Ohio Canal Marks 150th Anniversary

Much like the old soldier who fades away, the Ohio Canal had been forgotten by all but a few dedicated canal buffs. However, in celebrating the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Canal's first segment (the 38-mile Akron to Cleveland portion) canal buffs have joined with other interested citizens in forming the Ohio Canal Sesquicentennial Commission.

From June to September, the Commission presented a program for all ages. From band concerts to bus tours, from Johnny cake pastry to Johnny Cake Village, every day citizens and canal buffs alike have seen the Canal achieve the prominence that accompanies the title of National Historic Landmark which Congress has bestowed on it.

Throughout the summer, band concerts were presented and a slide show history of the Canal was shown near its banks.栗arens followed the old "Buckeye Ditch" down through the Cuyahoga Valley from Akron and Cleveland, stopping along the route to inspect locks and other various historic sites.

On the anniversary of the Canal's opening, July 4th, ACS member Jim Koth led a gala, festive ceremony in Cleveland's industrial "Flats" area. Included in the program was a re-creation of the original opening ceremonies in 1877. Some of the first welcoming speeches were recited, interspersed with cannon fire from the Connecticut Western Reserve Militia Volunteers and their 19th Century vintage cannon.

The last known living Canal boatman, James Dillow Robinson, 80, who worked on a slave repair boat as a youth presented a poem, "Canal Nostalgia," an original reminiscence of his boyhood experiences.

The City of Cleveland fireboat, "Celebrate," thrilled spectators with a water salute as visitors, paraded and listened to music on the banks of the Cuyahoga River near the mouth of the old Canal.

Closing out activities in September were "Canal Days at Hale Farm," a restored 19th Century village on the Jonathan Hale homestead between Akron and Cleveland. From September 10-18, visitors were treated to the baking of Johnny cake pastry, an appearance by Dillow Robinson, a slide show History of the Canal, a display of photographs and Wilcox paintings and the Wright Patterson Air Force Band of Dayton, Ohio on September 17th.

(Concluded on Page Two)

Portage Canal Society Formed

The re-constructed "Bateau Francaise" won first prize in the September 4, 1977 Labor Day Parade in Portage, Wisconsin. The "Indian Chief" is Henry Abraham, President of the Portage Canal Society.

The Portage Canal Society of Portage, Wisconsin was formed to seek recognition of the Portage Canal, to clean it up, and to restore it back to providing navigation between the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers. The first part of the goal was achieved this summer (25 August 1977) when the canal was entered on the National Register of Historic Places. Cleanup work continues through the winter.

At present, canoes can use two miles of the canal, portage around the Fox River Locks (do crews by the Corps of Engineers), and go into the Fox River. The Wisconsin River locks remain in place but cannot be used at present.

Instrumental in much of the work of the Portage Canal Society are president Henry Abraham and Secretary Frederica Keist. ACS Navigable Canal Committee Chairman Dev Morris has said of the group, "Some day this new society should write up the history of its political fight to get recognition of the Portage Canal. If any of you are fighting for a lock or a canal, keep it up, for your odds are no worse than that of the Portage Canal Society. If you get discouraged, write to Henry Abraham, 529 West Cook St., Portage, WI 53901."
TRIBUTE TO A CANAL BOAT CAPTAIN

Not too long ago, the Editor of American Canals received this 1829, photograph of Joseph Reed (left) leaving the lock atraction, Pa., on the Lehigh Canal. It was typical of Joe that he shared his knowledge and kindness for the old canals up to the last. Joe Reed was a canal boat captain who followed the footsteps of his father and grandfather on the canal before him, by starting as a rudder driver at the age of seven. He became the captain of his own canal boat at the age of 16, operating on both the Lehigh and Delaware Canals. The American Canal Society is grateful that Joe Reed, a member of the society, shared his memories with his friends, as we now share his memory along with all the other "canaliers" who are rapidly passing on into the history of one of the most fascinating aspects of American life.

"Frank B. Thomson" Christened

On Friday, May 6, 1977, at the ceremonies officially opening the New York State Barge Canal System for the 1977 canal season, the Department of Transportation work boat, Frank B. Thomson, was christened. The ceremonies took place at Guard Gate No. 2, Waterford, N.Y. Mrs. Dorothy Thomson, the late Canal Museum director's widow, along with former State Transportation Commissioner, Raymond T. Schuler, jointly christened the new craft.

Originally known as Derrick Boat 12, the Frank B. Thomson was built in 1926 in Syracuse, N.Y. by the State Department of Public Works crews. Rehabilitation of the work boat began in 1976 in Waterford, N.Y. by the White Water Maintenance crews of the State Department of Transportation. The original dimensions of the boat (75' long, 23' beam, and 12' draft) have not been altered, merely Ballasted added to the hull for cargo weight and the addition of a Grarter 151-100 unit with hydraulically operated stabilizing "sprays." The 150 ton unit will be involved in dredging operations along the Champlain and State Barge Canal System along the Mohawk River, winching and deepening the navigation channels and removing silt deposits.

The State wishes to take recognition of Frank Thomson's work, both personally and through the Canal Museum in Syracuse, N.Y., to promote the understanding and use of New York State's historic canals and their effect on the Nation. Schuler said of Thomson, "Under his dedicated leadership, the museum brought the rich history of our canals to many thousands of New Yorkers and visitors from other states and nations. Frank Thomson understood, and made vivid to others, just how very much our canals contributed to the growth and cultural heritage of New York."

Anyone who knew Frank Thomson's love of canals and boats can be sure he would have appreciated this tribute. He was a Director of ACS. (Excerpted from Sept. 1977 Canal Museum Assoc. Newsletter.)

Ohio Canal's "150th"

In addition to the festivities, the Sagascentennial Commission dedicated a short history, "The Centennial Era of the Ohio Canal," written by James S. Jackson, former associate editor of the Akron Beacon-Journal, and his wife, Marjorie. Also commemorating the "Sag" were platters, coffee mugs, belt buckles, and canal boat models.

The Commission, with the guidance of the Western Reserve Historical Society, has taken its educational program to schools, other historical societies, and later groups. The slide show history of the Canal is the main feature of the program that will carry the Sagascentennial through the winter months. (Submitted by Jim Kun, ACS, and the Western Reserve Canal and Transportation Society.)

"Colonel Baldwin"

The Canal Packet Boat "Colonel Baldwin" (a reconstruction) at Woburn, Mass., was built in the summer on a restored stretch of the Middlesex Canal. Plans are to run the boat again next summer from its site near the junction of Routes 28 and 38. The towpath was used by the Boston & Maine RR for many years. The Lamell Baldwin "Mansion" appears to the right. (Photo by Aiden Gould)
RECONNAISSANCE OF FRENCH CANALS

by William J. McKelvey

While all my friends in the Canal Society of New Jersey were about to depart on a second sojourn to England, I decided that this was my year to take a good look at the inland waterways of France. The books of Gerard Mogon, Grenville, Flugel, Pilkington, L. T. C. Flott and especially John L. Lucy had all described a canalier's delight which could not be postponed. My feelings were that we Americans have ignored and bypassed France too long. Briefly, I would like to direct to what you all have been missing.

The first day began with a stroll around Paris to see the Saint Martin Canal, which tunnels for seven blocks under city traffic, and the bustling of narrow canal boats and Bateaux Mouches (sightseeing boats) on the River Seine. The next day I took a long anticipated trip north by train to visit the Roncaulins Inclined Plane near Charleroi, Belgium. To experience the 6000-ton lock tanks traveling up and down hill is a pilgrimage which every serious canal enthusiast should make.

Canal boating (or barging) for me began at Montbard on the Burgundy Canal where I boarded the PA INPLUS, the first hotel barge in France, for a week of fine food, picturesque scenery, and lots of fun. Although well maintained, the only vessels we saw on this canal during the week were the hotel boats LA GUEPHE and WIFTEANDA plus one commercial vessel with a load of logs. The highlight of the one mile Pouilly-auxois Tunnel through which we were pulled by an electric tug which took power from two overhead wires just like a trolley bus. The tug hauled itself along on a stationary chain laid in the bottom of the canal.

Next stop was the Arcivalier transverse shiplift which replaces 17 locks on the Marne-Rhone Canal. This 41' inclined plane was unfortunately closed for repairs but full tours were being conducted. Remnants of the abandoned electric monorail narrow gauge railway could be seen at several locations along the canal. Work was in progress nearby where the summit level tunnels through the Vogeze Mountains. Water from the canal prism apparently had been leaking down into the railroad which tunnels through the mountain below the canal.

From Northeast France I journeyed to the Southwest to observe the world's first water slope or inclined lock at Montebaur. (See further details in the article "Canal Locks Unnecessary Everywhere in this Issue of AMERICAN CANALS.") The pair of rubber-tired locomotives handle only commercial vessels. Pleasure boats must use the adjacent five old locks.

The "Palmarus" Hotel Barge, shown near a lock on the Burgundy Canal, the vessel which Bill McKelvey boarded at Montbard, France.

One of the 6000-ton tanks carrying three boats between levels at the Roncaulins Inclined Plane near Charleroi, Belgium.

The St-Louis-Arzivier Transverse Inclined Plane, which lifts a "bath tub" full of canal barges from one level to another on the Marne-Rhone Canal. This device replaces seventeen locks.

My journey on the Canal du Midi, which was completed in 1669 (originally known as the Languedoc Canal) began at Toulouse. The canal slices right through the busy center of this city where it is a pleasantly landscaped park, but it arrives and departs the city in the corner island of a main highway. The unusual elliptical locks of the Canal du Midi are unfortunately some of the most restrictive in size in France. In spite of this, the waterway was found to be well wooded by white barges, grain barges, and a variety of pleasure craft.

Although France has an extensive, 3,000-mile-plus canal system (and over 25,000 miles of roads), no evidence of canals or canal societies could be found. Very few native pleasure boats were seen, most were English or American. In contrast to Great Britain, where there are nearly 100,000 canal pleasure vessels and most locks are operated by the boaters in France there are hardly any pleasure craft, and nearly all locks are manned by "tenants." My trial week was spent in exploration of the various ports on the Riviera: Monte Carlo, Nice, Antibes, Cannes and San Tropez, plus a few pleasantly X-rated beaches along the way.

For information on canalizing in France, contact Ms. Vanessa Jones at Continental Waterways Ltd., 22 Hans Place, London, SW1 England.

(Bill McKelvey is a Director of ACS, VP of the Canal Society of New Jersey, and Chairman of the Huguenot, Hulks, etc. Sub-Comm. of the ACS Canal Boat Committee.)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

A copy of the financial statement of the American Canal Society for the year ending 31 October 1977 is available upon request from: ACS Treasurer, Wm. E. Troxill III P.E., 1832 Cinco Rodes Dr., Denver, CA 91015.
THE MUSCLE SHOALS CANALS

By L. W. Richardson

After the final abandonment, about 1840, of the ill-starred Tennessee Canal, it must have seemed to the valley settlers that there was no solution to their navigational problem. Tuscumbia, Courtland & Decatur Railroad was of some help. It had been extended to Decatur in 1834 and it moved some freight around the battle-reek in the river. However, the delays and the increased cost of transhipping on the portage severely limited the volume of traffic. Even with this headache, the railroad made money and is in use today as a part of a major rail system.

The long suffering rivermen did receive a message of hope in the Inaugural Address of Millard Fillmore in December of 1850. The incoming executive said that the troublesome problems of inland navigation were of national concern. He observed that improvements to coastal harbors, the building of lighthouses, etc had been accomplished with Federal aid and under the direction of Army Engineers and suggested that similar improvements were also a national responsibility. To that time, Federal help for such projects had been limited to surveys and grants of unoccupied Federal lands to the various states. This policy had cost Washington not to nothing, had encouraged settlement of frontier areas and had greatly increased the tax base. Now, a new and almost bottomless "pool" of canal bonds had been opened. In the next century, there was scarcely a stream large enough to float a canoe that was not surveyed and promoted as a navigable waterway.

So far as the Shoals were concerned, the first tangible evidence of the new policy came in 1859. The Rivers and Harbors Act of that year included an appropriation of $20,000 for the improvement of the river in the Shoals region. This money was soon expanded with no noticeable results. It would be another decade before this subject of the Tennessee received further attention. Then it was the military operation in the valley during the Civil War that brought the problem to national notice. Grant's campaign up the river came to an abrupt halt when his fleet of gunboats, transports and supply vessels were unable to pass the Shoals. River historian Dordis Davidson said it was: "From the close of the Corinth-Shiloh battle to the battle of Missionary Ridge, Muscle Shoals was worth many divisions of troops and miles of fortifications to the Confederacy." Later, the Army would certainly remember their war-time frustration. And, as there is after all war, there was a surplus of manpower in the War Department. It is not surprising then, that there was a preliminary investigation of the entire river underway in 1867. In 1872, Major Walter McFarland completed a detailed survey of the Shoals area. From this data a plan was developed and presented to the Congress. The proposal included pass canals around Elk River and Big Muscle Shoals and channel improvements through Little Muscle Shoals. The first two were considered the worst obstacles in the river and were the first encountered by downstream traffic. The Colbert and Bee Tree Shoals deep water groups, while dangerous and often impassable, would be improved at some later time.

The proposal received the approval of the Congress and an initial appropriation was voted. The fact that General Grant was now in the White House may have contributed to the prompt action. Before any work could begin, a fire destroyed the Engineer's Field Office and with it all of the detail survey data. Another survey was completed in 1875 and the clearing of right-of-way began. Progress was very slow, in part because of an acute shortage of labor in the war-torn valley and in part because of the uncertain and inactivity of appropriating in subsequent years. An overly optimistic report by the Resident Engineer in 1881, stated that the work was about 75% complete.

By 1888, some traffic was moving through the canals but the project was far from finished. The next year, General Casey, Chief of Engineers, sent a young officer, Capt. George W. Goethals, to Alabama to breathe new life in the project. Goethals recognized the good idea, initiated double shifts and made significant design changes. While the official opening date of Nov. 15, 1890, seems to have been a little premature, before the end of 1891, steamers and large towed vessels were regularly passing through the two canals. Goethals remained at the Shoals until 1894. In 1907 he was designated to Panama to take charge of another tunneling canal project. Here, his genius at organization and his skill as an engineer earned him international fame and the rank of Major-General.

With the first two canals in operation and a passable channel open through Little Muscle Shoals, attention was turned to the Colbert-Bee Tree Shoals. In 1883, work began on a third canal that would by-pass this last major obstruction. The Colbert Shoals Canal was opened in 1911 and, for the first time the "Great Bend" of the Tennessee was reasonably safe for navigation.

For some years thereafter, the volume of traffic increased. In 1900, 409 steamers and 419 barges passed through the two canals then open. Unfortunately, the improvements had come during the last days of the picturesque river steam boat era. The steam whistles just could not comply with the rapids that by now crossed the valley.

ELK RIVER SHOALS CANAL

The canal began about 32 miles above Florence with a dike or wing dam from the foot of a small railroad embankment. The canal left or south bank of the river, this provided a protected channel into Lock A, the entrance. The canal proper, the excavated portion, was a tangent 6000' over a mile long, ending at Lock B. Below this outlet, an improved channel, about 2 miles long, ran between the left bank and Gilchrist Island. The canal trunk was 90' at the top and 9' deep. The lockworks were 80' x 285' in the clear, built of cut stone and equipped with ornate gates. They had hung up impassively. At Lock A, the gates were operated by hydraulic machinery, powered by a water turbine. The machinery at the other lock depended upon auxiliary pumps. The performance is evidently satisfactory as requests for funds ($50,000 per lock) to install similar equipment at Goethals Locks have been made on both state and national occasion. There is no record of any money having been provided or other locks having been so improved.

MUSCLE SHOALS CANAL

Proceeding down and across the river, traffic entered the guard lock about 4.5 miles below Gilchrist Island. The entrance on the right bank was protected by a short wing dam. The canal was 14.5 miles long and followed the line of the old Tennessee Canal. The trunk was between 90 and 120' wide at the water line and 6' deep. Instead of the 16 locks of the old canal, there were now only one guard lock and 9 lift locks. The same size as those at Elk River, 90' x 283' they required the addition of an additional lock lift of 71' at Locks #5 and #7. All were built of cut stone. Lifts #6 to 9 had wooden drop gates on the right bank, all of cast iron on the left. All were operated by hand cranked machinery. An unusual consists of a 40 foot rising angle on the cutoff. The lock was deepened to provide a 10 foot water crossing but fifteen smaller streams were allowed to empty into the trunk of the canal. As usual, the cases, this was a constant source of trouble, requiring the dredging of silt and debris after every heavy rain.

There were several unusual features to this canal. One was a private telephone line. Originally erected by the contractors working on the project, it was acquired by the Engineers and used to great advantage. In addition to the obvious uses of reporting damage and the ordering of supplies, it enabled the Headquarters Office to control traffic. Some of the larger steamers, particularly if they had in tow a raft or a pair of barges, this was a very necessary function.

The design of the Shoals Canal Aqueduct embodied new concepts of form and material. The structure was 856' long, 60' wide at the water line and 5' deep. It rested on 2 abutments and 25 piers of cut stone, each 11' high, 75' long and 9' thick. The trunk was built of steel I-beams, 174½ high, spaced 37½ on centers. The floor was 1½ plate steel, 30' long, resting on
the bottom flanges of the I-beams. To protect the metal, the inside was coated with a mixture of coal-tar, pitch and sand, 1/8" thick. The outside was kept painted with red lead. It was reported that no rival in this country could fabricate beams of the size and strength specified and these were imported from Belgium. The aqueduct was built on a smooth curve and the supporting beams reflected the line of the whole, presenting a rather curious corrugated effect but one that was graceful and pleasing to the eye.

Certainly the most unique feature of the canal was the fact that it "owned" and operated a railroad. The line of the waterway was along a narrow bench between the river and a row of high, rocky bluffs. There were only a few spots where access to the river by wagon road was practical. To move the tremendous tonnage of cut and broken stone needed in the construction, the contractors built a narrow gauge, 4' rail line on the spoil bank between the river and the canal. Their work done, they sold the little road to the Government.

The Annual Report for 1890 stated that because of the "limited width, numerous curves and trestles, rock bluffs 50' to 60' above water - many wind (even) the U.S. towboats find difficulty in passing through the canal and there where it is very shallow. This undoubtedly depends on the size of the vessel and weather conditions, most passages through the canal were accomplished with the help of the locomotives. In addition, launches, canoes and other small craft were simply loaded on a flat car and taken through without the trouble and expense of loading.

Although electric locomotives had been tried in America, notably on the Miami & Erie between Cincinnati and Dayton, so far as we know, this is the only instance of steam engines on the towpath. This has been attempted in Europe without success. One experiment was on an 8.5 mile stretch of the Oder & Spree Canal. A problem encountered there was the tendency of the locomotives to drift to one side. The Germans found it necessary to attach a heavily weighted 'towing car' behind the engine. At no time were the locomotives operated from Alabama, it may be concluded that the German engines were very light.

As an adjunct of the canal, the Headquarters Camp of the Engineers at Shue Creek should be noted. There was the usual office buildings, workshops, a laborer's dormitory, hospital, horse stables, blacksmith shops and a large sawmill. Power was supplied by water turbines. The complex included railroad yards and a way to turn the locomotives plus mooring space along the canal for the several dredges and work boats. The Camp served as a command post for improvements on the river from Riverton to Chattanooga.

COLBERT SHOALS CANAL

The third canal began about 22 miles below Florence and a mile above the village of Riverton, Alabama, less than two miles from the Mississippi state line. The entrance was a guard lock on the left bank. The trunk was 3.1 miles long, 190' wide at the water line and 9' deep. Riverton lock, the outlet, was the only lift lock. It was 60' x 267' with a lift of 10.5'. The canal by-passed the Colbert and Bee Tree Shoals, eliminating the last major barrier to year 'round traffic on the river. It was more expensive to build than any other lock on the river for about $400,000.

Unusual construction of the Shoals Creek Aqueduct, nearing completion in May of 1889. Designed by Major W. R. King, of the U.S. Corps of Engineers. (Photo courtesy of David Wilson, Jackson, Tenn.)

The three canals were in operation for the next fourteen years, until the huge Wilson Dam was completed in 1926. The dam crossed the river just above Florence, at the foot of Little Muscat Shoals and the reservoir pool covered the Muscogee Shoals Canal almost to Lock No. 2. A cut from the canal into the pool allowed traffic to move through the first two locks. The other canals were not affected.

The national controversy over the operation of the Wilson Dam and powerhouse is too well known and too long to recount here. It is enough to say that, in 1933, the Congress created the Tennessee Valley Authority and the navigation of the river became the responsibility of that agency. In 1936 TVA completed the Wheeler Dam, built across the river almost on the foundation of Lock No. 2. The blackwater behind this dam drowned all that was left of the Muscogee Shoals Canal, all of the Elk River Canal as well as Brown's, Gitchiri and a score of smaller islands in this part of the river. Two years later, in 1938, the Pickwick Landing Dam was finished. This was about 25 miles below Riverton, just above the state line into Tennessee. As this pool filled, the Colbert Shoals Canal disappeared forever.

Oddly, in these twilight days of the canals, another was needed. There was still a stretch of shallow water, 11' deep, as the dam was completed a lateral canal was cut, from the foot of the tandem Wilson Locks, 2.5 miles downstream to another low dam and a single lock. This was the second No. 1 to the Engineers, was usually known as the Florence Canal. Construction of a new, single lock at Wilson in 1938, allowed the deepening of the Canal and the elimination of Lock and Dam No. 1. Today, the Florence is actually an improved channel leading up to the downstream gates of Wilson Lock.

The locks built as a part of those earlier TVA dams were little larger than the old Riverton lock but, as traffic increased and the towns became larger, they were rebuilt and enlarged. Now, the standard size is 11' x 300'. In the clear, little lift height vary by location but come are an incredible 100'. As we noted above, the romantic days of the steam boat "dowling for a landing" are gone but the tonnage moving on the river is six times that recorded in the early 1900's. And the barge boats that devastated the valley every year or so are gone. The Tennessee River today is a placid series of slack-water pools with a normal channel of 11'. The way from Knoxville to Paducah. Unfortunately, the waters of these vast inland lakes have covered the last evidence of the years of effort and the millions of dollars expended in earlier attempts to conquer the river.

PCS Field Trip Draws 110

Part of the PCS group inspects the S. & T. Outlet Lock and Lockhouse Museum at Havelock. (Photo by Bill Shank.)

The Pennsylvania Canal Society mounted forces with members of the Susquehanna Museum of Haare de Grace on October 1, 1977 for a tour of the Susquehanna and Teletower Canal in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Approximately 110 people participated in the program, which included slide lectures and a banquet in Park Pa. and a three-bus caravan along remains of the old canal between Haare de Grace, Maryland and Wrightsville, Pennsylvania. A few light showers during the tour did not dampen the enthusiasm of the group.

The Susquehanna Park authorities had an old Grist Mill, along the S. & T. Canal near Lapidum, Maryland, in full operation for the PCS tour party. (Note buses at the left.)
CANAL LOCKS UNNECESSARY

The steel "push-plate" is raised to allow a pleasure boat to enter the basin at the lower end of the canal's waterslope ramp.

A novel system for floating canal boats directly from one level to another has been developed in France. Conventional, double-gate locks are replaced by a moving wedge of water which supports the craft as it ascends or descends a gentle slope between levels. The water is impounded and moved by a steel plate attached to twin diesel-electric locomotives that straddle the canal. Leaks past the plate are forestalled by three rubber-covered rolls, attached to its vertical sides and bottom edge.

First installation of the "waterslope" was at Montech, on a side canal of the Garonne River, near Tolouse in southwestern France. The canal's two water levels, differing some 15 meters in elevation, are joined by a 400-m long, U-shaped concrete flume. Water is prevented from cascading down the slope by a tilting gate at the brink of the upper level. The push-plate between the pair of locomotives is lowered behind a boat that is to go up the slope and then swipes it forward up the flume in a wedge-shaped volume of about 60 m³ [2,119 ft³] of water. For a boat about to descend the slope, the locomotives push a wedge of water up to meet the vessel as it passes over the tilting gate at the top of the flume.

The "waterslope" system, as it is presently designed at Montech, can be extended to accommodate boats up to 400 tons and can be operated by one man. Previously, canal traffic at this location was handled by five sets of locks, requiring ten hours. A lift took about two hours. Now, time for a typical "waterslope" traverse is as little as seven minutes. (Submitted by ACS Member Walter Neveck. The original story appeared in Du Pont's Elastomers Notebook for August 1977.)

Canal Daze

by Capt. Herb W. Dusey

It seems so very strange that, having sailed for years as master of merchant steamers upon the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes, I still feel a potent wave of nostalgia whenever canals are mentioned. This strange fascination stems from the time around the turn of the century when my duty drove the family surrey to aqueducted spots along the Ohio and Erie Canal a few miles south of Cleveland.

The horses were unhitched and the lunch hampers unloaded while we kids romped and played while we eagerly anticipated the approach of a canal boat. My first experience was for the first woman observed an approaching boat to yell, "Canal Boat, Canal Boat" whereat all the neighborhood turned to watch the boat pass and disappear into the woods around the bend.

By a strange quirk of fate I was destined to traverse most of the North American canals, a circumstance never anticipated by the little boy along the banks of the Ohio and Erie many years ago.

As master of a research vessel in 1921 I had the unforgettable experience of traversing the Everglades Canal from Fort Lauderdale, Florida to and across Lake Okeechobee to Moore Haven. Thence we proceeded through the LaSalle Canal to the meandering Caloosahatchee River to its mouth at the Gulf port of Fort Myers. Our initial voyage to the East Coast was via Key West.

At that time Fort Lauderdale was a small village upon the New River with a dozer house and a hand-powered swing span crossing the stream. We navigated up the river through the wilderness until we found the canal entrance which we entered and then anchored for the night. The next morning we proceeded up the canal and reduced so much that our ship was close to the bottom of the shallow canal and it had a tendency to squat.

I shall never forget the vast expense of the Everglades reaching on the horizon all around, with no sign of man's intrusion. Wild birds, snakes, alligators and turtles were in wild profusion and the two canal locks we negotiated were made of palmetto logs. As night fell we dropped a boat anchor and an anchor chain to prevent the ship from swinging against the canal bank and inviting unwelcome wild critters aboard.

At dawn we were under way again and we soon arrived at the high lift lock into the Okeechobee. This is the second largest fresh water lake in the United States and we were greatly surprised how bountiful it can get. As we were rolled seaward during the 50-mile crossing, Our reception in Moore Haven was a bit forbidding from what we suspected were angry poachers; their Winchester rifles promptly met our own business. Which we did.

Crossing the Everglades by canal a half century ago was a balm endowed by the seeming absence of time and I fondly recall it as the most peaceful period in my life.

(Capt. Dusey, an ACS member, is Chairman of the Museum Committee of the Great Lakes Historical Society. In his letter to the editor, Capt. Dusey said, "We were not swimming on the Ohio and Erie Canal too and I well remember the male driver accompanying us to keep in the water because there was a lady aboard. As the boat passed and I had a good look at the lady I announced she had nothing to learn from us kids." )

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American Canals, No. 23—November 1977
SUEZ CANAL

Ship number 35,000 transited the Suez Canal since its opening on 11 September 1977. She was the largest transport the KARKOUK displacement 5000 tons on her way to the Arab (Persian) Gulf.

This view of newly rebuilt Lock #12 of the Farmington Canal at Cheshire, Conn., shows the lock tender's house as well. To view this site, take route 42 off route 10 from Cheshire to RR crossing which do not cross. Lock is about 500' to the left. (Photo by Alden Gould.)

The Amelia Earhart Locks at Dam Site are located on the Mystic and Malden Rivers in both Everett and Somerville, Massachusetts. There are three locks at this site, all completed in 1986. This view shows Lock #2, one of the two small locks, which is 120' long and 25' wide. The commercial lock (not shown) is to the left and is 325' long and 45' wide. (Alden Gould, Director, ACS)

ACS Member
25,000th Thru Tunnel

ACS Member Paulina Meyer of Edwardsville, Ill., an avid canal enthusiast, became the 25,000th person to go through the Dudley Canal Tunnel near Birmingham with the Dudley Trust on 3 August during a field trip of the Industrial Archaeology Course at Avencroft Museum, Bromsgrove. (Paulina has published an excellent canal game which will be of interest to American canal enthusiasts everywhere. See Classified Ads this issue for information on ordering.)

New York State Barge Canal

Two public meetings regarding navigational improvement in the New York State Barge Canal System will be held by the Corps of Engineers. The first meeting is at 5:00 p.m. on 30 November in the First Floor Hearing Room, 335 F. Washington St., Syracuse, N.Y. The second meeting is at 9:00 p.m. on 1 December in the First Floor Hearing Room (No. 1, Sec. C), Ge. Donovan State Office Bldg., 120 Main St., Buffalo, NY.

AMERICAN CANALS, NO. 23 — November, 1977
TED SHERMAN “REMEMBERS”

“Lock No. 43 (also known as ‘Minai Trail Lock’) of the Lehigh Canal about 1½ miles below Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The lock tender was George Searles from about 1865 to 1910 or 1916; George Gross until about 1922; and Andrew Reis until 1932. Andrew Reis married my mother-in-law in 1927. She fell in the abandoned lock (the canal was empty) in 1933 and was injured and died in 1934.” (Photo and caption provided by Theodore (Ted) Sherman, a former canal boat operator on the Lehigh and Delaware Canals, now residing at 1831, Washington, PA 18235.)

FUN ON THE LEHIGH CANAL

While bilge pumps were rushed on board, the boat began to settle beyond its normal water line and for a time it seemed as though the water was coming in faster than it could be pumped out. The accompanying photos were taken by the Allentown Call-Chronicle during the early navigational difficulties, when the launching party made an unsuccessful attempt to get the “A. Emerson” through the Guard Lock gates at the upper entrance to the restored Lehigh Canal section.

At this writing, it would appear that the plans have probably swelled sufficiently to allow the “A. Emerson” to become operational during the coming 1978 season on the lower Lehigh Canal!

Here’s what the “A. Emerson” looked like shortly after being placed in the water below “Chambers Bridge” on the Lehigh River. The pumping operation apparently wasn’t helping much.

The reconstructed canal boat “A. Emerson”, formerly in operation at White Mills, Pa., on the Delaware and Hudson Canal (See AMERICAN CANALS, No. 11, Nov. 1974) was recently acquired by the Hugh Moore Park at Easton, Pa. Here it will be used to carry canal enthusiasts, and other visitors to the Delaware Canal Society Museum, along a fully restored section of the Lehigh Canal west of Easton, complete with three operating locks.

The “A. Emerson” had been dry-docked for several years before the transfer to Easton, and hence the planking of the hull had dried out rather thoroughly. Members of the Hugh Moore Park and Delaware Canal Society anticipated difficulties when the boat was placed in the Lehigh Canal, and had done a complete caulking job ahead of time.

No one was quite prepared, however, for the leakage which began to occur when the boat was actually placed in the water. Seepage through the caulked sections began almost at once, and...

NEW CANAL?

Once again plans are in the air for an all-American canal linking Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. Congressmen from Western New York State have reintroduced the idea in Washington, and in May the House of Representatives authorized $1.5 million for the Army Corp of Engineers to study the possibility. The study will also explore building a U.S. controlled waterway between the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes. This route would take ships up the Hudson River and across a rebuilt Erie Canal to Buffalo or across the Erie Canal to the Oswego Canal to Lake Ontario. The Senate has not yet approved the study. (From "LOG”, June 1977)