NEW ACS OFFICERS

Effective 1 July 1978, the American Canal Society will have a change in its principal officers when William H. Shank, P.E., takes over as President, Bill Shank is known to many canal enthusiasts as a former Vice President of the Pennsylvania Canal Society. Editor of Canal Currents for 22 issues, and Vice President, Secretary, and Production Editor of the American Canal Society for nearly seven years. Bill was assisted in all these tasks by Ruth Shank, who, aside from her official duties was actually Assistant-Secretary of the American Canal Society. Bill is the author of many canal books and articles concerning not only canals but other forms of transportation, and is a Professional Engineer.

William F. Trout, III, Ph.D., becomes the sole Vice President of the Society and will retain his title as Chairman of the Canal Parts Committee, as Editor of the American Canal Guide, and as Associate Editor of American Canals. Bill Trout (for those who are new to the Society) is the acknowledged authority on the canals of Virginia, a leading expert on the canals of the world, and an authority on underwater archeology. Being relieved from his duties as Treasurer of the Society, he hopes for more work in preservation and research.

A part of the duties of Bill Shank and Bill Trout has been taken over by Charles W. Dietz, Jr. of Friesenburg, Pennsylvania, who becomes the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Canal Society. Charlie has been active for several years in the Friesenburg area on the Lehigh Canal and in the affairs of the Pennsylvania Canal Society, of which he is a Director. In fact, the idea of the American Canal Society was conceived of by canal enthusiasts, and all will pitch in to help with their new duties in the Society.

Captain Tom Hahn remains Editor of American Canals and President Emeritus. Being relieved of the chief administrative duties of the Society, he hopes to allow him to devote more deeply to the canal research in which he is particularly interested. He will remain in touch with all of you through American Canals and through the "Editor's Corner," which should perhaps now more appropriately be called the "Editor's Corner" or some such, with a new "Captain" at the helm.

The directors named in the last edition of American Canals remain in effect. Bill Trout, Tom Fish, and Bill Shank are all the founders of the American Canal Society, Inc., which was conceived in 1971 and formally organized in 1972.

End of Cross-Florida Barge Canal?

Inglis Lock on the Cross-Florida Barge Canal, 64 x 600 feet, built in 1970. This view shows the east gate and control building. Note the "Hyacinths" floating in the lock chamber. (Photo by Alon Gould, March 1973)

An administration task force has recommended a $20 million plan to dismantle the Cross-Florida Barge Canal, drain Lake Oklawaha and restore the Oklawaha River to its pre-canal state. The plan will be submitted to the White House for President Carter's decision. The plan would involve filling in the locks, removing the Hoosier Dam and restoring the area as nearly as possible to its natural state. After the White House review, the proposal would be sent to Congress for the ultimate decision. Some $70 million has been spent on the canal, which was one-third completed in 1977 when President Nixon responded to environmental objections and halted it. See additional photos in American Canals No. 29. (Submitted by ACS Director Alon Gould, from the Fort Myers News.)

SUEZ CANAL NAUTICAL CHARTS

Our English member Sam T. C. Cash repeats his offer of free lectures on the English canals to canal organizations, church groups, schools, or other organizations on his intended trip to the U.S. for his new address: "Arthmourhead, Plymouth Road, Tavistock, Devon, England."
American Canals
Bulletin of the American Canal Society

DEDICATED TO HISTORIC CANAL RESEARCH, PRESERVATION AND PARKS

AMERICAN CANALS is issued quarterly by the American Canal Society, with headquarters at Box 310, Shepherdstown, W. Va. 25443. Objectives of the Society are to encourage the preservation, restoration, interpretation, and use of the historic canals of the Americas, and to provide an exchange of canal information.

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RESEARCHING CANAL BOATS

This is a brief description of three sources of information which can be very helpful in canal boat research. Unfortunately, recording of vessels was limited to those which were required to be registered by the U.S. Government. Powered vessels or mule-drawn boats which actively engaged in inter-state commerce needed documentation papers and were assigned a U.S. registry number. However, canal vessels which were captive to one canal or never left the waters of one state usually were not registered.

The primary reference publication is Merchant Vessels of the United States, 1668 to the present, printed annually by the Government Printing Office, and usually available only at larger libraries. Unpowered (or mule) canal boats are listed under the "unrigged" section, and are arranged alphabetically by the name of the vessel. The canal historian can obtain much information by "reading" these lists from end to end. For example, the lists can be used in reverse to determine dates of vessels built at, or with home ports at, towns or cities on canals. Frequently, vessels change names, and "rig" and tracing them becomes akin to detective work. The earliest volumes give only the home port and the tonnage; later volumes give the year and place built. By 1910 the information also includes the number of crew members and by 1923 the length, width, depth, type of service or trade, plus name and address of owner.

For steam canal vessels only, the one-volume reference work entitled Merchant Steam Vessels of the United States is highly recommended. It covers the years 1790 to 1868 and is also known as "the Lytle - Hold arrs list," named after the original compiler. The list was revised and edited by H. Bradford Mitchell and was reprinted in 1975 by the Steamship Historical Society of America, Inc.

Generally, if a vessel can be located in Merchant Vessels of the U.S., there is a very good chance that the original documents issued to the vessel are on file in the National Archives. But, they do not have a comprehensive index to vessel documents for canal boats prior to 1890. In many instances, canal boats operated for years without vessel documents, while in other cases they were documented almost as soon as they were built.

Vessel documentation records in the National Archives include certificates of registry, enrollment, and license, issued to American-flag merchant vessels. A typical certificate contains the name of the owner, the name of the master on the date issued, a brief description of the vessel, and the date and place built. Changes in the ownership, home port, name, or description of the vessel, or a change in the type of trade in which it engaged, required the issuance of a new certificate.

The first and last certificates issued to any vessel usually contain enough data to summarize the vessel's career. In addition to the data ordinarily found in each certificate, the first document often contains the name of the builder of the vessel, and the last frequently includes an endorsement containing information about the end of its career as a registered American merchant vessel.

Most researchers require only the information contained in the first and last documents issued to a vessel. Photo copies of the first and last (Concluded on Page Three)

AMERICAN CANALS, No. 25 — May, 1978
Pennsylvania North Branch Extension Canal

by T.K. Woods

Pennsylvania's officials were confident that in 1854, after more than 10 years of on again, off again construction, the North Branch Extension Canal would be opened to traffic from Pittston to the New York State Line.

The eighteen mile long Junction Canal was constructed by private capital from Pennsylvania's North Branch Extension to New York's Chemung Canal and opened early in 1854. A packet boat was then brought in from the New York System to make regular runs between Elmira, New York and Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

When water was let into that part of the Extension north of Cokerton and south of Towanda, though, it was impossible to maintain levels deep enough to carry traffic. The earth is very porous along the upper Susquehanna and the canal channel had not been properly lined with clay "patties." All normal attempts to "fix" the canal failed. Leaking bars became undermined and fell into the river. Whole sections were later added into underground cavities.

All the water was let into that part of the Extension north of Cokerton and south of Towanda, though, it was impossible to maintain levels deep enough to carry traffic. The earth is very porous along the upper Susquehanna and the canal channel had not been properly lined with clay "patties." All normal attempts to "fix" the canal failed. Leaking bars became undermined and fell into the river. Whole sections were later added into underground cavities.

Allegations of incompetent engineering and political corruption were made. Whether or not these charges were well founded, the North Branch Extension Superintendent, Mathew A. Gumblee, resigned in the fall of 1854. His final report estimated that it would take an additional expenditure of $49,000 to open the canal to through traffic.

William Rose Maffet, an engineer with a great deal of experience on canals, railroads, and mines was hired as Chief Engineer of the North Branch Extension in November, 1854. He promptly hired Thomas S. McNair, a lifelong friend, as Assistant Engineer.

Maffet had become acquainted with a number of other canal engineers in previous years and he had attempted to hire the best of them in a struggle to get the Extension Canal running. One such man was J. Bennett Smith, then enjoying a "cushy" job in the Engineering Department of the Lackawanna & Bloomsburg. Maffet had gotten Smith his first engineering job and felt he "owed" him. Smith must have thought so, too, for he soon found himself in Wilkes-Barre with Maffet, facing a cold North Eastern Pennsylvania winter on the Extension Canal.

A herculean effort was made to get the canal in shape before the end of the year, but the job was more than anyone had figured. It was finally decided to deepen the channel all along the defective section and line it with a good thickness of clay "patties." For this purpose large clay beds were purchased near Milan.

All this was in the future, however. A heavy snowstorm and cold spell hit the region early in December and Maffet decided to shut down construction for the season. He traveled to Harrisburg to get the money ($14,000) to pay off the crew. The money was given to Smith with the order to take it to McNair who was supposed to be staying at George Saxe's Hotel at the head of the narrows above Cokerton. Let's now have S. B. Bennett Smith, himself, take up the narrative, from an old newspaper interview

"I put the money in an old carpet bag and took the early morning stage run that ran between Wilkes-Barre and Scranton and was operated by Dave Seamon and Dan Roberts. I left that stage at Upper Pittston and traveled the long way to Saxe's Tavern, but found that McNair had taken his crew and gone up the line to do some engineering work.

"My orders were to deliver the $14,000 to McNair. He had left two days before I arrived and had gone up the line, and it was very uncertain where I would find him. The snow was several inches deep and traveling was pretty tough, but I stuck to the low path to find him. I put a stick through the handles of the old carpet sack and took it over my shoulder and he offered it to McNair's. Bill told McNair had stayed there Monday night and had gone further up the line, I tramped to Tunkhannock where I learned that Mac had stayed the night before, but he had gone further up the line that morning.

"I know that there was some engineering work to be done on the rock above Vossburg and I would probably find him at some farm house. I got my supper at Hill's Hotel and shouwered my carpet bag and took the low path like a long carcass doggie hound was on the track and had to get my man before I went to sleep. About 8 o'clock I found McNair at Archy Ballentine's, about a mile above Vossburg tunnel. I had tramped about twenty eight miles that day through the snow and was mighty glad to get rid of that money. Some true lads ate a lot of money and do not have so hard a time to get rid of it as I had."

Some limited traffic was able to use the Extension starting in November of 1856, but half loads and double teams were the rule through 1857. By the spring of 1856, Gamble's $45,000 estimate to finish the North Branch Extension Canal had swollen to more than $300,000 in actual expenditures, but thousands of tons of Anthracite could now be shipped north to New York and Ohio.

The State disposed of all its Branch Canals in 1859 by selling them to the Sunbury & Erie Railroad. The North Branch Canal and Branch Extension Canals were later acquired and operated by separate canal companies, but the services of Maffet and McNair were no longer required. They both went on to bigger and better things. Hopefully, so did J. Bennett Smith, a young Engineer who rode and hiked nearly 40 miles through a snow storm to solely deliver a "fortune" entrusted to him.

(Much of the information for this article was obtained from Charles E. Mange, local historian of Pittston, Pa. Mr. Woods is now researching the North Branch and North Branch Extension Canals for a book with a tentative publishing date of spring, 1980. The additional information on these canals would be greatly appreciated by T.K. Woods, 9359 Easthill Drive, Carton, Ohio 44718.)

Researching Canal Boats

(Concluded from Page Two)

documents can be furnished for a fee of $7.50 per vessel. The procedure is to obtain the GSA form #6770, "order for copies of documents issued to vessel" from the Industrial and Social Branch, National Archives (GSA), Washington, DC. 20408. Now you have a nice new shoe - have fun digging!

The author wishes to thank fellow ACS members, Jim and Alice Wilson for their personal instruction, several years ago, in the methods outlined above. Perhaps some of you will find these voluminous lists will be compiled to make such research faster, easier, and more productive with greater accuracy.

(By Bill McKeever, Director - ACS Chairman - Canal Boat Hulks, Wrecks and Remains subcommittee.)
Tiber Creek to Murder Bay: Failure of the Washington Canal

This 1855 map of Washington and Georgetown clearly shows the old Washington City Canal and its branches. Note also the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal at the upper left, and the Tiber Creek - Rock Creek canal connection, along the north bank of the Potomac. The Alexandria Aqueduct is also shown, just south of "Georgetown College."
James Cochran of Baltimore, a reputable contractor who had worked on the National Road, was hired to undertake the excavation and construction of the canal, which began on May 9, 1810, with President Madison himself on hand for the groundbreaking ceremonies. Crowds comprised of aristocrats and mechanics set to work on the digging. When money ran out after a few years and the workers were laid off, a congressionally chartered loan was issued to allow work to resume, but the invasion of the British in 1814 during the War again halted construction.

The British invasion and the shortage of funds created a period of economic difficulties. More significant were the structural deficiencies that had been incorporated into the project by the company's short-sighted directors and its severe lack of resources. The canal was not completed the day it opened to traffic, Tuesday, November 21, 1815. With great fanfare, two barges, one carrying the too-right-angle turns to reach the western Band, passed the completed masonry, but one of the locks near the executive mansion was faulty, but also difficult to repair, delaying any use of the canal for another two years. Before it could be put into working order, nearly all of the wood lining the canal had rotted off instead of corrals. To correct their initial mistake, the directors ordered the wood replaced. As none of these developments had been anticipated by the Washington Canal Company, the company's stock fell from a per share of $100 to $30. Latrobe, who had been paid for his services with stock certificates, found himself unable to sell them.

These were ominous signs for the future of the project. The canal was not yet ready to be used before the all-but-insurmountable financial catastrophe. With high tide, for boats with a three-foot draft, much of the canal was constantly being filled by tidal action from the Potomac and the Anacostia, for the locks at either end never operated reliably. In 1822, the section of the canal running along Pennsylvania Avenue from 23rd Street to 3rd Street was abandoned, and the remainder of the canal between the north and south sides of Pennsylvania Avenue was closed.

The new route ran through the center of the Mall, making it too narrow to accommodate the whole of the canal. This area, the Constitution Avenue, which had already become a popular park, was the site of some sections of the canal having become a virtual swamp, the clay sticking down to a depth of six feet. The section of the canal between the north and south sides of Pennsylvania Avenue was closed.

Though periodic dredging continued, the city fathers realized after fighting a losing battle with sediment in the early 1850s that there was little hope of ever operating the canal successfully. The friction and wear of the canal against the sides of the canal had already become impossible. More than 1,000,000 cubic yards of earth had been removed from the canal. The section of the canal between the north and south sides of Pennsylvania Avenue was closed.

In 1888, when the canal dropped on the Canal of the Civil War. The canal turned south at this point and divided into two branches.

Washington City Canal, looking east toward the unfinished Capitol Building, at the start of the Civil War. The canal turned south at this point and divided into two branches.

(Concluded on Page Seven)
By Mary M. Yeater

(This article is the sixth in a series on the Hennepin Canal, formerly the Illinois-Mississippi Canal. Part Six is the continuation of "44 Years as a Commercial Waterway." Mary Yeater is a professional Historical Researcher for the State of Illinois.)

The Hennepin Canal was one link in a chain which connected the Upper Mississippi Valley and the Great Lakes. It not only connected the Mississippi River to the Illinois River. In national economic terms, that was meaningless without an adequate route from the Illinois to Chicago. The original promoters of the Hennepin Canal saw the Illinois and Michigan Canal completed in 1848 and the Chicago River as the Great Lakes link which would give the Hennepin significance. And if the Hennepin Canal had been built in the 1830s, when it was originally suggested, in the 1840s, or even in the 1850s, the Illinois and Michigan Canal would have been an adequate outlet for it and the canal's economic potential would have been realized.

The Illinois and Michigan Canal was built to accommodate boats with a maximum of 105 feet length and seventeen feet beam drawing a maximum of 4.5 feet of water. By the late 1870s, only the 1890s, boats of that size were too small to compete successfully with the railroads and water routes that had a greater capacity. After 1878, the state-operated Illinois and Michigan Canal had failed to pay even the expenses of its operation and maintenance. By the 1890s, the twenty years of continuous deficit operation had taken its toll on the Illinois and Michigan; it had no revenues to maintain it. Even if the Illinois and Michigan Canal had been in operational condition, the Hennepin Canal was larger, capable of passing boats with a maximum of 140 feet length and thirty-four feet beam and 640 gross tons. Its extreme capacity was probably three boats each way per hour; 144 boats per day of 640 registered tons each, 18,432,000 tons in 200 days, the shortest possible season of navigation.

In 1912 and 1913 Morton Salt Company pocketboat steamers traveled the Hennepin Canal regularly. This is the Peerless. (Photo courtesy of Ruth Jones (Mrs. Vorie), Wyanett, Illinois.)

Plaintly, the two canals did not fit in order to make the maximum use of the Hennepin Canal's capacity, eastbound cargo would have to be transferred to smaller barges at LaSalle, the entrance to the Illinois and Michigan Canal. The westbound cargo would have to be transferred to larger barges at Hennepin, entrance to the Hennepin Canal. Such a process is time consuming and, therefore, would in itself prevent maximum usage of the canal. It was also very expensive and greatly reduced the competitive edge, water transportation had over railroads or even through water routes which involved no charge of vessels. So shippers realized that the long run, it was cheaper to use the extreme capacity of the Illinois and Michigan Canal as the maximum on both canals. Therefore, the enlarged size of the Hennepin was not taken advantage of when the canal was used in conjunction with the Illinois and Michigan.

Of course, this was not what the federal government or the Corps of Engineers had had in mind. All the plans, reports, and surveys produced by the Corps from 1870 on had tied the success of the Hennepin Canal to an enlargement of the Illinois and Michigan Canal to the improvement of the Illinois River upstream from LaSalle, Illinois. By 1897, the Corps had worked out the details for what they saw as the most economical and adequate connection between Lake Michigan and the Illinois River at Joliet. However, this was not sufficient for the success of the Hennepin Canal. Neither the federal government, the Corps of Engineers nor any other group had done anything about the connection between the Illinois River at Joliet and the Illinois River at LaSalle. An adequate link was also necessary there for such success; neither alone had any significance.

Consequently, by 1908, the first year commercial traffic possible on it, the Hennepin Canal was virtually non-existent. Although this was certainly a far from ideal situation and agitation for greater use of the Hennepin Canal was heard, by the time of the construction of a modern commercial waterway from Chicago to Joliet, there was little interest or incentive. The Illinois and Michigan Canal from Joliet to Chicago was not enlarged as the Corps of Engineers had advised. In fact, the Corps' arguments about the need for an enlarged modern commercial waterway from Chicago to Joliet were ignored altogether. Yet action was taken, independent of commercial considerations, which proved the Hennepin Canal's Chicago connection. By the 1860s Chicago's water supply was contaminated by sewage running down the Chicago River into Lake Michigan, causing typhoid. To deal with the health problem, in 1893, the State of Illinois' Chicago Sanitary District began construction on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. This huge project, with a twenty-six-foot channel extending from the Chicago River across the divide to the Des Plaines River at Lockport, Illinois. The channel was also deepened in the Chicago River whose flow was changed in connection with the canal's construction. After water was turned into the Chicago Sanitary Canal in 1900, the Chicago River no longer flowed eastward into Lake Michigan; it flowed westward via the canal into the Des Plaines River.

The bigger and more modern Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, although not built specifically for that purpose, then replaced the small and deteriorated Illinois and Michigan Canal as the commercial waterway from Lockport to Chicago. Most of the portion of the Illinois and Michigan Canal that the Corps had wanted to enlarge was instead abandoned in 1900. In 1901, a further section of the Chicago Sanitary Canal was opened from Lockport to Joliet, causing that part of the Illinois and Michigan Canal to be abandoned as well. (This reach of the Chicago Sanitary Canal was itself subsequently replaced when the Illinois River project was completed in 1933.) On the other hand, the portion of the Illinois and Michigan Canal from Joliet to LaSalle - which the Corps had wanted to abandon was kept in service, even though the new canal severely reduced its water flow.

Despite the fact that the Corps of Engineers' inflated plans for the Hennepin to Chicago waterway had been thwarted, one of the necessary conditions for a successful Hennepin Canal had been met there was now an adequate connection between Lake Michigan and the Illinois River at Joliet. But necessarily as this was, it was not sufficient for the success of the Hennepin Canal. Neither the federal government, the Corps of Engineers nor any other group had done anything about the connection between the Illinois River at Joliet and the Illinois River at LaSalle. An adequate link was also necessary there for such success; neither alone had any significance.

Each overseer was provided with a motor launch as part of his standard operating equipment. One of these was the gasoline launch "Snoopy" shown here on mile 1 of the Hennepin Canal feeder August 27, 1909. (Photo courtesy of the Rock Island District, Corps of Engineers.)

AMERICAN CANALS, No. 25 — May, 1978
Sterling in 1910 small shipments of grain were carried from elevators on the Hennepin Canal's feeder line to Pekin and Peoria on the Illinois River. One of the steam power towboats involved in this trade is pictured here along with its single grain barge, the "Marceitus." (Photo courtesy of Bessie Goodale (Mrs. Clair), Wyanett, Illinois.)

continued for an adequate LaSalle to Joliet connection, no one foresaw what a total waste the canal would be without the link because it was assumed that coal shipments could keep the entire canal busy. In 1886, when construction began on the canal, Rock Island, its western terminus, was a primary coal station on the Mississippi River. Shipment of Illinois coal to Rock Island alone kept busy the entire stretch of canal opened in 1895. Unfortunately, within a matter of months after the 1897 opening of the entire canal, the coal fields of central Illinois closed.

Because the coal shipments ended, the first major use of the canal was to transport grain. In 1908, the only commodities handled on the canal were those used in canal construction and operation: wood, cement, tile, sand and gravel, lumber and posts; coal for heating the overspread and locomotive caissons; and coal for use as trash at the locks of the canal. These operations made up over half of all the tonnage carried during the first five years of operation.

The most profitable commercial activities associated with the Hennepin Canal in its earliest years of operation did not come from the traffic at the lock. In 1905 the corps began to sell ice permits, charging one dollar per thousand square feet of ice cut. They built ice houses along the canal to store the ice for use in the summer and rented them to commercial ice firms. Ice was even stored in the posh beds along the canal right-of-way on the Allendale section of the canal. The corps sold out as pasture these stretches of right-of-way not already allocated to employees for their own use.

Although several freight services were proposed in the earliest years of canal operations, no regular freight service was established.

The situation was partially remedied in 1910 when the firm of Smith-Hippon built two grain elevators on the feeder canal. For some years, small grain shipments made to distilleries in Pekin and Peoria on the Illinois River were carried on single barges powered by steam operated towboats. A few other elevators were constructed and grain transit became

the mainstay of Hennepin Canal commerce from 1905 until 1915, with about 65% of all commodities carried on the Hennepin Canal in this period. However, no truly significant grain hauling business developed; over the five-year period, only about 21,073 tons of grain were hauled on the Hennepin Canal.

The transport of salt was another potentially major freight market for the Hennepin Canal. Beginning in 1912, the Morton Salt Company shipped approximately 1,500 tons of salt from Chicago to Davenport, Iowa, via the Hennepin Canal. In 1913, they shipped approximately 2,000 tons. However, in that same year, Joseph Morton, president of the company discontinued service on its own steamboats because the Illinois and Michigan Canal had become so shallow that navigation was nearly impossible. In succeeding years all Morton shipments were phased out.

Although the Corps of Engineers had been promoting the improvement of the Illinois River over thirty years, no progress had been made on the channel between LaSalle and Joliet. Perhaps to force the issue and to get the matter resolved, the Illinois and Michigan Canal was abandoned on September 30, 1914. The Illinois and Michigan Canal was 12,222 miles in length. Although this 1914 tonnage record is almost inconsequential when compared to the canal's maximum capacity (18,900,000 ton), the record was not equaled or exceeded until 1921. By 1915, a total of $9 million had been spent on the project. In conclusion, its commerce - a total of less than $70,000 tons, not counting construction and maintenance supplies moved - was insignificant.

The abandonment argument was not, however, pushed very far at that time. The Corps explained the canal's difficulties in terms of the lack of a suitable water connection to Chicago and Joliet. Even though the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal had solved the problem from Lake Michigan to the Illinois River, a bottleneck still existed on that river from Joliet to LaSalle. In 1918-1919, the Illinois and Michigan Canal from Joliet to LaSalle underwent a temporary improvement financed by federal funds. But more importantly, in 1919, the Illinois State Legislature passed a bill authorizing the construction, operation and maintenance of a deep waterway from Lockport to Utica on the Illinois River.

Washington Canal Failure

(Concluded from Page Five)

$300,000 was hiked, while the cost of aerials was only $300. Along with the mayor - would reach as high as $4,000,000.

Although Severson considered the proposal to fill the canal "iron absurds to be swept up" in the question of the canal's fate was laid to rest when the District of Columbia abandoned the sole use of the canal in 1871 for re-organization as a territory under United States government jurisdiction. Several offers from mid-Western states to relocate the national capital following the Civil War had received serious consideration from Congress, for social and political turmoil in Washington had reached its peak in a general assault on the ability of the capital's citizens to govern themselves. By abandoning the canal for Federal administration, the city retained its status as the national capital, while Congress obtained a measure of control short of full responsibility for running the city. The experiment was not for only one way when the territorial government went bankrupt. Congress was forced to bring the District under a federal jurisdiction. By 1870, the District had an act for the old Washington Canal, Alexander Shepherd, the first collector of revenue in the District of Columbia, who had been owner of the canal, ordered the canal filled. In 1876, Congress passed a law for the District of Columbia, which included a provision for the sale of the canal to a private company, and the canal was sold for $250,000 in 1876. The railroad, however, had a greater appeal for the city than the canal, and the District of Columbia sold the canal in 1873.

Petitions to a committee of the House of Representatives transmitted to be an investigation of the canal's condition, and the board of Public Works, who approved the decision to fill the canal from 7th Street to the Potomac, to make way for the railroad and the Baltimore and Ohio, was passed in 1875. The canal was drained and filled in at a cost to the government of only $15,000. Along that part of the former canal route, the end of the canal was now a year later, and it was decided that the railroad was to be built.

The author is a Ph.D. candidate in American history at Temple University.

Wildflower Seeds

Enclosed with this issue of AMERICAN CANALS is a packet of wildflower seeds to be sown judiciously along your favorite canal to provide a spot of color which just might help start a new park instead of a parking lot. The best method is to push or rake them into the soil in the spring, weather permitting.

Thanks go to the Clyde Robin Seed Co., P.O. Box 2853, Gastro Valley CA 94546 for providing the seeds at cost and donating the envelope. Bulk quantities can be obtained from them of over 10,000 packets. The following is for the 100 Pack of CR-130 or Eastern States Wildflower Mx (CR-212). Their catalog and price list costs $1 (the seed propagation pamphlet mentioned only amounts to $1 for 100 packets). When they test, additional single packets of CR-130 are available from Bill Traders by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We'll know how your horticultural efforts turn out.
A.H. Fleckner was one of the early photographers in Virginia. It is thought that he was born in the Valley of Virginia near Staunton prior to the Civil War and he did some photographic work before the war. He served with the Confederate Forces, but not as a photographer. Sometime after the war he settled in Lynchburg as a photographer and had a studio there for many years. He left Lynchburg as an old man and went to Richmond, probably with some of his family, where he died at around 80 years of age.

He took many of the photographs in the area and the site in addition to his regular studio portraits. Two of his best known are the pictures of Robert E. Lee on Traveller and the picture of "The Marshall" on the shore of the James River and Kanawha Canal at Lynchburg, Virginia, with the old couple who lived in it.

Several of the Fleckner photographs are owned by the Dementi-Foster Studios of Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Robert A. Dementi graciously permitted us to print one of the photographs. The original glass plates have been in storage for many years in the possession of his family, and to him and his father's (A. L. Dementi, 87 years of age) knowledge they have never been published or even printed, or that matter in at least 35 years. The photograph illustrated is printed by permission of the Dementi's with a first one-time publication right.

The North River (now the Maury River) bridge in the picture is described in the 17th Annual Report of 1851 as follows: "The lower path crosses North River by a bridge of two spans of 159 feet each. This bridge is also provided with a roadway track over which the company are authorized to charge tolls. This route is 366 yards above the Blue Ridge dam.

ARNOLD BARBEN
Arnold Barben, a past president of the Canal Society of New York State and a former director of the American Canal Society died on 22 March in Syracuse, New York. He will be missed by his many canal enthusiastic friends.

Chessie" Gives Maps

The Chesapeake & Ohio System recently donated nearly 1,500 maps and charts comprised primarily of detailed maps of the route of the James River and Kanawha Canal during the nineteenth century to the Virginia State Library in Richmond. For canal researchers, the maps contain details on locks, bridges, and elevations. The maps will be available to researchers as soon as they are arranged and catalogued. This transfer was the culmination of a dream (and hard work) by ACS Vice President Bill Trout, ACS Member Gibson Hobbs, and friends at Reynolds Metals in Richmond. The American Canal Society congratulates the Chesapeake System for its public spirit and hopes that this will encourage others to do likewise, as Reynolds Metals has with its preservation of canal structures earlier in Richmond. Thanks are also due to J.W. Brent, Chief Engineer, and J.E. Shapero of the Engineering Section (both of Huntington, WV) for their efforts in making the transfer possible.

THE MAGAZINE COLLECTOR

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