

1874 - The highest tide that could be remembered on the Thames for some time swept down Grahamstown streets and, topped up with rainwater, made them impassable to foot traffic. The tide rushed under the Pacific Hotel and boiled up between the wooden pavements. The side entrance to the Academy of Music was ankle deep in water and for some time it was impossible for the languishing ladies to obtain entrance. As the surging sea rose into the orchestra area the piano had to be removed to a higher and drier site.

1885 - The Salvation Army were described as a "remarkably eccentric perambulating body" when they held up the mail coach from Tauranga to Thames. Having taken up their position at the junction of Williamson, Brown and Owen Streets they commenced to hoot and holler and block the roadway. The coach driver discreetly pulled up his horses and asked the leader of the Army if he could pass. The churlish Captain caught the horse's reins, frightening the animals and nearly causing a disaster. After some difficulty they were safely driven through the crowd, the dexterous driver retaining his equanimity throughout the whole affair.

1880 - Mr C McLiver, businessman, of Thames, was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the mail steamer. He was expecting several hundred pounds worth of London and Parisian novelties. During winter his well lighted warm smoking room was known as one of the most comfortable about town.

1891 - When Price's Foundry whistle blew in Thames one afternoon it was at first thought there was a fire in the foundry. The bells were rung but there was no cause for alarm. The whistle had been blown to direct the steamer Wakatere through a heavy fog. She was unable to find her bearings and although a little off course, the whistle guided her safely in.

1890 - A ghost seen in the neighbourhood of Sealey and Baillie Streets caused considerable sensation. Overactive imaginations in the minds of timorous individuals out late at night were blamed. Various theories were held as to the reality of this "visitor from the other world" but then the ghost was not only seen, but almost murdered. A gentleman on his way home about 10 o'clock encountered the ghost near his Sealey Street house. He boldly accosted the sneaky spook with the theatrical words "Stay! Speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!" The ghost paid no attention whereupon the gentleman struck the supernatural visitor across the face and head with his walking stick with all his might. An unearthly howl rose from the ghost as it drew up its long white shroud and took to its heels. The ghost seemed to be wearing a woman's hat, a white handkerchief across the face and a long white coat. The gentleman gave chase but the spirit gave him the slip. A crowd quickly collected with one portly gentleman flourishing a brand new pistol and another armed with an air gun, although he had encountered spirits of another sort and was of no use.

1915 - Clouds of dust rolling up Pollen Street, Thames caused no end of discomfort to pedestrians and inconvenience to shop keepers. The Municipal water cart was conspicuous by its absence but eventually made a welcome appearance and effected a big improvement on the dust nuisance.

1877 - Persons in the habit of leaving gates open had been giving vagrant goat's access to the Thames cemetery. Flowers and shrubs were demolished. "This thoughtlessness or carelessness is inexcusable," bleated the Star before suggesting goat owners should be fined the highest penalty the law allowed.

1877 - An itinerant organ grinder - "Italian, we should think" - strolled the streets grinding out popular airs, delighting a crowd of children and infuriating business people whose premises were made almost inaccessible by transfixed tykes.

1882 - A night prowler robbing clotheslines of ladies underclothing made a pest of himself around the hilly part of Thames. The backyard of an eminent lawyer was even visited and feminine frillies taken. The next night, perhaps disappointed, the lingerie lurker came back and cut the clothesline.

1901 - A vagrant was arrested by Thames police after conducting himself in a somewhat peculiar manner. They had difficulty in getting him to the station and surprised spectators witnessed the man being carried away in a wheelbarrow. As he was wheeled away he exclaimed "Well this is a bit of alright!" The man was charged with having no lawful visible means of support and was admitted to the Old Men's Home at Tararu.

1882 - A fast funeral for a man who died at Thames hospital outraged an observer. The funeral left the hospital at 20 to 2, the coffin being placed in an express – not a very clean one either. The driver, a hospital attendant and Mr Cocks, the undertaker, drove off at a brisk pace. So brisk in fact those four persons on foot intending to pay their last respects were completely unable to keep up. It was a disgrace to the people of Thames that such a thing should take place and future funerals should be carried out with at least a little decency by the madcap mortician.

1885 - At a church concert in Thames a ventriloquist's dummy said he wished the fellow in the gallery would take his arm from a girl's waist. The result was electric with several wide gaps opening between more than one pair of youths and maidens and their attempts to appear perfectly innocent were futile.

1881 – Complaints were made of polluted persons bathing themselves and washing clothes in the Thames water race despite knowing the water was used in town for domestic purposes. Nothing was more conducive to health than pure water and no one should be allowed to contaminate the supply.

1874 - The new Shortland fire bell was rung for the first time but it appeared to fall on deaf ears. It was loud enough for Shortland folk – but the sound did not travel far and it was unnoticed by those in Grahamstown. The baffling bell needed a trifling attention to the covers of the tower.

1874 - In Queen Street, Thames, there was a very primitive bridge spanning a sort of drain that crossed the road. It had been thrown across the drain in year one of the goldfields and its existence was a disgrace. On a wet, dark night a lady, alone and unprotected, was feeling her way along Queen Street. The Telegraph Office and the Mechanics Institute were closed and there was not a spark of light anywhere. The lurching lady missed her footing and fell over into the mud and water. It was rumoured an action for damages was to be brought against the Borough Council for a spoilt wardrobe and medical attention for a severe cold caught during the drenching.

1904 - Mr J Adams made a good run from Coromandel to Thames in his motorcar doing the distance of 13 miles from the bottom of Tokatea Hill, Coromandel, to Thames including stoppages in a brisk three and three quarter hours.

1891 - The road to Thames from Tapu was in such an abominable state that the residents could barely obtain the requisite necessities of life. "Truly we here are long suffering and hope that the county finances will soon be in a more prosperous state." A man was wanted regularly upon the road to watch and keep open the water tables. Rankled residents were also suffering losses being unable to send their oysters, gum and other produce to Thames.

1878 - The olfactory organs of persons passing along Cochrane Street, Thames, were seriously assailed by a most sickly smell. The putrid pong came from a boiling down establishment in the neighbourhood. Butchers should be forced to boil down their fat at a late hour of the night when the smell was less obvious, sniffed the Star.

1907 - A gang of goats were sent from Thames to the Waikato to be utilised for eating blackberries which were an increasing pest to landowners. The experiment had been successfully tried in other districts.

1908 - Bees going to church caused a buzz at the Thames Methodist Hall. They were located in the lining of the building and every Sunday appeared amongst the congregation – making a beeline from one pew to another keeping worshippers on their toes and teaching them a lesson in the persistence of attending services.