

WARWICK ADVERTISER
1897 to 1919

1 29 May 1897

LEAMINGTON BOROUGH POLICE, MONDAY MAY 24

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **William King**, boatman of Westgate Street, Gloucester, was charged with ill-treating a horse by working it whilst in an unfit state on May 16th. Inspector Hopkins of the NSPCA stated that on Sunday night, the 16th inst, he was on the canal side near the Ranelagh Wharf, when he saw the horse in the dockyard. The animal had knee caps on, and at the request of witness, defendant removed the caps and found a large quantity of matter oozing out, and the animal was scarcely able to walk. Defendant told him he had started from Worcester on Thursday morning, and had arrived in Leamington on Sunday morning. Witness refused to let the horse go further, and had it examined by Mr Crowhurst. Mr E G Crowhurst said that on examining the horse, he found the knees enormously swollen, and in one there was a hole through the skin extending deeply into the tissues of the knee. The horse was, in his opinion, totally unfit for work. The Mayor asked if there were any inspectors of the society between Leamington and Gloucester, and why the horse had not been seen before it reached Leamington. The Inspector answered that there were some inspectors, but could not tell why the animal had not been seen before. The defendant stated that the horse got into the canal and cut its knees. Mr J G Eagles said he had received a letter from the defendant's employer, and he understood that defendant was told at Worcester that the horse was fit to go on. The Bench said the responsibility rested with the owner, but they could deal with the defendant only. He would be fined 1s and costs, 23s 6d in all, and the horse was not to be removed or worked until a certificate was given as to its fitness.

2 24 July 1897

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

POLICE NEWS - A SCENE ON THE RIVER At the Borough Police Court on Thursday, **Frederick Williams Waters**, a boatman employed by Mr Rose of the Swan's Nest, and a man of immensely powerful physique, was summoned by George Clifford, steam launch proprietor, whose information said that the defendant had threatened him, and he went in fear that he would do him some injury. Mr Warden defended, and the evidence, which was gone into at some length, stated that on Monday night Clifford was bringing his launch down the river with passengers in it, when just after he had got through the arches of the Clopton bridge, he found the defendant waiting for him in a rowing boat. Waters propelled the row boat at a great rate and dashed into the launch, at the same time making use of violent and threatening language, and the complainant said he was really in fear of him. The cross-examination went to show that there had been previous ill feeling between the men. Waters had been a boatman for 12 years, and Clifford only purchased his launch at the end of the season, and it was sought to show that Waters had complained that Clifford picked up passengers off Mr Rose's private landing stage, and that when he met Waters's rowing parties, he had several times neglected the rule of the road to the danger of passengers, and had not Waters been able to whip his boat round quickly, an accident must have occurred. Waters had previously invited Clifford to get into a row boat instead of a steamer and have it out, and said in Court that he had no wish to do the man an injury if he received fair treatment. He was bound over to keep the peace for six months, and ordered to pay costs, the Bench saying that he had a proper remedy if he was unfairly treated, and must not act to the detriment of other people on the river.

3 11 September 1897

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY

BYE LAWS **Eli Heritage** of Rowington, a boatman, was charged with using abusive and violent language on the highway at Rowington on the 21st August last. PC Hullm who proved the case, said defendant was not drunk but he was like a madman and his language was most abusive and violent, and he had to be taken by force to his boat. Defendant, who admitted the offence, was fined 4s 6d

and costs 10s 6d.

ASSAULT Eli Heritage, the defendant in the last case, and James Sweatman, also of Rowington, labourer, were then charged with assaulting John Walters at Rowington on the 14th August last. Complainant said he had been playing a friendly game of quoits at Rowington on the day named, and was returning home when the two defendants, with others, followed him and assaulted him. Mrs Webster, who resided in a cottage near, gave corroborative evidence, but could only identify Heritage, as it was late at night. The Bench considered the charge against Heritage clearly proved, and ordered him to pay 20s including costs. The summons against Sweatman was dismissed.

4 16 July 1898

TERRIBLE TRAGEDY AT HANLEY A shocking tragedy occurred near Northwood, an outlying district of Hanley, about one o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, whereby two infant children lost their lives, and their mother, who will be charged with wilful murder, narrowly escaped with hers. Thomas Warrilow of 87 Prince's Street, Northwood, while passing, saw the three struggling in the canal, and summoned a boatman named **James Burton**. The latter plunged into the water, which here is about six feet deep, and with great difficulty he succeeded in bringing both the children and the woman to the bank. All were by that time quite unconscious. When the constable arrived, he tried means of artificial respiration. In the case of the woman, these in about twenty five minutes had the desired effect ; but with the children all efforts proved fruitless. Inquiries elicited the information that the woman resided with her husband, Thomas Copeland, who is the manager of the decorating department of Messrs Johnson Brothers' earthenware manufacturers at Hanley. The children were named Frederick William, aged one year and eleven months, and Thomas, aged three years and five months. No one appears to have seen the woman or children enter the water, and it is not known whether she jumped in with the children in her arms, or first threw them in and afterwards went in herself. She was on Wednesday night still very exhausted ; all that could be got from her as to her reason for her terrible act was a murmur as to some monetary trouble. The family have the reputation of being in comfortable circumstances ; the mother was always respectably attired, and she appeared to take every care of her children. The husband, on receipt of the terrible news, was perfectly prostrated, and seemed utterly unable to realise the full extent of the bereavement which had befallen him. He is unable to give any reason for his wife's act.

5 17 September 1898

DROWNED IN THE CANAL AT HATTON

DEATH ATTRIBUTED TO EXCESSIVE HEAT Mr J J Willington Wilmshurst, Coroner for Central Warwickshire, held an enquiry in the recreation room at Hatton Asylum on Wednesday, into the circumstances attending the death of **Thomas Parsons**, aged 23 years, whose body was recovered from a lock on the canal near the Asylum on Sunday afternoon. Mr W H Makepeace was chosen foreman of the jury.

Joseph Parsons, father of deceased, stated that he had identified the body as that of his son, who had been employed on the canal as a boatman. Witness had not seen the deceased alive for the last four years, and he knew nothing more about him.

Richard Attwood, boatman, stated that he hired boats from Messrs Fellows, Morton and Clayton, and he had known deceased for many years, as he had frequently worked for him on trips down the canal. Witness had usually known him by the name of "Chicken". Deceased had been with witness on many excursions, and on the present occasion they were going from Birmingham to London. Deceased had made it a practice to go for one trip and then give up his position. On the previous Sunday morning, they came down from Birmingham, and reached the top lock at Hatton at about 11 a. m. They afterwards came down to the middle lock, and at about 12 o'clock the deceased and witness had dinner together. About half an hour afterwards, they continued their journey, and the deceased, who was in advance of the boat opening the locks, continued to discharge his duties right up to the 17th lock – six locks from where they had stopped for dinner. A boat which was coming up

the canal had just left the 18th lock full of water, with the gate open, all prepared for witness to pull his boat in. Witness was in charge of the horse, and just as he entered the lock, he noticed that the outside paddles were let down but the inside ones were still up. He did not know whether the deceased had been to the paddles or whether the boat which they had just passed had left the lock in the condition in which he found it. Witness went up to drop the paddle when he noticed a cap (produced) floating in the water. He did not miss the deceased when he first came to the lock as he thought he might be lying down in the grass, as he usually did. The deceased had performed his duties with every satisfaction all the way from Birmingham, and he was not the worse for drink. When witness saw the cap in the water, he at once pulled the boat out of the lock and went to the lock-keeper's house. On reaching Warwick, witness gave information to the police, but was informed that the lock was not in the borough district. He then went back to Hatton and assisted the lock-keeper in recovering the body, whilst he sent his wife to the local constable's house. Witness thought that the man was in the water for about an hour after he found the cap. In answer to the Coroner, witness stated that he would not be likely to see the deceased as he walked from one lock to another, as there were a lot of bushes along the side of the canal, and in all probability he would walk at the side of the adjoining field in order to look for mushrooms. The body was pulled out of the water at about 2.30, and witness last saw him at the 17th lock at 1.20. Witness could not say whether he could swim. He had never seen him in the water. Deceased had a very hearty dinner, and he told witness that he had eaten nothing previous to this for two days.

John Chambers another boatman, deposed that he saw the deceased about half a mile from the 18th lock, when he was going down the canal towards Warwick. Witness was on the towing-path, and he shouted out to the deceased, "Hello, Chicken. Have you gone back from steam boating to brick boating?" In reply, the deceased said, "I'm not going so very much further". Witness inferred from this statement that the deceased was going to run away from his job. In witness's opinion, the man had never been quite right. He understood that he had been rather queer from his birth. Witness had known him from childhood, but had never heard him say anything about committing suicide.

Charles Gardner, lock-keeper on the Warwick and Birmingham Canal, stated that about 2 o'clock the witness Attwood came to him and told him that someone was in the water. Witness went and recovered the body from inside the lock, about 10 feet from the end where the gate was open. The body was on the towing-path side lying full length at the bottom of the lock.

Dr A Miller, medical superintendent at Hatton Asylum, stated that he had made a *post mortem* examination and had failed to find any marks of violence or injury whatever. The pupils of the eyes were slightly dilated. The skull showed no marks of injury, but the face was much congested. The brain was large and firm, but exceptionally congested. The substance of the brain also showed no signs of injury or disease. There were no signs of heart disease. The lungs showed no signs of disease, but they were greatly congested, and a considerable quantity of water escaped when pressure was resorted to. In the stomach there was about 2 1/4 lbs of undigested food. Witness thought that the deceased had not swallowed any water. There was no sign that the man had made any great effort to save himself whilst in the water, and witness thought he had died without any struggle whatever. He was of opinion – and the congested signs of the organs strengthened his belief – that the man was seized with a severe sun stroke, and that when he fell into the water he was perfectly senseless. There were no signs of alcohol about the man's liver, and nothing to show that he was not quite "all there". Witness thought it was hardly likely that the deceased would fall into the water and make no attempt to save himself unless he was insensible.

The Coroner reviewed the facts of the case, and the jury, after a brief consultation, found a verdict to the effect that the deceased fell into the water while unconscious, after having been the victim of a severe sun stroke.

6 1 October 1898

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

CRUELTY TO A HORSE **Joseph Taylor**, boatman of 4 Cross Street, Ablew Street, Wolverhampton, was fined £1 8s, including costs, for working a horse with raw shoulders at Long

Itchington on September 9th. Defendant admitted the offence, but said he waited for a fresh horse immediately the state of the animal was complained of. Mr Davis Hunt retired from the Bench during the hearing of this case, and stated that the horse was drawing two boats at the time of the offence. He examined the horse's shoulders and found them to be in very bad condition. The horse was also very poor and quite unfit for the task it was performing. The Bench considered the case a bad one, but were lenient with the defendant on account of the fact that when the state of the horse was complained of, he immediately sent to his master for another and ceased working the injured animal until the other arrived. Inspector Hopkins, SPCA, instituted the charge.

7 8 April 1899

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE, THURSDAY APRIL 6

A BOATMAN IN TROUBLE **Edward Parrot**, boatman of Gloucester, was brought up in custody charged with wilfully breaking a pane of glass, at 5 p m, in the Emscote Tavern, on the previous day, valued at £2 5s, the property of William James Marshall. Prisoner, in pleading, said it was a complete accident. Prosecutor stated that when he got home between four and five at night, the prisoner was using very bad language. He had been asked to leave the house, but he refused, and said he should not go unless he was put out. Prosecutor went into the bar, and the prisoner immediately took off his coat to fight, but witness put him out of the house. A man was placed at the door to keep prisoner out, but he rushed in again. After putting him out a second time, the door was bolted upon him, when he smashed the pane of glass. Prisoner said he was drunk at the time. His head had been cut with a windlass handle two or three times, and when he had a drop of beer he really did not know what he was doing. He had a large family and was a long way from home, his boat being blocked at the stoppage in the canal at "Hatton 21" with a load of wheat for Mr Kench. Just before the case was concluded, prisoner's wife came into the Court in quite an exhausted state with a baby in her arms. She had brought a letter from Mr Sheldon Kench which she handed up to the Bench. The woman seemed to be terribly put about, and water was fetched as she was in a fainting condition. The magistrates ordered Parrot to pay the damages, £2 5s, a fine of 5s and costs 5s, making a total of £2 15s. The man asked for time, and was allowed until Monday week in which to find the money.

8 15 April 1899

WARWICK COUNTY POLICE, SATURDAY APRIL 6

BRUTAL CRUELTY BY A BOATMAN **Arthur Young**, a canal boatman in the employ of Messrs Fellows, Morton and Clayton, canal carriers, and a native of Braunston, near Rugby, was charged by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals with cruelly ill-treating a horse by beating it with a whip at Hatton on March 20th. Inspector Hopkins conducted the case on behalf of the prosecuting society. When the charge was read over to the defendant, he calmly replied, "Yes, sir ; I agree, with the whip produced (holding it up in his hand). It was a case of necessity". **John Gibbons**, a canal labourer who was at work at the lock at Hatton, was the first witness. He had his evidence well prepared, and gave it in quite a dramatic style. He stated that about 12.30 p m on the day in question, he saw the defendant in charge of a butted boat loaded with coal which was being drawn by a horse in the direction of the lock. The animal was pulling the boat with all its might, when the defendant ran up to it when it was about 3 1/2 yards away from the waterside and beat it with a whip. In its endeavours to escape the man's violence, the horse ran towards the canal and, slipping on the kerbstones, fell head foremost into the water. After rising again the horse swam to the side, when the defendant said with an oath, "Drown, you old beggar ; you leave a bad character behind you". The defendant then threw a running noose over the horse's head and beat it unmercifully about the ears with the stock of the whip, whilst it was endeavouring to get out. With the assistance of another young fellow, the defendant got the horse to swim down the canal, dragging the canal boat after it. The lock gate was open and the horse went inside, but when the water was let in, it was drowned. It was a distance of about 80 yards from where the horse was knocked into the canal to where it was drowned ; the poor thing had been worked so hard that it was

completely exhausted before it fell into the water. The name of the barge was "*King Cup*", and the horse belonged to Mr Neal of Birdingbury Wharf. Witness had seen the man at work on the canal on previous occasions, but he did not offer to assist him because he was afraid of being abused. He said it was simply cruel the way the poor horses were knocked about on the canal side. **Frederick Pinfold**, who is also employed by the Canal Company and worked with the last witness, gave corroborative evidence. Witness said that he told Young that he would have a job to get the horse out of the pound, but he replied, "Oh, no ; swim him through". When the horse had got into the lock, the defendant lifted the two paddles and drew the horse into one of the paddle holes. The marks were to be seen on the lock gates where the poor beast had scratched with its shoes in its endeavours to get out. In witness's opinion, the defendant had acted cruelly in a wilful manner, and he thought he might have saved the horse if he had wanted. Examined by Inspector Hopkins : The horse was in good condition. He had no doubt it was through the defendant's violence that it fell into the canal. One of the men with the boat said that the animal had been in the water six times during the morning, but when witness first saw the animal, it appeared to be quite dry. When asked if he had any questions to ask the witness, Young said that he had not. Both of the men saw the position he was in, but did not offer to assist, and he was not going to ask them. When it was all over, he said that one of them asked him how he had got on. He replied, "Oh, it's all cold meat now", and the man replied, "Well, he is better drowned than to live and work as he has done". In his statement to the Bench, the defendant said that the horse had a "regular character of walking into the canal", especially if you spoke sharply to him or hit him. It was a big plough horse, and Mr Neal had been cautioned against sending him to be worked on the canal. Though in good condition, it was not workable on the towing-path. It was nothing new to see him in the middle of the canal swimming and pulling the boat behind him. Defendant was coming up with a 19 ton load on, and whilst he was lighting his pipe, the animal pulled towards the water. Defendant caught hold of the hind part of the gear and pulled back, but the horse slipped off his hind legs, fell into the water, and pulled away at the front of the boat. The only thing for him to do was to hit it about the head in order to make it steer a straight course into the lock, and not get crushed between the boat and the lock side. By means of a rope tied to the bridle, he got the horse into the lock, but before he could get the lock empty, the animal "gave up the ghost". Defendant added that he had been a captain for Messrs Fellows, Morton and Clayton for two years and he had been in their employ since the Jubilee year. The magistrates retired before giving their decision. On returning into Court, Captain Boulton said they were of opinion that it was a very bad case, but they could not think that the defendant intended to drown the horse, and he would therefore get the benefit of that doubt. At the same time, there was no doubt about the cruelty, and it was disgraceful cruelty indeed. He would be fined £3 and costs £1 1s 3d, making a total of £4 1s 3d, or in default he would have to go to gaol for a month. The defendant asked for time in which to pay, and pleaded for the magistrates to think of his wife and children. No time was allowed, and the defendant was removed in custody.

9 15 April 1899

SOUTHAM

A VIOLENT CHARACTER On Thursday in last week, **Samuel Page**, boatman, was sentenced to 21 days' hard labour for assaulting PC Rogers at Southam on the previous night. Defendant stated he was "in beer" at the time in question, and was sorry for what occurred. A second charge against the defendant for being drunk and disorderly at the same time and place was dismissed.

10 22 April 1899

BRUTAL CRUELTY BY A CANAL BOATMAN In our report of the case given in our last issue, it should have been stated that the prosecution was instituted by the Royal Leamington and Warwickshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and not by the National Society. Our local Society is to be commended on taking up a case of such brutality.

11 13 May 1899

PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY MAY 10

NO MUZZLE **Joseph Beck**, boatman, Hockley Heath, for allowing a dog to be at large unmuzzled on 30th ult, was ordered to pay the costs, 5s.

12 20 May 1899

KENILWORTH DIVISIONAL SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY MAY 17

THEFT OF FOWLS : THE POLICE COMPLIMENTED George Mullis, described as of Waterloo Street, Leamington, was brought up in custody charged on remand with stealing four fowls, value 7s, the property of Joseph Simmons of Offchurch, on May 5th. PC Sansom confirmed the evidence given at the last hearing of the case, and said that on May 6th he received information of the robbery of some fowls, and on the following morning he went to the premises of the prosecutor. He traced footprints leading from Long Itchington across some gardens to the back of the premises, and back again to the road, close to an osier bed. He went there, and found osiers stacked up in half moon shape, and on a bundle of osiers in the centre, he found an impression as if someone had lain there. By the side of that was the stick (produced) and some feathers. He afterwards traced the feathers to the canal side a few yards away. In the osier bed he noticed footmarks corresponding to those found near the prosecutor's house. On May 9th he apprehended the prisoner at Rugby and took him to Milverton police station. In the presence of another officer, he took possession of the prisoner's boots and compared them with the footprints at the rear of the prosecutor's house. He found that they corresponded. Prisoner : I shall prove that they are not the same boots. In answer to the prisoner, witness said that when the prisoner was brought by another officer to him, he was in a public house having a glass of beer. "I thought", witness added, "I was entitled to it". (Laughter). Joseph Saving, employed by Mr Vickers at Offchurch, deposed to seeing the prisoner about two miles away from prosecutor's premises and 1 1/4 miles away from the osier bed. Prisoner : Why, it's about two miles away. Joseph Simmonds, the prosecutor, a labourer living at Offchurch, said that on the day in question he locked up the fowls in the evening, and next morning they were gone, the door being burst open. The fowls that were missing were two black, one white and a grey brahms. He thought the feathers (produced) might have come from his fowl, which were valued at 7s. **John Hanley**, lock-keeper at Offchurch, said that on Friday May 5th, the prisoner came to his house and had two bottles of lemonade. He was carrying the stick (produced). The house was about 400 yards from the osier bed. **James Stokes**, a boatman in the employ of Messrs Fellows, Morton and Clayton, said on May 6th he saw the prisoner near the osier bed. He said he had got some fowls to sell, and witness, without thinking that they were stolen, purchased three, one white, one black and a pheasant coloured one. Prisoner asked 1s each for them, and that was the price he paid. The Clerk : What has become of the fowls? Witness : I've eaten them. (Laughter). This concluded the evidence. Mullis elected to be dealt with summarily, and pleaded not guilty. He had nothing to say. Superintendent Hannah said there was a long list of convictions against the prisoner. The Chairman said that there was not the slightest doubt that prisoner stole the fowl. There was a long list of convictions against him, and he had already had three months' hard labour for a similar offence. He would go to gaol for three months with hard labour. Mr Stanger-Leathes said great credit was due to the police for the way in which they had got up the case, which seemed to be a difficult one. Superintendent Hannah : Thank you.

13 3 June 1899

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY MAY 31

BREACHES OF THE MUZZLING ORDER John William Ryland, manufacturer, Rowington ; **Joseph Beck**, boatman, Hockley Heath ; William Garrad, no occupation, Kingswood ; Henry Smith, labourer, Ullenhall ; and Anthony Hanson, butcher, Rowington, were all charged with permitting dogs to be on the highway unmuzzled. The two first defendants, having been recently fined for similar offences, were ordered to pay 6s costs, and the others 5s each.

14 3 February 1900

LEAMINGTON BOROUGH POLICE, MONDAY JANUARY 29

DRUNK AND INCAPABLE John Summers, boatman, 5 Bosworth Street, Measham, Leicestershire, was charged with being drunk and incapable in High Street at 10.10 a m on the 27th ult. Detective Baum saw the man staggering down the street outside the police station, and falling down on the path. Fined 10s 6d or seven days.

15 3 March 1900

WARWICK WORKHOUSE MASTER COMMITS SUICIDE

SAD CASE

A BALAKLAVA HERO

AN HONOURABLE CAREER Mr George Garnham, master for thirty four years of Warwick Union Workhouse, committed suicide early on Wednesday morning by drowning himself in the Canal near the Workhouse. About a quarter to seven he went out of the Workhouse towards the Hospital. Half an hour afterwards, his body was found floating in the Warwick and Napton Canal at the bottom of the lane, and the attendant circumstances leave little room to doubt that his mind became unhinged and he committed suicide. The day of his death coincided exactly with the day of his ceasing to be master of the Workhouse. It will be remembered that last November his wife was compelled, on account of continued ill health, to resign her appointment as matron. The appointment was a joint one, and the resignation of either involved that also of the other. During the last three months Mr Garnham has been preparing for the taking up of the duties by his successor. On Tuesday his furniture was removed, and the day of his death was the last he would have spent in the house. The circumstances of this great change in his life appear to have weighed heavy on his mind. He told Mr Parsman, the clerk to the Guardians, that it was a great wrench, and that he felt he was leaving home. He had also been suffering for some time from liver complaint, accompanied by insomnia, which left him in a very depressed condition. A diary left behind showed how this bad state of health affected him. The last entry, made on the Sunday before his death, says, "Spent miserable day ; head very bad". There were other circumstances which combined to work on deceased's mind. His wife's health had for a long time caused him much anxiety. His son was shut up in Ladysmith, but he treated this incident with a soldier's spirit. In addition to this, there is too much reason to fear that he took to heart remarks that were made in reference to the Infirmary, although care was taken to expressly dissociate him from any blame in the matter. Although apparently a self contained man, whose mental balance would be sufficient to sustain him against unjustifiable suspicions, he was, beneath a hard exterior, one of the most sensitive of men, and anything which he could construe as a reflection on himself in the slightest degree appears to have given him exquisite pain. It has been falsely suggested that his retirement was the effect of these charges. No one who knows the circumstances or who has read the local newspapers will give this absurd statement a moment's credit. As a matter of fact Mrs Garnham's resignation, which involved that of her husband, was placed in the hands of the Chairman a fortnight before the discussions of which so much has been made, and the retirement coincided but did not result from it. But, unfortunately, there is little reason to doubt that Mr Garnham felt very keenly the unfortunate coincidence which brought him, as he wrongly imagined, under a cloud just at the moment when he was preparing to bid leave to an honourable career performed with entire integrity and conscientiousness. No one, in fact, imputed the least discredit to Mr Garnham for the circumstances referred to. The Chairman of the Board testified to his long and honourable service, and, as will be seen below, a resolution expressing in fitting terms the Board's appreciation of him would have been presented at today's meeting. No one can doubt that it would have been unanimously carried.

A SOLDIER'S CAREER It is well known that Mr Garnham was one of the heroes of the famous "Charge of the Six Hundred". He joined the 13th Light Dragoons, now the 13th Hussars, at the age of 18 and went through the Crimean campaign from the very beginning to the end. Soon after joining his regiment it was sent out to Besarabia with the idea of preventing the Russian advance on

Turkey from that side. His brigade sailed for the Crimea on the seat of war being transferred to that peninsula. There he went through the Alma, Balaklava, Inkerman and the siege of Sebastopol.

THE CHARGE OF BALAKLAVA From the charge of Balaklava he was fortunate in escaping without a hurt of any kind. His horse was shot under him, and he returned to the British lines on foot. Subsequently he endured the tremendous privations which the British forces went through during the succeeding winter. He received the Crimean medal, with four clasps, and the Turkish medal. At the close of the war he returned home, and his regiment was quartered at Cork. The rapid change of climate, coupled with the terrible hardships he had undergone, resulted in his being utterly paralysed with rheumatism.

INVALIDED HOME He was invalided out of the army and sent to the home of his father and mother at Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. The military doctors had been unable to do anything with him. After a short time in a civil hospital at Bury he regained the use of his limbs, and he has ever since enjoyed, on the whole, admirable health. He then went into civil employment under the Great Eastern Railway Company at Norwich, and from there went into the service of Her Majesty's convict prison at Dartmoor. It was while living in Devonshire that he met his wife. He then obtained a situation as master of the workhouse at Houghton-le-Spring, Durham, and in 1885 he came to Warwick as master of the Union Workhouse. The career of Mr Garnham at Warwick does not furnish incidents of the exciting nature of the early part of his life. It is a long record of conscientious service, in which the deceased outlived many boards of guardians and gave them all complete satisfaction. Those who only knew him slightly may be surprised to learn that he considered the children in the Workhouse the special object of his care. Public testimony has recently been borne to the success of his treatment. In the unexpected recesses of his heart he was in reality a man of great tenderness, and he regarded his office in a spirit as far as possible removed from that of Bumble. He did not make many friends, but no man was held in greater respect in the town. The news of his sudden end caused the greatest astonishment, and the sympathy with his widow and family will be shared wherever he is known.

Mr Garnham was at the time of his death a director of the Warwick Building Society, in which he had long taken a great interest ; and some time ago he was presented with a copy of the Saxon chair by the other directors. A presentation was made to him by the officials of the Workhouse on Tuesday in the shape of a copper and brass coal vase and a silver egg stand.

A FAMILY OF SOLDIERS Mr George Garnham came of soldiering stock. Something has been said about his career. That of one or two members of his family is worthy of remark. His grandfather fought at the siege of Malta, and is buried in that island. His own father was for many years a volunteer. One of his brothers is Lieutenant Colonel Garnham, late Royal Artillery, who has the honour of having risen from the ranks. He has seen 37 years service. Colonel Garnham, who bears a striking resemblance to his deceased brother, attributes his success, as he put it to the writer, "to possessing common sense and uprightness". Two of the brothers of the deceased have been soldiers. One was a sergeant of the 30th Regiment and died in service. The other was a private in the 68th Durham Light Infantry, and went through the Crimean campaign and the New Zealand War. Mr Garnham's own son William is a sergeant in the 5th Dragoon Guards. He was in Burma at the time when the operations on the north west frontier were about to commence, volunteered, and was accepted for special duty. He went with his regiment to Natal and was eventually shut up in Ladysmith. Mr Garnham's son Ronald is a private in the 1st Dragoon Guards now stationed at Dublin.

Mr Garnham leaves a widow, and his other children whose names have not been mentioned are Hamilton Garnham, chief of the Epileptic Asylum at Liverpool ; and one of his daughters is a distinguished graduate of London University and was, before her marriage, headmistress of the County School at Beaumaris, Anglesea.

INQUEST

CENSURE OF A BOATMAN An inquest was held in the Board Room at the Workhouse on Thursday morning, before Mr John Tibbits (borough coroner) and a jury, of which Mr Horse was foreman. The Board of Guardians was represented by Alderman Stanton (chairman), Alderman

Baly and Mr C H Passman (clerk).

Mr W J Stephens, relieving officer of the Warwick Union, was the first witness, and he identified the body. Deceased's age, he stated, was 64. Witness was in the deceased's company from 9.35 to 10.5 on Tuesday evening in the Master's room.

The Coroner : What was his state of mind as far as you can judge? Witness : Well, I don't know it as a fact.

But on the previous Sunday was he unwell? He was at my house on Sunday evening.

Had he complained about his health? Yes.

What was the nature of the complaint? He informed me he felt very depressed and that he could not get any sleep at night. He remarked on Tuesday night that he would not like to undergo another month like he had undergone. He had been greatly worried during the time, and had had some sleepless nights.

He did not mention any specific cause of worry? No.

As a matter of fact you knew his wife was ill, and he had a son in the war? He did not mention it to you? Not more than he hoped Ladysmith would be relieved. He had a lot of work in consequence of the transfer of his duties to a new master.

I suppose he gave you no idea he was likely to attempt anything? Not the slightest.

EVIDENCE OF THE CLERK Herbert Bevan, clerk to the deceased, stated that on the previous morning he spoke to him about ten minutes to seven. He went down the centre of the garden.

The Coroner : Did you notice anything strange in his manner? Witness : He was depressed, as he had been of late, but nothing else.

Anything unusual yesterday morning? No.

Then you lost sight of him? I lost sight of him after that.

DISCOVERY OF THE BODY Thomas White, 17a Pickard Street, employed by Mr Cashmore, stated that he was in the fields by the canal the previous morning. About twenty minutes past seven, he saw a hat lying on the ground by the railings. Witness got upon the railings and could see an object floating in the middle of the water. He crept through the hedge. He thought at first it was a dog, but when he got close he saw that it was a man. He was lying flat on his face.

The Coroner : Quite quiet? Witness : There was no movement.

Witness saw no one to render him any assistance, and he met a nurse in the lane and informed her there was a man in the canal. Then he informed the police. He was present when the body was removed from the water.

A STRANGE STATEMENT A Juror : Was there any boat passing at the time? Witness : Yes ; I asked him to swing out and see what it was.

The Coroner : You did not tell us you met anyone. Did you speak to the boatman? Witness : I spoke to him, and he would not render any assistance.

You are quite certain that at the time there was no moving about of the body? There was not.

STATEMENT BY THE TRAMP MASTER James Creelman, tramp master at the Workhouse, said at nine o'clock he was informed there was a body in the canal, and assisted to recover it. He arrived to find the body in the middle of the water. It was then nine o'clock. He assisted in moving the body to the mortuary.

The Coroner : Have you seen a good deal of him lately? Witness : Yes. He has been very depressed.

Have you had any conversation with him? I had twenty minutes conversation the night before last.

Did he make any remarks about severing his connection? Yes, sir, he did.

He seemed to feel it very much? Very much, sir.

You know he has been under medical treatment? Yes, sir.

Was he more depressed than usual on Tuesday night? Yes, he seemed to feel leaving the place.

Was he more depressed than usual? Yes, I think he was ; he seemed to be in very low spirits.

PS Holyoak stated that he was informed at nine o'clock of a body being in the canal, and proceeded there. It was found near the hedge at the right hand side of the lane. Witness searched the body, and found nothing to throw any light on the matter. He afterwards visited the deceased's office, and

found his drawer unlocked with the key in it, a thing which he was informed was very unusual. He found in the drawer deceased's watch, purse and keys. There was no letter or document. Fourpence in coppers was found upon the body.

By a Juror : There were a lot of footmarks along the bank, but nothing to indicate deceased had fallen into the water. The bank, however, was very muddy and sticky.

“I LEAVE HOME” Mr Charles Henry Passman said he was with deceased for two hours on Tuesday morning. He saw him in reference to the half year's estimated expenditure. He also came to get information with reference to the training of children in the Workhouse before deceased left. His term of office expired on Wednesday. Witness noticed he seemed very depressed at leaving, and he referred frequently, with considerable pride, to the success which the children had attained after being in the Workhouse. It was very noticeable the deep interest the deceased took in the institution, particularly in this matter. Afterwards a presentation was made to Mr and Mrs Garnham on behalf of the officers, and just before witness left, deceased said to him, “You have no idea what a wrench it is leaving here. I can't sleep at night thinking of it. Mr Passman, I leave home”. Witness left a few minutes after one o'clock.

The Coroner : You knew Mr Garnham well? Did you notice he had been unusually depressed? He complained of not sleeping at night.

Just lately? Just lately particularly. He had previously complained of the same thing. He had been generally out of sorts.

A VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION A Juror : I think as a matter of fact the post was resigned by the Matron? No ; the Matron resigned in consequence of ill health. It was a joint appointment and her resignation vacated both appointments.

The Coroner : How long was he master? Appointed October 7th 1865.

It is a well known fact that Mr Garnham was very much esteemed by the Guardians? He was held in very great esteem by the Guardians.

MEDICAL EVIDENCE Mr Roger Bullock, medical officer of health to the Workhouse, said he had recently attended Mr Garnham. He had for the last fortnight suffered from stomach derangement and liver complaint, with insomnia. It was a condition he was often liable to. When he had an illness of this kind, he commonly suffered also from an irregular motion of the heart.

The Coroner : Are there any other circumstances which contributed to depression? Witness : He has never mentioned any particular circumstances, except that I knew he was worried about the winding up of affairs before he left. He was what you might call very fussy towards the end. Witness had also attended Mrs Garnham.

Did he speak to you about his son? He has often talked about his son who is in Ladysmith, but he did not give the impression that that was preying on his mind, but he said he was a soldier, and must take his chances.

Insomnia would produce depression? Certainly, yes.

MR GARNHAM'S DIARY Witness produced a diary left by deceased, and read extracts from it as follows :- Monday 19th February – Feeling very bad. Thursday 22nd February – In town this evening. Got a sleeping draught from Holliday's. Friday 23rd February – Slightly better night and better today. Sunday 26th February – Spent a miserable day ; head very bad. This, said witness, was the last entry. Deceased seemed to have been in the habit of going into the town every evening to see the war telegrams.

The Coroner : Have you seen the body? There are no marks of violence? Witness : No. There are no marks of severe death struggle at all.

This concluded the evidence.

SUMMING UP The Coroner, summing up, said the evidence was so extremely clear that it could leave no doubt in their minds. There could be no doubt whatever, he thought, that deceased had been suffering for some considerable time from insomnia, which would produce considerable depression, and there was no doubt he was extremely depressed at the prospect of leaving the Union, which he looked upon as his home from his long connection with it. They would agree that from the evidence there appeared to have been no premeditation whatever. It seemed to have been a

sudden act. Deceased appeared to have gone out in the direction of the Hospital, and then suddenly to have turned down to the canal and made away with himself. They could see from the conversation with Mr Passman that he was quite right in his mind the previous day. They would have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the act was committed whilst his mind was unhinged and without any premeditation. There were a great many circumstances which tended to produce a condition of that sort.

THE VERDICT The Jury asked leave to retire. On returning,

The Foreman said their verdict was that the deceased committed suicide by drowning in the canal, and that he was temporarily insane at the time ; also that the boatman was much to blame in not assisting the witness White to recover the body. He wished to say on behalf of the jury that they had found it a very painful duty to hold this inquest on one who had been so highly esteemed by all who had any connection with him, official or otherwise, and he believed that he was also beloved by the poor, of whom he had charge for so many years.

The Coroner said he could sympathise with the remarks of the jury. It was a most painful duty. He need hardly say that they all felt it very much.

TRIBUTE BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GUARDIANS Alderman Stanton, Chairman of the Warwick Board of Guardians, then made a statement. He said that as chairman of the Board for thirteen years, he had been in constant communication with the late Master and Matron, and he felt that it was his duty on this painful occasion to say that a better, a more honourable and a more upright officer had never filled a public station. In saying what he had, he felt that he was repeating the feeling of every member of the Board of Guardians. He wished most emphatically to state and to emphasise what had already been brought out in the evidence, that the resignation of Mr – or rather of Mrs – Garnham was received by the Board with the deepest regret. They deeply sympathised with the cause of that resignation, her severe ill health. Two years before she resigned, it was intimated to her that if she studied her health, it would be necessary to give up her situation. But her devotion to duty was so great that she adhered to her office another two years until it became absolutely necessary that she should resign. As Mr Passman had explained, the resignation of the Matron necessitated that also of the Master. When it was made known to the Board in November of last year, it was received with the very deepest regret by the whole of the Board, and every member of it most sincerely sympathised with Mrs Garnham in the cause which had led to it. He (Alderman Stanton) might state that such was the esteem of the Guardians for Mr and Mrs Garnham, who had served them so faithfully for a third of a century, that many of the Guardians came to him after the meeting and asked whether it would not be possible for a daughter of Mrs Garnham to fill her place, so that they might retain the services of Mr Garnham for a few years more. It was due to their memory that he should make these observations. He repeated what he had said on the occasion of the resignation, and he was therefore not saying it in a perfunctory manner. He said then that he did not believe any board had an officer or officers – for he referred to them both – who had served them more faithfully, honestly and conscientiously.

A Juror (Mr Cooke) said he was very pleased to have heard these remarks because one or two slanderous statements had been made about Mr Garnham, and what Alderman Stanton had said would be the means of contradicting them.

Lieutenant Colonel Garnham, brother of the deceased, who spoke with considerable emotion, said that the deceased, having a son in Ladysmith and being himself an old soldier who had been through the Crimean War, did not feel any depression at having a son in that position. From the beginning of the time when troops were sent to South Africa, fighting to uphold the honour of our Queen and country, he was the very opposite of feeling depressed, and he (Colonel Garnham) had not the slightest hesitation in saying that if his brother had twenty sons, he would have felt the very highest possible pride if they were all performing the same noble service. The word depression rather grated, as it were, because he knew that this above all things would have no effect on his brother's feelings. It would rather be one of those things of which he would talk to those whom he met, and had he been fortunate enough to live and see his son return, that would have been one of the best days of his life.

A BELATED TESTIMONIAL Alderman Stanton added that it was in contemplation, and had been arranged some short time ago, that at the very next meeting of the Board, a resolution should be proposed, expressing pleasure and gratitude to Mr and Mrs Garnham for their past excellent and devoted services.

16 12 May 1900

SAD DEATH AT WARWICK

FOUND IN THE CANAL On Wednesday afternoon a boatman named **Saunders** was taking his barge under the canal bridge on the Budbrook Road, when he noticed a hat lying on the bank, and just under the surface of the water was the body of a man in a standing position. It was found to be that of Joseph Coles Ivens of 7 Victoria Cottages, Saltisford, a well known inhabitant of the town. There was nothing to indicate the cause of death.

An inquest was held on the body at the Dun Cow Inn on Thursday morning, before Mr J Tibbits, borough coroner, and a jury of which Mr W J Turner was foreman.

The first witness was Joseph Ivens, son of the deceased, of 5 Seven Sisters Road, London N, who identified the body, and said his father was fifty six years of age. Deceased had been perfectly well mentally of late, but had suffered from gout in his feet, so much as to impair his walking. Witness was not aware of any business or other trouble likely to cause him to take his life, and he had left nothing in any way pointing to a determination to do so.

A Juryman: You have not heard your father or your parents say that he would do anything wrong?

Witness : I never heard either him or anyone else say such a thing in my life.

Mrs Thomas Iliffe, wife of the licensee of the Dun Cow, said that deceased called at the house about a quarter past twelve. He had a glass of ale and made a remark about the weather, and witness thought he went up the road. He seemed in his usual health and spirits.

A Juryman : He was perfectly sober? Witness : Yes, he was just the same as he has been at other times.

Edith Paynting, wife of William Paynting, stonemason, Birmingham Road, said she saw the deceased at a quarter past two on the towing-path close to her house, two hundred yards higher up the canal than the bridge crossing Budbrook Road. He walked past, and stood near her house for about a quarter of an hour. Then he moved away in the direction of the bridge.

There was nothing unusual about him that called your attention? No, sir.

As a matter of fact he frequently took walks in that direction? Yes, frequently.

By a Juror : It was raining all the time deceased was standing on the towing-path.

James Saunders junr, employed by King and Co, Southam, stated that he helped his father as a boatman. About half past two, as he was passing underneath the bridge, the horse he was leading shied. Witness found there was a hat lying underneath the bridge on the edge of the path. Witness went to pick it up, when he saw the body of a man standing with his hands against the guard under the bridge. The head was just below the surface. There was no movement in the water. It was a hard hat of square shape, and was dented on the top in front ; to the left side.

James Saunders, father of the last witness, said he assisted in getting the body out of the water, two militiamen also helping.

PC Williams stated that he was called to the place where the body was found about ten minutes past three, together with PS Hollyoak. The hat was lying about a foot from the water, with the indentation towards it. It had apparently lain there some time, for the ground under it was dry, whilst all round it was saturated with rain. The clothing was not in any way deranged, and the coat was buttoned up tight. There were no marks of any struggle or of anyone slipping. The boots were covered in black slimy mud as far as the ankles. Witness took the body to his home and examined it, but found no mark or bruise. There was a watch on the body, which was still going. Witness looked through deceased's papers, but they all seemed in perfect order. There was nothing to indicate that he contemplated suicide. Witness had known deceased six years, and he had always had bad feet, generally walking with a stick.

The Coroner said it was quite reasonable, having regard to the condition of the towing-path, to

conceive that any man, especially one not good on his feet, should knock against the bridge, be partially stunned, and fall into the water. Whether the deceased fell into the water or not it was for them to say. There was nothing to point to premeditation. He suggested that the verdict of the jury should be one of "Found drowned". The posture in which he was found seemed to suggest that he was making a struggle to get out again. It was said that the water was five feet, and they had to add to that an amount of slime and mud, and with that addition, deceased might have been out of his depth.

The jury brought in a verdict of "Found drowned" and added a rider that the Canal Company should put the place in repair for the benefit of other people who might walk along the towing-path.

The Coroner said that it was a very necessary recommendation. He thanked the boatman for giving his evidence and helping the police. It was often very difficult to get boatmen to assist in these matters.

17 14 July 1900

WARWICK BOATMAN'S DISCOVERY The body of an unknown woman was discovered in the Warwick and Birmingham Canal near Sandy Lane, Birmingham, early on Monday morning. It was found by **Benjamin Taylor**, a boatman living at the Lower Cape, Warwick, and was removed to the Birmingham mortuary. The deceased is described thus : Apparently about 28 or 30 years of age, 5 ft 2 in in height, dark brown hair, medium build, full red face, wearing a black sailor hat, brown cloth cape with brown velvet collar, brown fur boa, black dress, grey underskirt, black stockings and lace up boots.

18 28 July 1900

WARWICKSHIRE ASSIZES

ACQUITTAL **Albert Bourne**, canal boatman, charged with perpetrating an abominable crime at Exhall on June 2nd, was acquitted owing to the identification being imperfect. Mr Parfitt prosecuted and Mr Mc Cardle defended.

19 11 August 1900

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY AUGUST 6

ASSAULTING A LOCK KEEPER **Henry Barnett**, boatman, Stockton, pleaded guilty to assaulting **William Sheasby**, a lock-keeper in the employ of the Canal Company at Stockton, on July 16th, and was fined £1 4s 6d including costs. From the evidence of complainant, it appeared that the assault arose out of an alleged waste of water by the defendant.

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY **Dan Gibbons**, Napton, boatman, for the above offence at Napton on July 20th, was fined 19s 6d, including costs. PC Emberton proved the case.

20 8 October 1900

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE

A BOATMAN'S CRUELTY **John Higgins**, a boatman of Tipton, was summoned by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for cruelly ill-treating a horse by working it whilst in an unfit state on September 17th. Defendant pleaded not guilty. Inspector Hopkins of the NSPCA said he asked defendant about a wound which was on the shoulder of the horse in question. The wound was two inches each way and very deep. Defendant said it was all right on the previous night when he put it into the stable at the Emscote Tavern, and by some means it had got cut open. There were marks on both shoulders and in the wound a lot of black fluffy matter – dirt. Witness denied that it was a fresh wound. Witness produced the collar, and it had been washed and scraped where it fitted on the wound. He examined the stable where the horse had remained during the night, but could find no trace of blood or anything likely to injure the animal. It had dragged a boat from Bishop's Itchington. PC Mason corroborated. Mr Horton, veterinary surgeon, inspected the horse. The wound on its shoulder was not newly cut. In the centre was dead tissue, which must

have been there some days. The collar had not been accommodated to the horse. It must have been in very considerable pain when drawing the loaded boat. The Bench found the defendant guilty of cruelty and imposed a fine of £1 12s, including costs, or a month in default of payment.

21 3 November 1900

LEAMINGTON BOROUGH POLICE

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY **George Lines**, canal boatman, was charged with being drunk and disorderly on licensed premises at the Leamington Tavern, Tavistock Street, at 2.50 p m on the 20th ult. PC Cash proved the case, and defendant was fined 10s 6d, including costs, or in default 14 days' imprisonment.

22 26 January 1901

SOUTHAM

MINOR OFFENCES **Noah Kent**, a boatman working on the Warwick and Napton Canal, was charged with trespassing in search of conies on land at Leamington Hastings in the occupation of Hervey W Sitwell, on December 16th. Mr John Grendon, a neighbouring farmer, in proving the charge, stated he saw defendant beating a hedge. He had a gun and was about to shoot at something, when he saw witness and then hid the gun in the hedge and made off. Witness afterwards searched and found the gun produced. Mr Sitwell, in reply to the Chairman, said he had been troubled a great deal lately with trespassers, but it was difficult to catch them. The Bench fined defendant (who did not appear until after the case had been decided) £1 16s 6d, including costs.

23 27 April 1901

MYSTERIOUS DISCOVERY AT THE CAPE

A CHILD'S BODY IN THE CANAL

NO CLUE While a boatman named **William Davies**, in the employment of Messrs Fellows, Morton and Company, was in charge of his barge near the Cape on Tuesday, he noticed a cardboard box floating in the water. Pulling the object from the canal, he untied the parcel. Within he found a petticoat covered with blood. It enclosed a second petticoat, and on this being unrolled, it was found to contain the body of a child, apparently newly born. The police were immediately communicated with, and all efforts have been made to trace the parent, but so far unsuccessfully. There was nothing on the wrappings to lead to any conclusion as to its ownership, and the only mark was a railway label on the brown paper with "Paddington" on it. Whether the child ever lived was a question which the doctor could not answer, on account of the decomposed state of the body. From the marks on the garments he concluded, however, that the child was newly born.

An inquest was held at the Police Station on Thursday by Mr John Tibbits (Borough Coroner). Mr John Eccles acted as foreman of the jury.

The first witness called was the boatman, William Davies of 1 Fazeley Street, Birmingham, boatman in the employ of Messrs Fellows, Morton and Co. He said he was in a boat which passed through Warwick on the Warwick and Napton Canal on Tuesday, and when about 200 yards below the lock by the Cape, he saw a box floating on the water. He pulled the object out, and saw that it was a card box wrapped in brown paper. He opened it and found a flannel petticoat inside, covered with patches of blood. He unrolled this, and found another petticoat similarly stained, and inside this he discovered the body of the child. There was a young man named Garrett walking along with him on the side of the canal, and he went at once to give information to the police.

PC Stretton, who was the policeman called, said he found the body lying on the side of the canal with the box and petticoats in which it had been wrapped. There was nothing on the clothing or on the box to identify the owner. The only mark was a label with "Paddington" on it affixed to the brown paper.

Dr Carter said the body was in such a state of decomposition that he could not say whether it had been stillborn or not. It was that of a male newly born child. It must have been in the water from

three to four weeks in his opinion.

Superintendent Ravenhall said that since the body had been found a full description had been sent out by him, and every effort made to discover whom the child belonged to. No clue however had been found.

An open verdict was returned.

24 4 May 1901

SOUTHAM At the Petty Sessions on Monday, **Samuel Millard**, Braunston, boatman, and **Charles Gardner**, Long Itchington, boatman, were each fined 10s 6d including costs for keeping dogs without licences.

25 1 March 1902

DROWNED IN THE CANAL

A FATAL SHORT CUT

WOMAN'S DEATH AT SHREWLEY A fatal accident occurred near Shrewley on Wednesday evening. Mrs Mary Ellen Bragg, wife of William Bragg of Pinley, Rowington, was returning from Hatton Station after visiting Warwick, when she fell into the canal, along the towing-path of which she was making a short cut home. The body was discovered by a boatman.

An inquest was held on the body by the deputy coroner (Dr Holmes) at the Durham Ox Inn, Shrewley, on Thursday morning.

William Bragg, husband of deceased, platelayer, said his wife was fifty last birthday. He last saw her alive at quarter to six on Monday morning. He took her a cup of tea ; she was in her usual health. She was to go to Warwick that day, and promised to return just after four.

Thomas Malins of Shrewley said on Tuesday morning a boatman told him that his boat had stirred up a body but he could not get near enough to touch it. Witness said he would go with him, and they saw the body of a woman. Witness then went and informed the police. The body was some distance from the side. When witness and the constable got there, the body was on the towing path. Edward Francis Mutch, signalman, Shrewley, stated that he was on Shrewley Common with another signalman named Carpenter on Tuesday, when a woman came and told them there was a woman in the canal. Witness went to the canal, and Carpenter went for a rope. On arriving at the canal, witness saw two sets of fingers in the water, and a basket on the left arm. When Carpenter arrived with a rope, witness attached a brick and threw it over the body, and thus drew it to the side. Shortly afterwards PC Cockerill arrived. There was the impression of a left foot on the towing-path, but the ground where the right foot would have been was broken away.

Frank Cluff, Hatton, ticket collector, said deceased came by the 6.40 train from Birmingham. Her ticket was from Warwick to Hatton, and witness wanted to know how it was she came from Birmingham. She said she had been over carried to Kingswood, and had been sent back by train. Deceased did not appear at all excited.

PC Cockerill, stationed at Hatton, said he visited the canal at Shrewley and saw the body of the deceased on the towing-path. William Bragg was there, and identified the body as that of his wife. The body was then removed. Witness examined the body and found a locket and brooch (produced) on it. The canal was close to the station, and the towing-path was a near cut to her home. Witness could trace her footsteps on the path to the point where the body was recovered. The footsteps ceased there, and there was a break in the bank where the right foot would have been. The path was very muddy and slippery from the state of the weather.

The Coroner said there could be little doubt that deceased fell into the canal on her way home. There was nothing to suggest that her death was due to anything but misadventure, except that the purse which she had upon her was not found on the body. It was probable, however, that it was now at the bottom of the canal.

A juror suggested that the Coroner should write to the Canal Company and ask them to close the path.

This was opposed by other jurymen, who said they used the path themselves.

A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

26 8 March 1902

ASTON BURGLARS **William Jones alias John Elkington**, 22, boatman, and **George Guest**, 25, toolmaker, were charged with burglary from **Henry Rooke**, Aston, on January 1st. Jones pleaded guilty and Guest not guilty. Evidence was given by a policeman who saw the prisoners together outside the house very early in the morning, by a neighbour who heard them say they had done no work the night before but intended to do that night, by a sergeant who searched Jones and found some of the articles stolen, together with matches and a candle, a piece of iron and some skeleton keys, and by Mrs Rooke, who gave evidence as to the articles stolen. Prisoner, in evidence, said that Jones came to him at about half past one and threw some of the stolen articles on the table, saying witness could have them. He asked witness to go out, and eventually persuaded him to do so. When they were out, they saw the constable. Witness had not seen Jones since. A verdict of guilty was returned, and prisoner was sentenced to four months' hard labour. Jones was sentenced to two months' hard labour.

27 9 August 1902

A BROKEN NECK At Willoughby near Rugby on Wednesday, Mr J J W Wilmhurst held an inquest on the body of **Frederick Lowe** (22), a boatman of Blisworth. Deceased, who is said to be the son of Birmingham parents, had been up from the canal wharf into the village of Willoughby with a cart load of flour, and was seen on the way back about nine o'clock riding on the horse's back. He was found later lying by the side of the road with his neck broken. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

28 18 October 1902

WARWICK CANAL TRAGEDY

PUBLICAN'S SAD END A sad discovery was made at the Cape Lock of the Warwick and Napton Canal on Thursday morning. The lock-keeper's attention was drawn by a boatman to the fact that the gates of the lock would not shut. By means of his drags, the lock-keeper discovered a body wedged between the gates. It had evidently been in the water some hours. The body was taken to a neighbouring outhouse and identified as that of **Seth Spilsbury**, licensed victualler of the Cape of Good Hope Inn. It seems that he left his home about midday on Wednesday and had not been seen since.

SPILSBURY'S WIFE CENSURED An inquest was held by the Borough Coroner (Mr J Tibbits) at deceased's house yesterday (Friday) afternoon. The jury returned a verdict of "Found drowned", and were of opinion that Mrs Spilsbury should have sent assistance when information was brought her that her husband was in an inebriated condition.

29 1 November 1902

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

OBSCENE LANGUAGE **Walter Selwood**, Stockton, boatman, captain of the barge *Nene*, was summoned by Arthur E Charlton, a mechanical engineer of Bolton, for using obscene language on the towing-path of the canal abutting upon the public highway at Stockton on September 26th. Defendant did not appear, but wrote asking to have the case adjourned for a week. The Bench however decided to go on with the case. Complainant gave evidence of the language complained of. The language was uttered in the presence of a number of children and grown up people. The Bench fined the defendant £1 10s 6d, including costs, or in default of distress twenty eight days' imprisonment. The Chairman complimented the complainant for bringing the case forward.

30 10 January 1903

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

UNLICENSED DOG **Charles Gardner jun**, Long Itchington, boatman, was fined 11s 6d,

including costs, for keeping a dog without a licence at Stockton on December 12th. Defendant did not appear. PC Black proved the charge, and stated that the dog had since been destroyed. A second charge against defendant for allowing the same dog to be at large on the public highway at Stockton on the same date without wearing a muzzle or collar with the owner's name inscribed thereon was dismissed.

31 24 October 1903

WARWICKSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

A MOST OUTRAGEOUS AND BRUTAL ASSAULT **George Bullock** (25), boatman, John Jones (21), labourer, Thomas Rowe (18), labourer, George Wells (18), labourer, Robert Heath (18), labourer, Walter Harris (18), brass founder, Anerian Isley (24), brass drawer, Alfred Higgins (18), stamper, Alfred Townsend (17), labourer and Joseph William Dabbs were indicted for assaulting Alice Cook (18) at Erdington, with intent to ravish her. Mr Horace Rowlands prosecuted, and the prisoners Higgins and Dabbs were defended by Mr Dorsett and Mr R Noble. The evidence disclosed most dastardly conduct on the part of several of the prisoners, they having met the girl on the canal side on the afternoon of July 14th, and after ill using her, committed a criminal assault. A witness named Isaiah Rathbone proved rescuing the girl from a number of the men, but could only identify Harris. William Thomas Bolton identified the prisoners, but said Harris took no part in the assault. He did not attempt to stop them because he was, in fact, with the other men. James Stephens identified seven of the men, and said that had he not been in a weak state of health he would have interfered. The jury found all the prisoners guilty with the exception of Bullock, and stated that they considered Higgins and Townsend were the ringleaders. The Chairman passed sentence on Wednesday morning, saying that the prisoners had been convicted of a most outrageous, brutal and cowardly assault on a respectable young woman. He was speaking of them all except Harris, in whose case all the magistrates agreed that a distinction should be made. If the young woman had not protected herself to some extent, and had they actually accomplished their purpose, they would all have been committed to the Assizes and have received something like eight or ten years' penal servitude. He had never before heard of an outrage of this kind having been committed by a gang of men in Warwickshire. The case showed the danger that arose from young men idling about on the outskirts of Birmingham, interfering with the passers by and ready for any mischief. The punishment which the Court had power to inflict on Higgins and Townsend, the ringleaders, was not at all adequate. It would be a very good thing if the Court had power to order a good flogging in addition to the other sentence. Not only did these two prisoners commit this gross outrage, but they behaved to the girl in a most treacherous and cowardly manner, for they promised to take her home, and then turned on her. The sentence was that they should undergo eighteen months' hard labour. With regard to the other prisoners, some had been in prison for three months, and some had not, and the magistrates would make a distinction accordingly. Rowe and Dabbs would be sentenced to twelve months' hard labour, and Jones, Wells, Heath and Ilsley to ten months'. Harris was on the spot, but it did not appear that he actually took part in the assault, and the Court was inclined to think that he was frightened to interfere. This prisoner would be ordered to come up for judgement if called upon.

32 28 November 1903

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

A BOATMEN'S QUARREL **Henry Monk jun**, Stockton, boatman, was summoned for assaulting **George Barnett**, also a boatman, at Napton on October 31st. Mr W P Bourne appeared for defendant, stating that his client was away with his boat and could not attend. He was prepared to admit that a technical assault had been committed by his client, but it was really a most trivial affair, and he considered that the justice of the case would be met by complainant withdrawing the charge on payment of expenses. If the Court would allow this to be done, he was willing to pay the costs. Complainant, however, said he wished the case proceeded with and, on being sworn, said defendant struck him a blow because he said he "could take a corner against any of the Monks". The Clerk

said this sounded rather like a challenge to fight, but complainant explained that it meant he could work against any of the Monks. This happened in the Bull and Butcher, defendant stating that if he went outside he would give him another. They both went out, when defendant acting up to his promises struck complainant again. The latter ran away. In reply to the Clerk, complainant stated the blows did not leave any marks. Thomas E Stephens corroborated the evidence of complainant, and defendant was fined £1 1s 6d including costs, the Chairman stating that it was not a very serious case.

33 22 October 1904

WARWICKSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

HIS LAST CHANCE **George Flateley** (21), boatman, pleaded guilty to breaking and entering the dwelling house of Verna Jones and stealing one silver watch, two chains, five brooches, one gold ring, one gold pin, one silver glove book, one pair earrings, one gold chain and six shillings in money in the parish of Aston Manor on October 5th. The Deputy Chairman said that prisoner had been convicted several times before, and if he went on in this way he would find himself shortly in penal servitude. They would give him one more chance, and this time he would be sentenced to six months' hard labour.

34 7 October 1905

SOUTHAM

REFRACTORY CASUAL **George McKenzie**, described as a boatman, was sentenced to seven days' hard labour for absconding from the Workhouse before he was entitled to discharge himself. Mr A Buttle (master) and Mr E Macbeth (porter) proved the charges.

35 25 November 1905

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY LAST

SCHOOL CASES **Henry Kendall**, Stockton, boatman, was fined £1 in all for not sending four of his children regularly to school at Stockton. Mr S Morris, school attendance officer, proved the charge.

36 3 March 1906

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

SCHOOL CASES **Charles Gardner**, Long Itchington, boatman, was ordered to send his child **Willie**, aged 7 years, regularly to school, or in default pay a fine of 10s. **Henry Kendall**, Stockton, boatman, was ordered to send his four children, **Frederick** aged 6 years, **Daniel** aged 9, **John** aged 12, and **Betsey** aged 13, regularly to school, or in default pay fines amounting in all to £2. Mr S Morris (attendance officer) stated the facts of the cases.

37 23 June 1906

AN AVON MYSTERY On Friday in last week, at the Stratford-on-Avon Town Hall, Mr G F Lodder, Deputy Coroner for South Warwickshire, held an inquiry into the circumstances of the death of William Henry Woodward (37), a gardener, whose body was recovered from the Avon on Wednesday of last week. Mr Harrison was chosen foreman of the jury.

George Woodward (brother) said he knew nothing of deceased's intention to come to Stratford. Witness saw him at 11.30 on Monday night. He was sitting up for witness, and appeared sober and jolly. He might have had a drop of beer. On the Tuesday morning witness saw him at 8.45. He was all right then, and said he would be back by dinner. Witness had not quarrelled with him. Deceased was not in pecuniary difficulties, and always had plenty of work. He had no trouble, and was a good swimmer.

Edward Ernest Edwards, outfitter's assistant of 14 Arden Terrace, said he and a companion were punting up the river on Wednesday morning, when his companion called his attention to something floating in the water. It looked like a man's coat. On going nearer he saw the top of a man's head,

so witness turned the punt round and came straight back, telling **Mr Waters**, boatman to Mr Ross, who informed the police.

PS Hipwell said at 7 a m on Wednesday he received information from Waters that a man was in the river. He took the ambulance down to the Swan's Nest landing stage and then, in company with Waters and PC Workman, went up the river in a large boat to some little distance above Mr Bird's residence. They there found deceased in mid stream. Finding he was a heavy man, they took him to the Warwick Road side of the river, got him on the bank and then into the boat, bringing him down to the landing stage, where they conveyed him on the ambulance to the mortuary. The clothing was searched, but the only things found were a linen handkerchief, a pipe, small pair of scissors, watch key, small padlock key and a lead pencil. There was no money at all, and no waistcoat or cap were found. George Woodward said deceased left his watch at home.

The Coroner : Have you got the doctor here?

PS Hipwell : No. The only thing we could find of recent date was a small abrasion on the right cheek, such as might have been caused by deceased striking the bottom of the river. There was an old scar on his face, through which he was identified by his brother. The body was that of a stout, well nourished man. Later PC Workman and he went up the river to examine the banks. He failed to trace anything, but PC Workman could give information as to footprints.

PC Workman said at 12.30 p m he searched the left bank, and the sergeant the right, and about 200 yards from where they found the body he came across two footprints, which corresponded with the boots produced. The impression made by the right boot was deeper, and looked as if someone had taken a spring. There were no signs of a struggle. It looked as if the man went straight down to the river and then jumped in. There was nothing to lead him to suppose that there had been foul play. They failed to find his cap.

The Coroner said it seemed to be one of those mysteries which could not be satisfactorily cleared up.

A verdict of "Found drowned" was returned.

38 5 January 1907

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

BURGLARY AT PRIOR'S MARSTON **Michael McFarlane**, boatman, no fixed abode, was charged on remand with breaking into the house of David Tolley jun at Marston Doles at about 11.30 p m on December 26th, with intent to steal therefrom his goods and chattels, these including a cash box and contents, a shaving case, two pairs of boots and a bundle of sundry articles consisting of cuffs, neckties, handkerchiefs, gloves, stockings etc. The evidence of Mr David Tolley jun showed that his family were away from home on the night in question, and witness went to spend the evening with a friend. On his return about midnight, he found the glass and framework of the kitchen window had been broken, the aperture being large enough to admit a man. He listened, and on hearing someone moving about in the house, procured assistance, and prisoner was induced to come out. Prisoner had thrown some of the articles out of the broken window, and was preparing to throw out some more when he was disturbed. PC Long also gave corroborative evidence. In the course of the evidence, prisoner volunteered to plead guilty. He was committed for trial at the Quarter Sessions at Warwick the next day.

39 6 July 1907

STOCKTON

SAD DROWNING FATALITY Last week, **Arthur Barnett** of this village, a youth about 15 years of age, met with his death under very sad circumstances. He was taking a trip to London with a boatman as a helping hand, it being his first journey of the kind. When at one of the large double locks on the Grand Junction Canal, he attempted to cross over on to the opposite bank after having opened the paddles. The rush of water into the locks caused one of the lock gates to bang against the one on which the deceased was standing, throwing the youth into the lock, which was partly filled. In falling, it is surmised, he must have knocked his head against the wall or bottom of the

lock. He was brought to the surface with a shaft immediately afterwards, but was quite dead. The poor lad was laid to rest in Stockton parish graveyard on Monday last.

40 23 November 1907

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

LARCENY OF COAL **George Davis**, Stockton, boatman, and **Thomas Hough**, captain of the canal boat "*Napton*" were summoned by William Griffin for feloniously stealing 1/4 cwt of coal, the property of Messrs Griffin and Co, at Stockton on November 8th. John Barrott, foreman for Messrs Griffin and Co, deposed that at about 11.30 a m on the day in question, he was looking through the window of the mill at the limeworks, when he saw defendant George Davis fetch a quantity of coal, weighing about 1/4 cwt, from the stoke hole of the engine at the works. Witness was about twenty yards away, and came out and asked Davis what right he had to come and fetch the coal away. He replied, "I haven't had any before". Witness told him he had better get off about his business, and he went away. Davis was working on the boat "*Napton*", which was going through the locks at the time, and of which boat the other defendant, Hough, was captain. Hough was in the cabin of the boat while Davis was taking the coal, and after witness had spoken to Davis about taking the coal, he went back to the boat. Just prior to the taking of the coal, witness had seen Davis and Hough in conversation together. Mr William Griffin, manager for Griffin and Co, said the firm wished a stop put to this kind of thing, as over a ton of coal had been stolen within the past week. Both defendants consented to be dealt with summarily. Davis pleaded guilty, but Hough disclaimed all knowledge of the theft. The Bench fined Davis £2 8s, including costs, but the charge against Hough was dismissed, there being no evidence against him. Hough's mother offered to pay the money for Davis, but Davis said he would rather "do the time". He was accordingly sent to one month's imprisonment in default.

41 21 March 1908

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE

ALLEGED THEFT OF A DOG **John Roberts**, captain of the canal boat "*The Leeds*" was summoned for stealing a dog, the property of **William Edkins**, 91 Saltisford, boatman, in the parish of St Mary on the 27th February, the dog being "there and ordinarily kept in a state of confinement, and the said dog not being a subject of larceny at Common Law". Defendant, who was very deaf, pleaded guilty "so that he could get away". Prosecutor said he had possessed a very handsome little dog which was kept on the boat on which he (witness) was working down the canal. Witness missed him on February 27th, and sent his little boy back to the defendant's boat, which was working in the opposite direction towards Hatton, to ask defendant if he had the dog. Defendant replied, "No, it ran straight down the towing-path". Witness would not have parted with that dog for £5 ; its value was more than a sovereign, he should think. Prosecutor's son gave corroborative evidence. Superintendent Ravenhall said that there was a man named Jones who saw the prosecutor's dog at Hatton, and told the defendant about it. The latter said, "I will keep it till I see you again". Councillor Lloyd Evans : That was a promise to return it. Prisoner said that he did not know that the dog was on board until he found it curled up inside the cupboard of the cabin. As soon as he found it, he called out, "A dog is in my cupboard". In reply to a man at Hatton, witness said, "I shall keep it and give it to the man it belongs to". Superintendent Ravenhall said that the prisoner had had the dog since February 27th without offering to return it, until the prosecutor applied for a warrant. He was liable to a fine of 40s under the new Dogs Act for not reporting to the police about the dog. Prisoner, at this point, on being asked if he wished to hold to his plea of guilty as the Bench thought he might have pleaded so under misapprehension, asked leave to withdraw his plea and plead not guilty. The evidence of the witnesses was then taken again, this time on oath. In reply to Councillor Lloyd Evans, prosecutor said that the dog had lost his collar and at the time in question had a bit of white tape round its neck with his (prosecutor's) name on it. In reply to Superintendent Ravenhall, prosecutor said that when he met the prisoner's boat, the man was steering and standing at the entrance to his cabin. The dog might have jumped into the boat when

the prisoner was getting it through the lock. The dog did not have to pass the prisoner to get into the cabin. PS Taylor gave evidence of arresting prisoner who, when charged at the police station with the theft of the dog, replied, "I didn't steal the dog ; he must have jumped into the cabin unawares to me". Witness asked him where the dog was at present, and he replied, "I lost him last Friday in Hardcastle Tunnel, Stoke-on-Trent. It is my own fault I got into this trouble ; I should have sent the dog back". The Mayor (to prisoner) : The magistrates are of opinion that you acted negligently, but they do not think that the case is proved. It will therefore be dismissed on payment of the costs, 16s 6d. It was intimated that prisoner's employers had promised to pay any fine imposed.

42 16 May 1908

DROWNING FATALITY AT WARWICK An inquest was held at the Warwick Police Station on Saturday morning before the Coroner (Mr J Tibbits) respecting the death of a man whose body had been found in the Warwick and Napton Canal on the previous Thursday near Budbrook. He had since been identified as James Charles Pocock, a navvy, who appears to have lived at East Ham, Essex. James Shimmen, 49 Mansfield Road, East Ham, said that in consequence of a communication which he had received from the police, he examined the body of deceased, and identified it as that of his father-in-law. His age was about 50, and he travelled all over the country for work. Witness last heard from deceased in January of this year, when he wrote from Yorkshire to say he was in work. Deceased was a man of cheerful disposition. **Joseph Barnett**, lock-keeper, said that about 2.15 on the Thursday, he met deceased on the towing-path, and deceased remarked, "It's a nice day". Witness got the body out of the water at four o'clock in the afternoon. **William R Ashmore**, a young boatman living at 7 Commercial Buildings, Warwick (who could not write), spoke to finding the body in the water ; he helped the previous witness to get it out. PC Parker said he brought the body to the mortuary. On searching the clothes, he found a pawn ticket, but no money. The Coroner said they had no evidence as to deceased's mind, and it was evidently a case in which they should return a verdict of "Found drowned", which the jury accordingly did. The Coroner added he should like to acknowledge the prompt way in which the police had made their enquiries. In a case of this kind, it was always more satisfactory when the body could be identified.

43 20 June 1908

LEAMINGTON DROWNING FATALITY

A LOCK HOUSE KEEPER'S METHODS The Deputy Coroner (Mr E F Hadlow) held an inquest at the Leamington Police Station on Monday on the body of George Frederick Wilkins (19) of Leam Terrace East, whose body was taken out of the canal near Radford the previous Saturday.

Henry Robert Wilkins, Stoneleigh Cottage, Leam Terrace East, bricklayer, identified the body as that of his son. Deceased had been subject to fits since he was two years old, and latterly his health had been worse than ever. Witness last saw him alive just before going to work at 5.10 on Saturday morning ; deceased was then in bed and asleep. When deceased had a fit, he often ran a dozen yards or more and then fell down, sometimes twitching with convulsions and sometimes lying perfectly rigid. He had at one time done errands for a Mr Adams, but the latter having given up business, deceased was thrown out of employment, and the fact that he was earning nothing seemed to have depressed him. He was in the habit of going fishing in the canal, and he persisted in doing so, although witness had warned him not to do it for fear he should fall into the water while in a fit.

Samuel Beecher, canal boatman in the employ of Messrs Nelson and Co of Stockton, said that he was taking his boat along the canal from Leamington to Stockton on Saturday morning, and when near the part where the road crosses the canal, he heard a splash such as would be caused by the throwing of a dog or cat into the water. He calculated that the splash was about three quarters of a mile away.

The Coroner : How could you hear a light splash three quarters of a mile away? Witness : The wind was very quiet.

How far would it be from the place where you first heard the splash to the lock? Witness : About a

mile. I told the lock-keeper about it, and he said he would go and see what it was.

Is it customary to inform the lock-keeper of all the cats and dogs that are drowned in the canal?
Yes.

George Silver, lock-keeper in the employ of the Warwick and Napton Canal Company, said that the last witness went through the lock by his house on Saturday morning shortly after eleven o'clock. He said that he heard a splash by the second bridge, and he did not know whether it was a dog thrown into the canal, or what it was.

The Coroner : Is it customary for them to report to you when dogs and cats are thrown into the water? Yes ; and I should like to catch some of 'em at it! (Laughter).

Did you think it was a cat? Witness (calmly) : I thought it was probably an old gentleman that I was watching the other night ; he was about three parts gone, so I thought perhaps it was him. I was going to my garden in the afternoon so I thought I might as well take my hook and make a search. After I had had my dinner, about twenty minutes past two, I -

The Coroner : You gave him a couple of hours to get properly drowned!

Witness : I knew that if I had gone at once I couldn't have saved him.

Where did you find deceased?

I found him just where I had seen my old gentleman the night before – and (waxing garrulous) I got a baby out one Sunday morning at just the same place, and -

The Coroner : Never mind about what else you found there ; is it about the position where the last witness told you he heard the splash? Yes.

You fished the body out? Yes ; and I laid him down on the grass and took his watch out and looked at the time ; it had stopped at 10.20 a.m.

What did you do then? Put it back again. (Laughter).

Witness added that he saw no fishing rod or line near where the youth had fallen into the water.

PC Day gave evidence of taking the body to the mortuary.

Dr Harold Mason said that he made a *post mortem* examination of the body. There were no external injuries with the exception of a slight bruise on the upper lip ; the teeth were tightly clenched, and the tongue was wedged between them ; there was a slight adhesion of the membrane to the covering of the brain, but with this exception, all the organs were healthy. There was no water either in the lungs or the stomach, and he had come to the conclusion that deceased died through suffocation during a fit, and that he must have rolled into the water in his death struggle.

The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, and expressed sympathy with deceased's parents.

44 29 August 1908

STOCKTON

NARROW ESCAPE FROM DROWNING On Saturday afternoon last, when passing through the locks near the Blue Lion Inn, Stockton, a boatman observed what he thought were the hands and arms of a child above the water. He immediately jumped into the canal and caught hold of the object, which proved to be the child of a man named Burcell, who lives nearby and is employed by Greaves and Co. The child was exhausted and practically on the point of drowning, but is now progressing towards recovery. (**Edkins** – see 46)

45 19 September 1908

ALLEGED ARSON BY A BOY On Thursday, before Mr T M Oldham, **Henry Deverson** (13), son of a boatman in the employ of Jee's Hartshill Granite Co, was charged with setting fire to a hayrick (containing about four tons) at Wolfhamcote on the previous day, the property of Mr Thomas Cope. PC Rowberry deposed that from inquiries made he arrested prisoner the same morning, when the lad admitted setting fire to the rick, stating that he wanted to see “a good blaze”. Accused was remanded until the next petty sessions on the 28th inst, bail being allowed in his father's recognisance of £10.

46 26 September 1908

BRAVERY UNREWARDED **Mr W Edkins** of 91 The Saltisford, Warwick, writes as follows to the Rugby Advertiser :- Seeing you have reported in your paper the saving of a lad from the canal near the Blue Lion Inn on Saturday August 22nd, may I say that this is the nineteenth life I have saved, and up to the present time have not received a reward. I am over 50 years of age, and caught very bad colds through jumping into the water all weathers. I should be pleased if you could put the record of my life saving in your paper. I have been a boatman for the last 35 years.

47 3 October 1908

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

BOY SETS FIRE TO HAY RICK **Henry Deverson** (13), boatboy, was charged on remand with setting fire to a hay rick at Wolfhamcote on September 14th, the property of Thomas Edwin Cope, under circumstances already reported. It will be remembered that on being arrested, defendant told PC Rowberry that he wanted to see a "good big blaze". The Bench ordered defendant to receive six strokes of the birch rod ; and the Chairman told defendant's father that he was largely to blame for what had occurred. The father admitted the lad had never been to school.

VACCINATION ORDER **Samuel Beechey**, Stockton, boatman, was ordered to have his child, **Eliza Emily**, vaccinated within 21 days and pay 15s 6d costs. Mr W C Collier (vaccination officer) proved the charge.

48 16 January 1909

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS. MONDAY

DISOBEDIENCE OF A VACCINATION ORDER **Samuel Beechey**, Stockton, boatman, was summoned by Mr W C Collier, vaccination officer, for disobedience of a vaccination order. Defendant did not appear, but Mr Collier said the child had now been vaccinated. The charge was accordingly dismissed, defendant being ordered to pay the further sum of 6s 6d costs.

49 13 February 1909

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE, MONDAY

CANAL BOATMAN'S THEFT **James Thomas Hale**, West Bromwich, boatman, was charged with stealing from a canal boat, on the 10th inst, two lock keys, value 2s 6d, the property of **Daniel Bunn**, Leighton Buzzard, boatman. Prosecutor said that on the 9th inst, while passing near Weedon, he met the prisoner, who asked him for a ride. Witness agreed to take him on and give him 4s for helping with the boat as far as Coventry. Prisoner stayed upon the boat until they reached the Coventry Road bridge, Warwick, when he said, "Good day, old cock", and got off. When witness got to the next lock, he found that the "keys" were missing, and went back in search of prisoner. He found him near the place where he had left him, and accused him of stealing the keys. Prisoner made off, and witness gave chase, the chase being also taken up by Dr Young, who was passing at the time on a bicycle. PC Samman said that about 1.15 the previous day, in consequence of information received, he proceeded along the Warwick Road to Leek Wootton, and there met prisoner. "I know what you want", said the latter, "I've got them, and mean to stick to them till he pays me". Witness then searched prisoner and found the two lock keys produced upon him. They were afterwards identified by prosecutor as his property. Prisoner (addressing the Bench) said he "had a few words" with prosecutor, and the latter told him to get off the boat. He had paid him nothing, and so he took the keys. He did not mean to steal them, he explained, but to hold them in pledge for the money. Replying to a question, prosecutor said that prisoner got off the boat before half the journey was accomplished. Witness could not pay him when he had not done half his work. Superintendent Ravenhall said that prisoner had been convicted nine times previously. He had been punished for gin stealing, boot stealing, and several times for drunkenness. Sentence of two months hard labour was passed.

50 10 April 1909

WARWICKSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

BROKE INTO INEBRIATES HOME **Charles Print** (52), boatman, was charged with burglariously entering the house of Elizabeth Eves, Erdington, on the 27th March, and stealing a pair of tongs and a poker, the goods of Henry James Boscomb. He pleaded guilty. D S Jackson said that prisoner was of a roving disposition and spent much of his time in canal boats. He had been convicted on several occasions for assault, but never before for burglary. The Chairman : Why did you do it? Prisoner : I was drunk. Mr Rowlands : I can quite believe that. He broke into the Inebriate Home for Women, and when arrested he said, "What is a man to do when he has no money and nowhere to sleep?" (Laughter). Sentence of six months hard labour was passed.

51 29 May 1909

CANAL SIDE FATALITY

WOMAN KILLED AT HATTON By the mere undirected movement of a horse, a woman met with a terrible accident at Hatton on Sunday last. **Mrs Sarah Ann Childs**, aged 54, of 46 Barnt Street, Birmingham, working up the Warwick and Birmingham Canal through the numerous locks at Hatton, was struck by the suddenly tightened rope as the horse moved on without orders from one of the lock gates, and was dashed on to the towing-path with fatal laceration of the brain. An inquest was held on the body at Hatton Asylum on Tuesday by Mr E F Hadow (Deputy Coroner for Mid Warwickshire).

The husband of the deceased, **William Childs**, was the first witness. He said he was a boatman employed by the Warwick and Birmingham Canal Company, and his wife always assisted him in working the boats. On Sunday last, the 23rd inst, witness was coming up the canal with a boat from Warwick to Birmingham, and arrived at the lock below the hill at Hatton about six o'clock. There was then nobody in the boat but witness, as his wife was driving the horse on the towing-path. At the lock, his wife got caught by the horse rope and was smacked down on the towing-path. The boat was going through the lock at the moment, and the horse was being stopped for deceased to lift the rope over the bottom gate, and if the horse had not moved on without being told, the accident would not have occurred. Deceased guided the horse by word of mouth. The rope being drawn up taut struck her in the stomach, so that she fell down about four feet of steps and smacked her head on the towing-path. Even then the horse would not stop, but went on, and drew the rope over deceased's legs. The horse was a new one to witness's wife, but had been used to that kind of work almost all its life, and was an old horse. Deceased was senseless after falling, and blood was flowing from her mouth and ear. She never spoke again. Witness rushed down to her as soon as he could, and put her head on his knee, and then got her on to the barge with the assistance of a man who was helping them through the locks, and who had seen the accident and had run back. They stopped a girl on a bicycle, and word was conveyed to the Asylum that there had been an accident. Witness assisted to bring his wife up to the Asylum, but she never regained consciousness, nor did he believe she opened her eyes.

Alfred Jones, West Street, Warwick, boatman, said he was helping the last witness with his barge up the locks on the day in question, his work being that of opening the gates. From the nature of his work, he had to be about 100 yards ahead of the last witness and his wife. Deceased was driving the horse and her husband was steering, and he (witness) was opening the lock ahead of that through which the others were passing. He looked back and saw the horse move on and swing the rope taut, so that the woman was knocked over. The horse went on towards witness, and it was possible that it had seen some succulent blade of grass ahead. But it was an old horse, well used to the work. Witness did actually think that possibly the horse had moved on to get at some grass. After seeing the accident, witness ran back and found the last witness holding up his wife's head, and together they got the woman on to the barge. She was unconscious and bleeding profusely. Deceased was brought up to the Asylum on an ambulance.

Dr H B Leech, assistant medical officer at the Asylum, said that on the 23rd inst, he was notified of an accident that had occurred at the locks. When he saw the woman, she was lying on the barge

supported by her husband. She was unconscious and blood was flowing from her right ear and mouth. He recognised that she was seriously injured, and recommended her removal on the ambulance to the Asylum. She arrived at the Asylum within an hour, and was then still bleeding. A ragged wound at the back of the woman's head was bleeding, and he suspected that she was fatally injured. She died at about eight o'clock, three hours after the accident. Witness thought the woman died from laceration of the brain from a fracture at the base of the skull, which was probably very extensive. Some of the brain matter was protruding from her ear. The other injuries were merely superficial. There was nothing to be done for the woman.

The Coroner said that it appeared that the woman, whom the jury might have noticed was a particularly stout woman, was accidentally flipped over on to the towing-path by the suddenly tightened rope. There was evidently no blame attaching to anybody in connection with the accident.

Alderman C Baker of Leamington was present at the inquest as a representative of Messrs Fellows, Morton and Clayton, and at the conclusion said he was sure they would all wish to express their thanks to the doctor for the willing assistance given to the deceased woman. The Coroner heartily associated himself with these remarks, adding that it was his experience that medical men were always willing to give all the assistance they could in such cases.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

52 17 July 1909

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

LARCENY OF A WATCH AND CHAIN **Frederick Norris**, 19, Napton, boatman, pleaded guilty to stealing a silver watch and chain, value 10s, the property of **George Mitchell**, from the cabin of a canal boat at Napton on July 10th, and was bound over under the Probation of Offenders Act to be of good behaviour for six months.

53 25 September 1909

WARWICK BOROUGH POLICE

OBSTRUCTING PEOPLE **Thomas Jones**, no home, boatman, pleaded guilty to being drunk and disorderly in Union Road on the previous day. PC Timms said that at 8.20 on Sunday night, after receiving two complaints, he arrested the prisoner, who was obstructing people and using very bad language in Union Road. His language was filthy at the police station. Prisoner was fined 10s 6d, or fourteen days.

54 9 October 1909

BIRMINGHAM BOATMAN'S FATAL FALL

A WARNING TO OTHERS

INQUEST AT HATTON ASYLUM An inquest was held on Monday at Hatton Asylum by Mr J J W Wilmshurst (Coroner for Mid Warwickshire) on the body of **George Gull**, 74 Fazeley Street, Birmingham, boatman, who fell into the canal on Saturday while in the act of closing the lock gates. Mr Assinder watched the proceedings on behalf of the Canal Company.

Joseph Gull (14) gave evidence of identification, and said the deceased, his brother, was twenty years of age. Witness and deceased were left in charge of a boat on Saturday, while their father had gone to Birmingham. His brother had been used to boats for a long time. They went through several locks, and when they came to the one near Hatton they found that the outside gate was shut and the inside one open. George tried to push the outside gate open, and in doing so fell into the water. Witness shouted for help, and someone came up to render assistance. The deceased did not make a noise when he fell into the water.

George Drage, Hatton Hill, said he was in his garden when he heard someone calling for help. Upon going to see what was the matter, he saw the last witness, who told him that his brother had fallen into the water. Witness could not see the deceased, but only his cap, which was on the top of the water. Witness always thought most of the boatmen opened the lock gates in a dangerous way.

Witness immediately after reaching the canal saw Mr Lampitt, whom he asked to help them. They dragged for the body, and soon recovered it. It was at the place in which the younger boy had said his brother had fallen in. The boat was not in such a position that the deceased would have struck it. There were wounds on the back of deceased's head, and his nose and mouth were bleeding. There were no signs of life. Mr Lampitt and witness tried artificial respiration, but all their efforts were of no avail.

Thomas Alfred Gull, father of the deceased, said that the deceased had been with him for about two years. While in the factory at which he previously worked, his son had bilious attacks, but since he had been in the open air he had got rid of them. Witness could quite understand how the deceased fell in. He (the deceased) had opened the gates in the usual, but not the proper way. The gates were opened in this way to save time, but it was a very risky process. In this case, there was no need to hurry to get the boat through. Witness would not have stopped deceased opening the gates in the way he did, as he (the witness) had often done it the same way himself. The deceased was a steady fellow, and was not subject to faintness.

Dr A W Wilcox, medical officer at Hatton Asylum, stated that he saw the deceased when he was brought out of the water. Witness was satisfied, when he saw the body, that the case was hopeless, and deceased was removed to the Asylum. Upon examining the body he found a punctured wound at the back of the head. The deceased had fractured his skull. He was not dead when he fell into the water, but the fracture would prevent him from struggling. The cause of death was fracture of the skull and drowning. The fracture was peculiar, for the hole went right through the skull to the brain, and was no larger than a crow's quill. This was the second case of drowning they had had at Hatton within the last few months.

The Coroner, summing up, said it appeared that the deceased had taken a risk that he need not have done. To save time, the boatmen adopted a risky way of opening the gates, and the accident should be a warning to them. He thought that the jury could only return a verdict of "Accidental death". Mr Wilmshurst added that they ought to feel very grateful to the authorities at the Asylum for allowing the inquiry to be held there, and for the great help they rendered.

The Coroner, acting upon the suggestion of the foreman of the jury (Mr Jeffs), expressed thanks to Dr Wilcox for his assistance, and asked him to convey a similar expression to the Asylum authorities.

55 23 October 1909

WARWICKSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

ROBBER FOUND WITH JEWELLERY **Henry Gorton** (21), boatman, pleaded not guilty to breaking into a dwelling house at Aston Manor and stealing a gold watch, a brooch, &c, the property of Ada Searle, 177 Lichfield Road. Mr Rowlands prosecuted. Detective-Inspector Scott said he taxed the prisoner with the theft of the jewellery. Prisoner denied having any jewellery on him, but the officer made a close examination of his clothing and found the stolen brooch in the right hand pocket of his coat. Prisoner denied any connection with the robbery, but was found guilty and sentenced to six months' hard labour.

56 6 November 1909

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY **Charles Berry**, Stockton, boatman, for the above offence at Stockton on September 25th, was fined 12s including costs. PC Smith proved the charge.

57 16 July 1910

WARWICKSHIRE ASSIZES

BROMFORD BRIDGE BURGLARY Lily Rastall (21) and **William Leeson** (22), boatman, pleaded guilty to breaking into a house on the canal side at Bromford Bridge, and stealing goods to the value of £2 10s. Mr Horace Rowlands prosecuted.

Detective-inspector Jackson said Leeson had been convicted several times. The girl was of better

class than the people she associated with, and if she had a home to go to, she would be a respectable member of society.

Leeson was sentenced to nine months' hard labour.

After hearing from a lady that a home would be found her, Rastall was discharged.

58 16 July 1910

WARWICKSHIRE ASSIZES

AN ASTON ROBBERY **William Fletcher** (28), boatman, pleaded not guilty to breaking into the house of Annie Saunders at Aston on April 2nd and stealing articles of jewellery and £1 in money. Mr Horace Rowlands prosecuted. The prisoner was found in possession of part of the stolen property, but he said it was given him by another man, and he did not know it was stolen.

The prisoner was found guilty, and sentenced to eighteen months' hard labour.

59 3 September 1910

A HATTON MYSTERY

BOATMAN FOUND DROWNED An inquest was held by Mr J J W Wilmshurst at Hatton yesterday (Friday) afternoon, on the body of **Matthew Thresher**, a boatman, who was in the employ of Messrs Fellows, Morton and Clayton, and who was drowned on Tuesday.

Edward Wenlock said he was engineer on the boat of which the deceased was in charge. The boat was passing through the locks at Hatton on Tuesday night, and the deceased was on the towing-path. Witness was waiting for the signal which would tell him that the deceased had reached the tiller, but as he did not hear the signal, he went on to the deck and missed the deceased. Witness called to another man, who was mate on the boat and who had gone to the next lock, and said, "It strikes me that Mat is in the lock ; I can't see him". Witness searched for him with a boat hook, and eventually found him, but could not drag the body to the surface. He sent for the lock-keeper.

James Marks, lock-keeper, said he heard a shout, and he went out and met a boatman, who told him that a man was missing from the boat. Witness hurried to the lock and, with the assistance of the previous witness, dragged the body to the surface and applied artificial respiration without success. There was a mark on the head, which showed that deceased had been either struck with the propeller or the boat.

Ernest Russon, mate on the boat, said he was at the next lock when he heard Wenlock shouting. He hurried back, and found that the deceased was missing, and then ran for the lock-keeper.

Jane Thresher, deceased's wife, said her husband was a strong and steady man. He never had fits. He was previously in charge of a horse barge.

PC Cockerill said he examined the boat and found marks which suggested that the deceased had slipped while jumping on to the boat. Witness knew it was quite possible for the deceased to have slipped while jumping on to the boat. It was very dark at the time.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death".

60 14 January 1911

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

CRUELTY TO A GELDING **Charles Gardner**, Stockton, boatman, was summoned by Inspector Timms, SPCA, for cruelty to a gelding at Stockton on December 22nd, by working it while in an unfit state. Defendant did not appear, but his wife attended. The evidence of PC Bradbury, Inspector Timms and Mr Ringer, VS, showed that the animal was very lame, old and in poor condition, and totally unfit for any kind of work. On defendant's wife promising to have the horse destroyed, the Bench took a lenient view of the case, and adjourned the case for a fortnight for the payment of 8s costs.

61 3 June 1911

WARWICK BROUGH POLICE

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY **Joseph Allett**, boatman, no fixed abode, was charged with being

drunk and disorderly in Crompton Street at 11.30 pm on Monday. He pleaded guilty. PC Freeman said he saw the prisoner very drunk in Crompton Street, and he was using filthy language. Prisoner was fined 5s and costs, and was allowed a week in which to pay.

62 17 June 1911

SUICIDE THROUGH LONELINESS An inquest was held at the Police Station on Wednesday by Mr J J Willington Wilmshurst, on the body of Ellen Gwatkins, aged 45, of 4 Leicester Street, which was found in the river near the Mill boat house on Monday evening. Charles Gwatkins, railway clerk of Old Milverton Road, identified the body as that of his aunt. She had been living with a friend. She suffered from dyspepsia, and was much depressed. Ann Sophia Jones said she worked in a situation with deceased, and when they left they lived together. Deceased had never threatened to take her life. She had complained at times of being left alone so much, on account of witness going out to her work, but generally she was bright and cheerful. **Albert Wise**, 48 King Street, boatman at the Mill boat house, said he recovered the body from the river facing the Jephson Gardens. PC Day said the body seemed only to have been in the river a few hours. The coroner read a letter left by the deceased for the witness Jones, stating her (the deceased) being alone “did the mischief”. The Jury returned a verdict of “Suicide while of unsound mind”.

63 9 September 1911

HOCKLEY HEATH

DROWNING FATALITY On Wednesday, the Birmingham City Coroner conducted an inquiry at the Victoria Courts, touching the death of **Walter James Jennings** (29), a boatman living at Wharf Lane, Hockley Heath, and whose body was recovered from the canal near Gas Street on Sunday. Deceased's mother said she last saw her son alive on the Thursday evening, when he said he was going to sleep on the boat, as he had to start a journey early on the Friday morning. A boatman named **Beck** said he saw him in Gas Street on Saturday night. He appeared to have had some drink. Deceased should have slept on the boat, but did not do so. Jennings's employer added that on Saturday he accompanied the man on a canal journey from Hockley Heath to Gas Street, Birmingham. They reached their destination just before three o'clock. Jennings left the boat to attend to his ordinary duties, and witness next saw him at about eleven o'clock, apparently the worse for drink. Another witness said he saw deceased shortly after one o'clock on Sunday morning, when he was making towards the boat. The medical evidence showed that there was a large wound on the right side of the head, above the level of the ear, and this was caused before death. The jury returned a verdict of “Found drowned”.

64 7 October 1911

BRIDEGROOM 77 – BRIDE 71

A WARWICK WEDDING

Bridegroom	77
Bride	71
Best Man	57
Bridesmaid	42

These are the ages of the wedding party which appeared at St Mary's Church on Saturday afternoon. Naturally enough, the event created an extraordinary amount of amused interest, and a large crowd assembled outside the Church to pelt the courageous old couple with confetti. The principal parties in this romance of late life were both old age pensioners.

The bridegroom was **Mr William Edkins**, a boatman of Commercial Buildings.

The bride was a widow – Mrs Elizabeth Anne Nicholls of the Saltisford.

The best man was Mr Harry Edkins (Stratford), son of the bridegroom.

The bridesmaid was Mrs Pare (Parkes Street), the married daughter of the bridegroom.

The arrangements for the wedding were so up to date as to include the use of a taxi cab for the

conveyance of the party to the Church and back to the Birmingham Road. "A happy party they looked", says a report, "with the bridegroom, bride, bridesmaid and a friend inside, and the best man outside with the driver, looking the very personification of dignity and importance. A contributor is evidently quite right when he describes the bridegroom as a "hardy" old man. As a rule, it seems, Mr Edkins requires the use of a couple of walking sticks in order to get about, but Saturday's ceremony was of such joyful significance that he made the experiment of discarding one of them for the afternoon".

The entrance to the Church was crowded with amused onlookers, and when the old couple returned from the vestry, they were obliged to pass through a perfect storm of congratulations and confetti. "Quite a grand affair, ain't it?", remarked the proud bridegroom, and he escorted his better half back to the taxi cab.

Upon arriving at the Commercial Buildings, Mr and Mrs Edkins were visited by upwards of thirty neighbours and friends ; some of them brought presents, and all bestowed upon the couple their congratulations and good wishes.

The Rev E G Hatton-Fraenkl officiated at the wedding.

65 21 October 1911

WARWICKSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

"A HOPELESS MAN" **Thomas Print**, 37, boatman, was indicted for housebreaking at Erdington on August 3rd, and stealing jewellery and articles of clothing belonging to William Davis Morris. He pleaded guilty. He also admitted having been previously convicted.

Detective-Inspector Jackson said the prisoner did no regular work. He had only been out of gaol a fortnight when he committed the offence to which he had now pleaded guilty.

The Chairman : He is a hopeless man?

Detective-Inspector Jackson : He is, sir.

Prisoner was sentenced to twelve months' hard labour.

66 11 May 1912

POLICE COURTS

A VIOLENT BOATMAN At Warwick County Police Court on Saturday, **Richard Proctor**, boatman, was summoned for cruelty to a pony on the 18th ult, at the canal side at Hatton. There was a further charge against defendant for assault on O Whitehead of Hatton on the same date.

Complainant said that he was employed by the Canal Company as a bricklayer. On the 18th ult, he saw the defendant in charge of a pony and two horses. Prisoner was whipping the pony most unmercifully. His arm was going as fast as it could go. Witness told him that if he did not stop he would report it and take the name of the boat. He then went to do so, and while he was looking down to get the name, defendant pushed him in the water, which was about six feet down. Defendant afterwards gave assistance to witness to get out of the canal.

Mrs Clara Whitehead said that she was with her husband at the time. When her husband spoke to him, defendant used very bad language. She corroborated the other evidence given by the first witness.

PC Cockerill said that on the day in question he was called by the foreman of the canal at Hatton. The defendant had been thrashing the pony very badly. There was, moreover, a rope round the neck of the pony, which was attached to the swingle tree of the first horse, so that if the pony's rope attached to the boat was not always tight, and if it was slack for a moment, its neck was nearly pulled out by the horse in front, which was an "old hand" and immediately started off on the word being given. When he took off the neck rope, a handful of hair fell off. The pony was covered with weals and had to be slaughtered at Birmingham as soon as it got there.

The Bench decided that it was gross cruelty, and defendant would have to go to prison for two months. For the assault, defendant was fined £1, with the alternative of 14 days. Defendant asked for time, but this was refused.

67 27 July 1912

BANBURY

BOAT BOY'S DEATH The Coroner on Saturday held an inquest on the body of **George Edwin Callow**, son of **George Callow**, boatman. The boy died at Banbury Infirmary following an accident at Fenny Compton Wharf. Callow was on his father's boat, and when passing a motor launch belonging to Mr Carr, Shiplake on Thames, the towing horse swerved and bolted 300 yards in the opposite direction, the towing rope getting round the boy's neck and inflicting terrible injuries. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

68 12 April 1913

NAPTON

BOATMAN'S OFFENCE At Banbury Police Court on Saturday, **James Biddle**, boatman, Napton, was charged with being drunk on the canal towing-path on Friday. Defendant pleaded guilty. PC Shattock said that at 11 p m he saw the prisoner drunk and staggering about in Bridge Street. He went in the direction of Mr Kench's mill. Witness and PS Grace found him on the towing-path. He said he had a boat there and was unable to find it. He took him to the Town Hall for his own safety. The Chairman said the police had done quite right in locking the man up, or he might have got in the canal.

69 22 November 1913

SOUTHAM COUNTY COURT, SATURDAY

A HORSE DEALING DISPUTE **Isaac Woodhouse**, Stockton, boatman, sued William Neal, Napton, farmer &c, for £15, the value of a horse unlawfully detained. Mr Harold Easen (Rugby) appeared for plaintiff, and Mr H Lupton Erddish (Rugby) for the defendant. Plaintiff's solicitor – in outlining the case – said the claim arose out of a contract, whereby defendant supplied a pony on approval to the plaintiff. The price of this, if found suitable, was to be £9, but after working it a week, it was found to be unsuitable and returned to defendant, plaintiff paying 10s for the use of it. The grey horse plaintiff had been previously working, but which had broken down, was, it was alleged, left in the defendant's custody, or put out with him to keep at 2s 6d per week, but defendant had since sold this horse, and the present action was brought for the recovery of the horse, or its value.

Mrs Woodhouse, wife of plaintiff, who stated her husband was not in a fit state of health to appear, said she had to do her husband's business, and bought the grey horse from a Mr James Carroll for £15 on October 7th 1911. They had an accident with this horse on the 27th November last, but kept him until the 13th December last, when they turned him out with the defendant. The horse had hurt its off foreleg. On Sunday December 15th last, defendant lent her a pony for which she was to pay £9 if found suitable, and defendant was to keep the old horse for 2s 6d a week. After keeping the pony for seven days, she found it was no good and returned it to defendant, paying him 10s for the use of it. She did not give Mr Neal the money direct, but left it at Birdingbury Wharf with Mr Neal's brother's son's wife.

His Honour : What relationship is that? (Laughter).

The Registrar : A niece-in-law.

Continuing, witness said the pony was not worth three halfpence. In December, witness asked Mr Neal about the grey horse, and he replied that it was going on all right, but he afterwards told her he had sold it to a Mr Bert Griffin, but if he could not get him back, he would find her another that would suit her.

In cross-examination by Mr Reddish, witness said : What the horse was worth when Mr Neal had him is nothing to do with the case. He was lame then. I never agreed to "swop" the old horse when I had the pony from Mr Neal.

Mr Reddish : I put it to you : You agreed to "swop" the old horse for the pony, and to pay £9 by instalments of 5s a week?

Witness : I did nothing of the kind. The pony was a "waster". He wanted two men to help him up.

Mr Reddish : Well, what about your horse?

Witness : My old horse jumped up like a lark. (Laughter).

In reply to his Honour, Mr Reddish said the pony was afterwards sold.

His Honour : The grey horse was part of the price.

Defendant, on being called, said he let plaintiff have the pony, on condition that he paid him £9 for it, and he (defendant) was to have the old grey into the bargain, as it was then worth nothing. In fact, he let Mr Bert Griffin have it for 10s worth of offal hay. The horse (he said in cross-examination) had since improved, but he would not like to give £5 for it even now. He accepted the 10s and the pony as closing the deal.

Herbert Griffin, the purchaser of the horse, said he had to keep it in the stable for 6 weeks, during part of which time he had had to sling it up. It had required great trouble and expense in getting it round, and it was now worth perhaps £5.

After hearing further evidence, his Honour still considered the grey horse was part of the price, and when defendant accepted the pony back and cancelled the deal, he ought to have given up the grey horse.

Judgement was accordingly entered for the plaintiff for the amount claimed or the return of the grey horse.

70 28 March 1914

SOUTHAM

ALLEGED LARCENY OF A WATCH AND CHAIN On Monday before Mr T Oldham, **William Holloway**, a young boatman aged 18, who said he belonged to Dudley Port, was brought up in custody charged with stealing a silver watch and chain, value £1, the goods and chattels of **James Sanders**, a boatman, at Napton on March 20th. Prisoner was remanded to Warwick Gaol until the next Petty Sessions on Monday next.

71 4 April 1914

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

CASE FOR QUARTER SESSIONS **William Holloway**, no fixed abode, boatman, was charged with stealing a watch and chain at Napton on the 20th March, of the value of £1, the property of **James Sanders**. James Sanders of Nuneaton, boatman, stated he was working two boats on the day in question, when he met prisoner on the towing-path at Flecknoe. The prisoner told him he was looking for work, and witness said he might go with him. They stopped the night at Marston Doles, and both slept in the same cabin. Witness hung his watch and chain on a nail in the cabin. He got up between 4 and 5 o'clock the next morning, and went into the other boat to light a fire, and when he returned about half an hour later, the prisoner had gone and the watch and chain were missing. He identified the watch and chain (produced) as his property. Mark Johnson of Southam, police-constable, stated he received the prisoner into custody from the Northampton Police, and when he charged him with stealing a watch and chain from the cabin of a boat, prisoner replied, "That's right ; I'd had nothing to eat for three days, and I must do something". Superintendent Clarke stated that prisoner had been previously convicted for larceny and several other offences. Prisoner pleaded guilty, and was committed to take his trial at the Quarter Sessions.

72 11 April 1914

WARWICKSHIRE QUARTER SESSIONS

SENT TO A BORSTAL INSTITUTION **William Holloway** (18), boatman, was charged with stealing a silver watch and one metal chain, the goods of **James Sanders**, at Napton on March 20th. Prisoner pleaded guilty.

Mr Chamberlayne, who prosecuted, said that prisoner met Sanders by the canal and asked him to give him a job – which he did – and they both slept in the same boat that night. Sanders got up next morning and went out to light a fire. When he returned, his watch, which he had left hanging on a peg, was gone, and with it, Holloway. PC Johnson said he knew prisoner, who did no regular work.

He had been convicted at Nuneaton some time ago for stealing motor tools. Prisoner was sent to a Borstal Institution for three years.

73 3 July 1915

FOUND DROWNED AT ROWINGTON

MYSTERY OF COUNTY COUNCIL WORKMAN'S DEATH On Thursday afternoon Mr Hadow, the district Coroner, held an inquest at the Cock Inn, Rowington, concerning the death of John Herbert Dale, a single man aged thirty three, whose home was with his parents at the Church School House, High Street, Henley-in-Arden. The deceased was an engine driver on one of the Warwickshire County Council's steam rollers, and his body was recovered from the Warwick and Birmingham Canal at Rowington on Tuesday.

George Spencer, foreman with the County Council's steam roller in the district, said he had known the deceased for the last eight years, and had been working with him for the past eighteen months. On Monday morning the 21st ult, deceased did not turn up to his work, and witness reported the matter to his superior. For the last week or so Dale had seemed very despondent, and had said that someone was trying to get him into trouble.

Mrs Barlow, daughter of Mr Price of the Cock Inn, said that about 2 p m on the Saturday mentioned, the deceased came to the house and asked for a pint of beer. He also asked for some writing paper.

Eli Heritage, boatman of Stockton, gave evidence as to finding the body in "a kind of standing position" in the canal. Mr A H Corbett of Rowington and he got the corpse from the water.

Dr Dwyer of Kingswood said he had examined the body, and in his opinion death was due to drowning. The jury returned a verdict to the effect that the deceased was "Found drowned".

74 3 July 1915

CHILD DROWNED AT WARWICK

LITTLE BOY TOO FRIGHTENED TO GIVE ALARM An enquiry into the death of a little girl, Eva Frances Smith, whose body was dragged out of the canal on Saturday, was held at Warwick on Monday morning, before the Borough Coroner, Mr John Tibbits.

The parents of the child were John Smith, a driver in the Army Service Corps stationed at Chesterfield, and Eva Mary Smith, his wife. Their home was at 15 Sanders Street, Warwick, and before the father enlisted he was a drayman in the employ of the L and NW Railway Company at Leamington. He identified the body. The mother, who was next called, said that at about 2.45 on Saturday the child went out, and she heard no more about her until a little boy named Freddie Burton came to her house. He said, "Your little girl is in the canal". He also told her that he and the deceased child were running up the boarding on the canal by Kench's mills, when the girl slipped and fell into the water. Witness went to the place, but could see nothing.

The little boy, questioned by Mr Tibbits, said : We were running up and down the planks, when Eva ran too quickly and tumbled into the water. I saw Mr Cooks further up, but did not run and tell him, as I was too frightened. I went home and told mother, and then ran and told Mrs Smith.

Mr A C Cooks of 1 Emscote Road said that on Saturday afternoon he was fishing in the canal about 100 to 150 yards past Kench's mills. He saw someone in the water lower down, but took it to be a boy bathing as he had frequently seen bathers there when fishing. He noticed also the little boy Burton standing on the bank, but he did not move as if anything had happened. He simply stood there. Two boys passed him after the girl must have fallen in, and spoke to him, but mentioned no accident. An hour and a half or two hours later, they returned and said, "Mr Crooks, did you know someone has fallen in the cut?" Witness expressed the greatest disappointment and mortification that he had been so near the scene of the tragedy and had known nothing of it. He assured the jury that if he had known he would have been the very first to go to the rescue of the unfortunate girl.

Mr Tibbits : I believe you have saved several children from the canal near there, haven't you?

Witness : Yes, it would be a matter of about six.

PC Tolley gave evidence as to dragging the canal, with the assistance at first of PC Stretton. About

7 p m he was still dragging, and half an hour later he came across something in the water, and after some difficulty succeeded in recovering the body. He subsequently made measurements at the place, finding that the depth was three feet to a distance of 1 1/2 yards out. After that, the depth was 8 feet. The staging on which the child probably slipped led down from the new part of the mill. Children had no right to be playing along there.

The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental drowning" and concurred in the Coroner's expression of sympathy with the parents. The greatest confidence in Mr Cooks, had he known of the accident, was unanimously expressed. The Coroner said as a matter of fact the children had no right on the boarding from which the deceased fell, as it was private property. Children had been moved off this boarding many times by the police, but they would persist in getting on it again as soon as the constable's back was turned.

75 24 July 1915

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY **James Biddle**, Napton, boatman, was fined 10s for the above offence at Stockton on the previous day. PC Smith proved the charge, stating that defendant was lying in the road drunk, shouting and making use of bad language.

76 11 September 1915

HENLEY IN ARDEN PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY

THEFT AND ASSAULT MATTER **Henry Wilden**, canal boatman of 58 Hare Lane, Gloucester, was summoned by Elizabeth Gascoyne of Kingswood, near Lapworth, for stealing growing potatoes from a garden at Lapworth in the occupation of Thomas Gascoyne, on July 31st last, and also for an assault upon complainant at the date and place mentioned. Prosecutrix and a witness were in attendance, but defendant was not present, sending instead a letter. The case was adjourned for his attendance.

77 11 September 1915

WARWICK COUNTY, SATURDAY

CANAL BOATMAN'S SERIOUS ASSAULT On the complaint of Mr A H Phillips, Assistant Engineer to the County and Birmingham Canal Navigation Company, **Frederick Dale** of the canal boat *Egypt* was summoned for assaulting **Joseph Barnett**, a lock-keeper at Budbrooke, on August 14th. Barnett, an old man in charge of the Hatton locks, said that on the evening of August 14th he was on duty at the locks, and a boat, of which defendant had charge, came along. Witness, according to his duty, called defendant's attention to the fact that he was wasting water. Defendant told him to mind his own business, said that he would do as he chose, and continued to do what witness complained of. Witness remonstrated with him again, and defendant then caught him by the throat and threw him down. He went to other locks and again wasted water. Witness told him of this again, and defendant threw him down twice more, and said he would strangle him. Defendant alleged that witness was drunk at the time, and that he threatened to hit him (defendant) with a stick. Witness denied that he had been drinking, and added that a few years ago defendant struck him. Mr Phillips said that Barnett had always had a very good character with the company. He was strict with the boatmen, as he should be, and that was why the company looked upon him as one of their best lock-keepers. He was a very steady and reliable man. The Chairman told defendant that the magistrates considered it a very serious case, and that they had hesitated on the question whether they ought not to send him to prison. However they had decided to be lenient, as it was the first offence known against him, and he would be fined £2 (or a month's imprisonment), and be allowed a fortnight in which to find the money.

78 18 September 1915

HENLEY IN ARDEN

THEFT AND ASSAULT MATTER At the Henley Petty Sessional Court on Wednesday, before Mr

C Couchman (in the chair) and Dr Agar, **Henry Wildene**, canal boatman of 58 Hare Lane, Gloucester, was summoned by Elizabeth Gascoyne of Kingswood for stealing potatoes from a garden on July 31st last, and also with assaulting her at the same time and place. Eventually the first case was dismissed. Regarding the second matter, prosecutrix, whose version was corroborated by a witness, said defendant gave her a blow in the eye which nearly knocked her through the hedge. Defendant was fined £1 for the assault.

79 11 March 1916

WARWICK BOROUGH, TUESDAY

CRUELTY TO A GELDING **Charles Newey**, Nelson's Works, boatman, was summoned for cruelty to a gelding, by neglect, on the 26th ult. PC Turner said that at 9.15 on the 26th ult, he went down to the Common and saw the animal standing in a foot of snow. When he tried to lead it away, it staggered like a drunken man. He gave it food, and it ate it up ravenously. Mr Gulliver, Common gate keeper, said that the snow had been on the ground for three days and that the horse had not had anything to eat. Defendant was fined 30s, including a bill from the herdsman for keeping the horse.

80 15 September 1917

CHILD DROWNED On Tuesday evening last week, the infant son of Mr and Mrs T J Smith of Nightingale Lane was found drowned in the canal close by his father's house. On the alarm being given the father plunged into the water, and at considerable risk brought out the body, but life was then extinct.

On Thursday afternoon an inquest was held at the Two Boats Inn by the Coroner (Mr E F Hadow). Mrs Eliza Smith, (grandmother), identified the body as that of her grandson, Frederick Percy Smith, aged 3 years and 4 months. At about 5.45 on the evening of the 4th, she saw him go through the gate near the house. About ten minutes afterwards, a boatman shouted that a child was in the canal.

Thomas James Smith (father) stated that about 5.30 he was having tea, and the child was then playing outside the house. He suddenly missed him, and sent another child to find him. She returned saying she could not see him, and almost immediately his mother shouted, and he rushed to the canal and succeeded in getting the body out. The child was then quite dead, and they "pumped" him without avail. Only ten minutes or a quarter of an hour had elapsed since he missed him. He did not know whether the boatman saw him fall into the water. The spot where the accident happened was about 60 yards from the house. The boy was by himself. He had often warned him not to play near the canal.

PC Albert Thrussell, stationed at Long Itchington, said on receiving information of what had occurred at 6 p m, he proceeded at once to the spot and found the child's body lying on the towing-path quite dead. After examination, he removed it home. From enquiries since made, he found the child had previously been seen sitting on the canal bank. An examination of the spot revealed a stone projection about a foot below the turf, and immediately below that and straight down was 3 feet of water ere the mud was reached. The boatwoman who saw the body said it was floating face downwards.

Dr H J Clague, medical practitioner, Long Itchington, said he was called to see the body on the morning of the 5th. A superficial examination revealed no injuries. The evidence pointed to suffocation by drowning, and he was satisfied that was the cause of death.

The Coroner pointed out there was no evidence to show how the child got into the water, and the jury (of which Mr J T Page was foreman) returned a verdict in accordance with the doctor's evidence.

81 27 April 1918

SOUTHAM A meeting of Southam Tribunal was held on Friday last week, Mr J Oldham presiding.

W E Wilson (33, married), Napton, boatman ; **A G B Nowell** (27, married), Wormleighton, boatman; **George Alsopp** (28, married), Priors Marston, crane driver ; **Harry Beck** (24, married),

Farnborough, blacksmith ; **George A Hancox** (33, married), all employed on the local canals, were granted exemption while in possession of Canal Control Certificates.

82 2 November 1918

CANAL DROWNING CASES

LOCK KEEPER'S FATAL SLIP AT HATTON On Friday morning, **Percy William Maunder** (aged 35), lock-keeper at Hatton, was engaged in clearing floating rubbish from the locks with a shaft rake, near the top lock. Suddenly Mr Yorke, at the check lock house, heard shouts and, looking along the towing-path, he missed Maunder, and ran along to the place where he had been at work. Maunder's hat was floating on the water. Mr Yorke got assistance at once, and deceased's body was taken from the canal by PC Cockerill and two employees from the canal workshop nearby. The body was at the bottom of the lock against the lock gate, and though artificial respiration was applied, it was of no avail. Dr Leech, who was soon on the scene in response to a message, could only pronounce life extinct.

It is thought probable that deceased's rake caught in the brickwork of the lock, and caused him to slip, as there were marks of his clogs on the lock kerb, which showed he slipped off the side, where his body was found.

At an inquest held by Mr Hadow at Hatton Asylum on Saturday, a verdict of "Accidentally drowned" was given. Maunder was a discharged soldier, and had been severely wounded while on service in France. He leaves a widow and five children.

PLUCKY BROTHER'S VAIN ATTEMPT AT RESCUE Mr Hadow held another inquiry in a drowning case at Leamington on Monday. Deceased was **Mary Ellen Powell** (13), daughter of a canal boatman, who fell into the canal on Saturday. **Evan Powell** said his daughter lived with him on the boat. He was in charge of two boats, and on Saturday he left deceased in charge of the first, and his 17 year old son in charge of the other, while he and his wife went to do some shopping. They left the boats at Clemens Street bridge, but told his son and daughter to proceed along the canal, and they would catch them up. He returned to find the girl had fallen into the canal, and they did everything possible, but were unable to recover the body until the police arrived with the drag. Deceased could not swim. **William Powell**, son of the first witness, said that about five minutes after his parents had left, he noticed the boat of which his sister had charge drift in towards the bank. He then noticed her rush to turn the tiller, but she went on to the wrong side of it and, missing her hold, fell backwards into the water. He rushed to the spot and jumped in and attempted to rescue her, but just as he reached her she went down and did not appear again. The Coroner said the evidence of the last witness was quite clear, and he should be congratulated upon his presence of mind and pluck in trying to save his sister. A verdict of "Accidental death" was returned.

83 4 January 1919

POLICE COURTS

YOUTH CHARGED WITH HOUSEBREAKING

FOR TRIAL AT BOROUGH SESSIONS At Warwick Police Court on Monday, before Messrs W Coltart, Lloyd Evans, R Dudley and Dr R Bullock, Joseph Frederick Turner (16), 41 Emscote Road, was charged with breaking and entering 2 Wright's Court, Emscote Road, between 4 p m on December 27th and 9 a m on December 28th, and stealing a lady's silver watch and chain, value £3, the property of **Charles William Newey**, a boatman. Mr Newey said that he and his wife were away on the boat on the night of December 27th. When he was locking the back door of his cottage on the morning of that day, a small pane fell out of the window near the door. The house was properly locked up, and the window fastened. When he returned to the house the next morning, he found that boxes had been broken open and various things moved about, and eventually he missed the watch and chain (produced) from a box upstairs. Anyone could have put his hand through the window where the pane had fallen out, and reached the fastener. Mrs Newey said that she was at the cottage during the afternoon of December 27th. When she left, she locked the doors, and put a

piece of slate at the window in place of the pane that had fallen out. PC Stretton said that he received information of the robbery at 9.30 on December 28th. On examining Mr Newey's house, he found that a box had been forced open, and on a chest of drawers downstairs he discovered a clasp knife, which he had previously seen in prisoner's possession. Upstairs he also found that two tin trunks had been burst open, and clothes were scattered about the floor. Later he saw prisoner and told him that he was making inquiry respecting a robbery at 2 Wright's Court. Prisoner said, "I know nothing at all about it". Witness then showed him the knife, and asked prisoner if he chose to say anything about it. Prisoner then said, "I might as well tell you the truth ; I broke into the house, but all I took was a watch and chain", and these he handed to witness. At the Police Station, he said, "I put my hand through the broken pane of the window, unfastened the catch, and got in". Prisoner, who had nothing to say, was committed for trial at the Borough Quarter Sessions. His brother, a soldier who has recently returned from Germany, said that he had given his mother a lot of trouble, though he had had every opportunity to behave himself. In regard to bail, the brother declined to be surety, but the magistrates eventually granted prisoner bail in his own recognisances.

84 **12 April 1919**

SOUTHAM PETTY SESSIONS, MONDAY

NEGLECTING CHILDREN **Peter Humphriss**, boatman, Southam, and **Alice**, his wife, were charged by Inspector Locke (NSPCC) for neglecting their four young children in a manner likely to cause them unnecessary suffering or injury to health. The female defendant was bound over and ordered to go back to the workhouse with her children, and the man was sentenced to three months' hard labour.