

**WARWICK AND WARWICKSHIRE ADVERTISER**  
**1866 to 1891**

**1      24 February 1866**

HENLEY IN ARDEN

INQUEST AT PRESTON BAGOT    On Monday last, T B Couchman Esq, coroner, held an inquest at the Crab Mill Inn at the above place, touching the death of **Joseph Gardner**, a lad aged nine years, who was drowned in the lock at Preston on the previous evening. The evidence of the father of the lad, a boatman in the employ of Messrs Greaves and Kirshaw, went to show that he was passing with his boat through the lock when he heard his wife scream that the boy was in the water, and that with assistance the lock was dragged, but the body was not found for half an hour after. It further appeared from the evidence of the mother that the lad said to her he would jump off and let down the paddle, and in jumping off from the boat he fell in. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death from drowning.

**2      14 April 1866**

HENLEY IN ARDEN

MAGISTRATES' MEETING, APRIL 11    **Charles Bayliss** of Birmingham was charged with aiding and assisting two youths committed for three months last week, for stealing two fowls at Wootten Wawen, the property of Mr Joseph Whittington. Bayliss was the boatman in charge of the boat, and it was proved that he steered the same to the side of the canal, so as to allow the youths to jump off when going to the barn, and on their return with the fowls. He was committed for three months with hard labour.

**3      3 November 1866**

BANKRUPTS    **Simmons, Thomas**, Bloxwich, boatman.

**4      20 April 1867**

COUNTY PETTY SESSIONS, FRIDAY    **George Allcock**, a boatman living at the Waterside, Stratford-upon-Avon, was charged with robbing part of the cargo of a boat he was navigating, by purloining 1 cwt of straw, the property of John Hiron, on February 27<sup>th</sup>. The theft occurred at Aston Cantlow, through which parish the Birmingham and Stratford Canal passes. Mr J E H Greves, solicitor, appeared for the prisoner. Mr John Hiron, the prosecutor, lives in Ely Street, Stratford-upon-Avon. The prisoner was in his service, and was in charge of a boat load of straw, consigned to Mr John Flavel of Birmingham. About 6 cwt was missed. The prisoner sold 1 cwt of straw for 2s 6d to **Edward Wood** of Preston Bagot, lock-keeper. When he was arrested he said he was not going to run away over it ; he thought Hiron could not do much at him, as he ordered him to sell the straw. The magistrates decided on sending the prisoner for trial at the next Sessions. A second charge of stealing 2 cwt of straw on February 7<sup>th</sup> at Preston Bagot from John Hiron was gone into. The Magistrates committed the prisoner for trial, consenting to accept bail, himself in £50 and two sureties in £25 each.

**5      11 May 1867**

SAD DEATH OF A CHILD    On Monday afternoon George Moore Esq, deputy borough coroner, held an inquest at the Stag and Oak Inn, the Cape, before Mr E Terrill, foreman, and a respectable jury, to enquire into the circumstances attending the death of George Barnwell, son of Ellen and George Barnwell, the latter of whom is a carpenter residing in the Packmores. The jury having viewed the body, the first witness called was **John Berry**, who said : I am a boatman in the employment of William Clayton of Saltley, near Birmingham. On Saturday morning last, I was working a boat on the Warwick and Napton Canal between Emscote and Birmingham. I saw a woman coming from the direction of the lane leading from the Warwick Union Workhouse. She was walking along a field on the opposite side to the towing-path. She went in the direction of the

lock of the canal which is near there. When she got to the lock, she leaned on the "balance pole" as if she was resting herself. My attention was directed to my boat for a short time, and in a few minutes I looked up and heard a splash in the water. I was about two hundred yards off at the time. I immediately jumped off my boat and ran to the spot. I saw a woman struggling in the water. This occurred about eight o'clock in the morning. I put my boat hook down and caught hold of her clothes, and managed with assistance to get her out of the water. After she was out, she said, "Oh, my baby is in the water. I was going for a walk up to Mrs Seywell, for I have been very bad". The Coroner : Who is Mrs Seywell's? Mr Hickling : A friend of hers. She often visited there. Witness continued : She appeared as if she did not know what she was doing after she said this. I felt in the water for the baby, and seeing some blood flush up, I put down a fish net I had and brought up the body. It bled at the nose but was not quite dead. It opened its mouth six or seven times, while me and my wife, who was with me in the boat, rubbed it with salt. I took it into the cabin and before the fire gave it a teaspoonful of brandy. We undressed the baby and wrapped it in a blanket, and took it to Mr Wills's house near the Cape, and it died as soon as it got there. When the woman rested against the balance pole, I did not see the baby and did not believe, until she said so, that she had one. After I heard her fall in, I saw the waves, and by that knew she was in the water. By a juror : She must have fallen from the lock, and would have to fall ten feet before she reached the water. It took two men to get her out of the water. I had to attend to the baby. Mr T W Bullock said : I am a surgeon practising in Warwick. I was called to see a child, reported to be drowned, at the Cape Lock, about a quarter to eight on Saturday morning. On my arrival I found the child quite cold and dead. I examined the body and found no marks of violence upon it, excepting a small bruise on the left temple. I afterwards saw the mother of the deceased. She was very ill, with cold extremities and suffering under great mental excitement. I have attended her ever since. She is now better, but in a low nervous state. She is quite unable to attend here today. In my opinion the child died from suffocation by drowning. The child was a little over a month old. I had not attended her previously. She is better today than she was yesterday. She sits up in bed and talks very wildly about the child, and asks for it. She was attended by a midwife, and a nurse was with her for a fortnight. George Barnwell said : I am the father of the deceased. My wife has been going on well since her confinement. On Thursday and Friday last, she said she felt very low spirited. I left home on Saturday morning last about a quarter to six o'clock, to go to work. She said the baby and the eldest child were fast asleep in bed. The deceased had been registered as George Barnwell. Mrs Seywell ran across the common to Mr John Hall Clark's to tell me of the accident. I ran home and saw my wife there, and went and fetched Mr Bullock. My wife is only acquainted with the Seywell in Warwick. She did not seem weaker than usual on the Friday night. She was particularly fond of the child, it being a son, and the other child being a girl. The Coroner said it was for the jury to consider, first of all, whether any further good would be obtained by adjourning the enquiry to procure the attendance of the mother of the deceased, or if they were satisfied, from the evidence, that the child was accidentally drowned. Looking at the evidence, he did not consider it was necessary for him to adjourn the enquiry for the attendance of the mother, and it was desirable, if possible, to avoid giving her pain which would be caused her if she had to attend. There was only circumstantial evidence to show how the woman and child came into the water, but he thought the evidence was sufficient to justify the jury in returning a verdict of "Accidental death". The mother did not appear to have any ill feeling against the child or any animosity, but in fact had been very fond of it. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

## **6 26 October 1867**

COUNTY POLICE INTELLIGENCE, SATURDAY OCTOBER 19<sup>th</sup>

**DAMAGING A CANAL LOCK** **William Beresford**, boatman, was summoned by Mr Edward John Lloyd, engineer to the Warwick and Birmingham Canal Company, for wilfully damaging a lock of the canal on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September, by running a certain steam boat against it. Mr J Lane appeared for the defendant. **Mr William Young** said : I reside at Hatton and am a night lock-keeper for the Warwick and Birmingham Canal Company. Between three and four o'clock on the morning

of the 27<sup>th</sup> of September, I saw the defendant and another man on the Hatton hill, at the twentieth lock from Birmingham. I told the defendant I should be glad if he would open the lock gates instead of knocking them open with his boat. They went on with the boat, and I followed them up a short distance behind, and saw them knock open the next lock gate as they did the previous ones. Cross-examined : The gate was closed, but after they knocked it open I did not see any marks on the gate or the boat. I do not think any repairs have been done to the gate. A horse boat immediately followed the steam boat. **Richard Rixon**, engine driver, was called on the part of the defendant, and said it was between twelve and one o'clock on the night in question when the complainant met them on the Hatton hill. Where the complainant stood, he could not see whether the top gate was opened or not. It was witness's duty, that night, to prepare the gates for the boats and draw off the water. **Edward Morrison**, assistant driver, said he did not feel any jerk of the boat, which he must have done had the boat struck the gate. On the night in question, the defendant got off the boat and opened all the gates. The magistrates said they considered the offence proved, but as no damage had been done to the gate, they were inclined to deal leniently with the defendant. Mr Lloyd said if the magistrates considered the defendant paying the expenses would meet the justice of the case, and the defendant would promise to be more careful in future, he had no doubt the company would be satisfied. This the defendant promised to do, and was discharged on payment 8s 6d, the expenses.

#### **7 30 November 1867**

LEAMINGTON POLICE INTELLIGENCE, WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 27<sup>th</sup>

DRUNKENNESS **William Butlin**, boatman, pleaded guilty to having been drunk on the 21<sup>st</sup> last, and was discharged on paying 3s expenses. He protested that it was too bad to have to pay when a man could walk but, on being told that the Bench could have fined him as well, he thanked them for their leniency.

#### **8 8 May 1869**

BANKRUPTS, FRIDAY APRIL 30<sup>th</sup> **William Taylor**, Montrose Street, Wolverhampton, boatman.

#### **9 27 November 1869**

SUICIDE OF A DRINKING WOMAN Dr Birt Davies, borough coroner, held an inquest at the Reservoir Tavern, Osler Street, Edgbaston, on Tuesday evening, on the body of **Mary Ann Ryder**, wife of **John Edward Ryder**, boatman, 5 Victoria Terrace, Osler Street. Deceased was forty six years of age, and had one child. On Saturday night she went to bed about eleven o'clock, and she appeared then to be the worse for drink. Half an hour afterwards her husband followed her, and noticed that she appeared stupid and refused to blow out the candle. About a quarter of an hour afterwards she got out of the bed, lighted a candle and went downstairs. Her husband went to sleep and thought nothing of his wife going downstairs, as she was in the habit of doing so. On the following morning he got up about half past seven o'clock, and on going into the kitchen, he found his wife hanging by a rope from a hook in the ceiling of the kitchen. She was dead, cold and stiff. It was shown that the deceased was addicted to intemperance, and her husband stated that she was sometimes strange in her manner. The Jury returned a verdict of "Suicide whilst in an unsound state of mind".

#### **10 24 December 1869**

THE FLOODS There are heavy floods in the Midland districts. In the neighbourhood of Nottingham the waters rose very rapidly on Saturday night, and on Sunday spread over the meadows near the town, the cellars in the houses of the low lying parts being filled with water. At Wilford, Ratcliffe and the whole of the vale of the Trent, the expanse of water looks like a vast lake, thousands of acres being submerged. On Sunday afternoon the water was rising rapidly, and at 4.30 was within three feet of the flood of 1852, the greatest inundation that has been recorded for many years. Similar accounts come from Monmouthshire and South Wales, where the Usk and Taff have

been greatly flooded. At Pontypridd a substantial stone bridge, which formed the road over which nearly all the traffic between the town and the Rhondda Valley passed, and which was built not very long since at a considerable cost, has been swept away. At Crathia, Braemar, Ballster and Keith, snow fell heavily on Wednesday week. At Keith the telegraph wires were broken by the weight of the snow. The Irwell, Ribble, Wye and other rivers overflowed on Monday. There was a great flood in the Wye district, and parts of Preston were inundated. Many acres each side Irwell are under water. The houses in the lower part of Salford were flooded, and the body of a woman was taken out of the Irwell, the water of which was 12 ft above the ordinary level. In north, east and west Lancashire there was nothing to be seen but a succession of great lakes dotted here and there with a homestead, haystack or (????). On Sunday the road in front of St Paul's Church, Little Chester, Derby, was five feet under water and it was, of course, impossible to hold services. On the banks of the Severn, thousands of acres of meadow land are submerged in a depth of several feet. A fatal accident occurred to a boatman on Sunday, who, while navigating his vessel down the river, ran against the centre of Maisemore Bridge near Gloucester, and getting broadside on to the current, the craft was broken in two. A man named **Jelf**, who was steering, was drowned. The Welsh hills are said to be covered with snow, and unless frost sets in, there does not seem any prospect of the flood subsiding very speedily. Many miles of the country between Banbury and Reading on the Great Western Railway are under water.

**11 26 March 1870**

BANKRUPTS, FRIDAY MARCH 18 **J J Holloway**, Richard Street, Birmingham, boatman.

**12 9 April 1870**

WARWICKSHIRE EASTER SESSIONS

SENTENCES **Thomas Bird**, 30, pleaded guilty to stealing, at Nuneaton on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June, a mare, the property of Mr Thomas Holder, Three calendar months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

**13 7 May 1870**

ARE LIVE PARTRIDGES "PROPERTY"? IMPORTANT DECISION The case of "The Queen v **Rae**" came on before the Court for the Consideration of Crown Cases Reserved on Saturday. The prisoner was tried and convicted for stealing a dead partridge at the Quarter Sessions for the county of Derby. There were several counts in the indictment, varying the ownership and the offence. The evidence was that on the 16<sup>th</sup> September last Colonel Henry Newdegate, Major George Newdegate and the Rev Mr Howman were out shooting at Kirk Hallam in the above county, on land belonging to Colonel Francis W Newdegate, accompanied by his keeper. A covey of partridges rose and was fired at by Mr Howman ; one of the birds came back round Major Newdegate, who fired at it. The bird crossed a canal, "lowered" and fell in a field belonging to Colonel Newdegate and over which he had the right of shooting, but in the occupation of his tenant. The prisoner, who was a boatman and who was on the canal bank at the time, entered the field and either picked up or caught the bird. The evidence as to the condition of the bird when caught or picked up was conflicting, but it was afterwards given to the keeper by the prisoner, and was dead at the time. The learned counsel for the prisoner contended there was no case to support a charge of larceny. That if there was a single spark of life in the bird at the moment when it was picked up by the prisoner, it could not be larceny. It was uncertain who gave the bird the mortal wound. The jury found there was no evidence to prove who shot the bird. That when the bird was picked up by the prisoner, it was alive, but in a dying state, and so disabled that it could not escape, and thirdly that the prisoner took the bird fraudulently, and with intent to defraud the owner of it. The question for the opinion of the court was whether the bird was the subject of larceny, and whether the property in the bird was sufficiently laid to Colonel Newdegate. Mr Roe appeared in support of the conviction. No one appeared for the prisoner. After hearing the arguments of the learned counsel, Lord Chief Justice Revill, in delivering judgement, said if the indictment had simply stated that the prisoner had stolen a partridge it would have been bad, because a bird or animal in a wild state was not the subject of

property. It was only when it was (????) into possession that it became so, by giving control over it. The requirement in the indictment of the words "dead partridge" was not one of form but substance, and necessary to make the stealing in this case one of larceny. The bird was wounded before it died, and when it was then picked up or caught by the prisoner, it was impossible to say if it was anything more than a wounded bird. The proof required to establish the charge had failed, and the conviction must be quashed. Mr Justice Willis was of the same opinion. It was never intended by the decision referred to in the case to make poachers who took game thieves as well as poachers. He was desirous of adding that, even if the bird were dead when picked up, he doubted if it had been sufficiently reduced into possession, either by the shooter or the proprietor of the land, to become the subject of larceny. Mr Justice Byles, Mr Baron Cleasby and Mr Hannen concurred. Conviction quashed.

#### **14 9 July 1870**

WARWICKSHIRE SUMMER ASSIZES The commission for holding these assizes will be opened before Sir Fitzroy Kelly and Sir William Baliol Brett on Thursday next at the Shire Hall, where all persons concerned are asked to give their attendance at eleven o'clock. The calendar at present contains the names of the following prisoners for trial :-

**Thomas Shaw**, 19, boatman, and **William Jones**, 19, boatman, burglary at Birmingham.

#### **15 23 July 1870**

WARWICKSHIRE SUMMER ASSIZES

PLEADED GUILTY **John Lakin**, 40, boatman, stealing 15 fowls, the property of Francis Whitworth, at Wishaw on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, four months' imprisonment ; **Thomas Shaw**, 19, boatman, and **William Jones**, 19, ditto, burglary at Birmingham on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, the former to 15 and the latter to 9 months' imprisonment.

#### **16 15 April 1871**

WARWICK COUNTY COURT

CLAIM FOR WAGES – **JAMES NEWHEY** v ROBERT HANSON The plaintiff sought to recover £13 19s as wages. Mr Griffin was for the plaintiff, and Mr Cheshire of Birmingham for defendant. It appeared that Newey was a boatman in the service of Mr Radclyffe of Leamington. When Mr Radclyffe's business was transferred to the defendant, Newey continued to hold the same position, but on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1869, while in charge of a boat belonging to the defendant at Tipton, Staffordshire, he was dismissed without any notice. He now claimed a month's pay in lieu of notice. It was elicited from the plaintiff, in cross-examination by Mr Cheshire, that he had received £3 belonging to Hanson, which he had not entered in the accounts handed in to the court. Other irregularities on the part of the plaintiff were shown ; and his Honour gave judgement for the defendant with costs.

#### **17 16 September 1871**

HENLEY IN ARDEN

MAGISTRATES' MEETING, WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 13 **James Newey**, boatman of Herne Field, appeared with summons, by request of PC Taylor, for working a horse on the Stratford Canal with sores. Fined 7s with 13s costs, and was locked up in default of payment.

#### **18 16 September 1871**

GROSS CRUELTY At Mr Field's office on Saturday, before Messrs E Wheeler and J Panton Gubbins, **John Selley**, a boatman, was charged with cruelty to a horse on the previous day. Police-constable Hobday, who is stationed at Radford, saw the defendant at Offchurch on Friday, driving the horse along on the towing-path of the Warwick and Napton Canal. It was so lame in both fore legs as scarcely to be able to get along, and defendant was whipping it unmercifully. He stopped the boat, sent for Mr Gibbs of Warwick Street, the agent for the Society for the Prevention of

Cruelty to Animals, who gave defendant into custody. The evidence of Mr Ford, veterinary surgeon, went to show that the horse having been blistered on both legs for some complaint, there was a plentiful crop of (?venicles) round the joints, which made it extremely painful for it to move either leg. It was most certainly unfit for work. Defendant was fined £2 including costs. His master, Mr Neale of Hatton, paid the money, and promised to destroy the horse.

## 19 7 October 1871

SOUTHAM

CHARGE OF FELONIOUS ASSAULT At the magistrates' clerk's office on Tuesday, before H T Chamberlayne Esq, **Thomas Bromwich**, a boatman aged about 18, was charged with committing a rape upon a child named Bland, aged about 9, daughter of another boatman, at Long Itchington. Prisoner was committed for trial at the Assizes.

## 20 25 November 1871

TAMWORTH

SHOCKING ICE ACCIDENT An accident of a most distressing nature occurred at Polesworth, near Tamworth, on Wednesday forenoon, which resulted in the deaths of three youths named **John Thompson**, aged nine years ; **James Thompson**, aged fourteen years ; and **James Kibler**, aged nine years. It appears the three lads, who belonged to boats lying at the Birch Coppice Coal Wharf, Polesworth, went by themselves on Wednesday morning to slide on some ice which covered a pool of water in a deep clay pit attached to the brick and pipe works of Mr Richard Bassett, not many yards from the wharf. This was eight or nine o'clock. A woman named Sarah Sharpe saw them sliding there at ten o'clock. Nothing more was seen of them ; but between eleven and twelve o'clock, two little children wandered near the pool, and seeing the ice broken and three caps floating in the water, they ran to the wharf and gave an alarm. All the people about at once rushed to the spot, and a boat loader named **John Crowley**, with a courage which does him the greatest honour, at once plunged into the water, which was twelve feet deep, and brought up the body of James Thompson. Considerable danger attending these attempts from the quantity of ice about, Crowley had a rope tied round his waist, and he then, without hesitation, dived down again under the ice. He found nothing, and dived a second time, when he reached the bodies of the younger Thompson and Kibler, and brought them both to bank. All three were quite dead. An inquest was held on the bodies at the Bull's Head Inn, Polesworth, on Thursday afternoon, before Mr T Dawes, deputy coroner. **Nathan Thompson** of Bugbrooke, boatman, identified the body of John Thompson as that of his son. **William Robinson**, boatman of Warwick, identified the body of James Thompson, who was in his employ. He was the son of Sarah Harrold (late Thompson) of Warwick. **James Kibler**, boatman, identified the body of James Kibler as that of his son. John Crowley, miner, deposed to recovering the bodies from the water. The Coroner commended the brave conduct of Crowley in the warmest terms, and said although what he was allowed to grant him by the Court was small, yet if the jury liked to take any steps in the matter and would forward their communications to him, in order that Crowley should be properly rewarded, he was entirely at their service, and would take care the recommendation should be sent to the proper quarter. The foreman of the jury (Mr Jackson) thanked the coroner, and said they would certainly take some steps and remunerate Crowley for his gallant conduct. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

## 21 23 December 1871

WARWICKSHIRE WINTER ASSIZES

CHARGE OF CRIMINAL ASSAULT **Thomas Bromwich**, 18, boatman, was charged with having, at Long Itchington on the 30<sup>th</sup> September, criminally assaulted **Harriet Bland**, then being of the age of nine years. Mr Chamberlayne prosecuted, the Hon E C Leigh defended. The facts were wholly unfit for publication. This case occupied several hours. The jury acquitted the prisoner.

## 22 17 January 1874

COUNTY POLICE INTELLIGENCE, SATURDAY JANUARY 10

A MISCHIEVOUS CANAL BOAT BOY **Thomas Attwood**, son of a canal boatman and about fourteen years of age, was charged with wilfully damaging three iron pinions, the property of the Warwick and Birmingham Canal Company. Mr R C Heath appeared in support of the charge, and Mr Hemp defended. A lock-keeper at Hatton named **Francis Knight** deposed that between four and five o'clock on Thursday afternoon the 8<sup>th</sup> inst, he was on duty at the seventh, ninth and tenth locks at Hatton. Five boats passed down in the direction of Leamington, one of which belonged to the father of defendant. Witness filled the ninth lock for the passage of the boat before that belonging to Attwood. For this purpose, he had to work the pinion attached to the lock. He observed that the pinions of both gates were then all right. Attwood's boat passed through, and defendant filled the lock. Immediately after he had done so, witness, who was forty yards off, heard the pinion struck a sharp blow. Each boat was provided with an iron crank handle to work these pinions, and it was competent for a person to break off the piece of cast iron on which the crank worked by giving it a sharp blow. In about five minutes afterwards, witness went to the spot and examined the ninth lock. He found the pinion broken short off. Shortly afterwards he heard a similar blow dealt at the tenth lock, but did not examine it. Cross-examined : I had worked the pinion of the ninth lock ten minutes before. I have threatened to report the defendant for wasting water. By the Bench : I have never broken a pinion in my life, and I have opened many locks. Re-examined : I was the last person who used the windlass at the ninth lock before defendant. Pulling off the crank handle from the pinion would produce a very different sound from a blow struck on it. David Humphries, foreman carpenter at Hatton, said he heard the blow on the pinion of the ninth lock, and after he had reached the spot, he also heard a blow on the tenth. He examined both, and found the iron at the point of fracture quite bright. Cast metal of that kind would rust over in two or three hours on a damp evening. Witness overtook the boat, and on telling the father his suspicions, the defendant began to cry. The father said that his son could do that or anything else. The engineer to the company, Mr Edward John Lloyd, stated that a fractured pinion could not be repaired. At the wholesale price at Sheffield, each pinion cost 2s 1d. They consisted of a mixture of glass and iron. When apprehended by PS Underwood, the defendant said he leaned his stomach on the crank handle, and the pinion broke with his weight. Mr Lloyd, in reply to the Bench, said the pinion was a solid piece of iron, of from seven eighths to an inch in diameter. It could not by any possibility be broken in the way described. Such a weight might break a cog out of the rack work in the centre of the pinion, but nothing else. He could only suppose the pinions were broken from mischief. Formerly one was not broken in a year ; now no fewer than one hundred had been broken during the past six months. The proceedings were taken under the 34<sup>th</sup> section of a private Act, 33<sup>rd</sup> George III, which provides that such an offence is punishable as a felony or by the infliction of a fine of double the value of the property destroyed. Although the defendant broke the pinions of the three locks, only two were proved in evidence, and the Bench fined him £1 6s 6d, including double the value of two pinions and the costs, or, in default, a month's imprisonment. The fine was paid by the father.

## 23 6 June 1874

EXTRAORDINARY SUICIDE OF A GIRL On Tuesday afternoon Dr Birt Davies, borough coroner, held an inquest at the Birmingham Arms Inn, Dudley Road, on the body of Sarah Elizabeth Curtis, 15, of 3 College Street, Spring Hill, who committed suicide on the night of the 30<sup>th</sup> ult. It appears that the deceased's father is a widower with five or six children, and deceased being the eldest acted as his housekeeper. Her father was in the habit of entrusting her with money to purchase any requisite for the use of the household during his absence at business, and she always acted with great intelligence. On Sunday night last, she told her father that she intended to go to a tea party on the following day, and he asked if she would require any money, and she said she did not need any. At her father's request she gave him the key of his box, which it was customary for her to keep, and on going to the box he found that a certain sum of money was missing. He

questioned his daughter as to where the money was, and she replied that she had it in the pocket of her dress, which she said was hanging in a lower room. She then went downstairs, leaving her father under the impression that she had gone to fetch the money. As she did not return after a considerable time had elapsed, the family became alarmed and search was made for her, but without success. About nine o'clock the next morning her body was found by a boatman named **Allbut** in the Old Birmingham Canal near to Blews Street, and it had evidently been in the water some hours. It is supposed that deceased had misappropriated her father's money and, fearing detection, she threw herself into the canal. The jury returned a verdict of "Suicide while in a state of insanity".

#### **24 6 June 1874**

**CRUELTY** At Mr Field's office yesterday, before Colonel Machen and O Milne Esq, **William James Williams** and **Joseph Mason**, boatmen, were charged with cruelty to a horse. Both pleaded guilty, and were fined £2, including costs ; in default, a month with hard labour.

#### **25 27 June 1874**

**BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE**

**A WAIF** **Thomas Alfred Gull**, 13 years of age, a ragged unkempt little fellow, was charged with stealing a windlass handle and pocket knife, value 1s 6d, the property of **Jeremiah Leak**, boatman of Droitwich. Prosecutor said that on Monday evening he was at Leamington with his boat, when he saw the prisoner and agreed to take him and treat him kindly and buy him some new clothes if he would serve him well. Prisoner said that he had run away from another boatman because he did not give him enough food. On Tuesday witness left the boat in charge of the prisoner for about three quarters of an hour, while he went to Mr Perkins's nurseries to arrange about a load of sand. When he returned, he found that prisoner had levanted, and making enquiries respecting him, he learned that he had been seen making off in the direction of Hatton. Witness followed, and caught the runaway near the Warwick Cemetery, when he found that he had concealed on him the property produced. Prisoner said his parents lived at Vine Row, Aston. His father was a pianist at public houses. He had been to school for two weeks, at the end of which time his father fell ill, and his mother was unable to keep up the payment. She ultimately got him a place with a boatman, but he did not treat him well. He admitted taking the handle and knife and hoped, with tears in his eyes, that the magistrates and prosecutor would forgive him. The Bench thought that the kindest course they could adopt was to remand the prisoner to the workhouse while enquiries were made whether the proprietors of Gem Street Industrial School could take him for a period of three years. The address given by prisoner would be enquired into, with the view of compelling the parents to contribute towards the maintenance of their offspring while in the institution.

#### **26 11 July 1874**

**SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY JULY 6**

**LARCENY** **Joseph Beauchamp**, a boatman on the Oxford Canal, was charged with having stolen a plank, the property of Mr R G Brown of Fenny Compton wharf. Mr Wood of Southam defended. From the evidence, it appeared that defendant was seen to pick up a plank out of the water opposite a brickyard of Mr Brown's, and to place it on his own boat. He at once gave it up, however, on its being sent for. Mr Brown said defendant used very abusive language towards him when he spoke about it. Mr Wood, addressing the Bench on behalf of his client, pleaded the absence of any felonious intent on Beauchamp's part in taking the plank, which he found floating in the water, and took up and placed outside his boat, where anyone might see it. He had no means of knowing to whom it belonged. Case dismissed.

#### **27 15 August 1874**

**BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE, MONDAY AUGUST 10**

**THE PENALTY FOR TAKING RABBITS** **Daniel Compton**, described as a boatman of Leamington, was summoned for coming from land where he was suspected of having been in

search of game, on the 6<sup>th</sup> inst. Defendant wished to have the hearing of the case adjourned for a week, in order to secure the attendance of a material witness who had been summoned to London. Mr Homer of Coventry, who appeared to conduct the prosecution, opposed the adjournment, and the Bench decided that the hearing must proceed. PC Ruane then stated that he had known the defendant for the past seven years. Between four and five o'clock on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup>, he was on duty in the Emscote Road near to the bridge over the Warwick and Napton Canal. He saw the defendant and another man, whom he did not know, gain the road from the towing-path. Each man had a bag thrown over his shoulder. Defendant also carried a large stick and was followed by a dog. As soon as the men perceived witness, they took to their heels, but witness pursued and overtook the defendant. On searching the bag Compton carried, he found that it contained four rabbits. In his coat pockets, defendant also had a number of pegs, such as are used by poachers to fasten down nets with which to take game. Defendant said, after witness had searched him, "I will have a smack at you for this". When witness served the summons on him, defendant said he wished he had set the dog on him, as in that case he should only have had to "serve time" (that is, go to prison). Witness believed it was true that defendant had served three years' penal servitude. Compton, in his defence, said he had been in the employ of the Grand Junction Canal Company for 31 years. The Bench fined him £5 and 19s costs ; in default, three months' hard labour. Defendant said he must go to prison. As he left the dock, he remarked that he never before knew of a man being sent for more than two months for an offence of that description.

## **28 29 August 1874**

LEAMINGTON POLICE INTELLIGENCE, WEDNESDAY AUGUST 26

ALLEGED ASSAULT ON A CONSTABLE **George Bund**, an elderly boatman of Stoke Prior, Worcestershire, was summoned for having assaulted John Gibbs, the district agent to the Royal Leamington Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Mr Hassall appeared to support the information. Complainant, who is a constable, deposed that between twelve and one o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> August, he was on that part of the towing-path of the Warwick and Napton Canal between Waterloo Street and Windsor Street barracks. He saw two pairs of donkeys approaching, drawing two canal boats. On the back of one of the first pair of animals, witness saw a piece of dirty linen or cloth ; and, his suspicions being aroused, he raised the cloth and found five or six punctured wounds close together. The wounds appeared to be deep, but the cavities had been filled up and blackened over. A boy was in charge of the first pair, and on witness enquiring how the wounds were caused, the defendant, who was in charge of the second pair, shouted to him to leave the donkeys alone or they would kick him. Witness then told defendant who he was ; and, in reply to repeated questions, he refused to give him his name and address. Eventually, defendant raised the collars of the second pair of animals, and then rushed at complainant and pushed him into the hedge. This was the assault complained of. The defence was a denial of the assault, and to support it was called **William Fowler**, who was steering one of the boats. This witness declared that the towing-path at the point where the dispute took place was very narrow, and that a movement on the part of the donkeys caused the officer to be pushed against the hedge. The Bench held that the evidence produced by Mr Gibbs was insufficient to support a conviction, and dismissed the case. Mr Gubbins considered that the complainant should wear such a uniform as could be easily recognised by anyone. The fancy dress he wore did not indicate to the uninitiated that he was a constable. **Thomas Bund**, the son of the above defendant, was then summoned for having threatened John Gibbs on the same date, and complainant therefore prayed for sureties of the peace. The specific threat was as follows : "You ----, if you had been on the Worcester Canal, you would have been drowned years ago. Only let me get off the cabin, and I'll "do" for you". Complainant was afraid of the possible consequences of this threat, and ran through the hedge to obtain the assistance of another constable. Defendant said he went off at the second bridge at the entrance of the town to purchase meat for the Sunday's meal, and did not rejoin the boat until the dispute was at an end. To support this version of the matter, the witness Fowler was again called. The Bench thought it was a case of mistaken identity, and dismissed the application.

## 29 6 February 1875

MYSTERIOUS CASE OF DROWNING AT BUDBROOK On Monday afternoon, Mr W S Poole, coroner for central Warwickshire, opened an inquest at the Budbrook lock house on the Warwick and Birmingham Canal, on the body of a man, name unknown, who was found in the canal on the previous morning by the lock-keeper at Budbrook, named **Humphries**. According to the evidence of this witness, it seemed that about ten o'clock on Sunday morning a boatman passing through the locks informed him that he thought he had seen the face of a man on the surface of the water a little lower down. Witness immediately procured the drags from the lock house, and on going to the spot indicated, soon succeeded in bringing to land the body of a man, in a very decomposed state. According to appearances, it seemed to be that of a person between 30 and 35 years of age, five feet three inches in height, of dark complexion, with a slight moustache and not much whiskers. Neither hat nor cap, coat, shoes or stockings were on the body, but there was a plaid scarf round the neck and a large plaid pair of trousers covering the lower part of the body and legs. In the pockets of these were a clay pipe and a tailor's thimble. Humphries was of opinion that the body had been in the water two weeks or more, and that the disturbance of water by the passage of a canal boat late on Saturday night or early on Sunday morning had caused it to float. There was no means of identification, and the police stated that up to that time they had been unable to obtain any clue. On the suggestion of the coroner, the inquiry was then adjourned for a week, to enable a *post mortem* examination to be made with the view of eliciting the cause of death, and also to afford the police time to make further inquiries. It has since been ascertained that about the middle of January a man, who said he was a bookbinder in search of employment, was accommodated with a bed at the Warwick police station. It is believed that the body is that of this man.

## 30 13 February 1875

THE MYSTERIOUS CASE OF DROWNING IN THE CANAL On Monday evening, Mr W Savage Poole, coroner for Central Warwickshire, held an adjourned inquest at the Budbrook lock house on the Warwick and Birmingham Canal, on the body of a man, name unknown, who was found in the canal on the morning of Sunday the 31<sup>st</sup> ultimo. From the report of the case which has already appeared in these columns, it will be remembered that about ten o'clock on the morning in question, the attention of **Humphries**, the lock-keeper, was directed by a passing boatman to a body in the water a short distance below the lock gates. Humphries procured the drags from the lock house, and succeeded in bringing to land the body of a man, apparently between thirty and thirty five years of age, very scantily dressed. In fact, the body was minus coat, hat or cap and shoes and stockings, and appeared to have been in the water between two and three weeks. A large plaid pair of trousers, a shirt and a plaid scarf were the only articles of dress remaining on the body. In the pockets of the trousers were a clay pipe and a tailor's thimble, but no means of identification. Police-constable Brown, stationed at Hampton-on-the-Hill, stated that he had searched every spinney and other places in the neighbourhood, but could find no trace of any clothing. Police-sergeant Webb of the Warwick borough police, said that on the night of the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, a man whom he felt confident was the deceased, was accommodated with a bed at the borough police station. He gave his name as William Morris, and stated that he was a bookbinder walking from Birmingham to Banbury in search of employment. The following morning, after he left the station, Morris went into the Rose and Crown public house, and a dispute arose concerning a fourpenny piece, which ended in his being ejected. When he applied for a bed, deceased stated that he had no money. Witness had instituted enquiries respecting him, but could ascertain nothing beyond the fact that he was subsequently seen in Barrack Street. Witness was at the public house half an hour, and noticed that Morris seemed to be very strange in his demeanour, and appeared as though he had lately been drinking heavily. Mr T W Bullock, surgeon, Jury Street, had been requested to make an examination of the body, with the view of eliciting the cause of death. The coroner stated that he had received a letter from Mr Bullock to the effect that he had found no marks of violence on the body, and was of opinion that death had resulted from drowning. Under these circumstances, the coroner said he had dispensed with the surgeon's attendance. In summing up, Mr Poole commented

on the rather strange absence of the coat and other parts of the attire of the deceased, but said there was no reason for believing that death had resulted from violent means. The jury returned an open verdict of "Found drowned".

### **31 17 April 1875**

**FOUND DROWNED IN THE CANAL** Yesterday (Friday) afternoon, the deputy borough coroner, Mr F Robertson Moore, held an inquest at the Emscote Tavern, on the body of William Holtham, 60 years of age, a coachman of Windsor Place, Leamington, who early on the previous morning was found in the Warwick and Napton Canal near to Boswell's Bridge. The first witness called was **Edward Hurley**, labourer of Radford, who said he was in the employ of the Warwick and Napton Canal Company. About twenty five minutes to six o'clock on Thursday morning, he was going along the Old Warwick Road to his employment at Myton, and when near Boswell's Bridge his attention was directed to the canal by a boatman, who shouted that there was a body in the water, and that witness had better get it out. He looked in the direction indicated, and saw the body floating about thirty feet from the bridge on the Warwick side. He obtained the assistance of another boatman, and brought it to land. The body was completely dressed, and the coat was buttoned up to the throat. The hat was floating on the water at a short distance from the body, which was about three feet from the bank. Fanny Hiron, servant at the Emscote Tavern, said that at a quarter past six o'clock on Wednesday evening the deceased came to the house and was served with half a pint of ale. He sat down in the kitchen and filled his pipe, but seemed disturbed in mind, and his hands trembled. He remained in the house about an hour, and after enquiring what the time was, left, saying he had to go to Leamington to see a gentleman. Before he quitted the kitchen, he drew three pieces of folded writing paper from his pocket and burnt two, replacing the third in his coat pocket. About half past eight o'clock he returned, saying he had not seen the gentleman. He ordered another half pint of beer, and drank it standing, leaving the house in a few minutes after he had entered it. Witness did not see which way he went, but noticed that he did not seem to be so agitated as on the first visit. Phoebe Sparks, wife of William Sparks, 2 Windsor Place, said the deceased had lodged with her for about three years. For the first twelvemonth, he was in the employ of Dr Carter as coachman, but after having had a finger amputated because it was poisoned, he was discharged by his employer, who gave as a reason that he was not capable of driving. He had not since had any employment. Since Christmas, deceased had been very low and desponding in his mind, and would often sit and cry. Shortly before he came to lodge with her, he lost his wife, and continually made reference to it. Some time in January he had a paralytic stroke, which affected one side of his body. He could not raise his arm to put on his coat, and complained of a pain at the heart. Since the stroke, he had been a patient at the Leamington Dispensary, and Dr Thursfield a day or two ago told her that his mind was unhinged. This she had several times suspected, for he appeared to be very restless, and would often walk about his bedroom at night. About twelve o'clock on Wednesday the deceased called to her and told her he should not want any dinner, as he was going for a long walk in Warwick. That was the last time she saw him alive. Sarah Taylor of Bubbenhall said that the deceased was her uncle. He was always very fretful, and appeared low and desponding. Pecuniary circumstances had nothing to do with this, as he had amply sufficient to support himself. In September last he suffered from giddiness, and while out for a walk fell down twice. The last time she saw him alive, on the 14<sup>th</sup> February, he also complained of giddiness and pains in the side. Police-constable Ruane said he was called to see the body by the first witness, and on searching the pockets found 5s 6d in two purses, a comb, a square of blank paper apparently used to contain a medical powder, and other articles. The landlady, recalled, stated that on Tuesday morning the deceased received from the dispensary several powders and a mixture, the former contained in papers exactly similar to that produced. The jury returned an open verdict of "Found drowned".

**32 15 May 1875**

COUNTY POLICE INTELLIGENCE

**GROSS CRUELTY TO A DONKEY Edward Wood**, canal boatman, was brought up in custody charged with cruelly ill-treating a donkey by working it in an unfit state on the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. PC Brown of the county constabulary, stationed at Hampton-on-the-Hill, said that on Sunday he saw the two donkeys drawing a canal boat on the Warwick and Birmingham Canal in the parish of Hatton. The defendant was in charge of the boat. Witness observed that one of the donkeys had a deep wound on the thigh, which the tow rope was chafing. He afterwards measured it, and found that it was one inch deep and four and a half inches long. Blood and matter was issuing from it. He took the defendant's name, and ordered him not to work the donkey while it was in that state. On the following day he went to Solihull to serve a summons on the defendant, when he found him again working the donkey in its distressed and shocking condition. Witness then took Wood into custody. The magistrate told defendant he ought to be ashamed of his conduct. He had been guilty of gross cruelty, and would be fined £1 19s, including costs. The money was paid.

**33 17 July 1875**

CROWN COURT, MONDAY JULY 12

**THE BURGLARY AT THE BULL'S HEAD, BIRMINGHAM** William Downes, 18, chandelier maker, and **Thomas Carey**, 19, boatman, were indicted for having burglariously broken and entered the dwelling house of George Cunnington, Bull's Head, Fordrough Street, Birmingham, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, and stolen therefrom a pair of trousers, a waistcoat and a cash box. Mr Dugdale conducted the prosecution ; Mr Griffiths appeared for Downes ; Carey was undefended.

Mr Dugdale, in opening the case, said that Carey was violent when taken into custody by Detective-sergeant Black ; but Downes, he was bound to say, behaved in a very manly way, and did not touch the police. If everyone had acted as he did on the night of the 7<sup>th</sup> of March, the time of the Court would not have been occupied with the serious cases which had occupied their attention during the past two days. He should perhaps, before the close of the case, have to ask for leniency in the case of Downes.

Evidence was then given to the effect that on the night of the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, the prisoners broke into a bedroom at prosecutor's house. The prisoner Carey and another man, who was afterwards identified as the prisoner Downes, were seen in the room by the servant, kneeling down at the foot of the bed, with a tin box before them. She saw them through the keyhole. It was found that the room had been ransacked, and a ladder was discovered in the yard reared against the window. The servant did not say anything about the matter until the following night, when the police were called in and Downes was arrested.

Detective-sergeant Black said he saw Carey in Newhall Hill on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, in company with two others. When prisoner caught sight of witness he ran away. Witness followed him and shouted to some cabmen to stop him. The cabmen took hold of him, and he tried to get away by "slipping" two coats that he was wearing. Witness, on coming up to the place, saw that prisoner had a knife in his hand, and told them to "stand clear". He then seized prisoner by the throat and made him drop the knife. He said to prisoner, "You are a nice fellow, aren't you, for trying to use that on me!" Prisoner replied, "I was only going to cut an apple with it". He had no apple in his possession.

Mr Griffiths having addressed the jury on behalf of the prisoner Downes,

Carey denied that he was at the Bull's Head on the night when the burglary was committed. He did not resist Black. Black "did not have to throttle him to get the knife from him".

Prisoners were found guilty.

Downes was reminded that he had been previously convicted, and he acknowledged the fact.

SENTENCES

Carey (crying) : I am very sorry to be standing before you for a crime I am innocent of. I beg you to have mercy on me, for I am innocent of this. I am very sorry to stand up before you for a crime which I am innocent of. I was not the cause of it. I beg you to take into consideration how hard it is to convict an innocent man.

His Lordship : I have listened very closely to what you have said. You cannot be more sorry than I am. I assure you my feelings are not ordinary feelings. If I had not imposed upon me the stern duty I have, nothing would have induced me to pass upon you the sentence I am about to impose. But my duty is clear. I can only deal with you upon the evidence. With regard to you, Carey, this is your history. (At this point, a woman in the gallery cried out, "Oh, my children, oh dear"). Let us look at your previous history ; for the sake of those who are hearing what is occurring that they may go home and tell others what is the consequence – the necessary and miserable consequence – of such lives as you have been leading. In 1872, stealing ; January and October 1873, stealing ; in 1874, stealing again – six months, three months, twelve months and six months. All this has failed to make you a better man. What do I find you now doing? I find you now, when the officers of the law are again doing their painful duty, having a knife in your hand and obstructing them.

Prisoner : I never offered to use it ; I never pulled it out with the intention of using it.

His Lordship : The sentence upon you is fifteen years' penal servitude.

Addressing Downes, his Lordship said : Now, I am glad to be able to yield to the recommendation of the learned counsel for the prosecution. He was quite right, however, in saying that it is no excuse for those who have committed crime that they should yield themselves up to those who take them lawfully. It does not diminish their crime at all. Your crime is still a very serious and bad one. You took advantage of the absence of a man whose house you had frequented night after night, and broke into his bedroom, and would have taken away if you could the earnings of the week. I find, also, that you have been leading a life, not so bad as the others, but still a bad life, and one which shows me, therefore, that imprisonment is not sufficient to do you any good, or sufficient to allow me to send you back to society. I find that in 1873 you were drunk and riotous ; same year, wilful damage ; again, obscene language ; again, assault, for which I see you suffered nine months' imprisonment. Taking into account, however, the consideration that was urged in your behalf, I sentence you to five years' penal servitude.

Prisoner : Thank you, my lord.

He then left the dock.

### 34 31 July 1875

**DEATH FROM SUFFOCATION** On Saturday afternoon, Mr G Moore, borough coroner, held an inquest at the Black Horse Inn, Saltisford, on the body of **Robert Harkell**, boatman, who died on the previous day from attempting to swallow a piece of meat. The first witness called was **Betsy Harkell**, wife of the deceased. She stated that her husband was 47 years of age, and had lived in the Saltisford for the past eleven months. On the previous (Friday) morning, the deceased was drinking at the Cape of Good Hope Inn, and when dinner was ready, she went to the tavern to induce him to return and partake of the meal she had prepared. As she approached the house, she saw him standing outside talking to another man, and shortly afterwards he turned from her and went into the tavern. She stopped for a few minutes to make an enquiry of a neighbour, who however was not in at the time, and when she went towards the door of the public house, she saw her husband in the passage advancing towards her and trying to vomit. He came out and went to a stile adjoining the premises, and leaning his head on his arm, which was placed against a wall near, seemed to be very ill. She noticed that he still continued to make efforts to vomit, and that his neck and ear looked very dark and swollen. Becoming alarmed at these appearances, she ran to the public house door, and calling to a man named Lidgett, said, "Oh, good God, run Harry, our Bob's dying". Shortly afterwards she became insensible. Henry Lidgett, in the temporary employ of the Warwick and Napton Canal Company, said that his wife sent him a beefsteak for his dinner on Friday, and he cooked it by placing it in the oven at the public house. When he took it out, the deceased was in the room, and said he should like to have a bit of it. Witness gave him permission to cut off some, and he did so. There were other men in the room at the time, and witness, who was conversing with them, could not say whether deceased ate the meat in the house. His impression was that he carried it away with him. After leaving the room, not more than a minute elapsed before deceased's wife called him out of the house by saying that her husband was dying. He ran to

the spot, and found deceased lying on the ground with his face downwards. Witness picked him up, and looking in his face, said, "He's quite dead ; he's quite dead". Deceased never stirred afterwards. He remained with him until Mr J R Nunn, surgeon, arrived. Mr Nunn said that in order to be able to certify as to the cause of death, he had that morning made a *post mortem* examination. He found a piece of beef, two and a half inches long and one inch thick, lodged in the gullet, a little distance from the top. Death was caused from this lodgement producing suffocation. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally suffocated".

### 35 21 August 1875

BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE, MONDAY AUGUST 16

CRUELTY TO A BOY AND RESISTING THE POLICE **Thomas Green**, boatman of Netherton, Dudley, was brought up in custody, charged with assaulting **Richard Whitehouse**, and also with resisting PC Hunt in the execution of his duty. John Seeley, bricklayer in the employ of Messrs Nelson, Dale and Co, Emscote gelatine manufactory, said that about seven o'clock on Monday evening he was employed at part of the works which overlooks the Warwick and Napton Canal. He saw two canal boats approaching, in one of which was the defendant and a boy. The two were having words, and shortly afterwards the defendant, with an imprecation, struck the boy four violent blows with his fist on the side of the head. Witness called out to him that he was no man to do that, and that if he could get at him he would hit him. Defendant then took the boy by his clothing, and endeavoured to throw him into the water. As he did so, the boy's hat fell into the water. The boy regained his feet, and defendant then pushed him against the cabin door with one hand, and with the other dealt him many blows with his fist. He continued to strike him while the boat went a distance of at least 200 yards, the boy meanwhile crying loudly "murder", "help" and "mercy". Witness left his work and followed the boat, shouting to men on the Emscote canal bridge to stop the defendant. A crowd was attracted, and followed the boat along the towing-path beyond the bridge. The defendant was treating the boy in a most brutal manner ; and the boatman in the second boat seemed to be afraid to interfere. Reuben Ward, who lives at Emscote, was in his garden about 100 yards distant from the canal, and heard the boy's cries. He ran to the end of his garden, and saw that the defendant beat the boy in a most unmerciful manner for a long distance. The boy seemed to be much hurt. PC Ruane followed the boat along the towing-path, but defendant dared him to interfere, keeping the boat in the middle of the stream by means of a boat hook and the rudder. Witness obtained the assistance of PC Hunt, who boarded defendant's boat from an empty boat belonging to Messrs Nelson and Dale. Defendant threatened Hunt that he would knock him into the water if he came near ; but the constable, with the assistance of two other men, secured and handcuffed him after much resistance. Defendant also resisted on the way to the station, and used obscene language to every woman he met. The boy Whitehouse described himself as an orphan between thirteen and fourteen years of age. The boat belonged to defendant's father, **James Green**, who was employed by the Grand Junction Canal Company. Defendant stopped half an hour at the New Inn, Hatton, and also at a public house at the Cape. He assaulted him because he had not made a fire and prepared tea, but witness could not do so, as he was in charge of the horse attached to that and the second boat, and worked them through a lock while defendant was in the second public house. His swollen face and eyes were caused from defendant's violence. The answer to the charge of assault was that the boy refused to light a fire when ordered to do so, and told defendant to do it himself. The Bench told defendant that he had been guilty of a cowardly and savage assault, for which he would be committed to hard labour for two calendar months. For resisting the police he would be fined 40s, including costs ; or in default 28 days' imprisonment, to begin at the termination of the first sentence.

### 36 28 August 1875

BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE, MONDAY AUGUST 23

A VIOLENT SON **Alfred Mitchell**, boatman, 4 Saltisford Buildings, was charged with threatening to do grievous bodily harm to his mother, **Ann Mitchell**, and also with damaging a

window. The complainant stated that about eight o'clock on the previous evening, shortly after she had returned home from work, the defendant came across the road from the Black Horse Inn, and told her that he was "ready" for her. She deprecated his anticipated violence, and he pulled off his coat and waistcoat with the intention of fighting his father, who had in the meantime come home from his work at the Warwick brewery. Defendant was induced to forgo this intention and to leave the house, but in about half an hour afterwards he returned, took a knife from the table and threatened that he would stick it into a lodger. He then went outside the house, and dashed his fist through the window. The damage was nominal. When defendant first made his appearance, he threatened her life and knocked her down. She did not however wish to press the case against him. The defendant was discharged on promising to leave the town immediately, and on payment of court fees.

### **37 11 September 1875**

BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE, MONDAY SEPTEMBER 6

FOUL WORDS AND SOAPSUDS John Ashburn, warder at Hatton Lunatic Asylum, was summoned for having threatened **Emma Edkins**, wife of a boatman, on the 31<sup>st</sup> ult. Mr Heap appeared for complainant. A cross summons charged Edkins with having assaulted Ashburn on the same day. The parties are neighbours, and live in two cottages near to the cemetery on the Birmingham road. Mrs Edkins alleged that about four o'clock on the afternoon of Wednesday, as she was in her wash house washing clothes, the defendant came to the window, and using an indecent action, threatened "that he would knock her head against the wall in two minutes", etc. She then threw some water at him with her hands. Nothing had been said that day, but on previous occasions ill will had been expressed because complainant had mentioned to Superintendent Hickling that defendant's wife did not treat her child kindly. That was not the first time complainant and her daughter had been threatened and insulted by defendant. The defence was a denial of the threats and indecent conduct. Defendant was in his garden pulling onions when the complainant commenced to jeer at him. He whistled and sang to drown her voice ; and as he passed the wash house window to go to his cottage, he stopped to reply to her. She then threw the soapsuds in his face and "smothered" him. The Bench considered the cases were of a very trifling character, and dismissed both, ordering each party to pay expenses, 4s.

### **38 18 September 1875**

LEAMINGTON POLICE INTELLIGENCE, WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 15

ALLEGED CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Henry Webb**, boatman, Brierley Hill, Staffordshire, and **George Moore**, boat owner of the same place, were summoned – the former for working a horse in an utterly unfit state, and the latter for allowing it to be worked. The poor beast was produced outside the Court for the inspection of the magistrates. Both Mr Gibbs, the agent of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and Superintendent Lund, said they had never seen a worse case. Webb did not appear, and the case was adjourned for a week, his employer promising that he would see that he attended.

### **39 2 October 1875**

A MAN DROWNED IN THE CANAL An inquest was held on Tuesday morning by Mr W Savage Poole, coroner for Central Warwickshire at the George Hotel, on the body of Richard Wilkins, 45 years of age, a painter and glazier, whose body had been found in the Warwick and Napton Canal the previous morning. Mr W G Bloomfield of George Street was foreman of the jury, who first viewed the body, which was deposited in the mortuary at the back of the Town Hall. Sergeant Staits deposed that, about half past seven on Monday morning, he received information from a boatman that he had found a man's hat floating in the Warwick and Napton Canal, and had seen either a boy's or a man's head in the water, a short distance above the Tachbrook Road bridge. He commenced dragging the canal, assisted by a man named Stop, in the employ of the local board of health, and in about twenty minutes a boat belonging to the Grand Junction Canal Company came by, and the

boatman, with the drags, found the body near the centre of the canal, about fifty yards above the Tachbrook Road bridge. The deceased was married, and had been in the employ of Mr Brown of Warwick Street. Mrs Fanny Wilkins, the mother of the deceased, said she resided within a few doors of her son, in Althorpe Street. Her son was 45 years of age last March. He had met with a serious accident some twelve months ago, when he hurt his head by falling from a building, and he had never been quite right since. Some time after, he had a second fall, when he stated that he did not know whether he fell from weakness or had been pushed down. The first fall injured him on the front, and the second on the back of the head. He had not taken as much drink recently, but during his life he had often taken drink to excess. Mr Marriott, surgeon, called upon her on Monday night, and told her that the deceased's brain was entirely gone. On Sunday night she was at her son's house, and talked with him for a considerable time. He seemed in a great deal of trouble, and kept complaining of his head. He had not recently got on with his work so well as usual. He had worked on his own account, and when he had nothing to do himself, he worked for other masters. The Coroner : The blow on his head is what presses on my mind most. The Foreman : We all of us know the state he frequently was in, and he might then easily slip off a ladder. The Coroner : Had he any difference or quarrel with his wife? Mrs Wilkins replied that the deceased's wife had been away from home, visiting her friends in London and Hertfordshire. He was a member of the Odd Fellows' Lodge. The Coroner asked how the verdict of the jury would affect the funeral benefit payable on the death of the deceased. Mr Neal said that the money would be paid, unless it were shown that the deceased committed suicide whilst in a sound state of mind. Edward Wilkins, the nephew of the deceased, who had lived with him for the last six or seven years, said that he slept with the deceased on Sunday night, and left him in bed at six o'clock in the morning. He had spoken with the deceased, who appeared very dull and complained of his head. The deceased had never slept during the whole of the night, but kept muttering to himself and was very anxious that his wife should return home. The deceased was never out of the house on Sunday, and had only two glasses of ale during the day, and one to his supper at night. Mrs Hannah Wilkins, the widow of the deceased, was also called, and was asked specially respecting the injuries he received by the accidents named by his mother. She stated that he said he had fallen on the second occasion by touching a man on the shoulder, and that he then reeled and fell against a lamp post. He did not complain of anyone having pushed or used violence to him. Inspector John Glenn said that the person who was with him when the second fall occurred was named Oates, and from enquiries made he was satisfied that it was perfectly accidental. The Coroner said he too was now satisfied on the point, as the deceased did not appear to have made any such complaint at the time, and what he said then would be the most reliable. He thought there was sufficient evidence to satisfy the jury that the deceased was not in his right mind. Besides, there was really no evidence that he had ever contemplated committing suicide. He had fallen on two occasions, and might have fallen into the canal on this occasion. Mr William (?Naul?), one of the jury, said he saw the deceased on a matter of business on Saturday, and he was then certainly not quite right in his mind. Mr Bloomfield said he thought the deceased, as his wife was from home, might have gone to the coffee stall under the railway bridge, and then, being too late to go to work, had gone for a walk along the canal side. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned".

#### **40      2 February 1878**

**CRUELTY TO A HORSE** At the Town Hall on Thursday, **William Sanders**, a boatman living at Long Itchington, was charged with cruelty to a horse on the previous day. Mr David Jones proved the case. Defendant was working the horse, which had a bad shoulder, was suffering from glanders and was much emaciated. The Bench ordered the horse to be destroyed, and fined the defendant £1 1s and costs £1 6s 6d, in default two months' hard labour.

#### **41      2 March 1878**

**LEAMINGTON BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE, MONDAY FEBRUARY 25**

**CRUELTY TO A DONKEY** **John Bagnall**, canal boatman of Bedworth Hill, was charged by Mr

David Jones, the officer of the Leamington and Warwickshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, with having cruelly ill-treated a donkey, by working it whilst in an unfit state on Sunday morning last. Defendant said he did not know that there was anything the matter with the animal. David Jones, the officer of the Leamington Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, said that on Sunday morning last he was looking over the hedge on the canal towing-path, nearly opposite to the Great Western Railway station, and saw a boat being drawn by two donkeys. He got over the hedge and examined the animals, and found a large raw wound on the off side of the neck of one of the donkeys. He pointed this wound out to the defendant, who said that he did not know of it. The defendant owned the canal boat, which he stated was his property, and it bore his name. On examining the donkey's collar, he found inside it marks of congealed blood, which the defendant had since scraped off. He brought the donkey to the George Inn, and it was in attendance outside the court. The collar was saturated with blood, where it had touched the raw wound. Alderman Wackrill : Was it an old wound or a fresh one? Mr Jones : It must have been of several days' standing. Defendant said that he did not know that there was anything the matter with the donkey. It was all right when he went through Leamington the previous Friday. The Mayor : Who takes the collar off the donkey? Defendant : My son ; my hip is out of joint, and my son has to do all the tackling. It is quite as much as I can do to walk a few miles in a day. The Mayor : Have you seen the donkey when it has been drawing the boat along the canal? Witness : Yes. The Mayor : Then I am bound to tell you that I don't believe your statement that you did not know that there was anything the matter with the animal. Defendant repeated his story that he did not know there was anything the matter with the donkey, which was all right when he passed through Leamington the previous Friday. The Mayor said the Bench considered it was a case of gross cruelty to work the donkey in the way described. The defendant must pay a fine of £1 1s and 11s 6d costs ; or, in default, a month's imprisonment with hard labour. Mr Jones asked the defendant if he would consent to a third donkey being destroyed. He said that this animal was not drawing the boat, but was very old, and in such a wretched condition that it ought to be put out of its misery. Mr Hills, veterinary surgeon, who had seen it, said it must be over thirty years of age, and it was so poor that it ought to be destroyed. Defendant said that Mr Jones might do what he liked with this animal ; and it has since been killed.

**42 27 April 1878**

HENLEY IN ARDEN

PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY APRIL 24 **John Hiorns**, a boatman residing at Stratford-upon-Avon, was summoned by Mr D Jones, officer of the Leamington Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, for ill-treating a donkey at Preston Bagot on the 10<sup>th</sup> inst. PC Cleaver said he was crossing a canal bridge at Preston on the day in question when he saw a boat driven by one donkey. The defendant was in charge of the donkey, and witness saw the defendant kick the donkey five or six times in succession with his heavy boots and beat him with a whip. The defendant upon seeing witness discontinued beating the donkey, and begged to be let off, saying he would not do it again. In answer to the Bench, the defendant said he kicked the donkey because the donkey kicked him. Fined £1 2s and costs 18s.

**43 8 June 1878**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY JUNE 3

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS **Joseph Matthews**, a boatman in the employ of Mr Hone of Banbury, pleaded guilty to a charge of having worked a horse and a donkey while in an unfit state. PC Swingler described the condition of the animals when he met them on the towing-path of the Oxford Canal between Napton and Marton Dolen. They had wounds on their shoulders, and one was lame. The constable directed the defendant to take them off work at once, and he did so. Mr Hone, the defendant's employer, said they were right when they started, but they had become galled on the journey. Fined 6s 6d with 13s 6d costs.

DRUNKENNESS **Thomas Kendall**, a boatman, had been summoned but did not appear, to answer a charge of having been drunk and riotous at Birdingbury wharf. PC Waite (remainder missing from bottom of page).

**44 6 July 1878**

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE, MONDAY JULY 1

FIGHTING **William Johnson**, boatman, and a private in the Second Warwick Militia, was charged with committing a breach of the peace by fighting in Barrack Street on Saturday. Defendant said that he and a comrade had a quarrel in the ranks, and when they were paid off on Saturday the man renewed it and struck him. He was ordered to pay 4s costs.

**45 20 July 1878**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY JULY 14

CRUELTY TO HORSES **David Morris**, Rowley Regis, Staffordshire, was charged with having worked a horse on the Oxford Canal while in an unfit state. PC Harris described the condition of the animal when he stopped it near Marston Dales. It was wretchedly low, and had 16 wounds on various parts of the body, principally the shoulders. It was being driven by a lad, and defendant was steering the boat. The animal had been turned out to rest since the officer stopped it, and defendant had purchased another horse to finish his journey to Banbury. Mr Robert Elkington, Southam, had examined the horse at the request of the police, and confirmed the evidence of PC Harris as to its condition. It was also very lame. It would be a long time before it was fit for work again, but might some time manage light employment. It was very old. The horse was produced by the police and examined by the Bench, and its state was still very pitiable. Defendant said he had been confined to his bed in the boat all the way from London till the day he was stopped, and he had therefore not been able to see the horse, which had been managed by two lads. It had fallen into the canal and received many of the scars in that way. He had lost two horses since Christmas, and could not now afford to buy a better. He was willing to put it out to grass till it had recovered. The Bench said this must be done, and defendant would be fined £2 and costs £1 0s 6d, as the case was a very bad one. Defendant would do better to have the horse destroyed at once, in which case the penalty would be reduced by 10s. Defendant on consideration elected to do so, and the horse was taken away and destroyed.

**46 16 November 1878**

WARWICKSHIRE AUTUMN ASSIZES

CONVICTION FOR STABBING AT BIRMINGHAM : COMMITTAL OF A WITNESS FOR PERJURY James Millett, 21, labourer, was indicted for having at the town of Birmingham on the 11<sup>th</sup> August wounded **Richard Jones** with intent to do him grievous bodily harm. Mr Bittleston prosecuted, and Mr Dominick Daly defended. The prosecutor said he was a boatman living in Blews Street. On the afternoon of the day named, a number of persons collected in front of his house, and began breaking his windows. He went out, and prisoner, who was one of the crowd, made a dash at him with a knife. Prosecutor avoided the blow, but afterwards fell, when prisoner tumbled upon him, and stabbed him in the shoulder. The prisoner was afterwards taken into custody. Two witnesses spoke to his having passed the knife to Kate Gibbons, a young woman with whom he was acquainted. A number of witnesses were called on each side, among them the young woman Kate Gibbons, who denied, in positive terms, that the prisoner passed the knife to her. The Judge cautioned her several times, and she persisted in the denial. The Judge : You had better be cautious ; I will give you one more chance, because if you go on telling lies I will send you to gaol. Do you mean to swear that he did not give you the knife? Witness : Yes, my Lord, I do. The Judge : Now you will hear of this again. I will not have this wicked swearing before me. It has been stated by two witnesses that the knife was passed to you by the prisoner. Mr Daly : It may be my fault, my lord, but I do not see that the witnesses said the knife was given to her. They said it was given to a woman. One of the witnesses was recalled, and said he saw the knife given to the

witness, Kate Gibbons. The Judge (to Kate Gibbons) : Now, be cautious. Did you tell Police-constable Stroud that the prisoner did give you the knife? Witness : No, my lord. The Judge : This very day? Witness : No ; I have not spoken to Stroud this day, my lord. The Judge : At any time? Witness : On Thursday last I did. Did you tell him then that the prisoner gave you the knife? Witness : No, my lord. Police-constable Stroud was recalled. The Judge : Have you spoken to this woman, and has she spoken to you? Witness : She spoke to me yesterday, outside the far door there. She said, "It was me that had the knife from him, and I have come to say so". The Judge (to Kate Gibbons) : Do you hear what he says? Witness : Yes, my lord. The Judge : Is it true? No, my lord, it is not. Stroud : She went much further than that, my lord. The Judge : What did she say? Stroud : She said, "It was me that stabbed him". (Sensation). The Jury, after a few minutes consultation, found the prisoner guilty, and he was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment with hard labour. His Lordship directed to witness Kate Gibbons to be prosecuted for perjury, and she was at once arrested by one of the county police, and brought up before the Warwick Borough Bench on Wednesday.

#### 47 23 November 1878

##### WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE, TUESDAY NOVEMBER 1

SERIOUS CHARGE OF PERJURY Kate Gibbons, 19, residing at 23 court, 3 house, Lancaster Street, Birmingham, was charged on remand with having committed perjury as a witness in a case heard before Baron Huddleston at the assize on the 12<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr Walter of Birmingham prosecuted, in his official capacity as public prosecutor. Having explained the nature of the case, he called Mr James Robert Hawkesford, reporter for the Birmingham Daily Mail, and residing at 28 St John's Road, Moseley Road, Birmingham, He stated that he was present at the Warwick assize held on the 12<sup>th</sup> inst before Baron Huddleston, when a man named James Millett was charged with feloniously wounding. Witness took shorthand notes of the cross-examination of the prisoner Gibbons, who was a witness at the trial. He had since made a transcript of his notes, which he now read. **Richard Jones**, a boatman, 10 court, 2 house, Blews Street, New Town Road, Birmingham, said that after being stabbed by Millett, he saw Millett give the knife to the prisoner. Prisoner said that it was a lie; the witness had said that she stabbed him. She never received the knife. He (Jones) did not consider that he had a soul to save. He had told Millett's father that he wished it had been her that was in trouble. Now he had got her, and it would not do him much good. William Holding, 10 court, 1 house, Blews Street, New Town Road, Birmingham, a coal dealer, was called as a witness in the case in which Millett was charged with feloniously wounding. He saw Millett with a knife in his hand after Jones was stabbed. Prisoner was there at the time, and witness saw Millett give the knife to the prisoner. Witness gave evidence to that effect before the Judge. The prisoner, on being asked if she wanted to put any question, replied that what the witness had said was false. Witness further said that when Millett gave prisoner the knife, she ran away with it. Prisoner denied this, and said it was not likely that Millett would run through a crowd to give her the knife. PS Stroud of the Birmingham police force, was present at the trial of James Millett at the recent assizes. He saw the prisoner sworn as a witness on behalf of Millett. The oath was administered by the officer of the court. He heard prisoner cross-examined by the Judge. Witness had heard his evidence read by Mr Hawkesford from his transcript of the notes, and it was correct. Prisoner denied that she told PS Stroud that Millett gave her the knife, and he was a "liar" for saying so. When asked if she had anything to say, prisoner declared that she did not receive the knife, and she had witnesses to prove it. Jones and Holden had said they both wished it was her that was in trouble. Nelly Heywood, 26 court, Summer Lane, Birmingham, a single woman, was called on behalf of the prisoner. She was present when Jones was stabbed, and it was not true that Kate Gibbons received the knife from the hands of Millett. By Mr Walter : Witness was there all the time, and she did not see a knife in Millett's hands. When Jones cried out that he was stabbed, Millett was almost at the end of Blews Street. Kate Gibbons was not near enough to receive the knife from Millett after Jones was stabbed. The stabbing took place in Mrs Gibbons's yard, and witness was close to Millett. She saw Jones struck but not stabbed. There were three or four persons near Jones when he was struck. Kate

Gibbons was at the other end of the yard. If the knife had been given to the prisoner, witness must have seen it. Witness did not go before the magistrates to give evidence because she was not asked. She was written to to come today. The affray took place about four o'clock on a Sunday afternoon. She would swear that after the stabbing Millett did not walk direct to the prisoner and hand her a knife. Ellen Gibbons, the mother of the prisoner, stated that she was in the yard when the stabbing took place. The prisoner and the last witness subsequently went to the police station, her daughter carrying a poker, but witness did not see a knife in her hand. Witness arrived at the police station about ten minutes or a quarter past four o'clock. By Mr Walter : Witness and her daughter were convicted by the magistrates and sentenced to two months' imprisonment for breaking windows previous to the stabbing. Prisoner was committed for trial at the assizes, but allowed bail, herself in £50 and two sureties in £25 each. Prisoner became hysterical and had to be assisted from the dock.

**48 3 May 1879**

COVENTRY

CASE OF DROWNING Mr Dewes (coroner) held an inquest on Wednesday afternoon at the Hop Pole Inn, Leicester Road, touching the death of **Thomas Flinn**, a youth aged fourteen years. Deceased was in the service of **Mr James Ingram**, boatman, and the boat in which he worked came into the canal on Sunday afternoon. A floating plank is placed across the canal to prevent boats entering the wharfs on Sundays, and it is supposed that the deceased in attempting to cross this on Sunday evening to get into the boat fell into the water and was drowned. The canal was dragged on Tuesday afternoon, and the body of deceased was found by Matthew Sly about two yards from the plank. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned".

**49 10 May 1879**

WARWICKSHIRE SPRING ASSIZES

STEALING FOWLS AT ASTON George Knight, 28, labourer, and **William Smith**, 29, boatman, were indicted for feloniously and burglariously breaking and entering the dwelling house of Joseph Jones, 402 Lichfield Road, Aston, near Birmingham, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March last, and stealing four live fowls, value 8s, his property. Mr Hugo Young prosecuted. It appeared that prosecutor was in the habit of keeping fowls in the cellar, and on the night of the day mentioned in the indictment, four hens and a cock were safely placed therein. On the following morning, it was found that the cellar window had been broken open, and the fowls were missed. A quantity of feathers and some blood were found in the cellar. It was stated in evidence that prisoners called at the Waterworks Tavern, Lichfield Road, on the night of the 26<sup>th</sup> March. A police-constable named Taylor stated that on this night he saw the two prisoners along with two others in the Lichfield Road about twenty minutes past eleven o'clock. He afterwards saw them near Jones's house. A fowl was subsequently found by the officer being boiled in a pot at the house of Knight. On being charged, Smith said that he knew nothing about the offence. PC Underhill charged Knight, and he made a similar answer. The officer produced a bag which he had found in Knight's house, and on which were some feathers and marks of blood. Knight asked that the bag might be examined and said it was such a small one that it would not hold a fowl, dead or alive. As for the marks of blood, he had been cutting his corns, and had cut his foot when the policeman came. (Laughter). Knight then called a witness named Jane Beal, who stated that at about five minutes past eleven o'clock on the night of the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, she met prisoner who was going home. He said "good night" to her. Smith called a boy named Thomas Knight, son of the prisoner Knight, who said he and prisoner Smith were on the boat, which was standing in the canal from four o'clock till eight o'clock on the day named, and at that hour, both went to bed. Smith was in the boat the whole of the night. The jury found the prisoners not guilty, and they were discharged.

**50 17 May 1879**

WARWICKSHIRE SPRING ASSIZES

ATTEMPTED UNNATURAL OFFENCE **Richard Thomas**, 65, boatman, was found guilty of

having attempted to commit an unnatural offence at Birdingbury on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April, and was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour.

**51 31 May 1879**

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY MAY 28

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS **Joseph Mortiboyes**, boatman of Nechells Green, Birmingham, appeared to a summons charging him with cruelly ill-treating a horse on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, by working it while in an unfit state, and **Benjamin Pearson**, of the same address, was summoned for causing such horse to be worked. Mr D Jones, the officer of the Leamington Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, proved the charge. Mortiboyes was fined £1 and 16s costs, and Pearson £1 and costs £2 6s.

**52 7 June 1879**

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE

A DRUNKEN MISTAKE John Grimley, a wood turner living in Cromwell Street, Birmingham, was charged with being drunk in Smith Street early on Sunday morning. Acting sergeant Whitlock stated that about two o'clock on the morning of the day in question, he was on duty, in company with PC Durham, in Smith Street, when he heard someone in Priory Road shouting, "Police". On proceeding thither they saw defendant, who was attired in his shirt and trousers only, and was "dripping wet". On witness asking defendant where he had been, he replied that someone had robbed him and thrown him into the canal. He was very drunk, and after being taken to the police station, he stated that he had fallen into the canal, but did not know at what part. The officer, along with PC Parkinson, went to the canal side, and found defendant's hat, jacket, scarf and belt at the bottom of some steps leading to the house of **Mr Atkins**, boatman's foreman. In the jacket pocket was a bottle, which had contained whisky. Witness traced defendant's footmarks across a garden to the canal, into which he appeared to have walked. Defendant stated that he had 7s 6d when he left Birmingham, but when searched by witness he had only 2s 1d. He called Mrs Atkins up for the purpose of enquiring whether she had been disturbed during the night, and she stated that she had heard a man say, "I shall summon you in the Queen's name to assist me". Defendant, in expressing his regret for his conduct, stated that this was the first time he was ever in a magistrates' court, that he was drunk, and supposed he got into the water. He did not remember anything of what occurred, but he had been drinking at Birmingham, Leamington and Warwick, having come to Leamington to see his mother and father. The chairman remarked that the police had very kindly taken care of defendant for two days, and he would have to pay 10s or go to prison for seven days, which he hoped would teach defendant to take care of himself.

**53 11 October 1879**

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 8

EMPLOYERS AND WORKMEN ACT William College, boatman, appeared in answer to a complaint by Robert Branston of Hockley Heath, for refusing to pay the sum of seven shillings, alleged to be due to the complainant for assisting in working a boat from Preston to Tardebigge in July last. After hearing the evidence of several witnesses, the Bench made an order for payment of the amount claimed, and 12s 6d costs.

**54 7 February 1880**

LEAMINGTON COUNTY POLICE INTELLIGENCE

A CAUTION TO BOATMEN **George Ayres**, described as a boatman, and for whom Mr Albert Overell appeared, was charged with having stolen one wooden post and three rails, value 2s, the property of the Countess of Aylesford, at Offchurch. PC Frost said that on the evening of Saturday January 31<sup>st</sup>, when on duty near the canal side in the parish of Offchurch, he saw the defendant go across a field adjoining the canal and pull up the post and rails in question. Upon asking defendant what he had done, he replied that he had merely got the wood to light a fire on his boat. He was

sorry if he had done wrong. Mr Overell, on behalf of the defendant, said his client was a respectable man. The boat had been frozen up near this particular spot and, as the defendant had neither coal nor wood on the boat, he in a moment of temptation foolishly went upon the land and took what he considered to be a useless piece of wood. The rails were really of no good. Defendant was let off on payment of 15s, including costs.

**55 21 February 1880**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY FEBRUARY 16

REFUSING TO QUIT ALEHOUSE **Henry Monk**, Stockton, boatman, was summoned for being disorderly at the Blue Line Inn, Stockton, kept by Miss Sanders. Defendant did not appear, but sent a friend named Kendall to say that he was away on a canal voyage and would like to have the case settled. In reply to Mr Davies, the clerk, Kendall said he was prepared to pay the fine if inflicted. The Bench consented to this and, the case being proved, a fine of 15s with 14s 6d costs was paid.

**56 20 March 1880**

LEAMINGTON BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Benjamin Birch**, a canal boatman of Bromsgrove, was charged by Mr David Jones, the officer of the society for preventing cruelty to animals, with having ill treated a horse. The defendant pleaded guilty. Sergeant French stated he saw the horse drawing a heavily laden boat, and noticed that it was very lame. He heard defendant say it was lame when he bought it two years ago. Mr Jones put in a certificate from Mr O Hills, veterinary surgeon, stating that the horse was very lame on both fore legs, and that the lameness was of a chronic character. Mr Jones added that, as defendant had consented that the horse should be destroyed, he should ask the Bench to deal leniently with the case. The Bench fined the defendant £1 and 19s 6d costs ; and the money was at once paid.

**57 29 May 1880**

SOCIAL AMENITIES AT THE CAPE At the Borough Police Court yesterday morning, before Alderman Smith (in the chair), Colonel Vaughton and Major Strickland, Henry Morby, labourer, Hannah, his wife, and William Corcutt, all of the Cape, were summoned for having assaulted and beaten **William Saywell**, labourer of the same locality, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May. Mr Sanderson appeared for the complainant, and Mr Heap for the defendants. Mr Joseph Francis Dell, assistant to Mr T W Bullock, surgeon, stated that on Whit Tuesday he was called in to see the complainant, whom he found suffering from considerable bruises and contusions on the upper part of the face. Both eyes were very much blackened, and a somewhat slight wound, caused probably by a kick or a blunt instrument, was over the one eye. He seemed very much upset from the effects of the assault. Complainant was incapacitated for work for some seven days. By Mr Heap : Mr Bullock is surgeon to the club of which complainant is a member. Complainant did not tell him that he had fallen over a tub, and that such tumble had caused the injuries. He was improving, but not yet quite well. In answer to the Bench, Mr Dell said a blow from a fist might have produced the mark on the eye. The complainant, who is in the employ of the Warwick and Napton Canal Company, said that on the evening of Whit Monday, about eight o'clock, he went to the Cape of Good Hope Inn, and with a man named Gilks turned upon the skittle alley. There were eighteen or nineteen other persons there, the male defendants, Morby and Corcutt, being among the number. Witness played two games, and afterwards went into the house. At this time Morby was sitting there, and after remaining in the house about five minutes, witness went outside. Mrs Morby was standing near the door, and addressing him, said, "What do I owe Mrs Saywell?" Witness answered that he believed it was 1s 4d. She replied, "You're a liar ; she owes me 8s for washing" ; and after some further conversation by way of explanation, witness called Morby outside and asked him "what they had robbed him (Morby) of" while living at his house. Upon this, something was said by Morby as to complainant having robbed him ; whereupon witness, shaking his fist, said, "If you tell such lies about me in saying I robbed you, I'll smash the pair of you". A Mr Reddish, who was standing near, advised

witness to keep his temper and not strike a woman. Mrs Morby, however, then rushed at him “just like an eagle after a sparrow” - (laughter) - and scratched him down the face, tearing off portions of the flesh. Morby, the male defendant, directly afterwards joined her, “pitched into” him and struck him. A struggle ensued, and they fell to the ground together, Mrs Morby “lumping” his head against the stones, and threatening to murder him. He got up, and they attacked him a second time. His right eye was then bleeding, and he had been very much hurt. He fell a third time, and after these three “ups and downs” he thought it advisable to defend himself and stop the row by striking at Mrs Morby for the first time. The defendant Corcutt, who had not before interfered, came up on hearing Mrs Morby call out, and struck him on the cheek. He and Morby then attacked witness, who was thrown to the ground for the fourth time. Then someone kicked him in the forehead, cutting his left eye ; but he could not say by whom the kick was administered. Morby and Corcutt were the only persons against him then, Mrs Morby having been removed. When witness got up, he was quite “giddified”, could scarcely see, and was quite helpless. Morby, nevertheless, on the advice of some of his companions, bumped his head against the wall. The only provocation witness gave was when he shook his fist at the Morbys. By Mr Heap : Witness and Morby had “a word or two” on the afternoon of the day in question, but he did not threaten to throw Morby into the river. He simply told him to desist making false statements to the effect that himself and wife robbed him while a lodger at their (Saywell's) house, or he should have to make him. He denied having struck Mrs Morby in the face, but admitted having hit her in the side after she had attacked him, and they had several “ups and downs”. Witness was simply defending himself, and quite time too, he thought, when his head was “lumped” in such a manner against the ground. It was not a fall against a tub that caused the injury in the eye. He had no reason for believing Mrs Morby was carried away insensible ; because she returned soon afterwards and wanted to “go at him again”. (Laughter). Colonel Vaughton here suggested the advisability of the solicitors engaged in the case coming, if possible, to an amicable settlement between the parties, remarking that the Bench were always reluctant to interfere in family squabbles like the present. Alderman Smith and Major Strickland expressed themselves similarly ; but the suggestion was not acted upon, Mr Heap contending that the complainant, and not his clients, was the aggressor. William Charles Saywell, a lad, spoke to having heard his father tell the Morbys to desist, and said he saw Mrs Morby “stroke” him down the face. He then corroborated the statement of the complainant generally as to the several attacks made by Morby and his wife, and swore to having seen Corcutt kick him when on the ground. John Handy, who was a lodger at the Cape of Good Hope Inn on the day in question, deposed to having gone out and seen the complainant on his knees. Blood was pouring down his face, and he was calling out, “That's enough ; I can't see”. Morby struck complainant, who was quite sober, twice while he was upon his knees. Elizabeth Barnwell of the Saltisford said that on the evening of Whit Monday, she went up to the Cape about half past nine o'clock, and saw a crowd outside the public house there. She heard John Corcutt, defendant's brother, said, “Give it him well, Harry!” Morby struck complainant several times, although he was leaning helplessly against the wall and saying that he could not see. Mr Heap, for the defence, contended that Morby did nothing more than protect his wife from the insolence of the complainant, and in support of his case called **William Adkins**, a boatman living in the Saltisford, who said he saw complainant and Morby struggling together and “hugging” each other. They sparred and tried to throw one another down ; but there was more “hugging” than sparring. (Laughter). He could not say by whom the first blow was struck. The “hugging” took place close against the canal, and witness himself got upset in trying to save the parties from falling into the water. Complainant fell upon a barrel, and the effect of this fall caused the blood to flow. He would swear that Corcutt did not kick complainant ; he was not near enough to do so. **Joseph Reddish**, toll clerk in the employ of the Canal Company, said that on the evening in question he heard complainant and Mrs Morby quarrelling respecting money matters, in front of the Cape of Good Hope. They called each other liars, and complainant, daring her not to accuse him of owing debts &c, struck her a blow on the left cheek. She then “returned the blow with vengeance, for she made his face ring”. (Laughter). Until complainant struck Mrs Morby, not a blow had been dealt. When she screamed, a number of men rushed out of the public house. He

did not see Corcutt there. Mr Heap was about to call other witnesses ; but the Bench, after a few minutes conversation, intimated their intention to dismiss the case, and ordered each party to pay their own costs. A cross summons brought by Mrs Morby against Saywell was then withdrawn.

**58 21 August 1880**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY AUGUST 16 William Neal, Napton, innkeeper, had been summoned for an assault upon **Samuel Pell**, boatman. The defendant appeared but the complainant did not, and on the application of Inspector Walsh the case was adjourned, it being stated that the parties had compromised the matter.

**59 16 October 1880**

WARWICK COUNTY POLICE INTELLIGENCE

NON ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL **William Edkins**, boatman, Birmingham Road, for whom Mr Heap appeared, was summoned for having neglected to send his daughter **Emily**, aged twelve years, to a properly certified efficient school. Mr Heap, on behalf of the parents, pleaded guilty, but urged that they could neither read nor write, and were under the impression that the child was thirteen years old. Mr Colledge, school attendance officer, stated that the child was in the second standard. This case was a bad one, and had given considerable trouble to the school attendance committee and himself. Every encouragement had been shown to get the child sent to school, but without avail. The number of attendances made had been 64 out of a possible 210. A fine of 2s 6d was imposed.

**60 22 January 1881**

RUGBY

INQUEST On Tuesday Mr W S Poole, coroner, held an inquest on the body of **John Bottrill**, boatman aged 60, who met with his death under peculiar circumstances. A short time ago he fell asleep in front of the fire, and on awaking found his knee had been scorched, although the trousers had not been burnt. Subsequently erysipelas, caused by the burn, set in, causing death. A verdict in accordance with these facts was returned.

**61 23 July 1881**

SOLIHULL

ALLEGED THEFT At the Police Court on Saturday, **Jas Painter**, boatman, was committed to the Assizes for trial on a charge of stealing two fowls and other goods belonging to Mr C Stanley, farmer, Knowle, and on two other charges of stealing from a farmer and a publican.

**62 17 September 1881**

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE

EDUCATION CASE **James Statham**, boatman, Humphries Street, was summoned for neglecting to send his daughter, **Ellen Statham**, to school, according to the provisions of the Elementary Education Act. Mr Colledge, the school attendance officer, stated that the child had only made 54 out of a possible 221 attendances. The defendant's wife appeared, and stated that the child had been compelled to accompany her parents in the boat, there being no one at home in whose charge they could leave her. A fine of 1s was imposed, and an order made for the girl to regularly attend school, the defendant at the same time being cautioned.

**63 28 January 1882**

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ROBBING A FELLOW BOATMAN **Joseph Thay** and **Henry Thay**, father and son of Birmingham, were charged with having stolen half a bushel of corn and two pulley blocks, the property of **William Bromage**, boatman, Saunders Street, Emscote. Prosecutor stated that he had a boat on the canal, and kept two donkeys at the Emscote Tavern. Upon going to the stable there on

Tuesday evening, he found that the eldest prisoner had taken the hay from the donkeys, and placed it before his own horses. When spoken to, prisoner excused himself by saying that he picked up the hay with the litter, which, however, had not been removed. Upon going to his boat afterwards, he missed about a bushel of corn, and went to the prisoner's boat, which lay alongside his own. Witness accused prisoner of taking the corn, but this he denied. The corn, however, lay about the prisoner's boat. The younger prisoner was by at the time, and also at first denied all knowledge of the theft, but subsequently fetched some portions of the corn from underneath his bed. The two pulley blocks were also afterwards missed. PC Standley spoke to having charged the prisoners with the theft of the corn and pulleys, when the elder one replied several times that he knew nothing about it. The younger prisoner stated that he did not take the corn, but that his father handed it to him. Witness searched for the pulley blocks, but was unable to find them. Inspector Hall said that other stolen property was found in the boat, including two iron bands belonging to telegraph poles. If the Bench would adjourn the case until Monday next, he would bring further evidence. The horse belonging to the elder prisoner was in a very poor and wretchedly emaciated condition. The younger prisoner was discharged, and the elder prisoner, who begged for mercy, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour.

#### **64 18 March 1882**

##### **STRATFORD-UPON-AVON**

**EXTENSIVE ROBBERIES BY WORKMEN** On Wednesday, before the Mayor and Dr Kingsley, at the Borough Police Court, William Hughes, sawyer, Waterside, and George Eastbury, platelayer in the employ of the Great Western Railway Company, were charged with stealing a quantity of timber comprising poplar, pine, oak and deal planks, one barrel and a bag, the property of Messrs J Cox and Son, timber merchants, on the 9<sup>th</sup> November. Prisoners are supposed to have been connected with several extensive robberies in the town, a large quantity of stolen property having been found in their possession. Eastbury had erected a shed with the boards stolen from Messrs Cox's on a allotment at the Redlands Shottery. A number of fowls were also discovered, and it is expected that other charges will be preferred. Eastbury was also charged with stealing three brushes, the property of the Great Western Railway Company, on the 9<sup>th</sup> November ; and Hughes, in company with his father, **John Hughes**, boatman, were further charged with stealing six rabbits, the property of Timothy Coles, from a garden in Tyler Street on the 20<sup>th</sup> February. The rabbits were found in the younger prisoner's possession. John Hughes was discharged ; and on the other charges Eastbury and William Hughes were fully committed to the Easter Sessions.

#### **65 22 April 1882**

##### **WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE**

**A LICENSED VICTUALLER HEAVILY FINED** Henry Jeffs Bawcutt, landlord of the Porto Bello Inn, Emscote, was summoned for having sold intoxicating liquors during prohibited hours on Good Friday to a person named Walter Tabuck ; further, for supplying drink to certain drunken persons, viz, John Johnson, William Hardell and John Ball ; and defendant was likewise summoned for having permitted "violent and quarrelsome conduct" to take place on his licensed premises on the same occasion. Mr Crowther Davies of Leamington appeared for the defendant, and pleaded not guilty to the whole of the charges. Inspector Hall said that on Good Friday about four o'clock, he was on duty on the Porto Bello bridge, in company with PC Ravenhall, when he saw a number of persons going through a doorway leading into the defendant's grounds. A man was standing at the entrance to the grounds, but he did not hear him ask the people any questions, and they went in and out as they pleased. One young man entered the grounds, and a minute afterwards witness followed through the back door into the house, and saw him in the act of drinking a glass of stout. The defendant, Mr Bawcutt, was behind the counter giving the young man his change. Witness told Mr Bawcutt he was a Warwick man, but the latter added he was not cognizant of the fact. There were a number of persons in the house – probably 50 – drinking and smoking, and about 100 in the grounds ; some of them were shouting. Witness was not called into the house for any purpose.

Cross-examined by Mr Davies, the Inspector said the age of the young man to whom he had referred was 18 or 19, and he knew him to be a Warwick person, his name being Walter Tabuck. There was an excursion party of the London and North Western Railway Company's employees in the Porto Bello on the day in question. A man named Hubbard was standing at the door leading into the grounds, but he did not speak to anyone. He saw about forty persons enter, but would swear that Hubbard did not ask anyone for a ticket. Witness was five yards off, and could have heard if he had spoken. Walter Tabuck, in the employ of Mr Talbot, butcher, Market Place, stated that he went into the Porto Bello pleasure grounds on Good Friday, afterwards into the bar, and was there supplied with a glass of stout. He was asked no question when he went in, nor when the liquor was supplied to him. Answering Mr Davies, the witness said he had been in Warwick about four months, but he did not think Mr Bawcutt would have known him if he had met him in the street. He did not see Hubbard at the door when he went in, and would swear that no one asked him a question. Inspector Hall, recalled at the wish of Mr Crowther Davies, said that Mr Bawcutt, previous to Good Friday, applied to him for a police-constable, stating that he would pay the expenses of a man being present at the grounds. Witness told him that he could not do that, but would instruct a constable on the beat to keep "a sharp look out". PC Ravenhall corroborated the statement of the Inspector, and said that when he took the man referred to back to Hubbard, he asked Hubbard if he was a traveller, the reply being in the negative. Witness asked, "Are you not aware you should ask everybody who goes in whether he is a traveller?", and he replied, "Well, I stopped all I know, and those I did not know I let pass as excursionists". Witness was present from four until eight o'clock, and at the latter hour a number of persons, between 200 and 300 of whom were there, "began to get drunk" ; about 30 or 40 came outside the house and engaged in a free fight. Amongst them were Johnson, Ball and Hardell. Witness requested them to go away, and they returned to the Porto Bello. Witness was not called into the house by the defendant. Shortly before seven o'clock, having obtained the assistance of PC Roberts, they entered the house together, and there heard a scuffling. Johnson called for a jug of ale, and was served by the landlady. Other persons were also supplied with beer. The disorderly conduct was kept up until eight o'clock, and Mr Bawcutt was in the house the whole of the time. Shortly before eight o'clock, two men named Butler and Ward complained of being struck, and witness and PC Roberts went in and apprehended the three men. Answering Mr Davies, he said it might have been possible for Mr Bawcutt, had he gone about it in the proper way, and with the assistance of the police, to have coped with the people present. PC Roberts also gave evidence in corroboration, and said that the man Johnson wanted him to "have a drink", but he declined. Witness also spoke to the disturbance which took place at the house. Mr Crowther Davies, in addressing the Bench on behalf of the defendant, called the attention of the Bench to the fact that Mrs Burton, a former landlady of the Porto Bello, was once charged with a similar offence, when the case was either dismissed or only a nominal fine imposed, the magistrates being of opinion that she could not be properly charged with acting negligently so as to render her responsible for a breach of the law. He urged that the same consideration should weigh with the Bench now. The defendant was then called, and said that on Good Friday the man Tabuck came to his bar with other people whom he supposed were excursionists, and had a glass of porter. He had never seen Tabuck before. Hubbard was placed at the door to watch the people who entered the grounds, he being an old resident ; and it was for that reason witness engaged him to stand there during the day, thinking he would know any local people who might present themselves. He saw Johnson, Hardell and Ball in and about the place during the day. Mrs Bawcutt, to his knowledge, refused to supply Johnson with ale. He also did all he could to stop the row. Mrs Bawcutt also stated that she did not draw the drink for Johnson, as stated by the constable. The disturbance did not begin until the party were leaving the house. The men started it outside amongst themselves. Her husband called upon Hubbard, Cox and another man to help him quell the disturbance. James Cox, in the employ of the defendant on Good Friday, said that Johnson struck him without the least provocation whatever, and that was the cause of the disturbance in the first instance. Mr Bawcutt called upon him to help to get the men away. **Henry Hall**, a boatman, said that Johnson was one of those who came down to the river and wanted a boat. This was about six

o'clock, and he was then quite sober. Inspector Hall : Was this man quiet? Witness : As quiet as people always are at holiday time! (Laughter). This being the case, the Bench conferred together, and the Mayor then said that, in regard to the first charge in the summons, that would be dismissed on payment of costs (12s) ; but the police acted rightly in bringing the matter forward. As to the second charge, for that the defendant would have to pay a fine of £5 and costs (15s) ; and the same penalty would be imposed in the third case. The fines and costs, amounting altogether to £12 2s, were paid. The Mayor added that the magistrates had decided not to endorse the license on the present occasion. They desired him to say, however, that the police had given their evidence very clearly and well, and the officers deserved praise for the forbearance which they exercised. Inspector Hall : Thank you, sir.

**66 22 April 1882**

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON BOROUGH POLICE COURT On Saturday, before the Mayor and Mr Nason, **Henry Hiron**, boatman, pleaded guilty to being drunk and disorderly and refusing to quit the licensed premises of Mr Stanley on the 14<sup>th</sup> inst, and was ordered to pay fines amounting to 15s and costs ; in default 28 days' hard labour.

**67 1 July 1882**

LEAMINGTON POLICE INTELLIGENCE

ILLEGALLY EMPLOYING A SCHOOLBOY **William Bromwich**, boatman, 5 Sanders Street, Emscote, was summoned by Mr Joyce, school attendance officer, for having unlawfully employed a lad named **Joseph Powell**, he being under fourteen years of age, and not having obtained the required certificate under the Education Act. Mr J W Hassall appeared to prosecute on behalf of Mr Blaker, the clerk to the School Board, who was absent in London. The defendant did not appear, but the service of summons was proved by Detective-sergeant Baum. The school attendance officer proved that Powell was under 14 years of age, had not obtained the requisite certificate to entitle him to be employed, and was absent for a whole week when he was taken away by the defendant. He had only made 99 out of 208 possible attendances. The Bench fined defendant a guinea, including costs ; and on another summons, against Powell's father for not sending his son regularly to school, an order was made for the lad to attend Court Street School regularly in future.

**68 22 July 1882**

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **John Wood**, boatman of Gloucester, was charged with cruelty to a horse by working it in an unfit state on the canal side at Emscote on the 15<sup>th</sup> inst. The defendant admitted having worked the horse, but said he had only bought it on the previous Wednesday from a man named John Griffiths, and he was thoroughly taken in with it. A certificate was handed to the Bench from Mr Stanley, veterinary surgeon, stating that the horse was suffering from chronic debility, the result of old age. It had a galled shoulder, and was unfit to work. A fine of £1 1s and 19s 6d costs was inflicted.

**69 2 September 1882**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

CRUELTY TO HORSES **Edward King**, boatman, was charged on remand with cruelly ill-treating a horse by working the same on the canal while in an unfit state. Defendant pleaded guilty, but said that when he bought the horse it had not been in the habit of having very much corn and very little work ; and when he got the animal, he gave it plenty of corn, which made it rather "humoury", but he kept three collars to suit the state of the horse's shoulders. PC Stockford found the horse, with some very bad sores on its shoulders, dragging a boat along the canal. The magistrates, after looking at the horse, said the animal was in a very disgraceful state, and the collar produced was quite unsuitable. They fined defendant £2 and 13s costs.

**Robert Chamberlain** of Marsworth, Bucks, boatman, was charged with causing a horse to be worked while in an unfit state, and **John Finney** of Tring, his servant, was charged with working the same, and pleaded guilty. PC Limer proved similar facts to the above. Defendant Chamberlain said the horse was sound when he bought it from a farmer in Buckinghamshire six weeks ago, and the change to different work “galled” its shoulders a little, otherwise the horse was in good condition. The Bench took into consideration the fact that the horse was in better condition than boat horses generally are, and let Chamberlain off lighter than they otherwise would have done, viz, with a fine of £2 and 13s 6d costs. Finney was fined 10s and 13s 6d costs.

## **70**      **18 November 1882**

### WARWICKSHIRE AUTUMN ASSIZES

HIGHWAY ROBBERY WITH VIOLENCE AT WARWICK      **Martin Keegan**, 24, boatman, 14 court, 12 house, Glover Street, Birmingham, was indicted for having stolen a purse containing £8 12s and a silk handkerchief, the property of Edward Darby, at Warwick on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August, at the same time using personal violence. Mr Soden, instructed by Mr G Fenton, solicitor, Warwick, prosecuted ; and prisoner was undefended. Prosecutor, who described himself as an engine fitter of 63 Coleshill Street, Birmingham, said that on the day in question he met the prisoner in that town, and accompanied him to several public houses, where they had something to drink together. The same evening, witness, prisoner and several other young men belonging to the army reserve came on by train to Warwick, leaving Birmingham about six o'clock. Upon reaching Warwick, himself, prisoner and two of the army reserve men called at the Brown Bear Inn, at which time witness had on his person the sum of £8 16s. Witness dropped a sovereign, but picked it up again, and prisoner saw him put it in the purse. They remained in the house about an hour, and upon quitting it he and prisoner proceeded to the Rock Tavern, Saltisford, where witness paid for a pint of beer. They applied for lodgings at the Rock Tavern, but could not be accommodated, and prisoner then said, “Come on to the Green Man”. They went thither, and the prisoner afterwards asked him for some money ; but upon his refusing to grant the request, prisoner struck him. They presently applied for lodgings at the Green Man, obtained them, and witness put down 1s 4d on the table in payment. Prisoner, however, took up the money, remarking that he was “not going to stop there”. He desired witness to go out with him, saying, “I'll find a better place than this”. They then left and walked down the road together. Before leaving the Green Man, the sum of £8 10s of gold and two florins were safe in his purse, which he deposited in his right hand trousers pocket. He also had a silk handkerchief in the outside pocket of his coat. They had not proceeded many yards from the Green Man when the prisoner took the purse from his pocket. He tried to stop him, but could not ; they struggled, and prisoner got away. Witness followed him along the canal side, when prisoner, putting his knee against his side, pushed him into the water and then ran off. Witness struggled in the water for some time, until a young man came up and helped him out. He, however, laid all night by the canal side in an exhausted condition ; and at daylight walked round the town in search of the prisoner. Failing to find him, he gave information to the police. Before they came to Warwick, prisoner told him that he had no money, and witness accordingly paid his railway fare. Witness was quite sober, having had but very little to drink that day, although he paid for liquor for the other men. PC Durham stated that about a quarter past three o'clock on the afternoon of the 4<sup>th</sup> August, prosecutor came to him in the Market Place and complained of having been robbed. Prosecutor eventually went with him into Northgate Street, when he pointed out the prisoner as the man who had robbed him. When witness caught hold of the prisoner, charged him with robbing the prosecutor of the sum of £8 14s and a silk handkerchief, and also with pushing him into the canal, he put his hand in his pocket, drew out 1s 6d and two or three coppers, and said, “That's all the money I've got”. When at the police station, on being searched, he refused to take off his socks ; but on removing one of them witness found a florin and six shillings in the heel. Prisoner said, “I received the 8s for working in a boat on the canal”. He gave the name of “James Kempson”. PC Mumford deposed that on the previous afternoon he was on reserve duty at the police station, and visited the prisoner in his cell shortly after his admission. He then told witness that the prosecutor

ran away from a man ; that he stood on the canal side ready to fight him when he came up ; that he was challenged to “come on”, and that in the struggle which ensued he pushed prosecutor into the water. Prisoner, who positively denied having robbed the prosecutor, or that he wilfully pushed him into the canal in the manner stated, was found guilty, but his Lordship deferred sentence.

**71 30 December 1882**

**MAGISTERIAL** At the Court house yesterday (Friday) morning, before the Deputy Mayor (Mr F W Arkwright) and Mr J S Baly, Alfred Allen, moulder of Shropshire and **Thomas Davies**, boatman of Middlewich, were charged with begging in Mill Street on the previous day. PC Munroe said the prisoners were discharged from the tramp ward of the Warwick Workhouse on Thursday morning, and directly afterwards were seen soliciting alms. The Bench sentenced them to 14 days' hard labour each.

**72 24 February 1883**

**SUDDEN DEATH AT LEAMINGTON** On Saturday evening, a boatman named **Henry Bland**, aged 73 years, arrived with his boat at Leamington. After mooring the boat for the night, Bland became ill, and died early on Sunday morning. Dr Shapley, police surgeon, saw deceased, and certified advanced consumption as the cause of death. The body was removed to the mortuary at the Town Hall on sanitary grounds.

**73 3 March 1883**

**WARWICK COUNTY POLICE INTELLIGENCE**

**CRUELTY TO A DONKEY** **Edward Grantham**, a boatman living at Banbury, was charged on the information of Superintendent Moth with cruelly beating a donkey at Budbrook on the 9<sup>th</sup> February. Defendant denied the offence. William Shelswell, farmer living at Budbrook, stated that at dinner time on the day in question, he saw a boat drawn by two donkeys come into the canal lock near Ongley Bridge. Defendant struck the near donkey four or five times with an iron windlass used for winding up paddles in the lock gates. Shortly afterwards he began striking the animal again. Witness then remonstrated with him. Defendant replied that witness would hit his horse if they would not work. The donkeys were in good condition. A policeman came up at the time, and he told him what he had seen. Henry Hume, roadman, corroborated the last witness as to defendant beating the donkey in a cruel manner. In answer to the charge, defendant admitted beating the donkey, but not in such a way as to hurt it. He struck it because it kicked and would not draw. The Bench said defendant had no right at all to use the windlass for such a purpose ; but, hoping he would not do so again, they would let him off this time on payment of 19s costs.

**74 31 March 1883**

**CORONER'S INQUEST** Mr F R Moore, borough coroner, held an inquest at the Dun Cow Inn, the Saltisford, on Wednesday, relative to the death by drowning of a child named **George Edkins**, aged four years, the son of a boatman living at Spring Cottage, the Saltisford. It appears that about four o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, the deceased was playing with other children against the canal bridge, near to the cemetery, close to its parent's house, and fell into the water. It was rescued by a boatman named **Frederick Court**, taken home and put into a warm bath, but died soon afterwards. The jury returned a verdict of “Accidentally drowned”.

**75 28 April 1883**

**WARWICKSHIRE SPRING ASSIZES**

**BURGLARY AT BIRMINGHAM** **Thomas Andrews**, 20, boatman, and Reynolds Witney, 19, Warwick Street, Birmingham, were charged with burglary at the shop of Joseph Barratt at Birmingham, and with having stolen therefrom a number of cigars, cigarettes and other articles, on February 9<sup>th</sup>. Mr Pye prosecuted. Prisoners were undefended. Prosecutor is a tobacconist in Stratford Road, and on the night of February 8<sup>th</sup>, when the shop was closed about midnight, the

whole of the goods were then safe. At an early hour of the morning the occupants were aroused by the police, it being then discovered that the premises had been forcibly entered and the articles in question abstracted. The same day, the two prisoners called at a public house known as the Ring of Bells, and offered two boxes of cigars for sale to Mr Davies, the manager, for the sum of 16s. Davies said he had not got that amount by him then, but would try and see if someone else would purchase the cigars. Subsequently he took to the prisoners 12s for them, deducting two shillings however in payment of a debt. When apprehended, Andrews said he knew nothing of the cigars, and Witney made a similar statement. Evidence was given clearly connecting the prisoners with the burglary, and in summing up his Lordship expressed his great disapproval of the conduct of Davies in the transaction, which he strongly suspected was a knowingly dishonest one on his part. He would emphatically advise him not to do anything of the kind again. If he did, and it led to any such charge as the present, he might depend upon it that there were few juries who would not convict him of receiving goods knowing them to have been stolen. Indeed, if Davies's evidence had not been required on this occasion, he would probably have stood in a position similar to that of the prisoners themselves. He advised him to take a warning from this time. Detective Bird said he knew nothing of the prisoners before this time. The Judge, in sentencing the prisoners to nine months' hard labour each, told them that had their previous history been a bad one like that of the young ruffians upon whom he passed sentence of penal servitude for a like offence yesterday, they would also assuredly have met a similar fate.

#### **76 12 May 1883**

##### WARWICK COUNTY POLICE INTELLIGENCE

**CRUELTY BY A BOATMAN** **John Fletcher**, boatman, West Bromwich, was summoned for cruelty to a mule at Budbrook on the previous Sunday week. PC Lines stated that shortly before five o'clock on the afternoon of the day named, when on duty near Stank House, Budbrook, he saw the defendant bringing his boat out of the lock. It was being drawn by a mule, and defendant was walking with it along the towing-path. After proceeding about thirty yards beyond the lock, defendant struck the mule six or seven times with an iron windlass, and subsequently treated it in a similarly cruel way, this time striking it on the ribs. Witness examined the animal, which was not in very "grand" condition, but could not see any wounds upon it. There were, however, the marks where he had struck it. When he told defendant he ought to have known better than beat the mule as he had, he replied that he "never carried anything else to beat it besides the windlass". Witness had received complaints respecting the beating of canal horses by boatmen in the neighbourhood of Budbrook. The boat which defendant had on this occasion belonged to a Mr Whitehouse of West Bromwich, from whom he had hired it. Lord Leigh told defendant that he had been guilty of a most cruel act, and said he could not conceive how any man could have behaved in such a way towards a poor dumb brute. He would have to pay, including costs, the sum of £1 1s 8d, and his Lordship hoped that this would be a warning to him in the future. He deserved to be most severely punished, and ought to be ashamed of himself. Both defendant and his wife denied that the mule was struck with the windlass, as stated by the policeman, but the Bench expressed themselves perfectly satisfied of the truth of the constable's statement. The money was paid after some grumbling on the part of the defendant as to "the injustice which he had suffered".

#### **77 9 June 1883**

##### SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY JUNE 4

**CRUELTY** **Frederick Goode**, boatman, pleaded guilty to working an ass while in an unfit state, at Fenny Compton on the 20<sup>th</sup> ult. Fined 1s and 14s costs.

#### **78 23 June 1883**

##### RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

**WORKING A DONKEY IN AN UNFIT STATE** **Thomas Lapworth**, boatman, Tusses Bridge near Coventry, was charged with working a donkey in an unfit state on June 8<sup>th</sup> at Brownsover.

Fined £1 and costs, 14s 6d.

**79 30 June 1883**

**WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE**

**BREACH OF THE LICENSING ACT** Charlotte Timms, landlady of the Britannia Inn, Emscote Road, was summoned for keeping open her licensed premises during prohibited hours on the 17<sup>th</sup> inst. PS Webb deposed that on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> inst, in company with PC Ravenhall, he was on duty in the neighbourhood of defendant's house. Between half past nine and half past eleven o'clock, they saw six men enter the premises by the back way leading from Wharf Street. After remaining in the house for about five minutes, the men returned into the street. One was a boatman of Wharf Street, and another, named Powell, also lived in Wharf Street. A Leamington man was observed to go to the back door, which had remained open the whole of the time. Mrs Timms came to the door and, returning into the house again, afterwards came back with a pint mug in her hand. This she handed to one of the men, who then took something from his pocket and gave to the defendant. He stood there to drink the contents of the mug, and then went away. Shortly afterwards witness and PC Ravenhall were observed by a woman from her bedroom window, and they then walked into the Britannia by the back way. Witness there saw the defendant, to whom he said, "You have had a good many people on your premises this morning, Mrs Timms" ; but she replied, "None but travellers". He said, "It's very strange that travellers should find their way to your back door ; they usually go to the front of the house". She again answered, "They were all travellers, and two of them came from Shuckburgh". Witness told her they had seen her supply a man from Leamington with something in a mug ; and Ravenhall said, "What was Powell and the boatman doing here?" Mrs Timms rejoined that Powell came in to remove the "(?sockage?)" for Mr Buckley, and that if he said he was supplied with drink, he told "a great lie". Witness replied that complaints had been made as to her Sunday trading, and that probably she would now hear something further about it. Police-constable Ravenhall corroborated the evidence of Webb, and said the back door of the Britannia was open the whole of the time. William Powell, Wharf Street, said that on the morning in question, he went on Mrs Timms's premises about 10.30 and saw the landlady herself, who fetched him a pint of ale without his asking. He had been previously there about 7.30 to fetch the "sock" for Mr Buckley. He paid Mrs Timms no money whatever for the beer, neither did she ask for any. She had told him when he fetched the "sock" that if he liked he could come and have half a pint of beer for his lunch. He had done some work in the house that morning for Mrs Timms. To Inspector Hall, the witness said he was sure he had no beer when he went to the Britannia the first time. He might have told PC Ravenhall that he asked for the beer, but could not remember. Witness had a "strap" at the house on weekdays, but not for Sundays. He might have told Ravenhall also that this Sunday's beer would go "on the strap". To the defendant, witness said that he never had credit for drink supplied to him on the Sunday at the Britannia. For the defence, Mrs Timms herself gave evidence, and said that the two men who first came to her house on this Sunday morning stated to her that they came from Shuckburgh and were going to Hatton Asylum to see someone. She supplied them with a pint of ale each, but they did not enter the house. The next man said he came from Stratford and was going on to Leamington. She afterwards met **Anson**, the boatman, near the stable door. He asked for fourpenny worth of cabbage, but witness told him he could not have it until the following day. He then at once left. The next man said he came from the other side Southam, and she served him with a pint of beer. That was all the liquor she drew on this particular Sunday morning. Powell came in a little after ten o'clock, as his daughter lived with witness as a servant, and he, as he had before, cleaned the boots and did some other housework. In reply to Inspector Hall, defendant said she could not tell why these people came to her back door. She had before sent men round to the front of the house ; but she should never serve even travellers after this. Alice Powell, a little girl, said she lived with Mrs Timms. On Sunday week, her father came between seven and eight to assist her in her housework, as he had been accustomed to do every Sunday since she had been there. The witness also corroborated Mrs Timms's statement as to the man Anson coming for cabbage, and said that she heard defendant ask the other men whether

they were travellers before supplying the beer. Her father had some lunch beer when he came the second time, which Mrs Timms gave him. He drank the beer against the back door, where the other men were served. To Inspector Hall, she said Mrs Timms had only told her to speak the truth and mind her manners. (Laughter). She did not tell her anything to say as to this case. Defendant said that neither of the men, as stated, came from Leamington. Mr J C Purser, Old Square, stated that Mrs Timms, being in great trouble over this case, sent up for either himself or his father to go and see her. On the Sunday evening he himself did so, and while there the man Powell happened to come into the room. In his hearing, Powell distinctly stated that the ale was given to him on this Sunday morning by Mrs Timms, and that he paid her no money whatever for it. He also said that if the constable told Mrs Timms he had admitted doing so, it was a lie. Inspector Hall : You went to Mrs Timms, I suppose, to sympathise with her, and to hear all you could? Witness : No, I indignantly deny that. I had not the least idea that Powell was there, and you have no right to insinuate anything of the kind. Mrs Timms took no part whatever in the conversation with Powell. Inspector Hall told the Bench that Mrs Timms was fined £2 several years ago for a breach of the Licensing Act. Alderman Dale said there must be a conviction in this case, and defendant would have to pay a fine of £2, including costs. The license would not, however, be endorsed. The money was immediately paid.

**80 14 July 1883**

LEAMINGTON POLICE INTELLIGENCE, MONDAY JULY 9

SHOCKING CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Charles Court**, Stratford-upon-Avon, boatman, was charged with cruelly ill-treating a horse by working it in an unfit state on the 7<sup>th</sup> instant. Defendant pleaded guilty to the charge, and added that he was on his way to Birmingham, where he intended to give the animal six weeks' rest. Mr David Jones, officer of the Leamington and Warwickshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, by whom this information was laid, stated that on the previous Saturday afternoon he was on the canal side, when he saw a boat coming along with the horse attached. The boat was heavily laden. He noticed the horse was very lame, and upon examination found it was "galded" on both shoulders, and could hardly bear to be touched. Mr Hills, veterinary surgeon, examined the animal, and had sent a certificate which stated that the horse was in a terribly emaciated condition, suffering from severe lameness, and in his opinion totally unfit for work, scarcely able to carry itself. Mr Hills recommended the horse should be destroyed at once. Mr Jones said the animal was not so lame today as it was on Saturday. Its foot had been dressed by the veterinary surgeon. He had known the defendant eight years, and there had never been anything against him before. Defendant said he had worked the horse twenty out of the twenty four hours. Mr Jones said the boat was a trading one, and the defendant was obliged to get to his destination at a certain time. The Mayor said it was evident the horse was unfit for work. Defendant said only the day before, the horse was kicking and biting on the way from Birmingham, and it lamed itself by running away. The Mayor : Do you consent to have the horse destroyed? Because it will influence the Bench in their decision. Defendant : I don't care which way it is. The Mayor : It is for you to decide. Defendant : Yes, I will have it destroyed. The case was dismissed on payment of the costs, £1 0s 6d. Mr Jones undertook to see the horse was destroyed.

**81 21 July 1883**

RUGBY PETTY SESSIONS, TUESDAY

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Richard Shakelston**, Stoke-upon-Trent, boatman, answered to his bail on the charge of cruelty to a horse at Hillmorton on July 10<sup>th</sup>. He pleaded guilty. PC Limer proved seeing the horse drawing a loaded boat on the canal, and on examining it he found on the off shoulder an old sore as large as the hand, discharging blood and matter. The magistrates fined defendant £2 including expenses.

**82 21 July 1883**

DETERMINED SUICIDE AT WARWICK Mr F R Moore, borough coroner, held an inquest at the

Dun Cow Inn, Saltisford, on Monday afternoon, to enquire into the circumstances attending the death of Thomas Arkell, a man 62 years of age, residing in the Saltisford, a dealer in tubs and other articles, who was found on Saturday morning to have hung himself. Joseph Arkell, 17 Commercial Buildings, Warwick, son of the deceased, said that he lived with his father at the address in question. His father, who was a dealer, was 62 years of age. He last saw him alive on Thursday morning about half past five o'clock. At that time, he got up leaving witness in bed, dressed himself and went out. He did not speak or say where he was going. Witness's suspicions being aroused in consequence of his father not returning home on Saturday morning, he went to a warehouse in the occupation of the deceased where the latter kept his stock of tubs and other articles in which he dealt. Witness found the door of the warehouse closed and locked, but he forced the staple out and effected an entrance. Upon turning to the right hand of the warehouse, he found his father hanging from one of the rafters by a rope. The deceased's feet were about six inches off the ground. He was quite dead. In reply to the Coroner, witness said that his father had not seemed the same man since the death of his mother about two years ago. He had also seemed very strange at times in consequence of trade being so bad. He was also very much depressed and melancholy. Witness should think that his father had not earned a sovereign for the last three months, and he frequently complained of this, and said he did not know what he should do. Witness was a slater and worked for Mr Grigg, but was away from home all day, sometimes working at Leamington and sometimes at Warwick. When his father came home on the Wednesday evening, witness asked him to have some tea, but he did not answer and lay down on the sofa. When witness retired at ten o'clock, his father was in bed. No one else lived in the house except witness and the deceased. Deceased was in the habit of going to Birmingham for the purpose of selling his tubs, and witness thought he had gone there on the Thursday. In answer to the Foreman, witness said that for the past month his father had not cared to associate with anyone, and he frequently appeared in deep thought. Deceased had to meet a loan that week, which seemed to trouble him, but witness had guaranteed to pay that for him. John Chambers, Pigwell Lane, Saltisford, and **John Maycock**, boatman, also gave evidence. A verdict of suicide whilst in a state of temporary insanity was returned.

### **83 11 August 1883**

#### NISI PRIUS COURT

CHARGE OF PIPE STEALING AT SALTLEY **William Gosling** (27), boatman, was charged with stealing 14 ft of India rubber pipe, the property of George Knight, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January. Mr Nathan appeared on behalf of the prosecution. Knight is a publican living at Saltley, and on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January the prisoner entered his house, and as the landlord refused to serve him, he threatened to steal something from the premises. Later on some piping was missing, and Gosling was charged with the robbery. The jury, considering the evidence for the prosecution of a weak character, found the prisoner not guilty, and he was accordingly discharged.

### **84 1 September 1883**

#### LEAMINGTON POLICE INTELLIGENCE

A CRUEL BOATMAN **Charles Hollis**, boatman, Brierley Hill, pleaded guilty to having cruelly worked a horse whilst in an unfit state on the 28<sup>th</sup> inst. Mr David Jones, the officer of the Leamington and Warwickshire Cruelty Prevention Society, in consequence of what he had been told, intercepted the defendant on his return journey from London with his boat. On examining the horse, he found sores on both sides beneath the collar – one raw and the other very tender. On the defendant promising to turn the horse out until it was perfectly well, the Bench inflicted the nominal fine of a guinea, including costs.

### **85 1 September 1883**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY **Edward Wright**, Stockton, boatman, was charged with stealing a watch from a boat at Stockton on the 10<sup>th</sup> August, the property of **Thomas Powell**. It was proved that the prisoner pawned the watch in London. He elected to be dealt with

summarily, and owing to evidence being given of his previous good character, the Bench, after cautioning him, fined him 1s and costs (£3 12s). The expenses were heavy owing to a police-constable's journey from town and a witness from the pawnbroker's.

**86 15 September 1883**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY SEPTEMBER 10

CRUELTY **Edward Webb**, Highbridge, Oxford, boatman, was charged with working an ass while in an unfit state at Napton on the 31<sup>st</sup> ult. He pleaded guilty. A good character was put before the Bench, and the case not being a very serious one, he was fined 1s and 19s expenses.

**87 13 October 1883**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Thomas Parker**, Banbury, boatman, was charged with cruelly working a horse while in an unfit state on the 26<sup>th</sup> ult at Lower Shuckburgh. Defendant pleaded guilty, and was fined 1s and £2 8s costs.

**88 3 November 1883**

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

SAD SUICIDE OF A STRATFORD MAN An inquiry respecting the death of William Spicer, 26, lodging in Kendall Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, a clerk in the employ of Messrs Ryland, Martineau and Carslake, was held on Monday morning at the Yew Tree Inn, Witton, by Mr W B Sanderson, deputy coroner for North Warwickshire. The body of the deceased was found by a boatman on Saturday afternoon in the Tame Valley Canal near Short's Bridge, Witton, having apparently been in the water about six hours. His identification was proved by a bunch of keys bearing his name and the address of the firm, "William Spicer, 7 Cannon Street". It appears that he was at the office on Friday, performed his ordinary duties, and left at the usual time in the evening. He did not return to his lodgings, nor did he attend the meeting of the Foresters' Court held at the Prince of Wales Inn, Broad Street, where, as secretary, it was his duty to have distributed the sick pay. Instead of doing so, he wrote to the barmaid asking her to pay over the money for him, as he had been taken suddenly ill. On Saturday morning, a friend of the deceased received a letter from him, stating that by the time he received it, the writer would be dead. The deceased was a Stratford man, and was formerly employed as clerk by Mr J C Warden, solicitor and clerk to the Stratford Guardians. Being an orphan, Spicer lived whilst at Stratford with his uncle, Mr Hardeman of Tiddington. He was considered to be very steady in his habits, and was an efficient and reliable clerk, having made much progress in his late situation. The deceased had been engaged for nine years to a young lady named Sylvia Herbert, formerly of Baraset House, Stratford-upon-Avon, and now of Barford, near Warwick, and was to have been married on the 14<sup>th</sup> prox. The banns of marriage were published at St Martin's, Birmingham, and also at Barford Church on Sunday for the last time. Every preparation had been made for the wedding, and a house in Birmingham had already been furnished. On Saturday, as the deceased did not make his appearance at the office, Messrs Ryland and Martineau telegraphed to the Superintendent of Police at Stratford stating that Spicer was missing, and asking the police to report if he had been seen in Stratford. The firm were careful to state that there was nothing alleged against Spicer, and that all his accounts were perfectly regular. On Sunday morning, the deceased's aunt at Tiddington received the following letter from Mr H Ward of 23 Heath Street, Birmingham :- "Dear Sister - I am sorry to have to send you some bad news, but you must bear it as well as you can, the same as I am doing. Willie Spicer has not been well for some time, and has been low in spirits. I was with him on Wednesday evening, and he was to come to our house on Friday night, but didn't come. He was at the office on Friday, and left as usual on Saturday - that was this morning. He sent a letter through the post to Mr Fletcher (a fellow clerk) stating that he would not see him alive again, for by the time he (Fletcher) got that letter he would be dead. The letter put them about very much at the office. Fletcher called upon me at once, and we have been about all day looking for Spicer. We heard nothing of him until after five

o'clock this evening, when we were told that his dead body had been found in the canal at Witton. We went there, and found the statement to be quite true. He was dead, poor lad, and you may judge my feelings when I saw the body". Miss Herbert, the deceased's betrothed, was staying with Mrs Hardeman when the letter arrived, and was so deeply affected that she immediately swooned, and she is now confined to her bed by illness and serious shock to the system. The young lady went to Stratford-upon-Avon on Saturday with the intention of meeting Spicer there, and of accompanying him to Barford on Sunday, an arrangement which had been carried out for several previous weeks. She was wholly at a loss to account for the sad event, but she believed Spicer had been worrying himself by over study, and that his head had become affected in consequence. At the inquest on Monday, Henry Ward said the deceased was his nephew, and was an engrossing clerk in the employ of Messrs Ryland, Martineau and Carslake. He saw him alive for the last time on Wednesday, when he appeared to be in very low spirits. Deceased had not been well for some time past, and had been very worried, but he was very regular in his habits. He had been in the employ of Messrs Ryland and Co for seven years. Michael Fletcher, cashier in the employ of Messrs Ryland and Co, said he saw the deceased alive on Friday afternoon, when he seemed depressed in spirits and said he was unwell and worried. Deceased had nothing to do with the money matters in the office, and was very much esteemed by his employers. Witness on Saturday morning received a letter by post from Spicer, in which he referred to the fact that in consequence of ill health he had been compelled to break off his engagement with a young lady and give up the idea of marriage. The letter was written in a rambling manner, and had undoubtedly been penned under strong mental depression. It was evident from the communication that the breaking off of the engagement had disturbed his mind. **Henry Haden**, in the employ of the Birmingham Canal Company, said he found the body in the canal near Short's Bridge, and was of opinion that it had been in the water about six hours. Police-constable Hartwell searched the body, and found 2s 10d in money in one of the pockets. Mr E L White, chief ranger of the Prince of Wales Court of the Order of Foresters, said that the deceased was secretary of the lodge, and that the whole of his books were perfectly straightforward. The jury returned a verdict "That the deceased committed suicide whilst temporarily insane".

#### **89 29 March 1894**

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY

STEALING LIME Charles Stockley and William Rawlins were charged with stealing two sacks of lias lime, value 6s, about the 20<sup>th</sup> January last, the property of Greaves and Co, from a boat at Kingswood. Mr Dorsett, barrister, appeared for the defendants. The boatman not being able to be present, the case was adjourned till next Petty Sessions, the defendants being liberated upon bail.

#### **90 9 April 1884**

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY APRIL 9

STEALING LIME Charles Stockley and William Rawlins, labourers of Lapworth, and **Thomas Monk**, a boatman, were charged on remand with stealing two sacks of lime, the property of Greaves and Co, at Lapworth on or about the 20<sup>th</sup> January last. Mr Fallows, solicitor, Birmingham, appeared for the defendants. After hearing the evidence, Monk was discharged and Stockley and Rawlins were committed for trial at the ensuing quarter sessions.

#### **91 10 May 1884**

WARWICK COUNTY POLICE INTELLIGENCE, SATURDAY MAY 3

THEFT OF BOOTS BY SOLDIERS Joseph Whittaker and Edward Hurley, privates in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, were charged with stealing a pair of boots, value 10s 6d, belonging to William Wright, a private in the same regiment, on the 25<sup>th</sup> ult. Prosecutor said he took off the boots and put them under the bed, after which he went into Warwick. Upon returning to the barracks they were missing, and he was afterwards told they had been "put out of the window". Witness and Private Bond subsequently found them outside the barracks. Private Jones deposed that on April 26<sup>th</sup> he saw Whittaker take the prosecutor's boots from underneath the bed and "chuck"

them into witness's coat, which Hurley reached off the peg. Hurley wrapped them in the coat, threw them through the window ; he also told witness that he had stolen another pair of boots, and sold them to the landlord of an inn at Warwick. The boots having been produced and identified, both prisoners now pleaded guilty to the charge, and were sentenced to three months' hard labour. They were then further charged with stealing a pair of boots, the property of Private Pinfold of the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment, on the 26<sup>th</sup> April. Prosecutor spoke to a pair of new boots being safe in his kit on the 24<sup>th</sup> ult, and they were missing on the 26<sup>th</sup>. **Henry Wilkins** deposed to Hurley having told him that he bought the boots for 3s ; they went into the King's Head Inn, and prisoner then sold them. Colour sergeant Hawker said Hurley told him he took the boots and sold them to a boatman named Wilkins. Whittaker was discharged, the Bench not thinking the evidence against him sufficient to convict ; Hurley was sentenced to a further term of imprisonment for one month.

**92 16 August 1884**

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS

HIGHWAYS **Charles Newey**, a boatman of the parish of Tamworth, was summoned for allowing a lamb to stray on the highway on the 31<sup>st</sup> July last. Defendant did not appear, and a warrant was issued for his apprehension.

**93 30 August 1884**

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY

SHEEP STRAYING **Charles Newey**, a boatman of the parish of Tamworth, was ordered to pay 7s for allowing a sheep to stray on the highway on the 31<sup>st</sup> July last.

**94 20 September 1884**

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

AWFULLY SUDDEN DEATH A case of very sudden death occurred in Stratford-upon-Avon on Saturday. **Thomas Neale**, 85, of Great William Street, was walking along when he suddenly fell down dead on the pavement. As deceased was under medical attendance and had been ailing for some time, it was deemed necessary to hold an inquest. Neale, who was formerly a boatman by trade, leaves a wife and family.

**95 16 May 1885**

KENILWORTH DIVISIONAL SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY MAY 13

POACHING **William Seabrook**, Fazeley Street, Birmingham, failed to appear in answer to a charge of poaching on land in the occupation of Bethral Barratt, on the 7<sup>th</sup> instant at Offchurch. Prosecutor stated that the defendant, who was a boatman, was seen on the farm on the day named. He had a gun in his possession. Defendant beat the hedge, and when he laid the gun down, witness, who was concealed in the hedge, picked it up. Witness subsequently handed the gun over to a constable. The present was a very hazardous time of year, and these men would shoot a hare that was not worth putting in the pot, whilst they were fat and well fed. (Laughter). Fined 21s including costs, in default 14 days.

**96 29 August 1885**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY AUGUST 24

NO LICENSE **John Howell**, boatman, pleaded guilty to keeping a dog without a licence at Napton on the 15<sup>th</sup> July last, and was fined 10s and 12s 6d costs.

**97 12 September 1885**

NAPTON

DETERMINED SUICIDE A suicide of a very determined character was committed on Monday by a man named **William Jennings**, aged 69, a boatman working for Messrs Pearce and Co, Banbury. The deceased formerly kept the Angel Inn, Banbury, but has since worked boats on the canal. He

was staying with his boats at Napton on Monday last when he committed the rash act. An inquest was held on Tuesday before Dr Wynter, coroner for Mid Warwickshire, and a jury of which Mr Esmey E Hall was foreman. **George Rowbottom**, assistant to deceased, proved finding the deceased about 6.30 on Monday morning in a cabin of one of the boats they were working, with his throat cut in a frightful manner. Deceased was struggling, but did not speak, and died about 20 minutes afterwards. He had noticed him strange in his manner for some time. A razor was found in the cabin, which was used for the act. Rebecca Tooley of Banbury, a sister of the wife of deceased, identified the body, and spoke to noticing a strangeness in the manner of the deceased lately. It was understood deceased was in pecuniary difficulties. The sum of about £6 was found upon him, but it was conjectured that this belonged to his employers. A verdict was returned to the effect that deceased committed suicide, being at the time of unsound mind.

## **98      26 December 1885**

**SAD DEATH OF A WOMAN AT LEAMINGTON** On Monday evening, Mrs Emma Curtain, wife of William Curtain, a carpenter, living in Chesham Terrace, Leamington, met her death under singular and distressing circumstances. It appears that she went outside her house to the canal side to throw away some broken food, when she lost her footing and fell into the water. Her screams for help brought her daughter to her assistance, and she held her by the dress for some time, but subsequently relinquished her hold, and before other help arrived the unfortunate woman was drowned. The affair has caused quite a painful sensation in the neighbourhood.

On Tuesday afternoon, an inquest was held by Dr Wynter, Coroner, at the George Inn, High Street, on the body. Mr E Waring was foreman of the jury. William Curtain, husband of the deceased, deposed that his wife was 33 years of age. When he left home on Monday morning at a quarter to eleven, his wife was in good health, and he never heard her talk of committing suicide. As he was returning from his work at Mr Fell's the previous evening, a neighbour met him and told him his wife was in the canal. He hurried to the canal side, but she was dead, the the body was subsequently dragged for and found. Alice Curtain, daughter of the deceased, stated that about 5.20 the previous afternoon, her mother went to the canal side to throw away some mouldy bread. Shortly after she went out, witness heard a scream, and she ran out. She saw her mother in the middle of the canal. She called to witness to help, and Mrs Fidoe, a neighbour, came, and she immediately ran for help. Several people came, but no man amongst them. After a while a man came and went into the water, but he was seized with cramp and had to be assisted out. The whole of this time her mother was above the water. A boat went down the canal and passed over her. The Coroner : Do you mean to say a boat went down and no notice was taken? The Chief Constable said Detective Baum would be able to explain the matter. Witness, continuing, said people were accustomed to go to the canal side to throw things in. Mrs Fidoe, 8 Chesham Terrace, stated that she heard some screaming on the canal side. When she went out, she saw the last witness and her brother, who told her their mother was in the water. Witness saw she was struggling in the middle of the canal and she called for help, but there were no men to be found. She didn't find a man until she met deceased's husband, who went back with her. Deceased had been in the habit of going to the canal side. Witness was of opinion that it was a pure accident. A canal boat was stopped, but it passed over deceased while witness was away. The boatman searched for the body with a hook, but could not find it. There was a lamp near, but it was not lighted. Detective-Sergeant Baum deposed that at 5.25 the previous afternoon, a woman came to his house and stated that a woman was in the canal at the top of Chesham Street. He ran up and found several women there, and deceased's daughter said, "Oh, my mother is in the canal". Witness could see nothing in the water, and he ascertained that she had been in the water ten minutes. He sent to the police station for the drags, and in the meantime a boat came down, but as the boatman was unable to stop it, it floated over the spot where it was stated she had fallen in. The boatman endeavoured to find the body, but could not. After witness and two others dragged for ten minutes, the body was found about ten yards from where it was stated she had fallen in. It was taken to the mortuary at the old Town Hall. The Coroner : You don't attribute any blame to the boatman? Witness : No ; he did what he could.

Witness was of opinion that death resulted from an accident. In answer to a juryman, witness said the edge of the towing-path was good at the spot, it having been kerbed with stone, but it was slippery owing to the damp weather. The jury returned a verdict of Accidental death. The foreman of the jury directed attention to the insufficient fence on the canal side, and the jury added as a rider to their verdict that the attention of the Canal Company be called to it. Mr French, a juryman, said he had himself taken no less than three children out of the canal at the bottom of his garden. The Foreman : This is about the sixth inquest I have attended on people who have been drowned in the canal there.

**99 30 January 1886**

COUNTY COURT, SATURDAY  
CLAIM FOR NEGLIGENCE

**John Wright**, Stockton, boatman v **Elijah Banner**, Wolverhampton, canal carrier.

The claim was £10 for damages caused by defendant's servants by their negligence in working a boat in the canal, whereby plaintiff's horse was thrown into the water and injured to the amount of £5. Plaintiff had also incurred expenses for veterinary surgeon's charges, £2 10s, keep of horse &c £2 10s. Plaintiff described the accident, and said the woman in charge of defendant's horse was behind it instead of at its head. The boats were passing, and the tow line was tightened and pulled plaintiff's horse into the water, the boat passing over it. Plaintiff's son gave corroborative evidence. Mr Wood appeared for plaintiff, and defendant had sent a letter to say the case would be defended. The defendant's name was called several times and no one appeared, his Honour considered the claim reasonable, and gave judgement for the plaintiff. Before the Court rose, Mr Ratcliff of Wolverhampton appeared for defendant, and stated his inability to arrive in time. His Honour said he must move in the usual way for a new trial.

**100 5 June 1886**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

ALLEGED CRUELTY **Charles Ward** of Oxford, boatman, was summoned for cruelly ill-treating a horse at Prior's Hardwick on the 7<sup>th</sup> instant, by working the same while in an unfit state. Defendant's employer attended and pleaded guilty, and the police stating the wound appeared of very recent standing, a fine of 1s and 14s costs was inflicted.

**101 2 October 1886**

SOUTHAM COUNTY COURT, SATURDAY **Thomas Neal**, Birdingbury Wharf v **John Knight**, boatman. Claim £13 18s 10d for horse provender, grocery, &c. This case was adjourned from last meeting for production of further particulars. These had been furnished in the interim, and were now disputed, and plaintiff failing to prove his account by the entries in the books, judgement was given for defendant.

**102 30 July 1887**

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE, MONDAY JULY 23

THEFT OF A FOWL **Thomas George**, boatman of Water Lane, Birmingham, pleaded guilty to having stolen a live tame fowl, the property of James Jephson, farmer, Myton, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> inst. Mr J W Hassall prosecuted. It appeared from the evidence that as a boy named Charles Bellamy of Leamington was fishing in the canal near Mr Jephson's farm, he saw a live chicken near the hedge. He caught it, and whilst holding it in his hand, prisoner came by with his boat and took it away from him. The boy gave information to Mr Jephson, and prisoner was arrested near Hatton the same day by PC Mason. The Bench committed him to prison for two months with hard labour.

**103 22 October 1887**

WARWICKSHIRE MICHAELMAS SESSIONS

“NOT SOBER NOR YET DRUNK” **Emily Gascoigne**, a widow, and **George (?Tomes/Tomce?)**,

on bail, were charged with having stolen £3 from the person of **Philip Mellor** at Newbold-upon-Avon on 16<sup>th</sup> August. Mr Pye prosecuted, and Mr Carter defended the prisoners. **John Carter**, boatman, stated that he went with his master in a boat on the 16<sup>th</sup> August. He subsequently met his master and the prisoners. They went down to the Crown and drunk two quarts of ale. Mellor went out and changed half a sovereign. The mistress of the house told him he need not go outside the house to change coin, as she could change it for him. He had £3 10s in his hand. Witness saw the three sovereigns placed in a bag, and tied up with a "half hitch". (Laughter). The bag containing the sovereigns dropped on the floor, and witness picked it up. After a while, Mrs Gascoigne showed him the back door – (laughter) – so he left the house and returned home. He saw his master again between two and three o'clock next morning. His master shouted out, "I am robbed". Cross-examined : Witness had been with his master all day. His master put silver in one pocket and gold in the other. Re-examined : His master was not sober, and yet not drunk. (Laughter). Samuel Ridley of the Crown public house said he remembered the prosecutor, his servant and the two prisoners coming to his house on the day in question. He saw the prisoner put money in his pocket. PC Bracebridge said that in consequence of what the prosecutor told him, he went to the house in which Mrs Gascoigne lived, and attempted to gain admission. He tried the doors, and made such a noise that it woke half the village up – (laughter) – but no one responded to his call. In the morning one of the prisoners unlocked the door to him. On searching the house nothing could be found. Mrs Gascoigne was sitting in the house. Cross-examined : He considered the prosecutor was under the influence of drink. John Carter, recalled and cross-examined : From the time he was in the public house, he had the prisoners in his sight the whole time till they went to their house. Mr Pye, in addressing the jury, pointed out that even had the prosecutor been drunk that would have been no excuse for robbery. To search the house was, under the circumstances, a mere formality, because the purse had been already found. Mr Carter then addressed the jury, and in the course of his speech dwelt upon that portion of the evidence which tended to prove the inebriated condition of the prosecutor. The Chairman remarked that the case was certainly not a very "savoury" one, and was surrounded with considerable doubt. He then criticised the various points which arose in the course of the evidence, and left the case in the hands of the jury. Both prisoners were found guilty, and sentenced to three months' hard labour.

#### **104 29 October 1887**

**SUDDEN DEATH** On Monday morning, a boatman named **John Holback**, in the employ of Mr Tyso of Emscote, was about to start out on his journey, when he found that his donkeys had strayed ahead. He ran after them as far as Leamington Hill, and in returning was so much overcome by the exertion that he fell down twice before reaching home, where he died almost immediately. Deceased was 67 years of age.

#### **105 3 December 1887**

**SAD DROWNING FATALITY AT WARWICK** An inquest was held at the Cape of Good Hope Inn, Warwick, on Monday afternoon, before the Coroner (Mr F R Moore), on the body of William Wellington of the Packmores, found drowned in the canal the same morning. Mr J W Glover was foreman of the jury. Richard Blaham, in the employ of Mr J W Glover, stated that about a quarter to eight on the morning in question he was coming across from the shed, when he saw the deceased walking on the side of the canal opposite the towing-path. He was about 220 yards away. He was walking up and down near the locks when he first saw him, and about twenty minutes later witness saw him similarly occupied. He subsequently saw him after he had been pulled out of the canal. Witness knew the deceased quite well. Samuel Reynolds, landlord of the Cape of Good Hope Inn, said he had known the deceased all his life. He first saw him that day at about a quarter to eight in the morning, near the lock, walking backwards and forwards. Deceased afterwards went down into the field, and witness lost sight of him for some time. He next saw him at about ten minutes past eight, and again later on, when he heard a boatman cry out. Witness immediately ran out and found the deceased standing upright in the water at the mouth of the lock. The lock itself was empty. The

deceased's head was just visible above the top of the water. Witness pulled deceased out of the water and sent for a police-constable. It was twenty minutes to nine when he dragged the body out of the water. He had not seen the deceased since the previous Friday evening, when he brought him a note, and returned after a few minutes. Witness had never seen the deceased in his house before. John Wellington, living at 11 Packmores, stated that the deceased was his father and lived at home with him. He was 68 years old on the 1<sup>st</sup> of last March. He had no regular employment, but helped turn a mangle, and carried out the washing. Witness last saw him that morning when he went to work, at about five minutes past six. Deceased was lying on the sofa downstairs, awake. Witness received the news of his father's death at about half past ten in the morning in question. His father had been addicted to drinking during the past fortnight, and had been remonstrated with by witness and his two brothers. Deceased had for some time appeared strange in his conduct. On one occasion when a postcard came for him to ring at the High Church, he said he did not feel right. Deceased, who was blind in one eye, had frequently complained of his eyesight being bad. Deceased was often in the habit of leaving the house in the morning and not returning before evening. By a juror : Deceased had complained very much about the weakness of his legs through sciatica. It was a usual thing for him to sleep downstairs. PC Salt deposed to receiving information at the police station at about ten minutes to nine that morning, to the effect that a man had been drowned at the Cape. On proceeding to the spot, witness found the deceased lying on the towing-path. He examined the body, and found it still warm. He could discover no marks of violence on the body, nor anything in his possession. He took the body to the Cape of Good Hope Inn. The Coroner then briefly addressed the jury, and pointed out in his opinion the evidence adduced could only justify a verdict of "Found drowned". After a few minutes consideration, the jury returned a verdict in accordance with the coroner's view.

#### **106 9 June 1888**

##### WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE INTELLIGENCE

QUARRELSOME BOATMEN William Savage, Market Street, labourer, and **John Chambers**, boatman of the Saltisford, were charged with being drunk and disorderly in the Cape Road on Saturday night. They both pleaded guilty. PC Durham stated that he found the two men stripped and fighting near the Cemetery gates. Mr Clapham, scripture reader, was endeavouring to part them but could not do so. Both prisoners were drunk, and their faces were covered with blood. Inspector Hall said both men had been previously convicted. The Bench ordered each to pay a fine of 10s including costs, or seven days.

#### **107 29 September 1888**

##### SOUTHAM SPECIAL SESSIONS, MONDAY

BOUND OVER TO KEEP THE PEACE **Frank Woodhouse**, late of Grandborough, boatman, was summoned by **George Alsop** of the same place, lock-keeper, for using threatening language towards him on the 21<sup>st</sup> ult. Defendant pleaded guilty and, upon payment of 17s 6d costs, he was bound over in the sum of £5 and one surety to the same amount to keep the peace and be of good behaviour towards complainant for six months.

#### **108 17 November 1888**

##### STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

BOROUGH POLICE COURT, MONDAY **Frederick Court**, 23 Summer Row, boatman, was charged with embezzling a sum of 5s belonging to Louisa Kirby, a single woman living in the same locality. The prosecutrix said she was at a sale which was conducted by Mr Walker Barnard in Payton Street on October 18<sup>th</sup>. She there bid for a flock bed, and it was knocked down to her for 5s. She saw the prisoner at the sale and, knowing him, she gave him 5s, asking him if he would kindly get the bed and bring it home for her. He promised he would do so. He took the money and later in the day brought the bed home to Summer Row, and prosecutrix gave him 3d for his trouble. Some time afterwards, she received a bill from Mr Walker Barnard, the auctioneer, with a note intimating

that the bed had not been paid for. She went to the auctioneer's office and, after making inquiries, obtained a warrant and had the prisoner arrested. A number of witnesses were called who swore that the defendant had never paid for the bed, and that they had not seen him take it out of the place. The auctioneer's men also said that they had barricaded the back door of the premises, and that later on they discovered that it had been opened. It was inferred that the bed had been taken out that way secretly. The defence was that the prisoner paid the auctioneer's clerk for the bed, and that the auctioneer's men saw him take it out of the house. He admitted that he had no ticket, and said it was a very common occurrence for goods to be taken away and for no tickets to be given when they were paid for. The Bench intimated that they were willing to send the case to the Assizes, where the prisoner could be tried by a jury, but he preferred for the case to be dealt with summarily. He was then fined 10s and costs, amounting altogether to £1 18s.

### **109 15 December 1888**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY DECEMBER 10

CRUELTY **William Smith**, Saltley, boatman, was summoned for cruelly ill-treating a horse at Long Itchington by working it while in an unfit state on the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. Defendant pleaded guilty. The Bench did not consider the case against defendant a serious one, as the horse did not belong to him ; he was therefore fined 5s and 12s 6d costs, which he paid.

### **110 22 March 1890**

WARWICKSHIRE SPRING ASSIZES

BURGLARY BY CANAL BOATMEN AT SOLIHULL **William Smith**, 21, and **Joseph Footman**, 26, the first described as a watchmaker and the second as a boatman, but both of whom were following the latter occupation at the time of the offence, were charged with feloniously and burglariously breaking and entering the dwelling house of Edmund Field on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 1889, at Solihull, about the hour of twelve in the night, and stealing therefrom seven bottles of sweets and other articles, his property. Mr Parfitt appeared for the prosecution. Edmund Field, shopkeeper of Solihull Lodge, gave evidence to the effect that on the night in question he went to bed about eleven o'clock, leaving everything secure and the place locked up. On getting up about half past five on the following morning, he found that the shop had been broken into. He missed seven bottles of sweets, one bottle of candied peel, one bottle of Spanish juice (ie liquorice), three tins of salmon, four pounds of bacon and eleven pounds of oatmeal, value 18s. He identified certain articles afterwards shown him by the police. PC Edwards of Earlswood, Tamworth, said he was on duty at Earlswood on the 15<sup>th</sup> May last, and saw the two prisoners at a quarter to ten o'clock in the Red Lion public house. About a quarter to eleven he again saw them about three quarters of a mile from the prosecutor's house, going in that direction. They were rather the worse for beer. They were in charge of two canal horse boats belonging to the Corporation of Birmingham. **Thomas Rawbone** of Yardley Wood, labourer in the employ of the Stratford Canal Company, deposed to seeing the prisoners with their boats near his house, which is close to the canal, about a quarter past one on the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>. His house was about two miles from the prosecutor's. **Mr Logan Walker** of 42 Herbert Road, Small Heath, boat foreman in the employ of the Birmingham Corporation, said the prisoners had been in the employ of the Corporation, and on this occasion were engaged in taking night soil to be emptied at Earlswood. They ought to have returned the same night, but did not put in an appearance until the following afternoon. Some liquorice, peppermint and broken glass were afterwards found at the bottom of the boat. William Walker, labourer of Yardley Wood, said he also lived close to the side of the canal, and on the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup> May, just after five o'clock, he found an oatmeal tin, with a scoop inside, in his garden. He handed the articles over to his wife with instructions to give them to the police. Emma Walker, wife of the last witness, gave corroborative evidence. PC Caley of Yardley district, produced a stick of Spanish juice and a peppermint lozenge – the sight of which caused some amusement – which he found in the boat used by the prisoners on the night in question. He saw some broken glass at the end of the cabin. At the request of the Judge, he handed the fragments that remained of the spoil over to the Bench. The

Judge : They are similar to the things you saw in the house? Witness : Similar the same, my lord. (Laughter). PC Pickthorne of Yardley Wood produced a large square tin of oatmeal, about the size of an ordinary grocer's biscuit tin, received from Mrs Walker. Inspector Carbin of Solihull deposed to arresting the men on the 6<sup>th</sup> January of the present year, and charging them with stealing the articles already enumerated, to which they made no reply. The Judge, having pointed out that the act of breaking into a house between the hours of nine o'clock in the night and six o'clock in the morning constituted a burglary, went on to point out that the only question for the jury was whether the finding of this stick of Spanish liquorice and peppermint lozenge, taken with the other circumstances of the case, satisfied them that the prisoners were the men who were responsible for the offence. The jury consulted for a few minutes, and the Foreman then said they would like to know where the men were from the time of the burglary until the arrest. The Judge : We cannot tell that. The Foreman : The jury would like to know whether they remained in the neighbourhood or whether they absconded. The Judge : It does not always follow that the innocent man remains in the neighbourhood, or that the guilty man goes away. If you like, I will ask the police. Inspector Carbin said the men absconded immediately. He was in Birmingham week after week on the look out for them. The Judge : That will perhaps help you. The jury immediately found the men guilty. Prisoners had nothing to say, and there were no previous convictions. The Judge, in passing sentence, observed that the robbery was not a serious one, and no violence had been used. It was, however, to a certain extent a serious offence to break into a house in the dead of night, and he would sentence both prisoners to three months' imprisonment with hard labour.

### **111 29 November 1890**

**DROWNED IN THE CANAL** An inquest was held at the Dun Cow Inn, Saltisford, on Thursday afternoon last before the Borough Coroner, Mr F R Moore, touching the death of **Joseph Parsons**, aged fourteen, a boat boy. From the evidence, it appeared that the boy was engaged on Tuesday afternoon at the time of the accident in opening the gates on the Birmingham and Warwick Canal at what is called the Hatton fourth lock, which lies between Ugly Bridge and Warwick. The lad had only been engaged at his present occupation for the last few weeks, although he had on several occasions accompanied his employers on journeys about the country, and on this particular afternoon he had been sent on in advance of the boat to prepare the lock for its entry. It was probably owing, as one of the witnesses remarked, to the dangerous formation of the lock that the accident occurred. The beam of one of the gates at the bottom end of the lock overhangs the water a little ; and to accomplish the task of shutting the gate, the person so employed has to reach over the vacant place to get at the beam before the gate can be shut. The floor also being composed of blue brick coping is very liable in the least wet or damp weather to be slippery, and it is inferred that the boy slipped or fell straight down into the water whilst endeavouring to close the gate, which was on the side opposite the towing-path. He had shut the one gate and had evidently crossed in safety to the other, because if he had fallen whilst jumping across, it would have been an impossibility for him to have reached the water without coming in violent contact with the gate itself or the wall adjoining. Life was extinct when the boy was taken out by his companion, and he was forthwith brought on the boat to his employer's house at Warwick. A rather sad feature in the accident was that it had only been decided that day for the boy to be permanently engaged as a boat boy to Mr Branson.

Mr C Wilson was foreman of the jury.

Elizabeth Parsons, mother of the deceased, living at Ivy Cottages, Rowington, stated that her husband was a bricklayer by trade. Her son, the deceased, was fourteen years old the present month, and was engaged by Mr Branson on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November as boat boy. On Tuesday between one and two o'clock the boy was at home, when she last saw him, but he left her at half past one to go back to work. Before he left, he told her his employer was very kind to him, and it was because she was aware of the fact that she had in the first instance let him go to be with Mr Branson. At the time the boy called, Mrs Branson was at the house, and it was then arranged that the lad should be permanently engaged, he having been before only on trial. The boat left Rowington on its way to

Hatton, and she did not see the boy again until after he was drowned.

**John Branson** of 7 Commercial Buildings, Warwick, boatman, said the deceased entered his service in the early part of this month, and his work consisted in going along with the boat, getting the locks ready and seeing to the horse. On Tuesday last they left Rowington at twelve o'clock. Besides the deceased and himself, his brother-in-law, **Frederick Adkins**, was with them. They came on towards Warwick, and the deceased was sent forward to open the locks. They passed through seventeen locks, and when they got on to the next lock the time was about ten minutes to five. Daylight had not quite gone and the moon was up, but they would not see very far. As they neared the locks, his brother-in-law called out deceased's name, but the boy could not be found. The boat was about 100 yards from the lock when he called out first. He then called to witness, who was on the boat, and he came as quickly as he could. They found one of the gates open and one shut, and the first thing they did was to see if there was any sign of the boy in the water. Whilst he was looking, his companion said, "What's that black there?", and he picked the thing up, which proved to be deceased's hat, out of the water. He had a boat hook in his hand, and he put that in the water and found deceased. He pulled him out but he was quite dead. They then brought the body on to Warwick. The boy might have been ten minutes at the lock before they came. The windlass was on his shoulder when he found him, and it dropped off when he raised him. In his opinion, the boy must have slipped off the blue coping whilst he was trying to shut the lock. It was a dangerous lock, and witness had slipped at the same place himself. The body was found about five yards from the gates. His brother-in-law had been leading the horse. There was no one else there when the deceased was got out, and they used all the means in their power to restore animation. They did not do any rubbing, but a good few minutes were spent in trying to find out if life had quite gone. It was about twenty minutes from the time they missed him to the time he was found. Witness heard one of the paddles shut down by the deceased, although he did not hear the other, but that might have been because some boatman preceding them had knocked it down when he left. Witness was of opinion that he did not fall whilst crossing the locks, because if he had done so he would have been bruised by striking against the wall or the lock gate. The boy, although he had only been regularly employed since the beginning of the month, had often travelled with him, and had been into Northamptonshire and Staffordshire, and was thoroughly accustomed to the work. He had many times before opened the same gate. The way the boatmen had to reach over to the beam was very dangerous, and he had himself slipped there. It had been raining that afternoon, and no doubt the bricks were slippery.

Frederick Adkins, a youth, said he was accompanying the boat on Tuesday last, and was walking on the towing-path driving the horse. He last saw the deceased at Ugly Bridge, which was about half a mile from the lock in question. The boy was on the towing-path and went on to open the next lock. When witness got close against the top of the lock, he saw that there was only one gate shut, and he called out, "Joe". He then called to Branson, who came with a boat hook. He saw deceased's hat on the water against the tail end of the lock. It seemed to come up from under the water, and his brother-in-law got it out with the pole. He put the shaft down again and got the boy out, but he appeared to be dead. It took about a quarter of an hour to go from Ugly Bridge to the lock. He did not know if the boy could swim. They could not see the lock from Ugly Bridge, because it was dark. Witness had shut the gate often, and it was awkward because the pole hung over the water.

PS Webb stated that about six o'clock he was sent by Inspector Hall to enquire as to the cause of this death. He came at about a quarter past six, and found the men with the deceased lying on a board by the canal bank quite dead. Branson said he should like the body moved to his house, and it was done at once. He afterwards had the body examined, but there were no marks or bruises, and the lad had nothing in his pockets.

Inspector Hall said in his opinion all the captains of canal boats should be conversant with the ambulance work, so that they would know how to act on such occasions as the present one. It appeared that no artificial means had been employed by the boatmen to restore animation.

One of the jurymen then referred to a witness's statement about the lock where the accident occurred being dangerous, but the Coroner pointed out that as no accident had really occurred there

previously, and the witnesses had safely accomplished the task many times before, there was hardly any ground for complaint to be made to the Canal Company. The jury unanimously returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

#### **112 4 July 1891**

**DROWNED IN THE CANAL AT EMSCOTE** A sad fatal accident occurred on Saturday afternoon last at Emscote. A couple of little boys were playing by the side of the canal when one of them fell in and was drowned. They had wandered from home in the usual way on the day when there was no school. About half an hour before the accident occurred, they were seen a hundred yards below the bridge by a boat builder, who was on the opposite side of the canal, and he, thinking that they might get drowned, told them to run off home away from the water. This they appeared to do, for they made off in the direction of the Emscote Bridge, but the man did not see them any further. The next he heard was that his anticipations had proved true, and one of them was in the water. The man along with his employer got a boat and crossed the canal to the spot. The little boy Ward was standing under the bridge, and upon being questioned as to the whereabouts of his little friend, he said he was in there – pointing at the time to the water – adding simply in his childish manner and painfully pathetically that he was waiting for him to come out again. The boy was very soon afterwards got out, but his little life had fled. The boy's name was Alfred Fennell, son of Mr George Fennell, carter, 6 Humphries Street, Emscote. The inquest was held at the Emscote Tavern, where the body was taken, on Monday afternoon, before the Borough Coroner, Mr F R Moore. Mr S Reynolds was foreman of the jury. The father of the deceased said that the boy was three years old last September, and used to go to school at All Saints'. Like other boys he used to play about the streets, but witness was not at home on Saturday, and did not therefore see him go out. He heard that he had been drowned in the canal about two o'clock, and upon going to the Emscote Tavern, he saw the body there. **Edwin Roberts**, boat builder working at Emscote, said that he saw little Fennell a few minutes before one o'clock on the towing-path of the canal about a hundred yards on the Leamington side of the bridge. There was a little lad named Richard Ward with him. They were playing, and he told them to run away, which they did do, in the direction of the bridge. He could not say, however, whether they left the canal and got on to the road. About twenty minutes past one, Mr Farr, witness's employer, came to him and said there was a boy in the water. They at once got two shafts, and getting into a small boat, went across the canal to the bridge. The little boy Ward was standing under the bridge, and they asked him whom the hat belonged to that was lying on the path. He said a boatman had thrown it out of the canal, and it belonged to a little lad in there – pointing to the water. He was waiting for him to come out again, he said. They then dragged for the lad, and got him out under the bridge in about a minute. They laid him on the towing-path and tried to restore life, but he was quite dead. Witness then brought him down to the Tavern. Two boats had passed by since he first saw the boys on the bank, and a boatman had thrown the hat out of the water. He had warned the boy Ward away from the canal many times, but he did not particularly remember having seen the other one there. The little boy Ward being too young to give evidence, this concluded the enquiry. The Coroner remarked that it seemed a pity these little children should be allowed to wander so, and a juryman also endorsed the words, and said it wanted a little care on the part of the mothers. A verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was returned.

#### **113 12 December 1891**

**FOUND DROWNED IN THE CANAL AT NAPTON** Dr D R Wynter (the coroner for Central Warwickshire) held an inquest at the Bull and Butcher Inn, Napton Folley, on Monday afternoon, on the body of **Andrew Godfrey**, aged 16, a native of Leicester, who was drowned in the Canal on Thursday night of last week.

Caroline Grimsby, wife of Francis Grimsby, warehouseman, Leicester, stated that she knew deceased. She last saw him alive about eight weeks ago. He seemed in good health and in good spirits.

**William Smith** stated that he was a boatman and lived at Newbold. He saw the deceased at the

wood near Nuneaton, and set him on. It was on a Monday, nearly three weeks ago. Witness's boat was near the landing, where the boats loaded. Deceased wanted a job and witness said he might go with him. Since then they had gone various journeys, and the boy had been with him all the time. On Thursday night, they were coming down the canal at Napton towards the Bull and Butcher. When they came out of the second lock, witness told him to pull the gate to, and go and get the bottom lock ready. After he told him, witness opened the gate and started the horse, and came down the pound gently. Just before witness got out through this lock, he shouted out to the deceased, "How is it", but no answer came, so he ran to the lock and hulloaed, "Andrew!" He hulloaed "Andrew" twice, and then began to pull the bottom gates to. He was pulling them to and looking through the bridge to see if he could see anything of him there, and went up the outside and "drawed" and looked up to see if he could see him uphill. Then he opened the gate and pulled the boat in. He afterwards shut the gate and "drawed" at the bottom lock. (A Juror : To empty the lock). Then he put the horse in at the stable and opened the gates, and seeing George Eadon coming down, he asked him if he had seen his "chap" anywhere. Eadon said, "No, I haven't seen him anywhere. I have only just come straight-way down". Witness then said, "He must have run away then. He ran away from me at Banbury". Witness said to Eadon, "He didn't get any lock ready nor nothing". Witness slept in the boat that night, and saw George Eadon in the morning. He (witness) thought about starting that morning and seeing deceased in Nuneaton when he got there, but something struck him to "feel" before he started, or else he never thought "nothing" about him being in the "cut" the night before. They found the body in the lock. Witness and deceased had been good friends. Deceased seemed very well and in pretty good spirits. Witness never thought he would go and commit suicide, in fact he seemed all right. In answer to the Coroner, witness said it did not strike him to look in the lock the night before, as deceased had not done anything to get in, and even had not got to the bottom gates.

Mr Sheasby : What made this young man run away from you at Banbury?

Witness : We had a few words at these locks before.

Mr Shepherd : About what time would it be when he got into the water?

Witness : It would be about seven o'clock. It was very dark.

**George Eadon** said he was a lock-keeper residing at Napton locks. He was on duty on Thursday evening from 4.30 to 7. There were several boats down at the time. The last boat was William Smith's. Witness met Smith, who told him that he had sent the lad to fill the bottom lock, and had not seen anything of him when he came down to it. Witness asked Smith if he thought he was in the canal, but he said he should think not. Smith did not say anything more about it until the next morning when, as he came to fetch the horse out of the stable, he said to witness that he should like to see if he could find him anywhere in the canal. They found the body about three parts of the way along the lock.

The Coroner : When you asked Smith if he thought the deceased was in the lock, did he look at all confused?

Witness : No, Smith did not look confused. He looked as if the boy had run away from him again.

PC Emberton said he examined the body, but found no marks of violence except one on the head. He also saw Smith, but noticed nothing particular about his appearance. He spoke to witness and asked if they had had any row. Smith replied that he had words with the deceased and boxed his ears once. He did not seem upset.

This concluded the evidence.

The Coroner, in addressing the jury, said the present one was a case quite deserving of very strict enquiry. They had heard the evidence of Smith, which they might believe or not believe as they chose. Eadon, however, whose evidence he was sure the jury did not doubt, also corroborated the evidence of Smith, and told the same tale of the affair. With respect to the one mark of violence on the head, he had himself been and examined it, and as a medical man was not of opinion that the wound was inflicted by anyone else. His theory of the case was that deceased, in tumbling in the lock, must have struck his head. In this case, however, there was no evidence before them to show how the boy got into the water, and it would be therefore best to return an open verdict.

A verdict of "Found drowned" was accordingly returned by the jury, there being no evidence to show how the boy got into the water.

The Foreman said they had had accidents at the locks at various times, and he thought the Canal Company ought to find lights to light every lock on the canal. He thought lights were as necessary there as at a railway station.

Mr Neal, however, on the other hand, thought that the boatmen would object to lights, as they would dazzle them more than enough. There were lights at Hillmorton and they were very much disliked, and he thought more accidents would occur through having them than not having them.

On this point of lighting, the opinions of the jury differed considerably. The Coroner said he did not see what could be done in the matter then, but no doubt the Press would make a note of the discussion.