

Wrexham Advertiser - Saturday 14 December 1861

Attempt Murder Child. At the Uttoxeter petty sessions, Thursday, before Lord Waterpark, and other magistrates, William Yates, late the Highwood, Uttoxeter, was brought up in custody, charged with having, on the 24th ultimo, feloniously and wilfully administered certain destructive drugs to male infant child, aged eleven months (of which he had been adjudged the putative father), with intent murder. It appeared from the evidence of the child's mother, Ellen Dawson, that the prisoner had neglected to pay to the child, and had recently promised marry her, and went to live at Abbots Bromley with her, where the banns were published. His treatment of the child was very cruel, and on one occasion, when it was at its mother's breast, he took its clothes up and beat it with doubled leather strap. On the 21st November he went a druggist's shop in Bromley and bought a mixture of tincture of henbane and strong spirit of ammonia, stating he wanted the same, as his heel frost-bitten ; and the morning of the 21th of November the child was left with him in bed asleep whilst its mother was getting breakfast ready, and about 20 minutes afterwards it was heard making a noise, if suffocated ; its mother ran upstairs and found the poor thing in bed, in a dreadful state of suffering, and it smelt strongly of something, she charged the prisoner with having poisoned it, to which he made reply. The assistance of a medical man was obtained, and the child, although in great danger for long time, got better. The prisoner the time was also charged by other parties with giving the child something, and he admitted at last that he was dressing his foot, and laid the bottle on the pillow, and it rolled into the child's mouth. He soon after absconded from the neighbourhood, and was apprehended in the Potteries, where he was going in another name. Other corroborative evidence was adduced, and the prisoner was fully committed for trial at the ensuing Staffordshire winter assizes.