the case. Fined 2s 6d and costs 10s 6d.

**Frank Humphreys**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged with a similar offence at Buckby Wharf on the 20<sup>th</sup> May. PC Thomas said he saw a brown lurcher dog concealed on a boat in charge of defendant. Witness asked the defendant if the dog was his property. He replied, "No ; I am going to take it from a gentleman in Birmingham to a gentleman in London". In his defence, the defendant said he did not know the name of the gentleman in Birmingham, who paid him 5s to carry the dog, nor the name of the gentleman to whom he delivered the dog in London. The gentleman in London applied for the dog. Fined 5s and costs 9s 6d.

**Richard Harmon**, boatman, Gloucester, similarly charged, was fined 5s and costs 10s 6d.

**142 22 June 1889**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JUNE 19

KEEPING DOGS WITHOUT LICENCES **William Arlidge**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged with keeping a dog without a licence at Buckby Wharf on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April. PC Thomas gave evidence. Defendant said he got a licence, but it appeared he did not obtain it till a month after the policeman spoke to him. Fined 5s and costs 9s 6d.

**143 6 July 1889**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JULY 3

KEEPING A DOG WITHOUT A LICENCE **John Allen**, boatman, Gloucester, was charged with keeping a dog without a licence at Buckby on 31<sup>st</sup> of May. Adjourned.

**144 13 July 1889**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JULY 10

KEEPING DOGS WITHOUT A LICENCE **Isaac Green**, boatman, Birmingham, was charged with keeping a dog without a licence at Buckby on the 16<sup>th</sup> May. PC Thomas proved the charge. Fined 5s and costs 9s 6d.

**John Allen**, boatman, Gloucester, charged with keeping a dog without a licence, did not appear, but wrote admitting his guilt, and expressing his readiness to pay fine and costs. The Bench ordered warrant to issue.

**145 27 July 1889**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

IT WAS A CREDIT TO HIM **William Wilkinson**, boatman, Bedworth, was convicted in the costs 12s 6d for using a fishing net in the canal at Brownsover on July 6<sup>th</sup>. The summons had been served at defendant's house when he was travelling about with his boat, but hearing that it had been issued, he voluntarily appeared. Defendant pleaded guilty, but said that he did not know that he was doing wrong, as he was allowed to fish in some places. Colonel Cooper said the Bench believed defendant had acted in ignorance, but the law did not admit that as an excuse. If any case of a like kind came before them, it would be more severely dealt with. Defendant had come there when he had heard that a summons was out against him, although he had not had the summons, and it was very much to his credit. Defendant was ordered to pay costs.

**146 27 July 1889**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, JULY 24

KEEPING A DOG WITHOUT A LICENCE **John Kent**, boatman, Boxmoor, was charged with keeping a dog without a licence at Long Buckby on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May. PC Thomas said he saw the defendant on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, and he had a brown terrier dog. Witness asked him if it was his, and if he had a licence. He replied, "No ; I am going to take it to a chap down country". Witness asked for the name of the chap. Defendant said he did not know his name. Defendant said the dog followed him ; it was a stray dog. Fined 10s and costs 9s 6d.

**147 3 August 1889**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

CRUELTY TO A PONY **John Harlow**, boatman, Bedworth, was summoned for causing a pony to be worked while in an unfit state, and **James Smith**, a boy in his service, was charged with working the said pony at Newbold-on-Avon on July 24<sup>th</sup>. Police-constable Bracebridge stated that about 5.30 p m he saw two boats drawn by two horses coming along the canal. Noticing that the last one limped, witness examined it and found on the left shoulder, under the collar, two wounds of the size of a shilling, from each of which blood and matter were oozing. He called Barlow's (*sic*) attention to it, and he said he knew it was in that state, but he intended taking it off next day. Witness added that the animal, which was in a very bad condition, was drawing 32 tons of Hartshill stone. In defence, defendant stated that he cut holes in the collar so as to avoid the wounds, and he intended to replace the pony with a donkey when he got to Newbold. He had only started from Easenhall that morning. The boy was told that he was not so much to blame as the man, but he was equally liable, and must pay a fine of 2s 6d. As to Harlow, Mr Wood said the case was a very bad one. He inspected the pony ; it was in a wretched condition, and the defendant had been guilty of great cruelty to it, and ought to be ashamed of himself for treating it in that way. He would be fined 10s and 12s 6d costs.

**148 21 September 1889**

STONY STRATFORD PETTY SESSIONS, FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 13

THEFT FROM A BRAKE **William Simpson**, boatman, was charged with stealing an overcoat from a brake standing in the yard of the Locomotive Inn, Old Wolverton, the property of Thomas Bonham of 11 Broad Street, Northampton, cab proprietor, of the value of £2, on the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. Defendant pleaded guilty. Fined £1 or 21 days.

**149 21 September 1889**

BOROUGH MAGISTRACY

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Alfred Simpson**, master boatman, Boxmoor, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it when in an unfit state at Buckby Wharf on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August. Inspector Woodward of the RSPCA said he was at Whilton Locks on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August about 4 pm, when he saw the defendant detach a horse from a barge, and putting a boy on the horse, send it by road for

Buckby Wharf. Witness followed, and found the horse at Buckby Wharf in charge of the boy. He examined the animal, and saw a wound on the off shoulder about the size of a crown piece. There were several wounds on both shoulders, and they had been black leaded. He afterwards saw the defendant, who said he sent the horse on because he did not want witness to see it. The defendant said there was very little the matter with the horse. Fined with costs £1.

**150 26 October 1889**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

CRUELTY TO A MULE **James Chater**, boatman, Foleshill, was charged with cruelly ill-treating a mule by causing it to be worked whilst in an unfit state at Brownsover on October 13<sup>th</sup>, and **William Chater**, his son, was summoned for working it whilst so unfit. The younger defendant did not appear. PC Haynes proved that on the day in question, he saw the mule drawing two boats full of coal along the canal, and upon examining it found three large wounds on the shoulder. Defendant said the mule had rested for a week to recover from some old sores, and just before the officer saw it, it had rubbed up against a bridge and reopened them. Previous convictions were proved, and a fine was inflicted of (?£1?) and 14s costs, or in default a month's imprisonment. The boy was fined 10s and 13s 6d costs.

**151 2 November 1889**

LEIGHTON BUZZARD

SAD DEATH BY DROWNING On Thursday week, the 24<sup>th</sup> inst, a boatman belonging to one of the barges plying on the Grand Junction Canal lost his life. The unfortunate man, whose name was **Samuel Bustin**, age 30 years, while winding up the trap to let in the water to the locks at Linslade, fell into the canal. The water was only five feet deep, and the man five feet nine inches in height, but falling on his back he was unable to rise. Mr Fell, the Bucks County Coroner, was at once communicated with, and he held an inquest the same afternoon at the Bedford Arms Inn, Linslade. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

**152 9 November 1889**

SPECIAL DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNKENNESS **James Tompkins**, boatman, was charged with being drunk on the public highway at Hardingstone on the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. PC Shaw proved the case, and Tompkins was fined 2s 6d and costs 8s 10d, being committed, in default of payment, for seven days.

**153 9 November 1889**

OUR CANAL CHILDREN Sir – While I am grateful to the local authorities and school officials who have and are carrying out the Canal Boats Acts of 1877 and 1884 – although very perfunctorily – for their help in reducing the death rate among the canal boatmen one half and in getting more than half the canal children into schools, the time has come when the Canal Boats Acts must be carried out without either "favour, fear or affection". Up to the present they have been carried out by the local authorities as if the canal boat owners had neither part nor lot in this matter. Why the boat owners who have been and are making fortunes out of the boatmen should have been shielded so long is inexplicable and mysterious. No doubt light will be forthcoming some day. I was at Paddington a week or two ago, and the boatmen complained loudly. One said to me, "Some of our cabins are not fit for dogs to live in, much less human beings ; and the inspectors are not doing their jobs honestly and fairly". Another boatman said they were fined for not keeping the boats in repair – work belonging to the owners – so as to prevent London filth oozing through the rotten joints into the cabin. The regulation of the Local Government Board relating to painting and other sanitary matters seem to be ignored entirely. It is time that the inspectors at Paddington, Uxbridge, North and South Staffordshire, Birmingham and other places in the Midlands were made alive to their duties and responsibilities, so as to bring the educational and sanitary powers of the Acts to bear upon those living in canal boats, aye, and owners too. In a boat cabin near Rugby I saw, a few days

since, there were man, wife and five pale thin children, some of them almost women and not one of them could read or write a line. One of the girls about 16 was very ill, but no power at hand could prevent her crawling to the cabin door for a book to look at. The father of this family owned two boats. Two Sundays since, three boat children at Buckby Wharf, of school age, joined our Band of Love I founded several years since – to make the way for children and adults plain and easy leading to morality and virtue – and not one could even make a “cross”. One prettily featured boat girl, but unkempt, looked up into my face with tears in her bright eyes, said, “Mr Smith, will you come again? Will you come this afternoon?” She was yearning for light. At Braunston and Hillmorton a day or two ago I saw similar sad sights. I frequently meet boats in which there are four, five and six children, nearly all of whom are of school age. That the Canal Acts can be carried out without pinching anybody has been proved over and over again. Numbers of women have left these floating boxes for cottages, and can now be seen with sewing machines ; and their girls have been sent to service without any inconvenience. Our little maids on water and land have sadly been neglected too long. There is power and machinery in the Acts – maimed as the Bills I promoted were by the Canal Companies while they were in committee – for completing the redemption of the poor canal children, if put into motion wisely and well ; but as a further instalment to complete the redemption of the juvenile and adult boaters, and also to protect their animals, I am taking steps with a view to having another Bill introduced into Parliament to prohibit Sunday travelling on canals for, out of 25,000 canal boats, the boaters on 20,000 are fearful Sabbath breakers. Sabbath desecration is a curse that hangs around the neck of canal traffic, and shows with a tightening grip and like a nether millstone round the neck of the Sabbath breaking boatmen. Many of the canal authorities are anxious for Sunday traffic to be stopped, if only requisite legislation were to bring it about. Yours &c,

George Smith of Coalville

The Cabin, Crick, Rugby, Nov 5 1889

**154 1 March 1890**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, FEBRUARY 26

VACCINATION **James Stevens**, boatman, Long Buckby, charged with not having his child vaccinated, did not appear, and as proof of the service of the summons could not be given, the case was adjourned for a week.

**155 22 March 1890**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

CRUELTY TO A DONKEY **John Renshaw**, boatman, Stretton-under-Fosse, charged with ill-treating a donkey by keeping it without food, was fined £3 and £1 14s 6d costs or, in default, one month's imprisonment with hard labour. The evidence went to show that it was tethered to a hedge in an allotment, and remained there without food or drink until it died. The defence was that the owner had been confined to his bed through illness, and had thus been unable to attend to it. He went to gaol.

**156 22 March 1890**

TOWCESTER POLICE COURT, TUESDAY

HE JUMPED IN THE CANAL **John Adams**, a boatman, was charged with stealing a boat line, value 4s, the property of the Grand Junction Canal Company, on March 15 at Grafton Regis. **John Marks**, canal overseer, Cosgrove, identified the rope. John Edward Swain, labourer, Yardley Gobion, spoke to seeing Adams with the line (produced) at about half past ten on Saturday morning. He said prisoner put the rope on his boat, but when he saw witness he called to his mate on the boat to throw it off again, which he did. Defendant was then given in charge to a policeman, when he jumped into the canal to try and escape. He offered to pay 5s if they would let him off. Witness said the rope was the property of the Canal Co, and he had had orders to watch it. PC G Roberts of Stoke Bruerne said he was watching the line, and saw the prisoner take it. Upon being charged with stealing it, he jumped into the canal, and then got onto a boat. Prisoner, who pleaded guilty, elected

to have the case settled at once and was committed for one month ; three previous convictions were recorded against him.

**157 5 April 1890**

BRAUNSTON

FOUND DEAD IN BED An inquest was held at the Ship, Braunston, on Wednesday, by Mr W Terry (county coroner) on the body of a child named **Florence Eliza Smith**, aged two months, the daughter of **Emmanuel Smith**, a boatman. The child, who slept with its parents, was in its usual health on Monday evening, but was discovered to be dead on the following morning. Charles Bennett, surgeon, deposed that he saw the body of the child on Tuesday morning, but there were no marks of violence upon it. He made a *post mortem* examination, and found that there was a perforation of the stomach which caused the contents to pass through, after which there was acute congestion of the vessel and inflammation of the intestines and stomach. Death would be caused by a shock to the system. The perforation probably arose from a small ulcer. The jury returned a verdict of "Death from natural causes".

**158 19 April 1890**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, APRIL 16

VACCINATION PROSECUTION **William Towks**, boatman, Long Buckby, was charged with neglecting the vaccination of his son **Arthur**, aged 14, and the case was adjourned for three weeks.

**159 26 April 1890**

DAVENTRY PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **John Kent**, boatman, Boxmoor, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it while in an unfit state. PS Thomas said he was with PC Chapman at Buckby Wharf about 2.30 pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> April, when he saw a horse drawing two boats with 56 tons of coal. He noticed that the horse flinched, and on lifting the collar he found raw wounds on the off shoulder, about an inch across. On the near shoulder, there was one wound about one and a half inches wide. Black lead had been used. The wounds were much inflamed, and seemed to be very painful. Witness called the attention of Kent to the condition of the horse. He said the wounds had been made that day, and denied that black lead had been used. The horse was in a low condition, and was the property of the defendant. PC Chapman corroborated the former witness. The defendant did not appear. Fined 20s and costs 10s 6d. Allowed a fortnight to pay.

**160 2 May 1890**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Charles Jacks**, boatman, was charged with assaulting **Francis Clay** at Braunston on the 9<sup>th</sup> April. The prosecutors were the Grand Junction Canal Company, for whom Mr Roche appeared. The defendant did not answer to his summons, and a warrant was ordered to issue.

**161 13 June 1890**

DAVENTRY DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS **John Kendall**, boatman, Braunston, charged with keeping a dog without a licence, did not appear, and was fined 5s and costs 9s 6d.

**George Berry**, boatman, and **Elizabeth** his wife were charged with being drunk and disorderly at Braunston on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. The defendants did not appear, and a warrant was ordered to issue.

**162 27 June 1890**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **James Garner**, boatman, Braunston, summoned for keeping a dog without a licence at Braunston, was fined 10s and costs 9s 6d.

**163 18 July 1890**

DIVISION PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY **Charles Jacks**, boatman, Stoke-upon-Trent, was

charged with assaulting **Francis Clay** at Braunston on the 9<sup>th</sup> April. The prosecutors were the Grand Junction Canal Company, for whom Mr Roche appeared. Francis Clay, steerer of the steam tug employed to draw boats through Braunston Tunnel, said there was a stoppage at the tunnel in April, and boats could go through only during particular hours. During the day boats had arrived and were detained until the evening. Witness was at the Braunston end of the tunnel about half past eight at night. Witness shouted out whether all the boats were attached, and the reply was "no". He waited and repeated the inquiry, when the reply was, "Go ahead". The tug then steamed off, and when they got to the Walton end of the tunnel, they found the defendant's boat was not attached. The tug then returned with another line of boats, and they met the defendant's boat about the middle of the tunnel on the wrong side for passing. The tug was stopped to prevent a collision, and the defendant threw a rope round the stud and locked his boat and the tug, in which state he said he would keep them all night. He used the most abusive language, and detained them in the tunnel filled with smoke almost to suffocation for forty minutes, when he was prevailed upon to loose them and let them go, but as they were passing he raised a heavy piece of wood and threateningly declared he would crush witness's brains out. Witness to avert the blow ducked his head in the cabin. **Henry Danks**, engineer of the tug *Hastings*, corroborated the former witness. The defendant said he was vexed at being left behind. Fined 1s and costs £1 4s 11d.

**164 31 October 1890**

WELLINGBOROUGH DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **James Badley**, boatman, was charged with stealing a bag of wheat smut, value 2s 6d, the property of J B Whitworth, on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Fined £1 and costs.

**165 28 November 1890**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **John Stevens**, boatman, was charged with assaulting his wife, **Emma Stevens**, at Braunston on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Complainant, who had been married 11 years and had three children, said her husband, whilst she was steering the boat, threw a stone at her. He hit her with his fists, and struck her with a mopstick. He was sober. Fined 10s and costs £1 0s 11d ; and he was bound over in £10 to keep the peace for three calendar months.

**166 12 December 1890**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **George Shiers**, boatman, Tamworth, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it while in an unfit state at Braunston on the 5<sup>th</sup> December. PC Chapman said he on the 5<sup>th</sup> saw a bay pony drawing a boat laden with 30 tons of coal. The defendant was with the boat, and he said the pony was his, and that it was all right. Witness saw an old running sore and a raw wound both into each other, being together six inches long, and the raw one was two inches wide. There was a sore on the withers, and one on the near shoulder. The defendant said he worked it 20 miles that day, and in the morning the sore was only the size of a threepenny bit. The animal was very weak and poor. Richard George Chilman, an Inspector of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, stationed at Northampton, said he had seen the animal in question. It was old, very weak and in poor condition. He saw the wounds. One was large and suppurating, and very painful at the touch. The Bench thought it a very bad case, and fined the defendant £2 including costs.

**167 12 December 1890**

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COURT

ELIZABETH FIELD, WIFE OF JOHN FIELD, 2 BREWERY ROAD, COTTON END, LABOURER v WATKIN BROS, SHEEP STREET, TIMBER MERCHANTS The claim was for £15 damages for personal injuries sustained. The plaintiff's particulars stated that these were incurred whilst the plaintiff was walking with her husband along the footpath by the side of the river Nene, through defendant's servant putting a rope across the footpath and causing the plaintiff to be thrown down. Her wrist was broken, and she was otherwise cut and bruised. £10 was claimed

for personal injury and suffering, and £5 for attendance by Mrs Allen and others. Mr T Ashdowne appeared for the plaintiff and Mr A J Darnell for the defendant. Mr Darnell said it was alleged that Mr Watkin's boat was tied by a rope to the palings of his yard, and this it was over which the defendant (*sic*) was stated to have fallen. Mr Thomas Durrant, house surgeon at Northampton Infirmary, said the plaintiff's injuries would decrease her power to do the house work of a labourer's wife. The plaintiff, who is aged 72, said during the eight weeks she was out patient of the Infirmary, she had a woman to do work. **William Redhead**, Linslade, boatman in the employ of Messrs Watkins, said he did not tie a boat up in the way stated on August 23. He was then at Gayton, and reached Northampton about 11 a m on the Sunday. He fastened his two boats up properly, one to a ring and the other to a nail driven into the bank, about 14 inches from the water edge. The children pulled this up, and he drove in another. About eight o'clock he returned from looking after his horse, and found his ropes cut and boats adrift. He did not tie a boat to the railings, but saw another boat fastened to them. He would not swear his boat was never tied to the railings ; it was not to his knowledge. **Charles Edmunds**, assistant to the former witness, corroborated, as did **Augustin Roddis**, toll collector, who said that the rope over which the plaintiff fell was attached to a boat belonging to a man named **Griffiths**. Judgement was given for the plaintiff for £7 10s, which his Honour said he wished the boatmen could be made to pay, as that might lead to greater care in future.

### **168**      **20 February 1891**

**DROWNED** Mr C C Becke held an inquest at the Council Chamber on Wednesday, on the body of Joseph Horsfield, who was seized with a fit whilst walking by the side of the river on Tuesday morning, and falling in, was drowned. Emma Horsfield of 2 house, 11 Court, Bridge Street, said the deceased was her son, and he did a little shoe blacking. He was 27 years of age, and was subject to epileptic fits. On Tuesday dinner time he left the house with his brother's dinner, which he was to take to the Vigo Brickyard. **John Green**, Milton, boatman, said that about 12.30 on Tuesday he was steering his boat down the river, when he heard someone call out. He turned his head, and saw deceased fall into the river. He appeared to be in a fit. There was no one else near, and witness had no means of getting off his boat. He told some men near the locks. He was afraid of sticking in the mud, so he did not jump in and try to save deceased. John Surrige, labourer living at Far Cotton, with assistance recovered the body, which was about six feet from the bank. He thought deceased was then dead, but efforts were made to restore animation for nearly an hour after. The water at the spot was about three or four feet deep. The Coroner, in summing up, commented upon the action of the witness Green in not trying to save deceased when he saw him fall in. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental drowning".

### **169**      **10 April 1891**

#### **LEIGHTON BUZZARD**

**DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS** William Guess and James Linney, labourers of Leighton, were charged that being bailees of a goat, the property of Walter Baker, they did fraudulently convert the same to their own use at Leighton on the 10<sup>th</sup> March. The evidence in this case was heard last Petty Sessions, and was adjourned, owing to Linney not appearing. A warrant was issued for his arrest, and he was now brought up in custody. Further evidence was given by **Ephraim Mucklow**, the boatman who purchased the goat from the defendants for 7s. Both defendants pleaded not guilty. They were fined 40s each, or in default one month's hard labour.

### **170**      **29 May 1891**

**RUGBY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS** A boatman named **Samuel Gibbons**, for refusing to allow Mr V W H Redfern, the Inspector of Nuisances to the Rugby Rural Sanitary Authority, to inspect his boat on April 14<sup>th</sup>, was charged £1 and costs 17s 6d.

**171**      **3 July 1891**

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ASSIZES

THE BRAUNSTON TRAGEDY      **Frederick Richard Earl** (26), boatman, was indicted for maliciously and feloniously wounding at Braunston on June 29<sup>th</sup>, **Alfred Barrington**, a boatman. The prisoner pleaded guilty, but said he was provoked, and certainly did not intend to kill the man. Mr Hammond Chambers said he had advised the prisoner to plead guilty to the offence of unlawful wounding. Acting on his Lordship's suggestion, Mr Sills, who prosecuted, agreed to this modified charge. Mr Chambers then made a powerful plea for the prisoner. The case was a very sad and dreadful one. Under the circumstances, he submitted the offence was so slight it was really no offence at all. The prisoner was captain of certain barges, and the prosecutor, Barrington, was a boatman under him. On Friday June 26<sup>th</sup>, prisoner discovered the prosecutor's clothes and those of prisoner's wife had been packed up in a bag, and prosecutor and prisoner's wife had gone off together. Prisoner was greatly incensed, and followed the two, tracked them to Weedon Station, and from there he walked to his own home at Braunston, where he found the prosecutor in bed with prisoner's wife. Prisoner then did undoubtedly assault the prosecutor. But the circumstances were so fearfully provocative that probably no husband in England would have done otherwise than the prisoner did. (Applause). Mr Chambers pleaded for the fullest leniency the law allowed. His Lordship said he felt the force of Mr Chambers's plea. Prisoner was subject to the grossest possible provocation. It was not in human nature to restrain oneself with such provocation, and it would not be creditable to human nature had prisoner endured the provocation without being roused. Although his Lordship was not surprised at prisoner's conduct, it was legally unjustifiable. Had the prosecutor been killed, prisoner would have been responsible for his death, although the provocation might have reduced the conviction to manslaughter. The depositions, however, seemed to show that prisoner only desired so to mark the prosecutor as to make him abstain from repeating the offence. It was possible that the provocation might be renewed in future, although his Lordship hoped not. (Prisoner : "I hope not".) His Lordship wanted to place the prisoner in the best position to resist that possible provocation. He therefore bound him over in the sum of £20 to come up for judgement if called upon, and to keep the peace towards Barrington. Prisoner : "Thanks, my lord".

**172**      **3 July 1891**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS      **William Griffin**, boatman, Braunston, was fined 5s for not sending three children to school. They had not attended for two years.

**173**      **10 July 1891**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS      **William Chater**, boatman, Tusses Bridge, Warwickshire, was fined 5s and 16s 3d costs for keeping a dog without a licence at Long Buckby on the 9<sup>th</sup> June.

**174**      **31 July 1891**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS      **Thomas Attwood**, Brierley Hill, boatman, charged with keeping a dog without a licence, was fined 2s 6d and costs 9s.

**175**      **11 September 1891**

DROWNED AT ROTHERSTHORPE      On Thursday the County Coroner (Mr W Terry) held an inquest at Rothersthorpe on the body of **Alfred James Peasland**, aged 14 years, who was drowned in the canal the previous day. The father of the deceased, **Alfred Peasland** of Rickmansworth, said he was a boatman in the employ of Mr Archibald Cooper, and his son assisted him. On Wednesday witness was in charge of boats loaded with corn for Mr Westley. They left Blisworth at 12 o'clock, and when they had got to the top of the series of locks, witness left one boat behind and went on with the other to the Rothersthorpe Lock. Witness left the boat in the last lock with the lad to draw it into the basin, to clear for another boat that was approaching. Witness let the water out, and went back to fetch the other boat. While on the way, he was acquainted that his lad was in the water.

When he arrived on the spot a man named Johnson had got him out, and was trying to restore animation. William Arnold, surgeon of Blisworth, said he had examined the body and found a slight bruise on the breast bone. The cause of death was drowning. A verdict to that effect was accordingly returned.

**176 18 September 1891**

Mr C C Becke (Borough Coroner) held an inquest at the Infirmary on Wednesday, on the body of **Amelia Battison**, a boatwoman, who died on Tuesday. Robert Steuart, acting house surgeon at the Northampton Infirmary, said the deceased was admitted on Thursday last, and died on Tuesday. He had made a *post mortem* examination, and found a rupture of the spleen, which had produced peritonitis, which was the cause of death. Alice White, nurse at the Infirmary, said the deceased, who was in her charge, told her that she had had a fall from a boat. **William Battison**, a boatman living on his boat, said deceased was his wife, and about a fortnight ago they were passing some locks near Berkhamstead when the deceased, who was at the end of the boat shutting the lock gate, slipped and fell over the boat into the water. She was first taken to Leicester Infirmary as an out patient, and afterwards to that at Northampton. Verdict : "Accidental death".

**177 13 November 1891**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS May Alford, governess, Norton, was summoned for a breach of the rabies order. Fined 5s for each of the dogs and 10s 6d costs. **Thomas Lewin**, a boatman, for a like offence was, in his absence, fined 5s and 11s 11d costs.

**178 20 November 1891**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Joseph Shires**, a boatman of Bedworth, for a breach of rabies order, was in his absence fined 5s and costs 9s 6d, or in default seven days.

**179 1 January 1892**

RUGBY

DRUNKENNESS At the Police Court on Wednesday, a boatman named **Thomas Bedford**, who said he came from Oldbury, pleaded not guilty to a charge of being drunk on the previous day, and was discharged.

**180 4 November 1892**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Samuel Smith**, a boatman, was charged with being drunk and disorderly at Whilton Locks on October 21<sup>st</sup>. PS Thomas proved the charge. Fined 2s 6d and costs 7s, or seven days' with hard labour.

**181 9 December 1892**

TOWCESTER SPECIAL PETTY SESSIONS, FRIDAY **William Evans** of Tipton, Staffordshire, boatman, was charged by PC F W Dyson with being drunk at the parish of Blisworth on the 1<sup>st</sup> inst, and on the evidence of PC Dyson, defendant was fined 2s and 13s 11d costs.

**182 23 December 1892**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Samuel Smith**, boatman, was charged with leaving his two daughters chargeable to the Daventry Union. The defendant is a widower, and left his children in the care of a Mrs Gardner at Buckby Wharf. He failed to pay for their maintenance, and she placed them in the union, since which expenses amounting to 15s 6d have been incurred. Defendant made a statement to the Bench, upon which he was allowed to take the children out of the house ; and promising to remit £1 3s 8d in a month, the case was adjourned for a month.

**183 17 February 1893**

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **John Halse** (26), no fixed residence,

boatman, was charged on remand, on his own confession, with stealing a coat, vest, pair of trousers and fishing net, the property of **Joseph Kempster**, his employer, at Harefield, Middlesex, on or about April 26 last. The Chief Constable said Kempster refused to take further action in the case, and he would not offer any further evidence. Prisoner was discharged.

**184 10 March 1893**

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH PETTY SESSIONS **William Sewell** (21), no fixed residence, boatman, for being drunk and disorderly in Bridge Street at 10.25 p m on March 4<sup>th</sup>, was fined 5s and costs, or seven days.

**185 31 March 1893**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY **Albert Franks**, boatman, Wyken, was charged with cruelty to a mare by working her when in an unfit state at Buckby Wharf on the 21<sup>st</sup> March. PS Thomas said he was at Buckby Wharf on the 21<sup>st</sup> about one p m, when he saw a mare drawing two boats laden with coal. He noticed that the mare flinched very much and drew on one side. He examined her, and on lifting the collar he saw on the off side shoulder two running wounds about the size of half a crown. On the near shoulder there was one similar wound. Blood and matter were oozing from all the wounds. He called the attention of the defendant to the wounds and the condition of the mare. The defendant said, "I know the shoulder is bad, and I expected to be stopped. The mare does not belong to us ; our horse is dead, and we hired this one to go this journey from Thomas Lapworth of Wyken. I called his attention to it before we started. The shoulder was then bad, but he said he thought it would not hurt if he dressed it and eased the collar". The mare was in poor condition, and had a heavy job to draw the two boats with a cargo of more than fifty tons. The defendant at once took the mare off work, and was very civil. Inspector Webster said he saw the mare on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, when the shoulders were very bad, and the animal was in very low condition. Before the Bench decided the penalty, they wished to hear the charge against the owner of the mare. William Tapworth, Wyken, was charged with cruelty to a mare by causing her to be worked when in an unfit state. Albert Franks, Toleshill, said he worked for Mrs Line and had charge of a boat. On the 21<sup>st</sup> March he left Hillmorton and went to Buckby Wharf on his way from Wyken to Croxley Mill, near Watford, Hertfordshire. The mare started from Wyken and was hired from defendant. Witness called the attention of the defendant to a bit of a wound on the shoulder. It was an old wound. On the other shoulder there was a gall, and he called defendant's attention to that. The defendant said two or three days rest would make it all right. That was on Saturday, and witness started on Monday about 11 a m. Witness saw the defendant and told him it was going on nicely. The defendant did not look at it himself. When he got to Buckby Wharf the following day, he had gone a little more than 30 miles. The defendant said the witness had had the mare a month before he called his attention to the old wounds, and he said nothing to him. Fined 10s and costs 4s in each case.

**186 5 May 1893**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Richard Hall**, boatman, was charged with keeping a dog without a licence at Buckby Wharf on April 7<sup>th</sup>. PS Thomas proved the charge, which the defendant admitted by letter. Fined 7s 6d and costs 6s, or seven days. Allowed a week.

**187 12 May 1893**

LEIGHTON BUZZARD DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **John Hulse**, a boatman of Chester, was brought up in custody charged with being drunk and disorderly on the highway at Leighton on the 6<sup>th</sup> May, and was further charged with assaulting Ernest E Gilbert on the same date. Defendant pleaded not guilty. Ernest Gilbert said about twelve p m last Saturday he was going home, when he was stopped by three boatmen, one of whom asked him for some matches, and then for some tobacco. The latter he refused to give. The man then struck him on one side of his head. The defendant then struck him on the other side of his head. He returned the blow, when the defendant

tried to butt him with his head, but he missed him. He then ran away. Witness followed and caught him, and handed him over to a policeman. A man named Horn came to the help of witness. A witness was called, who corroborated the assault. Defendant said he was drunk, and knew nothing about it. PC James said the defendant was given up to him by Gilbert. Defendant was very drunk. For the assault, defendant was fined 20s and 11s costs, or in default one month's hard labour ; and for being drunk and disorderly he was fined 5s and 7s 6d costs, or 14 days' hard labour – the two terms to run concurrently. Defendant said he would go to prison, and was removed in custody.

**188 26 May 1893**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Edward Williams**, boatman, Brierley Hill, charged with keeping a dog without a licence, was fined 5s and costs, or 14 days.

**189 1 September 1893**

RUGBY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **John Storer**, boatman, Hartshill, pleaded guilty to working a horse while in an unfit state at Easenhall on August 21<sup>st</sup>. Mr Wood said the magistrates had seen the horse, which was in a dreadful state. It was badly pinched, and was nothing but skin and bones. Fined £1 and 11s 6d costs.

**190 13 October 1893**

TOWCESTER DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Henry Goddard**, a boatman, Northampton, was summoned for a breach of the Grand Junction Canal Company's bye laws at Blisworth on the 21<sup>st</sup> ult. Mr Herbert Dawson, on behalf of the company, asked that the case should be allowed to be withdrawn. The charge was that of obstructing the traffic. The defendant had always borne a good character, had given an apology and offered to pay the costs of the case. The Chairman : Does this case affect the public? Mr Dawson : Oh no, sir. The Bench granted the application for withdrawal.

**191 13 October 1893**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Walter Webb**, a boatman, was charged with allowing a horse to stray on the road leading from Barby to Braunston. PC Springthorpe proved the case, and as this was the first charge against the defendant, it was dismissed on payment of costs, 3s 6d.

**192 3 November 1893**

At Warwick on Monday, **William Aldridge**, boatman, Northampton, had to pay £1 18s 6d, and **Samuel Clarke**, Bridge Street, Northampton, the owner, had to pay £1 8s for cruelty to a horse at Warwick on 13<sup>th</sup> October. The horse, it was said, was 14 or 15 years old and very lame, yet it was drawing a boatload of 25 tons.

**193 17 November 1893**

SAD CASE OF NEGLECT AT COTTON END An inquest was held by the county coroner (Mr W Terry) at the Pomfret Arms, Cotton End, on Tuesday, touching the death of **William Leavsley**. Mr G H Percival, surgeon of Northampton, said he attended the deceased nine months ago. He was then in a feeble condition, and was suffering with swollen legs, from dropsy and a weak heart. He had made a *post mortem* examination of the body, and found two bruises on the knees. There were no other recent marks. The body did not appear to have been well nourished. He had examined the organs, but there did not appear to be any recent mischief. The stomach was healthy, but very empty, and there was no appearance of any deleterious (substance) having been taken. In his opinion, death was due to heart and kidney disease. **Eliza Leavsley** of Cotton End, the wife of the deceased, said her husband was 73 years of age. He was a boatman by trade, and he had been unable to get about for the last year. He got across the house on his knees, and used to go out in a bath chair. He used to sell matches. On Saturday he was very middling. His speech was very bad, and he could not get his words out plainly. On Sunday he was worse still, and was in and out of bed

constantly. He would not allow witness to fetch a doctor, he saying he would be better shortly. Witness left for bed between eight and nine o'clock. Her husband slept downstairs, on a sort of chair bed. He did not then appear worse. Witness went downstairs about twelve o'clock, and again between two and three. He was very ill at that time, and seemed to be worse. He was restless, and out of bed. Witness got up between eight and nine o'clock, and found her husband lying on the floor, breathing very hard. Witness could not move him. She lit the fire, and sent her little girl for a friend who lived in Bridge Street. On her arrival, deceased could not speak. He was just breathing his last, and passed away very quietly. Deceased had had no medicine since last winter. He had a sup of tea on Sunday night, and he tried some food, but he could take but little. They had not been allowed anything from the parish, and deceased was always reluctant to go into the house. They had nothing but what witness worked for. Deceased was in a club at Braunston, from which he received 2s 6d a week, and witness thought there would be a little money for the funeral. Deceased was not otherwise insured. Harriett Barton, 2 Court, 6 House, Bridge Street, the friend who was called in, said she was sent for about half past eight on Monday morning. She went at once, and found the deceased lying on the floor with his clothes on. He was in a dying condition, and drew just one breath. Witness did not see any bottles about, or anything unusual which would excite suspicion. The jury returned a verdict of "Death from heart and kidney disease", adding the following rider :- "The jury wish to express in the strongest manner their disapprobation of the conduct of the wife of the deceased, in her want of attention to him in his helpless condition, and her inhumanity in allowing him to remain so long a time on the floor in a dying condition".

#### **194 24 November 1893**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **William Leatherland**, boatman, Mountsorrel, charged with keeping a dog without a licence at Watford on the 6<sup>th</sup> November, was fined 10s, including costs. Another charge against the same defendant was preferred of cruelty to a horse by working it when in an unfit state. PC Chapman also proved this charge, which took place at the same time as the former one. Fined £1 and costs 4s.

#### **195 29 December 1893**

DAVENTRY COUNTY MAGISTRACY, FRIDAY Ada Postle was charged with stealing money, wearing apparel and other articles, at Whilton Locks, the property of **Daniel Clements**. **Sarah Clements** said her husband was a boatman living at Whilton Locks, and in the early part of October the prisoner first went to her house with witness's daughter. She remained a few hours. About a fortnight after that, prisoner went again, saying she had left her husband. Witness took her in as a lodger, and she obtained some dressmaking. On the 15<sup>th</sup> inst witness went to Leicester, leaving her daughter in charge of the house, and the prisoner remained with her. Leaving, she left a sovereign on the sideboard for the rent, and a half crown she put in a cream jug. The prisoner knew the money was put there and what it was for. Witness knew the wearing apparel, a cloak and serge dress skirt belonging to her daughter, and the watch, chain and bank book to her son. Sarah Clements, daughter of the prosecutor, said on the 15<sup>th</sup> inst she was left in charge of the house, and on Monday the 18<sup>th</sup>, she was induced by the representations of the prisoner to go to Rugby to fetch a silver tube and other things from a cousin of prisoner named Miss Ewings. Prisoner gave her a letter to take to the Post Office, where she was to receive £4 10s. She found Miss Ewings, who said she had nothing of the prisoner's. Finding this, she opened the letter and found there was no authority for receiving money. She hurried home and found the prisoner had gone, and the articles produced were missing. PS Thomas spoke to apprehending the prisoner in the City Road, London, on the afternoon of the 20<sup>th</sup>. She admitted stealing all except the cloak and brooch ; that she changed the sovereign at the Queen's Head, Wharf Road, City Road ; had spent the remainder and bought a hat. The prisoner was then charged with having obtained by false pretences from Esther Barrett the sum of 10s on the 18<sup>th</sup> December, at Whilton Locks. Esther Barrett, the wife of William Barrett, said she had known the prisoner about seven weeks. On the 18<sup>th</sup>, the prisoner went to her house and said a gentleman in London had sent her £50 by his clerk who had gone to Norton on

some business, and would be back in an hour, when he would call for 10s, some expenses she would have to pay. The money he had left her consisted of two £20 and a £10 note, and she wanted to change the £10. Witness could not change the note nor could she tell her where to get it changed. She then left and returned in about three quarters of an hour and said the gentleman had come, and asked witness to lend her 10s. To assure her all was right, she held in her hand a bank book in which she showed her an entry £50 5s 2d, and said she would leave the bank book with witness. Believing her statements, witness lent her 10s, and shortly after heard she was gone. She subsequently represented her case to Sergeant Thomas. Sergeant Thomas said he on Wednesday last charged the prisoner with obtaining 10s by false pretences from Esther Barrett, and showed her the bank book produced, and pointing to the writing of the £50 5s 2d, she said, "That is my writing. What are you to do when you have neither money nor friends". Prisoner, who had nothing to say, was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions.

**196 16 March 1894**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **Charles Atkins**, boatman, charged with not having a lighted lamp on his boat as required by the Canal Company's bye laws, was fined 20s and costs 14s 6d.

**197 13 April 1894**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY  
ASSAULT **William Kidsley**, boatman, Weedon, was charged with assaulting William Sorrell of the same place. Complainant said on the 4<sup>th</sup> April in the evening, while he stood talking in the street with two other persons, the defendant came out of his house and challenged any one of the three to fight. None of them was disposed to accept the challenge, and then the defendant directed special attention to witness, saying he made pretention to be a professional gardener and that he long wanted to give him a good dressing. Witness declined any engagement of the kind. He know of no cause of quarrel and he walked away, but defendant followed him and put his fist in witness's face. That he did three times, and he knocked witness's hat off. Defendant said he could not explain his conduct, and he did not know any cause of quarrel. The Bench pointed out to the defendant that such unaccountable conduct could not be allowed, but thought the ends of justice would be met by his being bound over to keep the peace for six months in a £10 bond and paying the costs, including the expenses of the complainant, 5s 6d.

**198 18 May 1894**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS **George Bennett**, boatman, Hawksbury, charged with keeping a dog without a licence, was fined 7s 6d and costs.

**199 28 September 1894**

DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS  
KEEPING A DOG WITHOUT A LICENCE **Richard Humphreys**, a boatman of no fixed residence, was charged with keeping a dog without a licence at Watford on the 4<sup>th</sup> September. Sergeant Chapman said he saw the defendant on the towing-path at Watford on the 4<sup>th</sup>, with a lurcher dog. Witness asked the defendant if he had a licence. He replied, No", and said he had only recently bought the dog. Witness made some enquiries, and found that statement was not correct. Defendant said he bought the dog on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, but he could not produce any evidence to show that such was the fact. Fined 10s and costs 6s.

**200 19 October 1894**

TOWCESTER  
RURAL SANITARY AUTHORITY The Medical Officer (Mr A P Kingcombe) reported that a fatal case of smallpox had occurred at Stoke Bruerne. The wife of a boatman named **Humphries** fell ill on the canal on the way from London. On reaching Stoke Bruerne, the woman became so ill that

Mr Ryan, a medical man, ordered her removal from the boat, and the illness was afterwards diagnosed as a case of smallpox. The woman, who had just been confined, was taken in by Mr and Mrs Amos at Roade, and the infant died. The woman succumbed to the disease, which was of a malignant nature, on the 10<sup>th</sup>, and the funeral took place the same night ; every precaution to prevent a spread of the disease being taken. Mr Kingcombe spoke very highly of the disinterested kindness of Mr and Mrs Amos in taking in a woman suffering from so loathsome a disease. Mrs Amos devoted herself to the care of the woman with the most unremitting and careful devotion. There were no marks of vaccination on the body of the deceased, but all the members of the family in the house to which she was removed were by the Medical Officer's orders at once vaccinated. Though it was not in his place to suggest what compensation should be given to Mr and Mrs Amos, who had suffered considerable pecuniary loss, he felt that all would admire their conduct. (Applause). Mr George Savage said he could corroborate all that Mr Kingcombe had said in reference to Mr and Mrs Amos, to whom he desired to move a vote of thanks. In answer to a question, Mr Savage added that the boatman was in the employ of a large company of canal carriers who, he understood, were organising a subscription. The question of compensation might, he thought, stand over for a fortnight, to see what the company did. Mr George seconded Mr Savage's proposition, and it was carried, the mover bearing testimony to the admirable manner in which Mr Kingcombe and the Inspector (Mr Salmon) attended to the case.

### **201     19 October 1894**

**SAD SUICIDE OF A BANBURY SERVANT GIRL** Mr G Coggins, district coroner, held an inquest at the Plough Inn, Bodicote, on Saturday afternoon, touching the death of Mary Ann Southam, recently living in service at 5 Dashwood Terrace, Banbury, but who had been missing for several days, and whose body was found in the canal on Friday. Richard Southam, machineman, Swindon, brother of the deceased, stated his sister was 25 years of age. She had been despondent for some time, and about three months ago he received from her a letter stating that she did not get on very well in service, owing to ill health. She was living at Kenilworth at the time, and had previously stayed for several weeks with witness at Swindon, where her mother was living. Before entering the service of Miss Pratt, Dashwood Terrace, about six weeks ago, deceased was an inpatient at the Banbury Infirmary. Witness knew of nothing likely to lead deceased to destroy her life. About six years ago, an elder sister was found drowned in the Thames at Hammersmith. Deceased had made no complaint to witness while living with Miss Pratt. Miss Dora Pratt, 5 Dashwood Terrace, Banbury, deposed that deceased entered her service six weeks ago, previous to which she had been treated at the Infirmary for hysteria. She was sometimes depressed, and on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October she seemed very despondent, cried a good deal, and partook of very little food. Deceased was a good servant, and well able to do her work. Witness did not think she was engaged, or that she kept company with anyone. When witness questioned deceased on 4<sup>th</sup> October as to whether she had toothache, she said it was a good deal worse, adding that she had told a story about going to Swindon. Witness did not know what she meant, and nothing further was said. At half past six the same evening deceased appeared to have been crying, and half an hour afterwards she was missed from the kitchen, the back door being open. Deceased had not asked to leave the house, and should not have gone without permission. Witness saw no more of her, and the house was left open all night in case she should return. Witness had found no letter or anything to account for the deceased leaving, and everything in her bedroom was in good order. James Griffin, surgeon, Banbury, who had made an external examination of the body, stated that in his opinion death was caused by drowning. Elizabeth Wiseman, Paradise Square, Banbury, deposed that the deceased, her niece, stayed with her two days before entering the service of Miss Pratt, and on one occasion, while upstairs, she heard deceased talking to herself. Witness asked her what she was saying, and deceased replied, "There's no wonder what any of us do". Deceased was always rather silent, and sometimes when spoken to would give no answer. She was occasionally very much depressed, but on the Sunday before her disappearance she seemed much more cheerful than usual. Ellen Locke, Adderbury, of which village deceased was a native, stated that on Thursday evening about seven

o'clock she saw deceased walking down High Street, apparently in a hurry. Deceased did not appear to see witness. **John Stilgoe**, lock-keeper on the Oxford and Birmingham Canal, deposed that about ten o'clock on Friday morning, a boatman informed him that something had floated past his boat. Witness went to the spot indicated, about a mile from Banbury and in the parish of Bodicote, and saw the body of deceased in the water. He removed it to the bank, and sent for the police. PC Stacey deposed to searching the dress worn by deceased, and finding in the pocket a purse containing 6s 0 1/2d. On searching her box at the house of Miss Pratt, he found a Post Office Savings Bank deposit book, showing £23 16s 2s to the credit of deceased. A verdict of "Suicide whilst temporarily insane" was returned.

**202 9 November 1894**

TOWCESTER DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS

NO LICENCE **Noah Kent**, boatman, Brierley Hill, Staffordshire, was summoned for keeping a dog without a licence at Stoke Bruerne on October 10<sup>th</sup>. Defendant said the dog was under age. PC Beesley, who gave evidence, said that the dog was more than six months old. Fined 7s, including costs.

**203 23 November 1894**

COUNTY COURT

CLAIM FOR A BICYCLE Harry Taylor, cycle agent, Gas Street, Kettering, sued **J Holland**, boatman, Wisbech for £12 6s for bicycle supplied. Mr E P Toller appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr Arthur Smith of Wisbech represented the defendant. Mr Toller, in his opening statement, deposed that the defendant was supplied with a bicycle made to the defendant's order. It was used by him for five months and then returned damaged by an accident. This was on October 10<sup>th</sup>, and defendant had not made any payment. There had been some correspondence between the parties, and defendant alleged that the material and workmanship were inferior. Harry Taylor, cycle dealer at Kettering, deposed that he had had two or three dealings with defendant. In May last, defendant came into witness's shop and said he wanted a road racer with Palmer's tyres, which he wanted at once. The machine was put in hand at once, and delivered on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The price was to be £13 10s. Defendant had previously had two similar machines from witness, who understood that the machine was for his own use. It was a common thing to take a considerable sum off the list prices, especially when anyone gave a good order or had previously purchased from witness. Witness expected defendant to pay at once, but in July defendant sent a pedal, without any comment, which had been damaged through a fall, and not attributable to bad workmanship. Witness sent another pedal in its place, and also sent an invoice asking for the money, but it had not been paid. Witness had a letter from the defendant. This was handed to the defendant, who denied that it was written either by him or by his authority. Witness, continuing, said the machine was ultimately returned, but as it was much worn and damaged, witness refused to take it in. During the correspondence, witness told defendant he would settle the matter for £12, as he was anxious to get the money in. John Davis deposed that he was book keeper to plaintiff, and was present in May last when defendant came in, and after paying for a machine he had previously had, gave orders for another to be built, which witness thought was to be a cash order. David Lucas, Manager of the Kettering Swimming Baths, deposed that defendant was some relation of his, and he had been the means of introducing the defendant to plaintiff. Witness was with defendant when he ordered the machine from plaintiff, and to his knowledge nothing was said about agency terms. Witness was at Wisbech in July, and at defendant's request, examined the machine, which was in a fair condition, although the machine had evidently had a heavy fall, and had the appearance of having been much used. Defendant told witness that someone had had the machine for a fortnight, and witness advised defendant to prosecute those who had had the machine. The defendant then made a statement, contending that after purchasing the second machine from plaintiff, he was appointed agent for the Wisbech District. His Honour gave a verdict for plaintiff for the amount claimed with costs.

**204 15 February 1895**

**AN ICE ACCIDENT** A boatman connected with the ice-bound barge in the canal near the Boat Inn rescued a boy from drowning on Monday afternoon. The boy, it appears, had fallen through some thin ice, and a Mr Fisher, who was just removing his skates near the spot, saw the accident and raised the alarm. The boatman thereupon made his way to the spot and succeeded in hauling the unfortunate lad out. Had it not been for this timely assistance, the boy would undoubtedly have been drowned.

**205 15 March 1895**

**BANBURY**

**SUDDEN DEATH OF A BARGEMAN** The Coroner held an inquest at the Town Hall on the body of **James Blagrove**, bargeman of Oxford, who died suddenly on the towing-path of the canal on Thursday afternoon. **Louis Grantham**, boatman, Heyford, stated that on this previous Monday week, he took defendant out of Oxford Workhouse to assist him with his boat, and since that time Blagrove had accompanied him with the boat. The boat was moored near Banbury Lock on Thursday, and deceased complained of being unwell and said he had a bad cold. About three o'clock the same afternoon, Blagrove became worse. Witness went for a cab to take him to the Workhouse, but on his return the man lay dead on a wheelbarrow. Edward Grantham, brother of the last witness, gave similar evidence ; and Mr Innes Griffin, surgeon, who had made an external examination of the body, expressed the opinion that the cause of death was heart disease. Verdict accordingly.

**206 24 May 1895**

**TOWCESTER DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS** **Charles Atkins**, boatman, Hillmorton, was summoned for a breach of the canal bye laws in not having a lighted lamp on his boat, which contained gunpowder, between sunset and sunrise, at Stoke Bruerne on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Defendant said the light went out when he was asleep. PC Beesley, **Hubert Dawson** (a clerk in the employ of the Grand Junction Canal Co) and **George Hinds** (a lock-keeper at Stoke) gave evidence, Mr Dawson stating that the boat was laden with sixteen tons of gunpowder. Defendant said all three of the men on the boat were asleep, and the lamp, which the governor provided, was not a suitable one. Mr Dawson said that one or other of the men ought to have been in charge in order to see to such matters. There was a previous conviction against the defendant for a similar offence near Daventry last year, and the Bench fined him £2 and costs 6s, and cautioned him as to his future conduct, the Chairman adding that defendant's employer should provide him with a proper lamp.

**207 23 August 1895**

**DAVENTRY DIVISIONAL PETTY SESSIONS**

**NEGLECTING TO SUPPORT HIS MOTHER** **William Fall**, boatman, Aylesbury, was summoned to show cause why he should not contribute towards the support of his mother, **Catherine Knight** of Braunston. The defendant stated his circumstances to the Bench who, having heard his statement, declined to make an order.

**208 6 December 1895**

**THE SUDDEN DEATH OF A WOMAN AT NETHER HEYFORD** The County Coroner (Mr W Terry) held an inquest at the Bricklayers' Arms, Nether Heyford, on Saturday afternoon, touching the death of **Sarah Ann Moore**, the woman who was found dead by the side of the canal on Thursday week. **Isaac Moore**, a boatman travelling with a barge on the Grand Junction Canal, said the deceased was his wife, and was 48 years of age. On Thursday he was going with two boats with coal to London. The deceased left the boat the other side of Weedon about three o'clock, to purchase some provisions. He did not see her again, and he went along steadily with the two barges as far as Gayton. The deceased often used to get off the barge and catch him up again, and he expected she would do so on Thursday. He stayed the night at Gayton, and as she had not returned,

he went back to look for her in the morning. When he got to Bugbrooke he met the constable, who told him what had happened. When she left witness, she was as usual, but he had noticed two or three times in the last few years that deceased had had a slight attack of fainting. Francis Olliver, parish constable at Heyford, said he was informed on Thursday evening by a boatwoman that the body of a woman had been found on the side of the canal. He went to the spot, which was about 200 yards from the bridge by the furnaces, and found deceased lying on the towing-path. There was no appearance of any struggle. He found deceased's bonnet on the hedge close by. With assistance the body was removed to the Bricklayers' Arms. All means were tried to restore the deceased. PC Lord of Bugbrooke said he examined the spot where the woman was found, and found a quantity of provisions. He made enquiries at Weedon, and in the morning met the husband at Bugbrooke. He found deceased had visited several public houses at Weedon, and had had beer. Mr William Lawton said he saw deceased late on Thursday evening, when he found her quite dead. There was no sign of violence whatever. Her face seemed a good deal congested, and the mouth smelt strongly of beer. The body was still warm, and had not been dead very long. In his opinion the deceased died from apoplexy, and he did not see any reason whatever to suspect any unnatural cause of death. A verdict in accordance with the medical testimony was returned.