

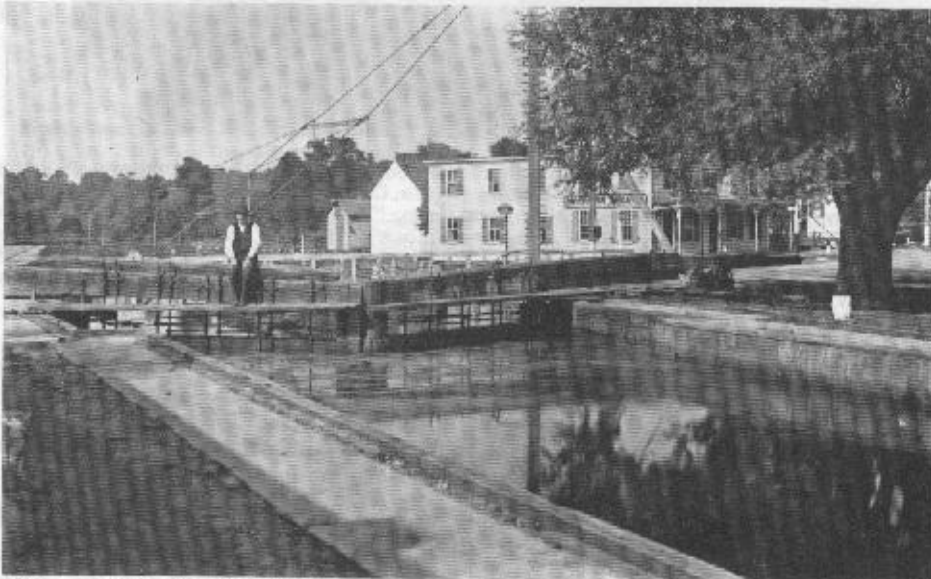
AMERICAN CANALS

BULLETIN OF
THE AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN NUMBER 9 EDITORIAL ADDRESS - P. O. BOX 638, GLEN ECHO, MD. 20768

MAY, 1974

D. & R. CANAL PARK SHAPES UP



We are indebted to Bill McKelvey, Jr. for this fine photo of the D & R Canal Lock at Hoffman House, in its hey day, C-1900.

The Delaware and Raritan Canal state park will soon be a reality! Final approval of the bill by Gov. Byrne will give the state regional zoning powers in the 17 municipalities and four counties through which the 44-mile canal passes. The bill was necessary because the canal is being threatened by shopping centers, parking lots and factories.

The Dept. of Environmental Protection is authorized by the bill to establish the park under the direction of a nine-member commission. The bill should protect undeveloped portions along the entire length of the canal except for the canal's final segment from the Landing Lane Bridge in New Brunswick to its juncture with the Raritan River in that city. That Section was omitted because of the proposed extension of Route 18 over the river at Landing Lane.

The American Canal Society takes the position that the 6000 feet in New Brunswick is essential to the wholeness and historical significance of the canal. Anyone having comments to make concerning Route 18 should address them to Captain Ken Wilson, Chief Bridge Section, U. S. Coast Guard, 400 7th St. SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. He has yet to give his permit to cross the Raritan River and has environmental questions about the crossing.

All of the D & R Canal except for the last 6000 feet is also on the National Register of Historic Places. (How would you like to have a Statue of Liberty without a

head or the Brooklyn Bridge without any piers?) Because of new Federal Guidelines on historic sites, this last segment could be put on the National Register by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Write Ms. M. Webster Smith, Director of Compliance, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, 1522 K St. -N.W., Suite 430, Washington, D.C. 20005. Send a copy to Pres. Lee Bullitt, D & R Canal Coalition, R.D. #1, Princeton, N. J. 08540. The Coalition is the action coordinator for area groups and represents the American Canal Society well on this subject. The position taken by the A.C.S. is also the one taken by the Coalition, the Rutgers Student Committee on the Bicentennial Year, the Rutgers Student Committee on Route Eighteen and the Canal Society of New Jersey.

BRITISH WATERWAYS MOVIE AVAILABLE

The British Waterways Board of the United Kingdom recently sent the American Canal Society a gift of a movie entitled "World of the Waterways," a 20-minute narrated color film on the recreational uses of the inland waterways in the U. K. The American premier of the film was held at the Great Falls Tavern on the Chesapeake & Ohio near Washington, DC, under the joint sponsorship of the American Canal Society

"Captain's Corner"

We have so much material on hand, that I am going to try to keep my comments short so as to include as much as possible. That is the frustrating part about being limited to six pages in *American Canals*, which we must do at the present time to stay within our budget for the year. One way for us to get ahead financially is to increase our membership so as to reduce the cost per copy. With sufficient members we could then go to a larger quarterly. So, part of it is up to you. Purchasing bumper stickers and ACS sew-on badges will also help.

Mid-Spring is a favorite time for canal activities and we have had our share: the Canal Symposium at Syracuse, NY; parts of the Chesapeake and Ohio Hike from Cumberland to Washington; the Public Forum on the Delaware & Raritan Canal at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ; the joint Pennsylvania Canal Society Canal Society of New York State in Rome, NY; a trip to the power canals of the Society for Useful Manufacture at Paterson, NJ; the Board of Directors Meeting of the American Canal Society, etc.

Unfortunately we had to miss the Canal Society of Ohio and other field trips, but we will eventually get around to see many of you. Part of the fun of going to canal activities away from home is to share the concerns and enjoyments of others, and field trips are certainly the place to do that. In addition to treks away from home, we had very enjoyable visits with our Vice President Dr. Bill Trout, who recently finished his annual 'spring cleaning' visit to as many canal sites that he could cram in and a surprise visit from our ACS director from England, John Atkinson, who came all the way over here to take part in our ACS Directors Meeting. That is the kind of devotion we need!

In putting together articles on canals in different places, I find that we are very short of suitable photos. I usually have to write a frantic letter to some friend to help out, but it would be ever so much easier to have a file of photos from which we could make selections whenever the need arose. Hope you have a pleasant summer!

Tom Hahn

and the National Park Service. The film is available for local showings by canal or canal-related organizations belonging to the American Canal Society. Shipping/insurance fee of \$5. Write to ACS, P. O. Box 638, Glen Echo, MD 20768, stating date requested.

American Canals

BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN CANAL SOCIETY

AMERICAN CANALS is issued quarterly by the American Canal Society, with headquarters at Lockhouse #6, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, P.O. Box 638, Glen Echo, Maryland 20768. Objectives of the Society are to encourage the preservation, restoration, interpretation and use of the historic canals of the Americas; save threatened canals; and to provide an exchange of canal information.

Annual subscription to "AMERICAN CANALS" is automatic with a minimum ACS dues payment of \$4.00. Individual copies may be purchased at \$1.00.

ACS President and Editor-in-Chief — Capt. Thomas F. Hahn, USN (Ret.) P. O. Box 638, Glen Echo, Md. 20768.

ACS Vice President, Secretary and Production Editor — William H. Shank, P.E. 809 Rathton Road, York, Pa. 17403.

ACS Vice President, Treasurer, Associate Editor and Chairman, Canal Parks Committee — Dr. William E. Trout III, 1932 Cinco Robles Dr., Duarte, Cal. 91010.

Chairman, Canal Index Committee — ACS Director, Peter H. Stott, Haines Road, Mount Kisco, N. Y. 10549.

Chairman, Canal Bibliography Committee, ACS Director, Harry L. Rinker, 39 West Springettsbury Ave., York, Pa. 17403.

I am working on a model of the canal boat STAR OF FREEPORT used in Pittsburgh around 1845 from a photograph of very poor quality. I would appreciate any information anyone has on this boat. W. L. Eyzel, 327 Denniston, Pittsburgh, PA 15206.

ACS SECRETARY GIVES CANAL LECTURE



Bill Shank, ACS Vice-President and Secretary, gave a presentation of his "Amazing Pennsylvania Canals" lecture to 250 members of the Lancaster (Pa.) Traffic Club at their 50th Anniversary Banquet, April 22. Incoming President Arthur Quinn left; retiring President William Seigford, Center.

POTOMAC VALLEY AUTHORS HONORED



The National Park Service recently honored Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and Potomac Valley authors at the Great Falls Tavern on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. Left to right: Jim Reber, "Potomac Portrait"; Tom Hahn, "Towpath Guides to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal"; "Morris Fradin", "Hey-ey Lock"; "Hooper" Wolfe, "I Drove Mules on the C & O Canal"; Robert Shosteck, "Washington Weekender" and "Potomac Trail Book"; and, Barbara Winslow, "Samantha Goes to Georgetown". (Photo by Bill Shank)

CLASSIFIED ADS

In order to help reduce the cost of AMERICAN CANALS and to add to reader interest, we will try an experimental period of using classified ads. At first, anyway, the ads will be limited to canal or canal-related items. Items for sale, trade, exchange of information, etc. We retain the right to return any material considered to be inappropriate. We have a world-wide readership—you might be surprised at the response you receive! Rates 10¢ per word. Minimum ad \$3.00. Checks payable to American Canal Society sent with ad to: Editor, AMERICAN CANALS, P. O. Box 638, Glen Echo, MD 20768.

JR & K CANAL RR TRIP

Every October the Old Dominion Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society organizes day-long trips up the Chesapeake and Ohio RR James River Line, which was laid on the towpath of the James River & Kanawha Canal in 1881. These excursions have been extremely popular so reservations should be made in advance. Interested persons who are not already on the chapter mailing list may send a postal card to Old Dominion Chapter, NRHS, Box 8583, Richmond, Virginia 23226, and ask for a trip notice before tickets go on sale, specifying the Autumn Leaf Special.

CANAL CALENDAR

June 15 - 16 — Illinois & Michigan Canal Lockport (Ill.) Old Canal Days Festival. Canal tours, canal slide lecture, demonstration & exhibition.

June 22 — Annual Banquet of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Hist. Soc. at Lake Mohonk. Contact Mrs. Wm. Russell, 9 Pine Tree Drive, New Paltz, N.Y. 12561.

July 13 - 14 — Canastota, N. Y. "Canal Town Days". General public invited.

August 17 — Dedication of rehabilitated section of Middlesex Canal at Wilmington. Write Middlesex Canal Assoc., P. O. Box 333, Billerica, Mass. 01821.

September 28 — Chambly Canal meeting of the Canal Society of New York State. Write Sidney W. Beyland, Star Route, Peru, N.Y. 12972.

October 4 - 6 — Allegheny Portage Railroad Tour, a combined outing of the Pennsylvania Canal Society and Canal Society of Ohio. Write Ralph J. Michaels, 394 Bel-Air Drive, Johnstown, Pa. 15904.

HISTORY OF THE BLACKSTONE CANAL, 1828-1848

By Alden Gould

The first attempt to procure water communications between Worcester, Mass. and Providence, RI originated with the citizens of Providence about 1796. Rhode Island passed the first survey legislation soon after, but Mass. refused to follow through. The project was revived in Providence in 1822, in which year a new survey was conducted by Benjamin Wright. On 14 Jan. 1823, the Mass. Legislature passed an act incorporating the Blackstone Canal Company. The engineers estimated the cost of the canal at \$323,319, a figure which later proved to be only one-half that needed. Meetings of the Canal Company to form a corporation were held in Worcester in 1825.

Subscription books for \$400,000 of capital stock were opened in Providence on 27 April 1825; three times the amount was received and the stock sold at a premium. A mad scramble was made for any unsold shares in canal towns along the route. The canal never became a money-making enterprise. Canal stock opened at \$100 per share, but later declined to \$1.25.

The Blackstone Canal opened for business in 1828 from Providence, RI to Worcester, Mass. It had a run of 45 miles and an elevation of 451 ft which it overcame with 49 granite locks. The Blackstone was a masterpiece of workmanship in its day, yet its life span was a short 20 years.

The canal opened on 7 Oct. 1828 with Gen. Carrington, a major stockholder and Pres. of the Canal Co., embarked on a "Canal Cruise" aboard the splendid barge LADY CARRINGTON, a packet boat 70 ft long, painted white with red curtains at the windows. Of the 50 guests aboard, including Gov. Fenner of RI, one man fell overboard and was rescued with a boat hook, soaking wet but calm in spirit. About 20-25 canal boats were operated by the Canal Co.

At the Historical Library in Providence is the Blackstone Canal Map Book, drawn by Resident Engineer Edwin Phelps in 1828. The book shows in detail the location of 49 locks, aqueducts, canal feeders, basin, ponds and rivers. Benjamin Wright made a bad error in using canalized rivers and ponds instead of dug canals for the entire distance. As a result, the freshets in the spring and low water in the ponds and rivers during the summer all raised H-E-L-L with the canal and also water use for mill privileges. At times the mills could not turn a wheel, nor could a barge on the canal go thru a lock. This situation resulted in many fights at the locks if the water was low but usable.



Almost perfectly preserved guard lock to the Blackstone River at Millville, Mass. built 1826-27.



The Blackstone Canal passing through an old factory yard at Lincoln, R.I., looking south.

The engineers recommended a canal 30-32 ft wide at the water line, 18 ft at the bottom and 3½ ft deep. One source of info states that the canal was 45 ft wide and 4 ft deep. From many areas visited, I would estimate the canal to be more than 30 ft wide in Mass. and in RI there are numerous sections where the canal might be even under 30 ft. There were originally 49 locks, but the number of locks mentioned in canal reports in later years indicates that there were 13 more added later, for a total of 62. All locks were built of cut granite, with the exception of the tide lock at Providence which may have been of wood. The lock at that point may not have been a true lock but a type of double stop gate which operated with the tide. Standard lift locks were 10 ft wide, 13 ft high, 6 ft thick with lifts of 6, 8 and 10 ft. Other locks varied from 92 to 126 ft in length and some may have been combines; such a possibility exists at Millbury where there were 9 locks in 1½ miles.

The terrain in the Blackstone Valley from Providence to Worcester is composed of rather high hills on both sides of the canal. The Blackstone and Mohassuck Rivers flow south in the same area and are canalized between dams in some sections. There were 16 situations where barges left or entered the river at slack water. There were many dams along the Blackstone River, some for mill power, which created slackwater pools as well, and barges could change towpaths from one side of the river to the other by rope ferries. A few dams were constructed with a lock built into the dam; these dams were replaced by new structures years ago.

There were at least two private canals that we know of and without doubt several others, their use seemingly for loading or unloading timber and other supplies at the place of business. They also had a special use on Sundays when excursion groups boarded the boats and then cruised into the main canal.

To the best of my knowledge, there was only one aqueduct. It was a five-span structure with four granite piers and 80-90 ft in length, carrying the canal over the Mumford River at Uxbridge, one of its piers being on an island in the river. The wooden trough was the first to go, then granite blocks, though there are still remains to be seen.

The Boston & Worcester RR was completed in 1832 and the Providence & Worcester RR was completed in 1847. Canal business accordingly fell off sharply within only a few years after the opening of the canal; by 1844 barges were not going all the way thru to Worcester. The canal ceased operation on 9 Nov. 1848 with the last paid toll and in 1849 the conjunctive RI-Mass. Charter was withdrawn.

The Canal Today

After 146 years since the canal opened, what would you expect could be left of this Old Waterway in 1974? Many miles of the Blackstone Canal route lie in rough virgin terrain, nearly as it was before 1828. Many sections are not easily reached as there are practically no roads into those areas—only footpaths or use of a canoe. There are quite a few miles of well-watered canal today, some of it excellent, mainly due to factories using the water for power or other purposes several years ago. It has been a common practice for local utility companies to run their lines along the old towpath, and using the towpath as a service road, which has served to keep the towpath open and the canal open for restoration and cleanup. Any trips should be taken in the fall or early spring or winter because of dense foliage.

Quite a substantial amount of canal and towpath remain intact north of Providence. The best coverage is from Lincoln, RI to Millbury, Mass. Lincoln has a society there known as "Canal Inc." They are very active and have done a great deal in their area, along with the Green Acres Program and the Conservation Commission. Since 1871, the Dept. of Natural Resources has been making a study for a 1330-acre park along the uninhabited sections of the Blackstone River in the Towns of Millbury, Grafton, Sutton, Northbridge, Millville, and Blackstone. The Blackstone Canal is a wonderful opportunity to link recreational use with the region's rich historical heritage. The Uxbridge area is the prime area for consideration for the park, as it contains a lovely stretch of the Blackstone Canal and its towpath.

(Concluded on Page Four)

Blackstone Canal

(Concluded)

At Millville, Mass. there is one lock which is nearly 100% perfect, as only two cap stones have moved a foot. This lock stands erect as the day it was built, probably about 1826-27. It was a guard lock to the river. The Dept. of Interior should know of this masterpiece. There is another lock about one mile above the Hartford St. Dam (in Uxbridge) in the Township of Northbridge. This lock is in pretty fair condition; it even has a short section of one quoin post, believe it or not. It is located in a rather remote area. We paddled right into the lock with at least three ft of water under the canoe. A trail also leads to the lock from above the dam. The towpath is easy to follow but somewhat grown up in parts.

Another mile takes us to Plummers lock on Church St. This lock is in very poor condition, nearly all blocks removed. This is the location of Plummers Tavern and Store. (Alden Gould is a very active ACS member—you will be seeing more of his material shortly.)

BLACKSTONE CANAL BOAT??

The Mass. Bicentennial Commission has applied for a grant for a canal boat on the Blackstone Canal. The project would include building an authentic style canal boat and staging trips for passengers and cargo to recreate the commercial and social aspects of the pre-Civil War Canal, presumably in the segment of the Blackstone State Park near Uxbridge. (Alden Gould from Milford Daily News)

ACS SITE MARKERS

Four-inch diamond-shaped metal markers are now available at cost plus postage (50¢ each). The intention is to mark canal sites and structures not already identified. These signs are designed to be placed, with the landowner's permission, at all locks and other canal sites, and on riverbanks and beside trails to direct canoeists and hikers to these sites when desired. Enough space has been left on the sign to write the name of the site, a directional arrow, the address of the local canal society, etc. This can be done with a felt pen (Magic Marker, etc.) or with paint (brush or ball-point tube such as Deco-Write). The Continental Can Co., which uses such signs on their woodlands, suggests that to prevent damage to the tree on which the sign is mounted, two 2" aluminum nails should be used, driven into the tree at an angle for about half their length. As the tree grows, the sign will be pushed outward without deforming the tree, for about 5 years.

It is hoped that these signs will help prevent inadvertent destruction of canal sites. They not only confer some importance to a site, but identify it and provide an ACS address for further information or assistance. An attractive possibility is their use on canoe trails. Frequently canoeists have a difficult time finding canal sites on the bank; a sign prominently displayed on a riverside tree trunk would help make canoeists into canal enthusiasts and encourage the establishment of canoe trails. The markers are small enough so as not to be intrusive, and inexpensive enough to permit replacement when necessary. Those concerned with canal sites are urged to use these markers. Write Bill Trout, 1932 Cinco Robles Dr., Duarte, CA 91010.

JUSTICE DOUGLAS CANAL HIKE



Hikers at Cumberland, Maryland: (l. to r.) Sherry Wood, ACS; Carl Linden, ACS Director and President C & O Canal Assoc.; Nancy Long, ACS and Chairwoman C & O Canal Citizens Advisory Committee; and Ken Rollins, Level Walker C & O Canal Assoc.



Vic Conrad (left) long time Level Walker of the C & O Canal Assoc., and Tom Hahn, ACS President at the start of the hike in Cumberland.

This year the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Association departed from its symbolic day-long stroll to hike the full 184½ miles from Cumberland, MD to Washington, DC, taking 11 days from 17 to 27 April. The Canal Hike each year commemorates the famous hike in 1954 led by Justice Douglas. Twenty years ago serious proposals, supported by the *Washington Post*, were put forward to pave over the canal and make a major highway of it. Justice Douglas, long a champion of the preservation of natural and historic values, challenged the Editors (one of them, ACS Member Robert Estabrook, now of Lakeville, CT) to see for themselves how much the highway would lose. That effort was instrumental in saving the canal from highway status and began the work which culminated in the passage, in 1971, of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Act. The C & O Canal Association was formed during the original hike in 1954 and has organized hikes each year since to promote the C & O Canal. The example set by the C & O Canal Association shows what can be accomplished thru citizen intervention and participation. The C & O Canal, ravaged in the past since its demise in 1924 by floods, its structures weakened and damaged, is sadly in need of restoration and repair, not to mention maintenance. The canal received a savage battering during Tropical Storm Agnes in June 1972, repair of which would cost at least \$34 million.

Sufficient funds are not yet available, but can be if interested citizens let their Congressmen and the Bureau of the Budget know that the preservation of this historic waterway is high in the priority of the things that they think should be accomplished by the Federal Government.

CANAL LITERATURE

"The D & H" Bulletin of the National Railway Historical Society, 38, #2, 1973, pp. 6-15. Photos of D & H Canal & RR. 75¢ to Circulation Manager, The Bulletin, NRHS, 734 St. John St., Philadelphia, PA 19107.

A fine 12 page illustrated article by ACS Director Alexander C. Brown, "The Tomb of a Dream"—The Marshall Tunnel and the Unfinished Portion of the James River and Kanawha Canal, Spring 1973 edition of Virginia Cavalcade. Send 75¢ to Virginia State Library, Richmond, VA 23219.

"Opportunities for Canal Archeology in Virginia" by our own Dr. Bill Trout in the Quarterly Bulletin, Archeological Society of Virginia, Mar. 1973, pp. 141-144. Send \$1.25 to Archeology Society of Virginia, 1946 Lansing Ave., Richmond, VA 23225.

Following are available from Middlesex Canal Association, P. O. Box 333, Billerica, MA 01821:

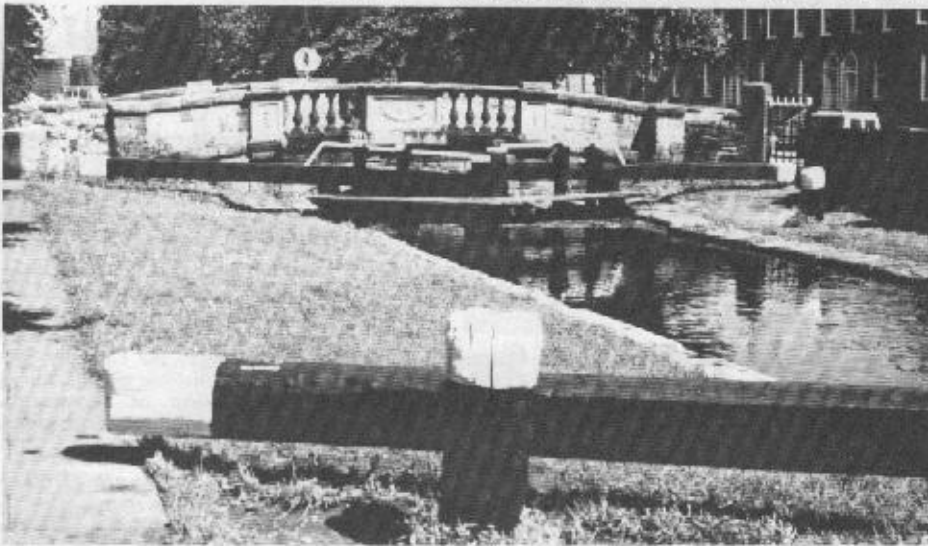
Two-color reprints of a large map of the Middlesex Canal at \$1.00.

Notepaper (20 pieces) of four different canal scenes and envelopes, \$1.00.

Back issues of Towpath Topics, 25¢ each.

(The following query was received from Paul Norton, Dept. of Art, Univ. of Mass., Amherst, Mass. 01002) "Perhaps you can answer a question which arose in a seminar I gave on Historic Amherst. Is the canal at S. Hadley, Mass., built in 1795, the first in the country to have locks? This is the local claim." (Editor: Any comments? My candidate is the three wooden locks (now non-existent) of the Potomac Co.'s Little Falls Skirting Canal at Lock (now Fletchers) Cove on the Potomac River in DC, which were in use in 1795, the year the canal was completed.)

THE CANALS OF IRELAND



Balance-beam gate lock on the Grand Canal in Dublin. In the background, Huband Bridge, built in 1791. (Photo by Herb O'Hanlon.)

(Final part of a two-part article by Herbert O'Hanlon, Aurora, Colorado)

Because of the number of locks in residential Dublin, the canal is sometimes in low cuts, again it is at a level above that of the streets on either side of the waterway. In one instance the canal is flanked by parallel rows of stately trees running through a well-kept parkway.

On its journey out of Dublin, the canal is followed closely by the South Ring Road. Before this road reaches highway T6, many locks and canal-side industries are passed. The industries give the impression that canal traffic is no longer necessary for their economic survival.

Twenty miles from Dublin on highway T6 brings the traveler to the photogenic town of Naas. Highway maps issued by oil companies (sold in Ireland for 12 pence, about 30 cents) do not accurately show some canal features. In some instances canals show where they do not exist. Thanks to Shell Oil Company, the writer spent a frustrating time west of Naas trying to find a canal that did not exist where indicated on the road map. An Ordnance Survey map with a scale of 1:575,000 or 1 inch to 9 miles can be purchased for 20 pence, about 50¢, and is more accurate. However, in trying to locate the phantom canals at Naas, a weed-choked waterway not shown on the Shell map was seen wending its way across the countryside.

Focal point of interest on the Grand Canal is in Robertstown 12 miles from Naas. The canal approaches Robertstown from the east on a long elevated fill that is about 25 feet higher than the surrounding countryside. The town proper is divided by a basin that is now tourist orientated. Two old canal boats moored in the basin had been converted into floating hotels devoted to cruises on the canals. Each boat was self-powered.

Need Vol. 1, No. 2 of *Bottoming Out*, dated sometime in 1956 or 1957. Have an extra copy of Nos. 21-23 for anyone needing same. T. Hahn, Box 638, Glen Echo, MD 20768.

Nearby were several private cabin cruisers whose crews were restocking galleys with provisions from a nearby store. Other dejected crews were sitting out a bit of Ireland's notorious wet weather. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the basin was the clear water contained therein.

The village of Robertstown is built of stone as are most of the buildings of Ireland. Progress, as we know it, has bypassed the town. Thatch-roofed cottages are to be found on the north side of the basin; the south side has old stores and houses that show no sign of modern change. The local pub is appropriately named "The Barge Inn."

About one mile west of Robertstown can be found two lateral canals branching off the Grand Canal. One branch reaches into the countryside north of Kildare where it abruptly ends in the beautiful Irish countryside just north of that community. The other lateral is The Barrow Navigation; the Barrow features about 25 miles of canal to Monasterevin and Athy. From Athy, traffic is maintained in the River Barrow by means of slack-water navigation to New Ross, a seaport on the southern coast of Ireland.

Before leaving Robertstown, mention should be made of a well-kept lock that bears the date 1799. Nearby are two neat lock-tenders' cottages, a scenic stone-arch bridge over the downstream end of the lock, mowed lawns, a multitude of colorful flower beds, painted lock gates and balance beams and a friendly and well-informed lock tender's wife.

Below the lower lock gate is a boat livery that rents cabin cruisers for use on the canal. Several boats of various size were moored awaiting the arrival of potential inland navigators. A few hundred yards west of the livery is a beautiful stone-arch aqueduct that carries the canal over a small stream. One hundred and seventy-four years after its construction it is still water-tight and sturdy; it still performs the original task for which it was built and doing the job well.

From Robertstown, the Grand Canal continues westward through the towns of Edenderry, Daingean, Tullamore and reaches

the Shannon River near Cloghan. The main portion of the Grand does not end at the Shannon, but continues upstream, on the west bank of the river, to Ballinasloe. Traffic to the south uses the river to the lower end of Lough Derg and then to Limerick on the isolated canal section reaching to tidewater.

Fifteen miles from Robertstown by highway brings the canal investigator to Monasterevin on the banks of the River Barrow. Here the lateral from Robertstown enters Monasterevin from the northeast through a large basin that is flanked on one side with a series of huge stone warehouses. Downstream from the basin is a unique drawbridge over the canal. After passing under the drawbridge, the waters of the canal enter a massive stone arch aqueduct over the River Barrow. On the west bank, the canal promptly divides; one branch, badly weed-choked, leads off in the direction of Port Arlington. The other, still in use, turns south in the direction of Athy.

Two other major artificial waterways are to be found in Ireland. These were not visited as they are in Northern Ireland. At the time of our visit, the northern counties were the scene of armed conflict and not the place for a casual tourist to be snooping around. Mention of the two northern canals should be made. The longer of the two is identified by two names, The Ulster Canal and The Union Canal. This waterway on the Ordnance Survey map is listed as abandoned; it connected Lough Neagh, a large lake west of Belfast with Upper and Lower Lough Erne. From the Lower Lough, the canal continued westward into Donegal Bay on the west coast. This was the *third* cross country canal in Ireland. On its journey, the Union, or the Ulster, crossed County Armagh the Ancestral Home of the writer, bisected County Monaghan where it serviced the towns of Monaghan and Clones before entering Upper Lough Erne.

The second, and shorter, canal in Northern Ireland, about 28 miles long, followed the line dividing County Down from County Armagh. The southern end began in the salt waters of Carlingford Lough, entered the city of Newry to the north, progressed on to Poyntz Pass at an elevation of two hundred feet, crossed the pass and journeyed north to Lough Neagh above Portadown. Information on the two northern canals was extremely sketchy, but what visions can be conjured up by the thought of a canal reaching up and over Poyntz Pass!



Drydock on the Royal Canal, Mullingar County, Westmeath, Ireland, August 6, 1973. (Photo by Herb O'Hanlon.)

BUSY DAYS ON OHIO CANALS



The "General Harrison" a replica of a packet boat, on a restored section of the Miami and Erie Canal at Piqua Historical Area.

Canal boat rides are a featured attraction at three areas in Ohio. Passengers who board a canal boat are treated to a placid speed of 4 mph, with time to reflect on a colorful chapter in Ohio's early development.

The *ST. HELENA II*, first authentically built canal boat in the country, has been in operation on the Ohio & Erie Canal at Canal Fulton since June 1970. The 60' freight barge is boarded at the Boat Landing in Village Park, June-Aug., Tues.-Sat. 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30; Sundays 1:30, 2:30 and 4:30. Fare \$1.50 adults, children 3-18, 75¢. To reach Canal Fulton, leave I-77 via Exit 26 and proceed west about 10 miles to Route 21. Canal Museum, Old Canal Days Festival, 12-14 Jul. Stark County Historical Society, P. O. Box 483, Canton, OH 44701 for brochure.

MONTICELLO II was the second replica of a canal boat built in Ohio; it is operated as a part of the restoration of Roscoe Village, a subdivision of Coshocton and a former canal town. The boat runs on a restored section of the Ohio & Erie Canal near Lake

Park, about ½ mile from Roscoe on Route 83; accessible from I-77 and I-70. Departure time is hourly 12-4, Mon.-Fri.; 12-5, Sat.; 1-5 Sun. Roscoe Village (no admission fee) open 10-6 Apr.-Oct.; 11-5 Nov.-Mar. Trolley ride. Overnight accommodations nearby; dining facilities.

The *GENERAL HARRISON* is in its second season of operation along a mile-long restored section of the Miami & Erie Canal. The full-scale replica of a combination cargo-and-passenger barge of the 1840s was built by the Ohio Historical Society for use at the Piqua Historical Area, located immediately north of Piqua on State Route 66 (I-75, Exit 55). In summer, the boat makes seven trips a day from 11-3:30, Tues.-Sat. Museum and historical house are additional features. (Julius Murphy from The Pittsburgh Press)

If you want to keep up with all of the old and new canal news in Ohio, join the Canal Society of Ohio. Single memberships \$8.00, family or organizational \$10.00, includes a subscription to *TOWPATHS*.

NEWS FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM

This is a year when results are being achieved, and are tangible, in the restoration campaign. No fewer than three major re-openings occur this year.

Firstly, the Marple flight of 16 locks, at the junction of the Macclesfield Canal and the Lower Peak Forest Canal were re-opened to traffic on April 1st and make possible the descent to the Lower Peak Forest (and the incredible Marple Aqueduct) and on to the Ashton Canal. There remains only a couple of miles of privately-owned Rochdale Canal to be restored, and then the much prized "Cheshire Ring" of canals will once again be available for round trip cruising over its 90 miles, making this circular route ideal for a one week vacation. One hopes that this all-important "Missing Link" of the Rochdale Canal section will soon be restored; it is vitally important. The Cheshire Ring was last navigated in 1961.

The second major achievement was the re-opening, at the same time, of the beautiful Caldon Canal—an easterly branch line from the Trent and Mersey waterway. This had been closed for about a decade and gives a superb new cruising ground up the otherwise inaccessible River Churnet Valley.

Thirdly, and most excitingly, the Queen Mother will re-open the Upper Avon Navigation at Stratford-upon-Avon on June 1st. This will complete another "ring"—and a large one, taking in the River Severn. ACS Director John Atkinson will be present (having already this year navigated the Lower Peak Forest and the Caldon Canal) to rep-

resent the American Canal Society with his traditional Narrow Boat *MARY JANE*—which forms the subject of a fascinating description by President Tom Hahn of his voyage on that vessel, printed in "Waterways World" in April 1974.

After the Stratford ceremony, John will take the *MARY JANE* to Lincoln in time to represent ACS at the Second Annual Lincoln Water Festival, being opened on June 8th by Prince Richard of Gloucester. Other ACS members may accompany John and his son Michael.

"One sad note" the old Harecastle Tunnel is closed all 1974 for repairs and one hopes it will open again in 1975. (Submitted by Mr. John Atkinson, M.A., Director, ACS and Member, Amenity Advisory Council of the United Kingdom.)

CUMBERLAND & OXFORD CANAL

In 1938, when I was first exposed to the Cumberland and Oxford Canal in Maine, I heard a story that was typical Yankee. It seems there was an individual stranded at the head of Navigation who wanted passage to Portland. Being without funds, he asked a barge captain if he could work his passage down to Portland. The captain agreed and the hapless individual did work for his passage. His job was to drive the team hauling the barge; he did this by walking the entire distance along the towpath! (Herb O'Hanlon)

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