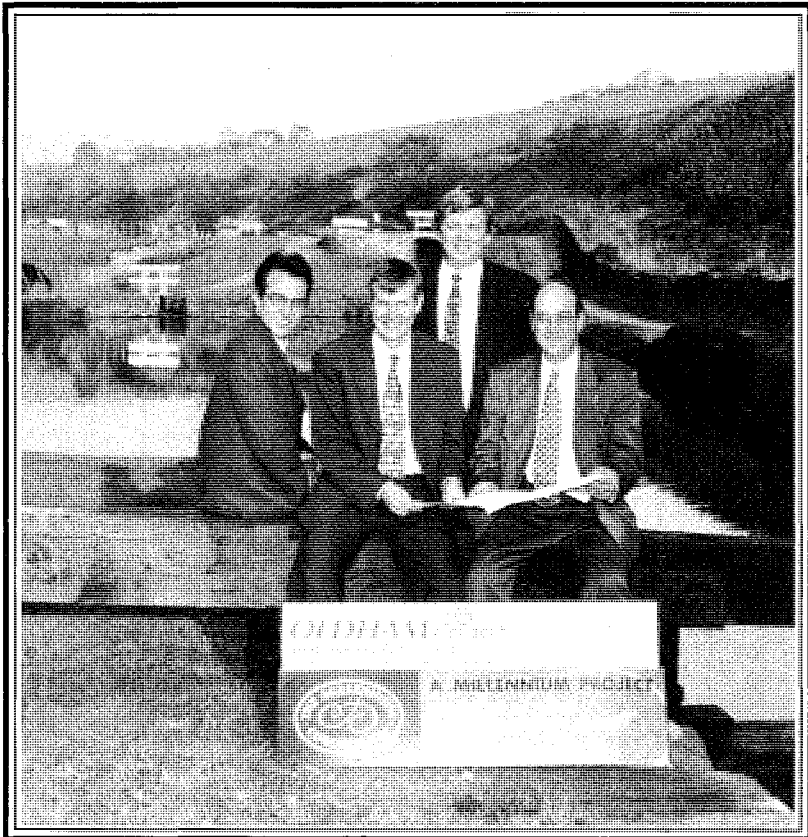




Pennine Link

Issue Number 123 - Winter 1997



Members' Quarterly Journal

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Front Cover: Celebrating the signing of the Millennium Commission Agreement at the Diggle flight

Photo: Oldham Evening Chronicle



The caption for the cover picture is definitely "Who are these four guys?" The supplementary question is "What are they doing on the cover of our Pennine Link?"

Well, they are, from the left (or even from the left, excluding one of them!) Phil Woolas, MP for Oldham East and Saddleworth, Alan Stopher, Project Director for Huddersfield Canal Company (HCC), Coun. John Battye, Leader of Oldham Council and Coun. Jim Greenwood, Chair of Oldham's Education & Leisure Services Committee and a director of HCC.

They were one of the groups celebrating the signing of the Agreement with the Millennium Commission that should really get the financial ball rolling.

The answer to the second question, above, is that they represent part of the new era in restoring our Canal. The work is now basically with HCC, BW and the local authorities to deliver. The Society is largely "not applicable" except in its watch-dog role as one of the restoration partners. It seems that HCS Restoration Ltd. will, after all, get some of the work to do in the short term, but their long-term future is still very undecided.

There has to be a new role for the Society and Council have considered it at their December meeting. We await any outcome with great interest.

If you, dear reader, have any views or observations on these matters, please let me have them. It is the future of *your* Society I am talking about - and I need letters from you!

One good spin-off from the Millennium story is that we have a new, regular contributor to our pages. I am pleased to welcome Alan Stopher to the fold. As Project Director for HCC he is the one person responsible for ensuring that the restoration is completed on time - with a lot of help from a lot of people, of course. Alan will be giving us a quarterly update on restoration work, which will leave Keith Gibson free to write on more general restoration issues - as he does this time.

Pennine Link did not win the Tom Rolt award this year (for the best Society magazine). That honour went to "Cuckoo", the magazine of Chesterfield Canal Society. Inside you will find a sample cover from "Cuckoo", and a typical article.

I congratulate them but still feel "we was robbed!" Plink is nearly twice as long and carries far more articles and more than four times as many pictures. "Cuckoo", in its defence, has a smart modern cover and a more modern internal layout. Consequently,

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



On 28th of October the Directors of the Huddersfield Canal Company signed the agreement with the Millennium Commission. This signing of the Principal and Supplementary Agreement sets in

train the legal process for completing the draft of agreements necessary to draw down the monies for the restoration.

New work has commenced with the partial demolition of a shed in the Sellers complex in Huddersfield to allow the new channel to be cut and we expect further projects to commence shortly, such as the dredging of the Upper mill section to be undertaken by HCS Restoration. In the next issue of Pennine Link you will read of a detailed programme of works and current progress, including the part to be played by the Society and Volunteers in The Standedge Experience.

One of our members and a good friend to the Society died in late November after a long illness - Mr. Hugh Wainwright. Hugh was a transport enthusiast but he was

particularly fond of canals and railways. He was a modeller - N gauge railways - such a small gauge for a larger than life character. He owned his own narrowboat and was looking forward to cruising through Standedge Tunnel. His contribution to the Society was enormous at a stage when the Society was short of funds and was looking for private sector support. Hugh purchased a narrowboat and leased it to the Society - Benjamin Outram. This boat plied the Upper mill stretch and its operation gave a tremendous boost to the campaign. He also paid for the set of lock gates at Lime Kiln Lock. So, he was with us from the start, and I am very sorry that he will not be with us when our task is completed. We send our deepest sympathy to his wife, Judith, and his two sons, Michael and David.

You will read in this issue a contribution from Alan Stopher, Project Director of the Huddersfield Canal Company. This will be the first of a regular feature by Alan to give you the Company perspective and our journal will continue to be members' main source of news of progress.

May I, on behalf of the Council of Management, wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. We all look forward to the next three or so years with excited anticipation.

David Sumner



cont'd from page 3

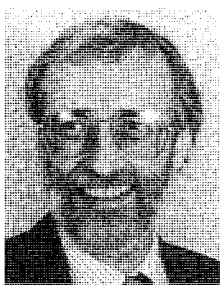
always aiming to improve, we have changed the internal style somewhat this time and are having thoughts about a new cover in 1998. Times they are a-changing and so should Pennine Link, in the drive to the Millennium.

One comment has been that there is too much 'outside' material compared with the amount of 'Society' or 'Huddersfield Narrow' material. That's probably true and there are two ways round it. I could reduce the size of the magazine - which I consider a retrograde step, OR - you could get your

pens out! I'm still and always open for Boat Crew News, East Side and West Side activities, festival preparation updates, bits of gossip (no dirty linen washing, please!), odd odes, relevant Press articles from papers other than the Oldham Evening Chronicle (to which, eternal thanks!) - need I go on?

It only remains for me to wish you all the very best for the forthcoming season of goodwill from all at Pennine Link - a very Happy Christmas and a New Year full of the sound of diggers and hammers and concrete mixers and, yes, Bob, this is where you can put the holly leaves and berries!

RESTORATION NEWS



As is reported elsewhere in this issue the all important agreement with the Millennium Commission has been signed. But before the restoration machine can move into gear again the

agreements between the partners and the operating and maintenance agreement with the Millennium Commission also have to be entered into. So my article looks further afield.

On 27th June, Viscountess Knollys, Chair of the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council (IWAAC) presented the Council's report "Britain's Waterways, An Undervalued Asset" to the government. IWAAC had been set up in 1968 as a statutory body advising British Waterways and the government on general amenity matters concerning Britain's waterways. Since 1993 the Council's role has been more focused on providing strategic advice to government. The IWAAC report says that:

".....In its inland waterways system, Britain has a national treasure, an asset of great historic and environmental value and a resource for a whole variety of beneficial uses".

The report concludes that there is a need for a higher status and profile for the inland waterway system, and a need to resource it more effectively. The waterway system's long-term value to the nation and for local communities needs to be preserved by shaping essential development and uses to conservation - based objectives achieved through partnership and management.

The recommendations of the report broadly follow an earlier consultation document. They are in line with the views I then expressed on behalf of the Society. The two most immediately significant recommendations are:

* The existing 1968 Transport Act based British Waterways now reflects neither what British Waterways is nor what it is trying to do. Government and British Waterways should consider how best to replace it by a new national body. This should have responsibility for the long term conservation, maintenance, regulation, sustainable management, development and promotion of BW waterways, and other waterways. These other waterways (river navigations managed by the Environment Agency, the Broads, and the numerous mainly coastal waterways managed by ancient bodies of commissioners) could with advantage be transferred to BW or its successor.
(Recommendation 1.2)

* The government has instigated work to identify the main aims and priorities for inland waterways. This is being carried out by British Waterways and the Environment Agency in consultation with the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities and IWAAC. IWAAC recommend that this work be developed within the next twelve months into an integrated 3-5 years strategic policy framework that has realistic targets.
(Recommendation 2.1)

IWAAC recommend that the government should issue a Green Paper to allow for full consultation as soon as practicable, and are, themselves, studying priorities for restoration of abandoned and derelict waterways.

British Waterways initial response to this was given at a presentation to waterway user groups on 2nd October. To improve the current management of repair work, British Waterways intend in the short-term to apply to have the whole or parts of 16 currently "Remainder Waterways" upgraded to "Cruiseway" standard. (Remainder Waterways being those which the 1968 Transport Act required to be legally neglected apart from very minimal amenity and safety maintenance.) This would be followed by similar applications to upgrade the Huddersfield Narrow, the Chesterfield,

the Forth and Clyde and the Union Canals when current restoration projects are complete.

British Waterways Managers believe that they are hampered by their inability to borrow for business development. They believe this could increase their inadequate funds to deal with the long standing backlog of maintenance. As long as they remain a nationalised industry these financial problems will remain. Privatisation has been ruled out by the Government because many canals would have to close. The only option which British Waterways can devise to resolve their difficulties is conversion to a charitable trust similar to The National Trust (or HCS!). They say that this would:

- * give more commercial freedom;
- * provide funds needed for the maintenance backlog and the future security of the waterways;
- * maintain and protect the public interest;
- * reduce costs to Government.

British Waterways are consulting national user groups on this proposal. Whilst welcoming the radical initiative to overhaul the way in which the waterways are managed, the Inland Waterways Association have concerns that need to be addressed before the proposals receive their full support. In particular, they believe that:

- * reorganisation should not be too hasty to give time to get the details right;
- * there should be no loss of opportunities for the reintroduction of freight carriage by water;
- * all navigable remainder waterways should be upgraded to Cruiseway status;
- * there must be appropriate safeguards to prevent undue commercial exploitation;
- * the principle of "inalienability" as applied to The National Trust's property and the "Right of Navigation" should be established by legislation'
- * the new body must be properly accountable;

* legislation must protect the built heritage and recreation interests besides nature conservation.

How this will affect us remains to be seen.

At the last Northern Canals Association meeting one delegate suggested that the present situation was better in that government funding provided the best assurance against catastrophic failures. In theory that may be true, but in reality, one has only to think of situations such as the Anderton Lift to appreciate that the government does not have a bottomless purse.

Talking of Northern Canals, I should report that I have been appointed Chairman for a third three year period. Meetings have this year been held at our Transhipment Warehouse in March, at Melbourne (on the Pocklington Canal) in June, and at Foxton in October. The March meeting was a general discussion about restoration progress being made by the constituent restoration societies. In June we had a speaker from English Nature, and in October a speaker from English Heritage. Although these meetings were originally supposed to be for the policy and restoration people of restoration societies north of Birmingham, other societies have opened the attendance list to include active volunteers. So, if you are an active volunteer, are interested in attending, and are willing to pay the £8-9 charge for the day, let Frank Smith know. I haven't asked him, but I think we can persuade him to organise a rota!

One item of concern at the last Northern Canals meeting was the decision to allow the construction of the privately financed Birmingham Northern Relief Road without any provision being made for navigable crossing of the Wyrley and Essington Canal and the Hatherton Branch of the Staff and Worcester Canal. Restoration of this abandoned waterway link has begun by the Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Trust. Complete restoration would provide a vital missing link in the national waterway network to allow boats and other canal users to pass in and out of the Birmingham Canal Navigation system to the north east and north west, thus revitalising a

significant part of the canal network. The Inspector at the Public Inquiry recommended that the road be built, but that navigable crossings be provided as required by the District Council's Local Plan. The decision letter issued on behalf of John Prescott, the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, however, said that he did not consider the substantial expenditure required to provide these canal bridges to be justified as the Canal Trust's work was a long term project. The Trust suspects that John Prescott had no hand in this, and neither did the "Environment" or "Regions" staff at his new combined super Ministry. It certainly smacks of the blinkered road building ethos of the old Department of Transport. In my view it is absurd nonsense. Turned on its head the same argument would justify no protection being given to proposed road alignments as new roads are notoriously long term

projects - more so than canal restoration in some cases!

The Lichfield and Hatherton Canals Trust is seeking political support to have this decision changed, and hope to meet Mr Prescott. The Trust hopes that, as with the earlier decision not to build a navigable culvert at Latton on the alignment of the Thames and Severn Canal, public pressure will alert government of a decision being made in its name which to my mind lacks any sense of natural justice or common sense. (The Latton decision was reversed when Mr Prescott was made aware of the situation.) The Trust hopes that as many people as possible will write to their MP, or to the Secretary of State. If you write, the Trust would appreciate a copy of your letter sent *c/o Phil Sharpe, 34 Old Eaton Road, Rugely, WS15 2EZ.*

Keith Gibson

A Piece Of History

In the late 70's a rally of boats took place on the Rochdale Canal to persuade the Ministry of Transport to provide navigable culverts through the M66 in Hollinwood. The flotilla sailed from Hollinwood Avenue to Failsworth and back. Huddersfield Canal Society are centre picture with 'Stan', Alwyn Ogborn on board; the white cruiser (left) is 'Mo's Boys' owned by Syd and Maureen Worthington. The rally was successful; the M66 is about to be completed - with a navigable culvert.



Photo: Collection of A. Ogborn

THE HUDDERSFIELD CANAL COMPANY

In this the first of what is intended as a series of articles we hear from Alan Stopher, Project Director of the newly formed Huddersfield Canal Company.

As you might guess, it's been a hectic first few months. Having followed the progress of restoration passively for around 13 years I already had a reasonable appreciation of the geography of the canal and the extent of the blockages but the complexities of the legal and organisational structures have taken some learning.

One of the pleasures of starting anew is meeting and getting to know the team of people already involved in the project. Without exception, everyone has been patient and helpful in bringing me up to speed on the scheme and supportive at every new stage of the process. It really gives one a boost to be working with such a committed group of colleagues and great satisfaction to be leading a project with such whole-hearted support both within the partnership and from the general public throughout its length. Inevitably there are concerns amongst residents and business people in some quarters but it is a tribute to the Society and their work over the last twenty years that practically everyone believes that through navigation is now a certainty. It will be one of my primary aims for the restoration work to go ahead with the minimum of disruption to local people and with effective consultation at each stage.

Although to the outside world little seems to have been happening since the successful bid was announced, much has been done behind the scenes to make the 'Impossible Restoration' a reality. In the months since December 1996, when the Millennium Commission made its offer of grant, a lot of detailed work has gone into the financial, technical and legal aspects of the project. Progress was well in hand on these aspects before I took up my post. Roger Anderson of Tameside MBC did an excellent job combining his normal workload with leading the project through a difficult phase. The Company was formed in May and the Board,



drawn from the five partners, Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside Councils, British Waterways and Huddersfield Canal Society, has since met monthly to set the direction of the Company and oversee and give its approval to the organisational arrangements which are so important for a successful project.

The Executive Group of the Company, made up of Officers of the partners chiefly from planning and engineering disciplines, has continued to review all the schemes which make up the Millennium Project to ensure that documentation is as up-to-date as possible. I have been working closely with the legal team at Tameside MBC dealing with the complexities of the various legal agreements, debentures, collateral warranties, and certificates of title which are necessary to give the requisite comfort to the main funding agency. This culminated in the signing of the agreement with the Millennium Commission by our Board members on 28th October 1997. With this milestone achieved, attention will now turn to finalising the commitment made by English Partnerships to provide £12m of match-funding.

Agreements are being formulated to enable the partner organisations to manage and have day-to-day control of the individual schemes which make up the project on behalf of the Canal Company. The bulk of the schemes concern work on the 'canal track' and, in view of their subsequent operation and maintenance responsibilities, it falls to British Waterways to manage these. Schemes involving highway bridges and other municipal works will by the same token be managed by the local authorities concerned. Most of the detailed design and supervision work will be done by the engineering departments of the three local authority partners. It sounds complicated and believe me it is. Even partnerships have to have clear cut rules about who does what. This helps to avoid confusion and omissions and ensures that the project aims are achieved.

As for progress on the real work of restoration, each of the 20 schemes is at a different stage. As

I write, a tender has been received from HCS Restoration for the restoration work between Lock 22 and Wool Road and it looks likely that this will be the first main contract to start on the Millennium Commission-funded project. Design work for Mark Bottoms, Holme Mill and Lees Mill Bridges in Kirklees is well advanced and tenders should be sought within the next two months.

Aside from the mainstream engineering work, separate groups have been set up under my chairmanship to co-ordinate work on the Standedge Experience and Marketing of the canal. Drawn from the Canal Society, British Waterways and Kirklees Council, the team dealing with Standedge Experience is reviewing the business plan to ensure that the 'Jewel in the Crown' is financially robust. It is also examining alternative approaches to the legal structure for the organisation which will establish and run the visitor/heritage centre. Everyone involved is acutely aware that we have a unique site at Tunnel End which needs to be developed with care and attention to detail to provide a quality 'Experience' which the public will want to visit but will ensure that the special qualities of its setting are retained.

The new Marketing Group has just been set up and aims to promote the use of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and provide information on the activities of the Huddersfield Canal Company. Each of the partners sends a representative and the resulting team has a useful blend of those with long and detailed involvement and those who are new to the project.

To date most of the meetings of the aforementioned groups have been held at the Huddersfield Canal Society's Offices in Ashton-under-Lyne. It would be remiss of me not to place on record the Company's thanks for the use of these excellent facilities, Steve Whitby's free-flowing coffee pot, the biscuits, Frank Smith's efficient work with the pen, and Paula McLoughlin's work on the word processor.

Well that's a quick run down on recent progress. I've covered rather a lot of ground in this first article and if I've missed any important aspects I apologise to those concerned. In any event I hope to have opportunities to correct any glaring omissions and add to the unfolding drama in later issues.

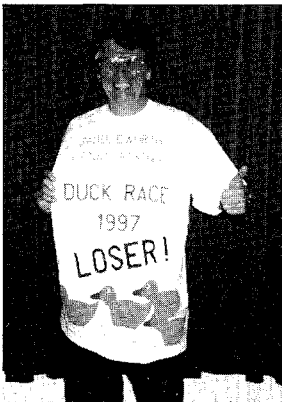
Alan Stopher

DUCK 'TAILPIECE'

The last duck to finish the race at this year's Saddleworth Canal Festival was No. 249, sponsored by member David Needham.

David, a former Chairman of Saddleworth Parish Council, is a founder and chairman of the Saddleworth Village Olympics, an annual competition for schoolchildren from the Saddleworth area.

A disconsolate David, on



being told that his duck had come last in the race said, in true Olympic spirit, *"taking part was just as important as winning."*

He cheered up however when he was

presented with a personalised T-shirt, specially crafted by John Young. This brought a smile to his face and a promise that he would sponsor two ducks next year!



John Young

Photos: Carol Needham

Just for a change, this year, Pennine Link did not win the Tom Rolt Award, presented by IWA and Canal and Riverboat for the best canal society magazine.

The honour went instead to CUCKOO, the magazine of the Chesterfield Canal Society. Our congratulations go to them and, to give you a taste of the quality of the magazine, we are reproducing the cover of the Autumn 1997 issue and an article by Christine Richardson, the Society's historical researcher.

1997 is not only the 21st Birthday of the Chesterfield society, it is also the 150th anniversary of the re-opening of the House of Lords, following the disastrous fire of 1834. The connection is that limestone used in the rebuilding came by water from the quarry at North Anston via the Chesterfield Canal, the River Trent and by sea to the Thames - being transhipped on the way.

The double anniversary was celebrated by taking a cubic foot of dressed limestone, by canal, from Worksop to the Black Rod Steps at Westminster. The stone, with a suitable inscription will be used when the stonework of the Royal Court, one of the inner courts of the Palace of Westminster, is restored in 1999.

The article below, by Christine Richardson, who is an author by profession, describes the part the canal played in rebuilding the Palace of Westminster.

Stone for the Houses of Parliament

by Christine Richardson

The Houses of Parliament is one of the world's most famous buildings, and the Chesterfield Canal played an important part in its creation.

In 1834 the new Victorian age was blighted by a tremendous fire that ruined the old Houses of Parliament, the next day

only the ancient Westminster Hall stood amongst the ashes. With true Victorian confidence it was decided that the opportunity must be taken to create a worthy home for the Government of the world's most powerful nation. The architect was Charles Barry and his first concern was the selection of the stone to be used.

By March the following year (1839) Barry and his men had checked 103 quarries throughout the country; Scotland, south Wales, Devon, Bath, and all points in between. They had tested 2" stone cubes from each location for water absorption, grain disintegration, reaction to heat. They also considered the transport situation and had noted the possible use of several waterways the Grantham, Kennet & Avon, Aire & Calder, Cromford, the Union Canal to Edinburgh, the Don Navigation, Trent & Mersey, Forth & Clyde, and the Grand Union Canal.

But the most favoured stone was from Bolsover Moor, eight miles from Worksop and the Chesterfield Canal. It was then discovered that the same stone with a more uniform colour, and thick beds, plus easier working was available at a quarry in North Anston in Yorkshire. The quarry was even nearer to the Chesterfield Canal, only two miles away and mostly downhill. Full sized trial blocks were sent by canal from Anston to Westminster during the summer of 1839 so that builders could try the stone to be worked.

Full scale deliveries started in early 1840 but the bulk of the stone was moved along the Chesterfield Canal in 1841-44. The scale of the boat transport required during those years was an average of 400 tons per month, 4800 tons or 200,000 cubic feet per annum. Extreme care had to be taken in handling the blocks; this was not stone to be broken up for roads, this was to build, embellish and grace the world's greatest seat of Government. At the quarry the blocks deemed satisfactory were loaded onto "drugs"; low wooden platforms, the

sturdy wheels of which were 18ins in diameter and 9ins wide. Each was pulled by eight horses the two miles to Dog Kennels wharf, on the canal's summit pound at Kiveton Park. Here the stone was sawn into accurate blocks before being loaded on to the narrowboats.

Unfortunately the Canal Company records for that period have not survived and the number of boats used is not known but it's likely that the volume of work would necessitate some being built especially for the task. From Dog Kennels wharf the narrowboats carried the valuable stone more than 30 miles, through Worksop and Retford to West Stockwith on the tidal section of the River Trent. Here, in the canal basin, the cargo was transhipped into Trent sloops for the journey to Westminster. Going down the Humber and the coast to the Thames was not unusual for Trent sloops. They could work well to windward and their rig was efficient enough for them to make coastal passages.

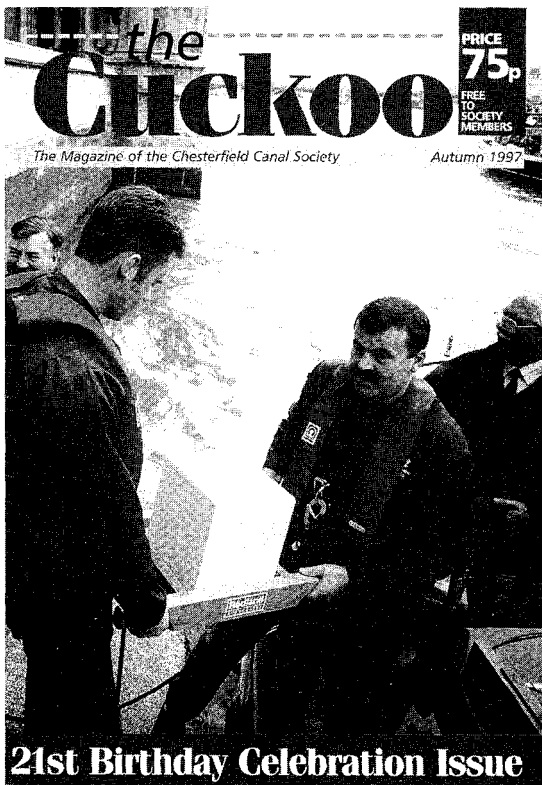
Throughout the five years of this traffic the average time from the stone leaving the quarry in Yorkshire to reaching the building site at Westminster was two weeks. A fine advertisement for 19th century water transport.

The construction work at Westminster was very rapid considering the complexity of the building we know today. Unfortunately, in spite of the care taken with selection, as early as 1861 a Parliamentary Committee was investigating the decay of the new building's stonework, a second Committee looked at the same problem in 1926. From the evidence given on those occasions it seems that the problem was mainly with the ornate nature of the carved stone used to embellish the exterior. Excessive workmanship and carving had made some parts of the stonework so delicate that they were "quite unfit and dangerous .. particularly in the acid-polluted atmosphere of a modern city." Also some stone, especially that used

around the windows, had been laid with the natural vents vertical and as a result the weather had eroded it quite easily.

When looking at the Houses of Parliament today it is impossible to know which stone was carried along the Chesterfield Canal and which is a later replacement, even the Parliamentary Works Directorate responsible for maintaining the building cannot answer that question. Nevertheless, the majority of the newly-cleaned stone at Westminster was probably brought to the site by water transport.

Today the quarry at North Anston is a public park; and on the Chesterfield Canal the area of the wharf at Kiveton Park is still known as Dog Kennels, but there is no evidence of the historic cargo once loaded there.



The attractive front cover of CUCKOO showing the cubic foot of limestone being off-loaded at Black Rod Steps, Westminster.

The Huddersfield Canals on Postcards

Part 2 - Types of Postcard

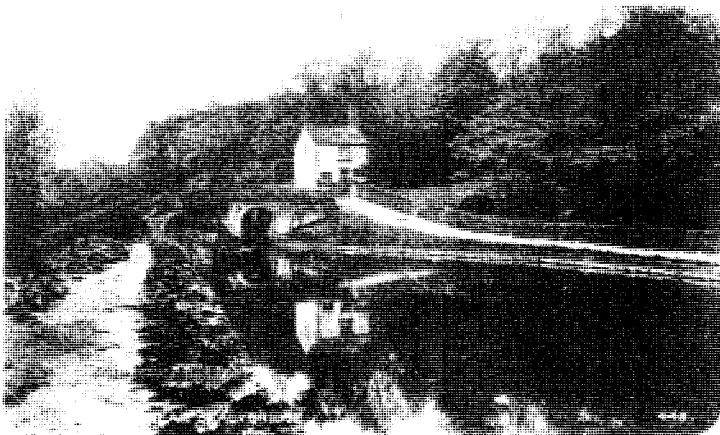
In no way is this intended to be the “anorak” guide to postcards. However, it may be useful to know that picture postcards come in a number of types; the most common finishes being colour, black and white or sepia. These might have been professionally printed in large “runs” or, in the case of sepia or black and white cards, be the rarer “real photographic” type, often produced in small numbers by local photographers. As the name suggests, these are a proper photographic print made directly from the negative or plate onto paper with a postcard back. Real photographic cards can command high prices today, depending on the subject matter, due mainly to their rarity and the fact that the views were often not covered

by the larger producers.

The most frequently illustrated place on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal is the old lockhouse adjacent to Lock 10W, and examples of most types of card exist. The site is variously described as being in Mossley, Millbrook, Stalybridge or Staley probably according to the needs of the seller. Versions were published by local publishers in Mossley, Stalybridge,



LOCK HOUSE, STALYBRIDGE.



Above Left: Lock House, Stalybridge

A sepia card by J.R. Tomlinson of Stalybridge.

Although posted in 1914, this shows the house and bridge in a very good state of repair and may well be a much older photograph.

Left: Lock House Near Stalybridge

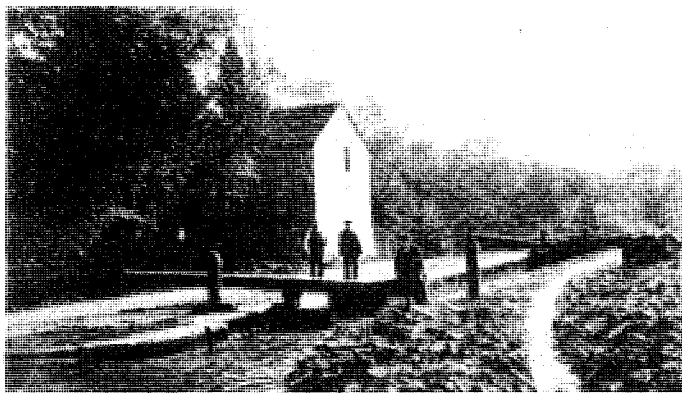
A card by Chas. Wilkinson of Manchester and posted in 1939, this is certainly a reasonable date, given the very ‘seedy’ condition of the house etc. Of interest is the punt-like boat with some kind of structure on it moored on the left. A very similar boat appears on a card of the Broad Canal.

Ashton, and Hyde, by regional publishers in Oldham and Manchester, and even by a major national firm such as Valentine.

Most of the views look up the canal from somewhere near Lock 9W, though there are a couple from below that Lock with the house in the distance and one example only which is taken looking from the opposite direction along Lock 10W itself. The house appears on “multi-view” cards of Mossley and there is even a “Lock House in Winter” card which appears to be part of a small set of the lockhouse! To date, I have seen at least 20 different

versions, though I suspect there are more. The earliest example was posted in 1903 and the latest in 1939, though only about half were used, making many hard to date.

One of the interesting aspects of having a number of cards of the same location is that it is possible to chart the decline of the lock house and of the canal. In what is probably the oldest view in terms of the date when the picture was taken, the house and the area around the bridge arch are carefully whitewashed. In later views, under close inspection, the words “Lock House” and some other writing appear on either side of the bridge, suggesting that the Lock Keeper may have been exploiting the site as a tourist attraction; probably a cafe. After this, the whitening of the bridge, in particular, becomes more and more worn and in the latest view I have, posted on the eve of WW2, the house too looks very careworn.



The Lock House.

Trevor Ellis

Above Right: The Lock House

A unique view looking in the opposite direction and published by 'A.H. & S.' of Ashton.

The vegetation on the lockside hasn't changed much down the years!

Right: Lock House Mossley

A slightly different view again, looking from the offside below Lock 9W.

The publisher is not known, although there are other cards of a similar style, including one of Scout Tunnel. This and the change of title might suggest a Mossley firm.



PHOTO COMPETITION - RESULTS

There were nine entries from members but, unfortunately, none in the Junior Section. Of the 36 photographs only 6 were of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the rest were in the "Other Waterways" category.

The judge, Geoffrey Hope, past-President of Oldham Photographic Society, says *"Thank you for the opportunity for me to see and indeed judge the entry for your Photographic Competition. I think I understand your requirements and rules! I will obviously not be as critical of the technical points of the photographs as I would be when judging a Photographic Club entry, but I think some of your entries show a definite flair when it comes to using a camera. I have tried to put the canal, its atmosphere and character foremost in my deliberations. One regret is that none of the photographs is of Huddersfield Narrow Canal - West side. It is so photogenic.*

"Despite my good intentions I was so impressed by some of the entries I was forced to be more critical than I meant to be in order to separate them.

"I hope that I have not upset anyone, for that is the last thing I would wish to do, but sometimes a little constructive criticism can get your picture taking a bit nearer to being a winner.

"Thanks again for the pleasure of seeing and judging your members' prints"

Mr. Hope has written individual comments on all 36 photographs which will be sent to the photographers when the pictures are returned.

RESULTS

Category A: Huddersfield Narrow Canal

FIRST: John Goodall, Marsden
"Cellar's Clough Mill"

RUNNER-UP: Alan Crosby, Ashton-u-Lyne
"Near Marsden"

In the second category additional awards of "highly commended" and "off-beat or humorous" have been given in view of the high number and quality of the entries.

Category B: Other British Waterways

FIRST: Anne Wright, Dobcross
"Lancaster Canal"

RUNNER-UP: Shirley Rowbottom, Hyde
"Reflections"

HIGHLY COMMENDED:
Alan Crosby, Ashton-U-Lyne
"Chirk Aqueduct"

OFF-BEAT: Alwyn Ogborn, Dukinfield
"Waiting for Bread"

Other entrants were from as far afield as Sheffield and Lechlade (Glos) and we thank them all for their efforts.

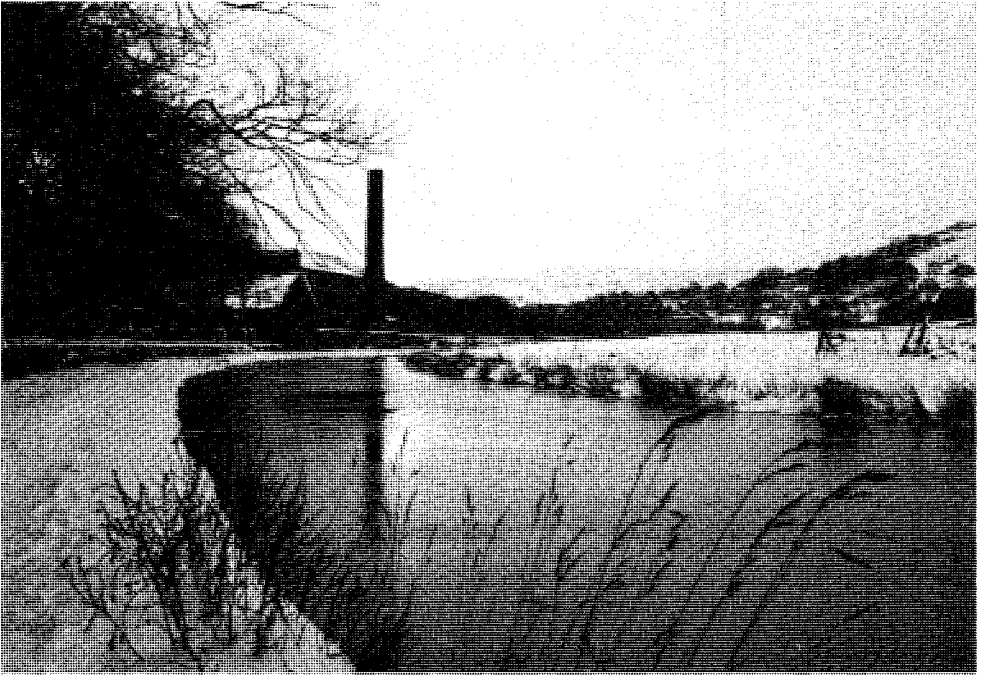
It will not have escaped your notice that "The Wife" has won in Category B and my penance for allowing that to happen will be having to live with her! She is going to be insufferable after reading the judge's comments - and she will *not* get the Dungebooth Lock print, she already has the original! Needless to say, she is still in a state of shock.

I would like to add my personal thanks to Geoffrey Hope, (or 'Bob' as he was at school!) for his efforts on our behalf. Thanks, Geoff!

Just to remind you - all winning photographs are re-printed (unfortunately in black and white) on the following pages and other prizes are:-

1. A signed certificate
2. Winners: A print of Dungebooth Lock and a set of "Restoring a Narrow Canal" cartoon prints in colour
3. Runners-Up, Highly Commended and Off -Beat: A print of Dungebooth Lock

--ooOoo--



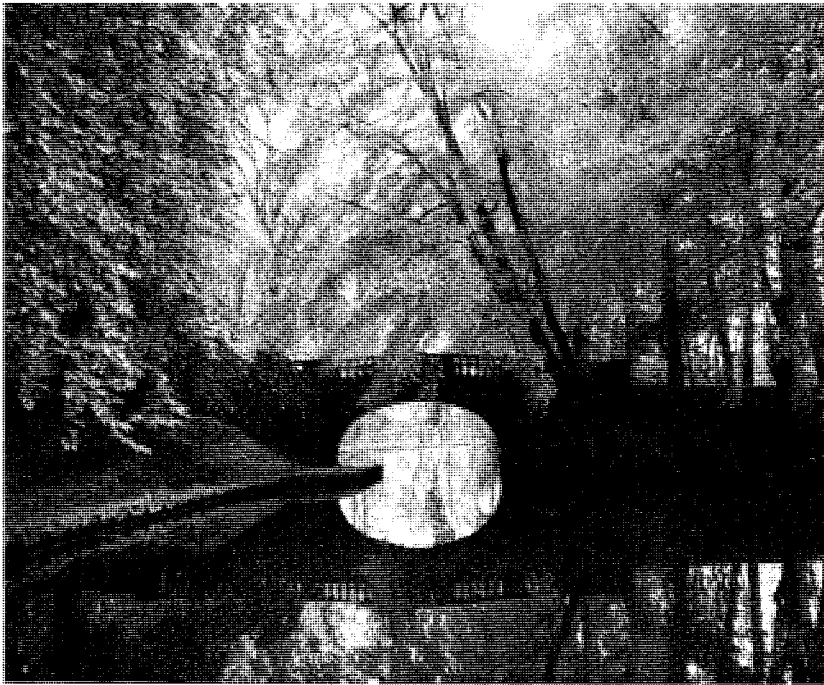
Category A: Winner (Cellar's Clough Mill)

"Very pictorial! Very well seen and taken. Sun carefully positioned to create wonderful effect and reflections. Grass in foreground again very well used. Excellent!"

Below: Runner-Up (Near Marsden)

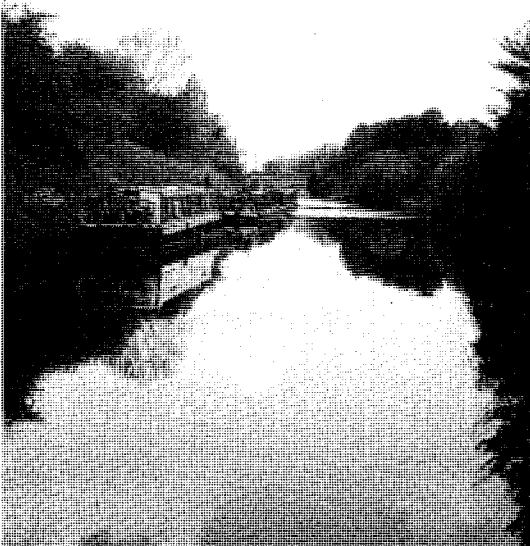
"Very pleasant picture. Sweep of towpath takes one into the picture and leads the eye to the lock in the distance. Well exposed and good colour."





Category B: Winner (Lancaster Canal)

"Beautifully composed and taken. Exceptionally sharp and would stand to be enlarged to make a good framed print. Exposure is perfect. Fulfils the necessary canal theme requirement. The entrant who submitted this has an artistic flair and is a natural photographer".



Left: Runner-Up (Reflections)

"Super picture. Very little comment needed here. Perfect exposure. Nice and sharp focus and very well composed and an easy to live with picture."



Above: Highly Commended (Chirk Aqueduct)

"Despite the flat lighting of a dull day this picture is an excellent effort. I like very much the amount of information of this famous aqueduct that this picture portrays. It shows its

height, length and construction very well and the positioning of the people and the boat give perfect scale to the picture. Very well done."



**Left: Off-Beat
(Waiting for Bread)**

"An excellent attempt at a potentially difficult picture. The duck's head and particularly the eye are nice and sharp and the lovely colour of the feathers is well recorded. (How many loaves did it take to bribe him to pose?)"

THE DISTAFF SIDE

CHANGING PLACES... CHANGING LIVES...

Leeds & Liverpool Canal
2nd - 25th May, 1997

The idea first came into the brain and straight out of the mouth in mid-sentence. After a rather unpleasant experience with a crowd of youngsters at Kirkstall Forge Three-Rise Locks on the outskirts of Leeds, the local Waterways Manager was explaining to me the impossibility of BW staff having time to go into schools in the way that Police and Fire personnel do, when I heard myself saying 'but boaters could!'

A couple of months later my husband Paul and I met David Gray, then Diocesan Evangelist in Blackburn, and discovered that, although not a boater, he was keen to use the length of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, which cuts across the Anglican Diocese of Blackburn, as a linear venue for Christian mission. One thing led to another and the beginning of May 1997 saw our home, narrowboat *Veritas*, tied up opposite Parbold windmill, close behind the 50-year-old wide (or short) boat *Kennet*, courtesy of BW Wigan Office. There was also a small assortment of Christians, mostly non-boaters but keen to learn, ready for an unusual adventure.

Kennet was soon equipped with an exhibition to interest both children and

adults; a mixture of information about the Canal and about famous and not-so-famous (i.e. team members) Christians. Of the former, those who interested the young people most were the many sportsmen and women who gladly acknowledge their faith.

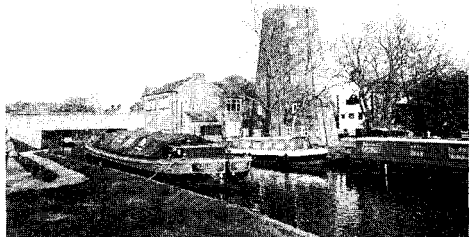
There is a wealth of published material about the Leeds & Liverpool, including the excellent history by Mike Clarke*, and we produced fact-sheets, maps and diagrams of all kinds, gleaned from these sources. Our main work was with school-children, through the many church schools in the Diocese which, as far as the canal is concerned, stretches from Parbold in the west to Foulridge in the east but unfortunately excludes Wigan. Still, with about 30 school assemblies in the 3 weeks we had plenty to do. In many of the primary schools we also took classes and many visits were made to *Kennet* by classes and by church groups.

Kneelers were provided to sit on, and we shared out the talks on safety, history, wildlife and leisure pursuits, as well as our personal experience of faith, among team members. Quizzes were compiled on specific stretches of canal and, later, one on the actual exhibition.

Our reception in all the schools was excellent and several classes had been working on canal-related projects prior to our arrival, so a lot of interest was engendered.



The Wilson's boat *Veritas* at Parbold Bridge.



British Waterways short boat *Kennet* at Parbold.

Two classic quotes from reception classes might be appreciated. One small boy in Parbold, on hearing that horses towing boats sometimes fell in the water, exclaimed: 'Oh, did they? I thought horses could swim!' But a small girl in Colne had a problem about the towing itself: 'But how could the horses swim?'...?? It just shows one cannot be too careful to explain exactly what one means.

Most, if not all, of the classes who came to see the boats walked a considerable distance from their schools. The one from Barrowford was particularly appreciative, as *Kennet* had moored part-way up the flight for their visit and, although they had been working very hard on their project, were not quite clear about how locks worked. When *Veritas* came toiling up the wide locks (easy for a wide boat!), there was a well ordered class lined up on the lock-side to see the whole operation! One team member, Roland, had only been with us a couple of days and was manfully wielding the bow rope. When his friendly face appeared to view from the depths of the lock there was a cheer!

School visits, and even church services, were greatly helped by two important team members, who had been lovingly knitted for us by two ladies in Leicester - Rosie and Jim! What a reception they got, especially when they had an impromptu dialogue about their adventures on the Leeds & Liverpool, or a discussion about the great day of the final opening of the Canal in 1816, when they had watched the procession of boats passing through their village - a bit of



Rosie and Jim making friends on board community boat *Rose of Parbold*, hired for a day by the local church.

artistic license here, and apologies to John, but quite effective.

As far as education of children living near canals goes, it was a drop in the ocean but, as Mother Theresa once told a sceptical journalist, 'The ocean is made up of drops.'

Winifred Wilson
HCS Member, Lechlade, Glos.

*Clarke, M. 1990. *The Leeds and Liverpool Canal: a History and Guide*. Carnegie Press, Preston.

In the next issue Winifred takes over from *The Wife's Tale* for a spell and tells us of a trip in 'Veritas' from the Lower Oxford Canal to Huddersfield.



A school class from Chorley making good use of the exhibition in *Kennet's* hold.



The crowds gather for the final 'Songs of Praise' at Foulridge Wharf. Photos P & W Wilson

CANAL WALKS 2 & 3 by John Harwood

WALK 2 - BARTON AQUEDUCT

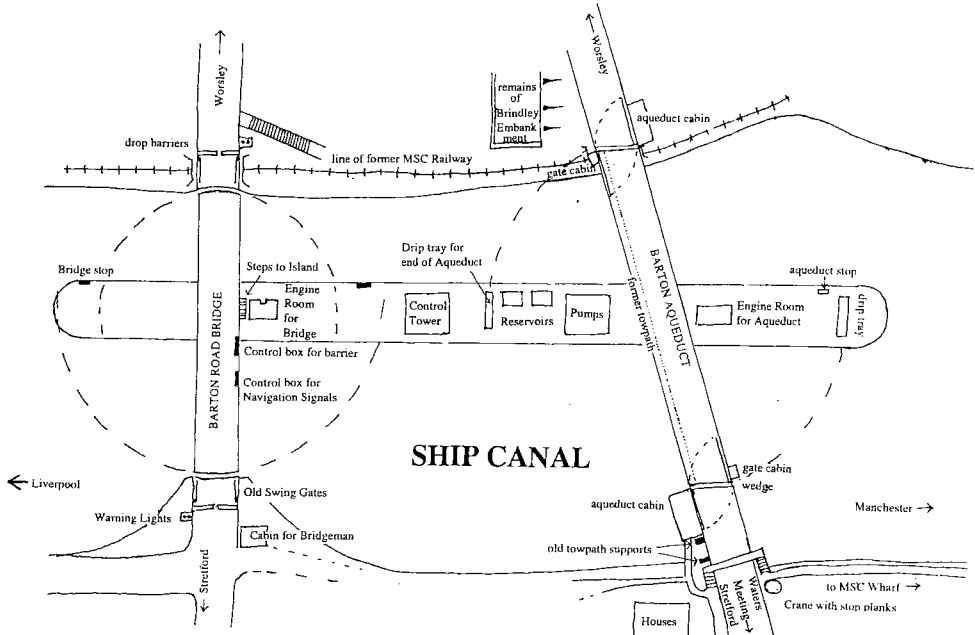
For many readers of Pennine Link a trip to Barton on Irwell in the Manchester suburbs will represent a drive of a couple of hours at most. At this fascinating site one can observe the remains of one of the earliest aqueducts on the waterway system and see (in operation if you are really lucky) one of the most modern.

On the 23rd March 1759 an Act was passed to authorise the building of the first totally artificial waterway of the canal age. James Brindley was the engineer who steered this Act through Parliament, on behalf of Francis Egerton, the Duke of Bridgewater, to enable coals from his mines at Worsley to be brought into the centre of Manchester. To achieve this involved crossing the River Irwell. Here we are then with Brindley - a millwright, proposing a 'bridge' to take a canal over a river. For the period this was

such a preposterous suggestion that one wit of the time was led to comment:- *"I have heard of castles in the air before but never seen where one was to be built"*.

Brindley's confidence was such that he took models and clay into Parliament to demonstrate that a puddled clay lining was watertight - and of course he was right - and on opening the price of coal in Manchester dropped by half overnight!

Moving on to 1885 we find the Act for the Manchester Ship Canal being passed which involved the canalisation of the Irwell and of course the original Brindley aqueduct was too low to allow the passage of ships into the proposed Manchester Docks. The solution to this problem by Edward Leader Williams, engineer to the ship canal, was as novel as the original Brindley idea and that was to build an iron tank aqueduct which could be swung out of the way to allow



Diagrammatic layout of the swing aqueduct and the swing road bridge at Barton.

ships to pass.

This new aqueduct is 235' long, 23'9" wide and 33' high. The actual swinging tank is 18' wide and 7' deep with a navigable depth of 6'. Altogether the moving part of the structure weighs 1,450 tons of which 800 tons is water. By the time the Ship Canal was opened on 1st January 1894, the old aqueduct had been demolished although traces of the embankments leading to it remain to this day.

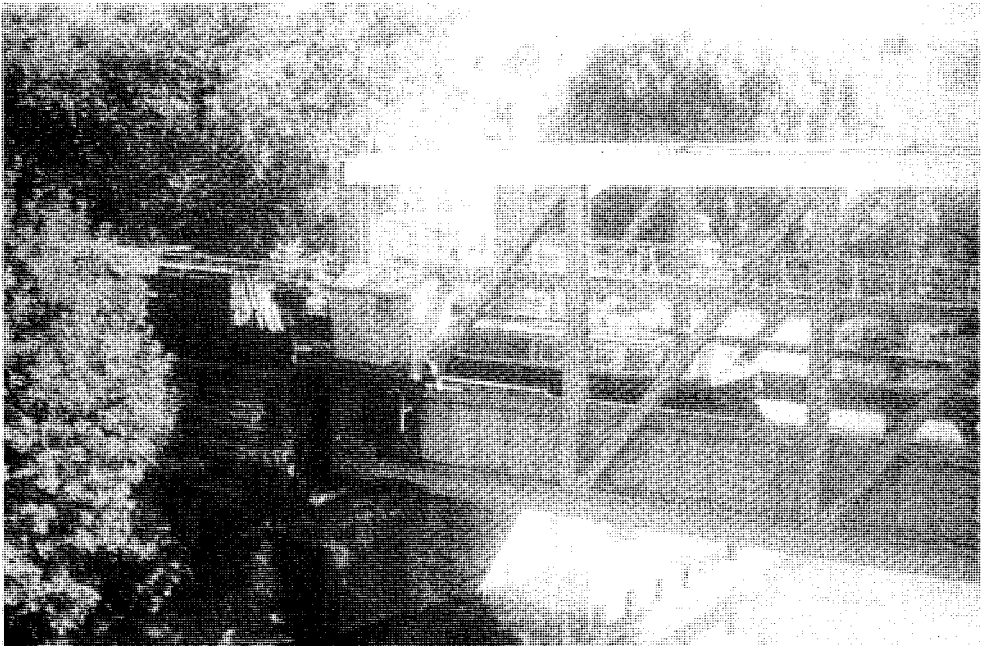
When the aqueduct is to be opened, gates (similar to lock gates) are swung across the canal - two to seal the ends of the tank and two to seal the ends of the canal. Water between these two pairs of gates is then drained into the Ship Canal. Rubber type seals are then hydraulically eased away from the mating surfaces and a bolt which locks the tank in place is withdrawn and the tank is now free to rotate on roller bearings until it is parallel with the Ship Canal. Here troughs can be seen which catch the inevitable small amount of leakage (usually attributable to weed or rubbish trapped in

the gate seals) and drain into the Ship Canal. Reversing the procedure involves positioning the tank precisely so the locking bolt can be replaced, repositioning the seals and filling the gap from the Bridgewater Canal so that the lock type gates can be opened. Judge for yourself (especially if you see it in operation) the engineering skills and imaginative thinking of our forefathers.

This trip can usefully be combined with Walk 3 to the mines at Worsley.

In the late fifties I worked at Davyhulme Sewage Works (for my sins) and crossed the Ship Canal by Barton Swing Bridge every morning. In those days regular canal traffic meant that car drivers were often "bridged" for up to half an hour - a wonderful excuse for being late for work! Ed.

Photo and diagram by John and Margaret Fletcher from "Barton Swing Aqueduct" (John C. Fletcher ISBN 0 9519058 0 5) by kind permission of the author.



A narrow boat crosses the aqueduct - seen from the top of the control tower.

WALK 3 THE BRIDGEWATER CANAL, WORSLEY

A trip which coincides nicely with our first outing to Barton is to see the Duke of Bridgewater's mines at Worsley. This is, unfortunately, more a trip of the imagination than the eyesight but when one has wandered past the Packet House at Worsley and on to see the mine entrances, an appreciation of what cannot be seen lends a lot to the experience.

As you stand and look at the two entrances to the mines, meditate on the fact that the canals in front of you penetrate eighteen miles (including side tunnels) into the hillside. Add to this the fact that once inside there were also two other mines on different levels (one above and one below the level you see) - totalling another twenty two miles - and the scale of this operation becomes difficult to appreciate.

In the early days of the Duke's mines, and before canals were considered, draining off water which collected in the mines became an increasing problem. Obviously the use of buckets had limitations and water volumes stretched the capacity of drainage soughs. In 1842, as discussions began into the possibility of building a canal to Manchester, it was realised that the canals could be extended underground thus solving the problems of drainage and transport in one operation. The underground canals were built with sluices at intervals so that a head of water could be built up which, when released, would help carry the boats out to the Delph at Worsley prior to building up into trains of boats for the journey into Manchester where, as a

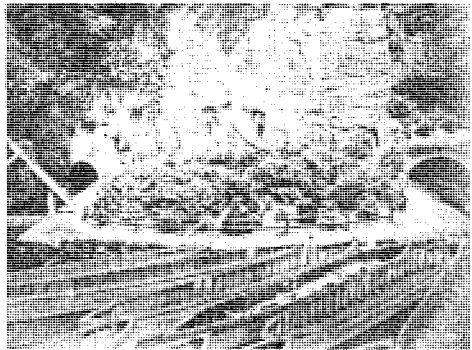
direct result of the building of the canal and the consequent reduction in transport costs, the price of coal dropped by half.

The boats used were in three sizes which could carry 7, 8½ and 12 tons and were known as starvationers (allegedly because their ribs showed prominently). Originally coal mined on the upper level was lowered down to boats on the canals in boxes but then, not satisfied with the number of 'firsts' already achieved, the Duke built an underground inclined plane so that all boats could be loaded at the coal face to save handling. The plane was built in such a manner that at the top were two locks with mitred top gates (as we understand them today) and with guillotine bottom gates. A boat would be steered into one of the locks, the top gates closed and as water was released from the lock the boat would settle onto a cradle on rails. When the lock was empty, the guillotine could be raised and the weight of the laden boat going down to the lower level would draw up an empty boat to the higher level. All this was controlled by cables passing round a huge drum which was equipped with a braking mechanism. The carriages on which the boats rested were 30'0" long by 7'4" wide, the locks 54'0" long and the drum 4'11" in diameter. The boats were controlled by 2½" hawsers and by this means up to thirty boats could be moved from the higher to the lower level every eight hours. The whole scheme came into operation in October 1797.

The third level of mines was brought into operation after the upper level was



Worsley Packet House, with mine boats moored near, about 1890



The Worsley mines boats in Worsley Delph, about 1890

operation after the upper level was exhausted and was 200 feet below the level you observe. This level was without the technology of the upper level and relied on the coal being hoisted up to the middle level up shafts. The coal was worked in a grid fashion (pillar and stall) so that plenty of roof support was left and as the actual miners worked at the face, it was then up to children to drag the coal on sledges to

where it could be loaded on to boats.

As late as the 1960s trips could be arranged into the mines when progress was achieved by legging and by means of pulling on chains. The inclined plane was still there for inspection although the rails had been removed. Unfortunately such trips are no longer allowed. One will note the discolouration of the water hereabouts caused by ochre leaching into the water. This appeared in such quantities that consideration was even given to commercial extraction.

Picture as you look at the mine entrances the work underground in those times - taking boats along what must have seemed immense distances in the near pitch dark (candles were allowed as ventilation was quite good), remembering which way to go at junctions, the operation of the inclined plane in the merest glimmer of light and perhaps above all - the children.

John Harwood



A canal junction beneath the ground, Worsley, 1963



VISITORS FROM THE SOUTH

Frank Smith at the bottom of the Diggle flight briefing members of the IWA Chiltern Branch on restoration progress, and of the intricacies of speaking from a manhole cover, during their guided tour of the Huddersfield Narrow in September. Included in the day's itinerary was a canal boat trip in Uppermill, Yorkshire Pudding lunch at a pub on Standedge Moor and site visits to Tunnel End and Slaithwaite. A grand day out for all and sundry (carrying raincoat). *Photo: Collection of F. Smith*

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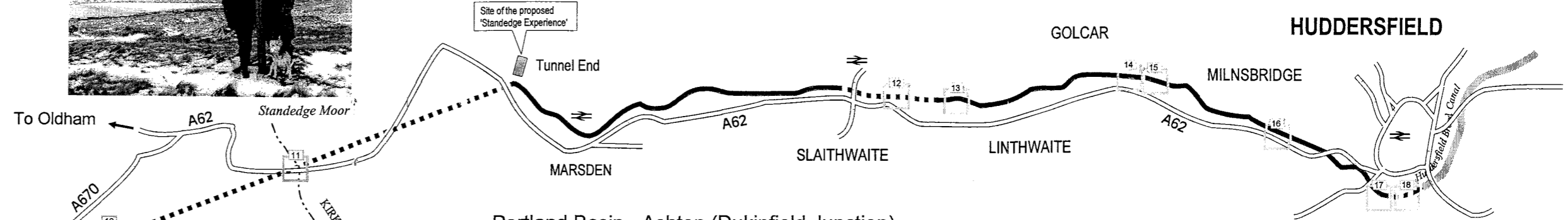


Contact: J. Lund
23 Pole Lane, Failsworth, Manchester. Tel: 0161 683 5728

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 Stalybridge Town Centre
Finish Date - Third Quarter 2000
Start Date - First Quarter 1997 | 5 Frenches to High Street
Finish Date - First Quarter 2000
Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1999 | 9 Wool Road Bridge
Start Date - Second Quarter 1997
Finish Date - Fourth Quarter 1999 |
| 2 Scout Tunnel
Finish Date - First Quarter 1998
Start Date - Third Quarter 1997 | 6 High Street Bridge & Wade Lock
Finish Date - Fourth Quarter 1998
Start Date - First Quarter 1997 | 10 Ward Lane to Standedge
Start Date - First Quarter 1999
Finish Date - Second Quarter 1999 |
| 3 Division Bridge Aqueduct
Finish Date - First Quarter 1999
Start Date - Third Quarter 1998 | 7 Lock 22W to Wool Road
Finish Date - Third Quarter 1998
Start Date - First Quarter 1998 | 11 Standedge Tunnel
Start Date - First Quarter 1997
Finish Date - Third Quarter 2000 |
| 4 Mann's Wharf to Frenches
Finish Date - Fourth Quarter 1999
Start Date - Second Quarter 1999 | 8 Old Sag Aqueduct
Finish Date - Fourth Quarter 1998
Start Date - Third Quarter 1998 | |



The Remaining Blockages on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal - Winter 1997



Portland Basin - Ashton (Dukinfield Junction)

From the ashes rises the phoenix. The former canal warehouse, burnt down in the early sixties, is being rebuilt to its original dimensions and appearance, providing new jobs and facilities for the people of Tameside.

Housed within the complex will be an expanded visitor centre, offices, flats, conference suites, and a pub/restaurant, proving yet again that canals and their restoration continue to regenerate derelict urban areas.

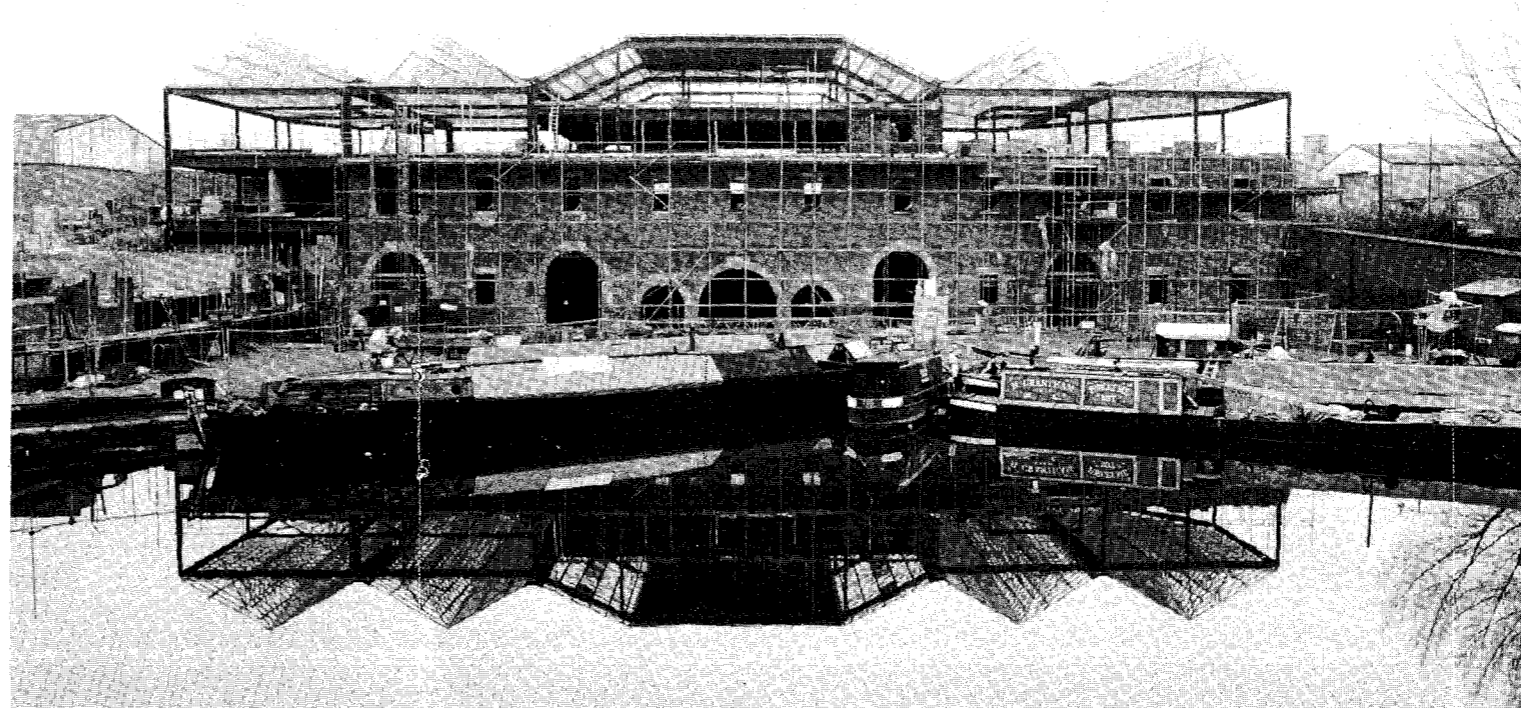
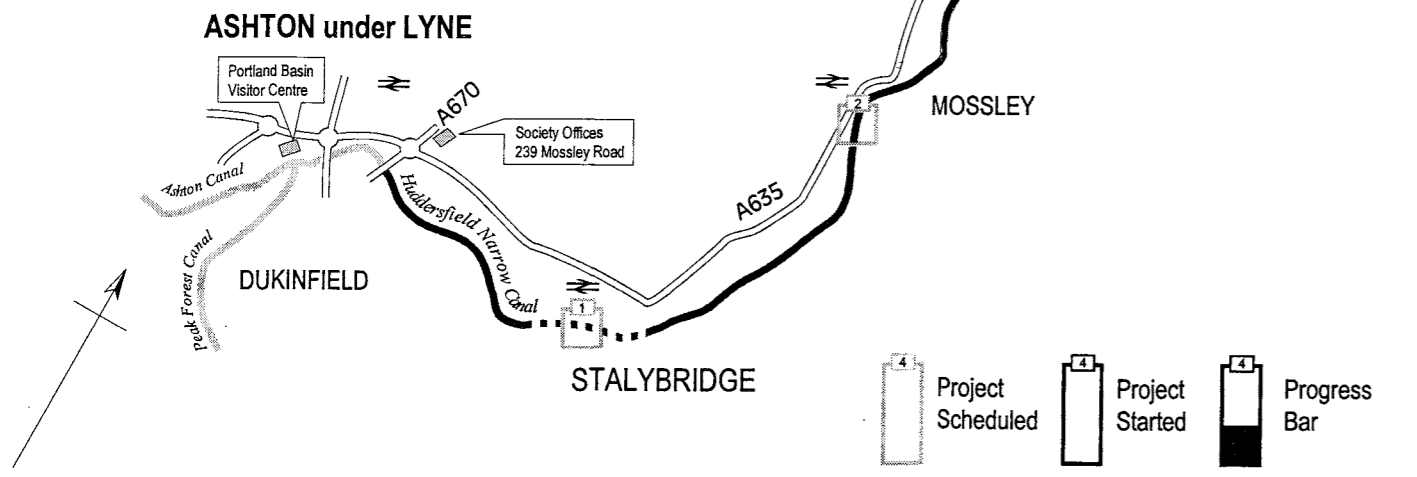


Photo: R. Gough

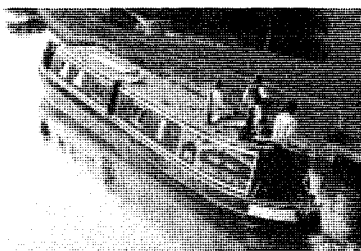


- | | |
|--|--|
| 12 Slaitwaite Town Centre
Start Date - Fourth Quarter 1997
Finish Date - Fourth Quarter 2000 | 15 Golcar Aqueduct
Start Date - Second Quarter 1997
Finish Date - Second Quarter 1998 |
| 13 Lees Mill Bridge
Start Date - Second Quarter 1997
Finish Date - Second Quarter 1998 | 16 Mark Bottoms Bridge
Start Date - Second Quarter 1997
Finish Date - First Quarter 1998 |
| 14 Holme Mill Bridge
Start Date - Second Quarter 1997
Finish Date - Second Quarter 1998 | 17 Sellers & Co
Start Date - Second Quarter 1997
Finish Date - Second Quarter 2000 |
| | 18 Bates & Co
Start Date - Second Quarter 1997
Finish Date - Second Quarter 2000 |

Scale approx. 1" to 1 mile

* Start and Finish Dates may be subject to change

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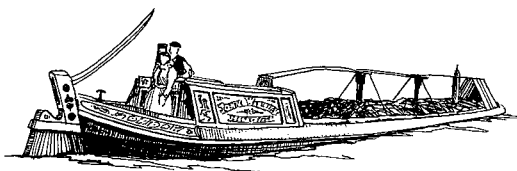
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Standedge Experience 'Storyline'

The fourth part of a serialisation of 'Storyline', the background material prepared for the Society by ArchaeoMedia Ltd., as part of our millennium bid report on the Standedge Experience.

Telford To The Rescue

On top of all the financial problems and the great flood, the contractors who had been engaged to work on the construction of the canal were proving unreliable at best, with some breaking their contracts and leaving the site unfinished. Outram had offered in 1798 to undertake the completion of the most difficult work, the tunnel, in five years, but this offer was overtaken by the disastrous floods, and by late 1799 work had all but ceased.

In 1800 a delegation from the Ashton Canal met with the Committee to negotiate facilities for its carriage. It was led by John Rooth from Manchester and it is from this time that he began to play an important role in the completion of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. In 1801 Benjamin Outram resigned as engineer and this was followed by the sacking of Nicholas Brown. Rooth had been made superintendent of the Diggle-Ashton stretch of the canal and for several years he had to spend his time dealing with whatever repairs became necessary and finance would allow before the main work of excavation on the tunnel could proceed. During this time he was responsible for the reconstruction of many locks and lock gates, reservoirs and bridges. According to Rooth, the construction of the reservoirs had been so inadequate that they would scarcely hold water, and he believed that local fears as to the safety of the Slaithwaite dam were well founded.

Traffic generally was beginning to build up, but the incompleteness of the Standedge Tunnel was a major obstacle to the development of a carrying trade. Rooth was asked to report on progress to the general assembly of proprietors in June 1806 and

unsurprisingly Standedge Tunnel dominated his submission. The rest of the canal was almost completed but there was continuing heavy expenditure to correct bad workmanship and design faults. A further Act was sought in 1806 to raise £100,000 by calls of £16 on each share, and the undertaking's insatiable appetite for money must have severely taxed the shareholders' patience.

In light of this lack of progress the Committee asked the eminent engineer Thomas Telford to resurvey the works and to provide a full schedule for completion. Telford's report was presented to the Special General Assembly of 21st January 1807 with a summary of the state of the work, precise dates for the execution of the tunnel section by section, and a detailed bill of estimates which showed that £98,945-12s-5d was required to finish the canal, of which £55,290-7s-4d was earmarked for the tunnel. He also found that the total capacity of the reservoir system was inadequate, and stated that *"...it is now too late to express a regret that such large sums of money have been expended on such narrow dingles of small capacity"*. Accordingly he recommended the construction of a further reservoir to the east of Black Moss to be known as Swellands Reservoir, followed by a tiny dam at Sparth, near to Marsden.

Comparing the respective reports prepared by Outram (1793) and Telford (1807) illustrates the enormous progress that civil engineering had made in fourteen years. Where Outram's report was full of generalisations and platitudes, Telford's dealt in concrete terms of fixed dates and yards per week; Outram's estimates were vague and general - for instance, *"to sinking eighteen shafts on the tunnel ... £2,767.10.0"* - while Telford went into extraordinary detail down to ropes, nails and buckets for every site at which further work was required. Indeed, so specific were his instructions that Rooth, who could not claim to be an engineer, was able to follow

them to the letter and to complete the tunnel within Telford's target date of December 1810.

The combination of the excellence of Telford's report and the forceful personality of John Rooth in his role of superintendent meant that the Huddersfield Canal project finally began to be completed. The report to the 1810 summer General Assembly anticipated the completion of the canal by the end of the year, but there was one last tragedy before this happened - the Black Flood. Early in the morning of 29th November 1810 the Swellands reservoir burst and, even though it was apparently far from full, the resulting deluge wreaked havoc in the Colne Valley and caused six fatalities. It was reported in the Gentleman's Magazine:

"About one o'clock in the morning of the 29th ult., the Diggle Reservoir, at the top of Stanedge, in Marsden, about nine miles west of Huddersfield, burst, and the water flowing in an easterly direction, inundated the whole of the adjoining valley. This Reservoir, formed for the purpose of supplying the Huddersfield Canal, covered about 28 acres of land, and such was the destructive impetuosity of the flood, that it swept away a cottage, occupied by James Scholfield, standing on the declivity of the hill, and his wife and four children perished in the flood. Rushing forward in its fatal course, the water advanced to the mill of Messrs. Horsfall, and so completely inundated the house of the miller, James Bamforth, that himself and his wife were floated out of their beds; he seized the stone-work in the window and for some time held his wife in his embrace; but she was at length forced from him, and her lifeless body was taken up the next morning at a place called the Paddock, two miles from Huddersfield; the husband, however, kept his hold of the window till the water subsided, and by that means preserved his life."

The Opening of the Canal

Notwithstanding this final disaster, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was finally opened on the 4th April 1811 - seventeen

years to the day after the original Act of Parliament had been passed. On that day a crowd of 10,000 people witnessed the entry into Standedge Tunnel of a party of about 500 guests, who were regaled by a band playing 'Rule Britannia' as they progressed towards Marsden.

In June of that year the cost of the canal's construction was quoted as £396,267, including £123,804 for the tunnel alone - more than double Outram's original estimate. Completion had taken far longer than anticipated, and the design, construction and management had all been heavily criticised, with some justification. Telford's intervention had shown what could have been achieved with greater attention to detail and better planning.

But, when all is said and done, the Huddersfield Canal and the Standedge Tunnel were actually completed, unlike many of their contemporaries which remained as plans alone or only part completed. In the final analysis it should be said that, despite all its problems, it was an extraordinary venture, and must be seen as one of the greatest achievements of early civil engineering. It remains today as a monument both to the enterprise of those who supported it financially, and also to the labourers who lived, worked, and in many cases died, in often appalling conditions to complete the canal. The self-confidence and vision of the promoters and the engineers of the Huddersfield Canal was quite remarkable, both in planning the venture and in carrying it through to completion. The making of the canal was beset by problems, both natural and man-made, but the determination and resolve of the canal builders was put to the greatest test by the most crucial element in the equation - the Standedge Tunnel.

Next time "Storyline" deals in some depth with tunnelling in general and our tunnel in particular.

THE WIFE'S TALE - PART 35

Part 35 - I feel as though we are coming to the end of a long journey! This will be the last Wife's Tale for a few issues while the Editor catches up with some other boating tales sent in by members.

Summer 1995 and we are on the final leg of our two-week trip to Stratford from the River Trent in the Noble's narrowboat "La Maitresse". Son Simon is crew. We are at Hockley Heath on the North Stratford Canal.

Thursday - 6th July

Destination - Lowsonford (S. Stratford Canal)

Weather - Sunny and warm, slight breeze

Distance - 8¾ miles

Locks - 36

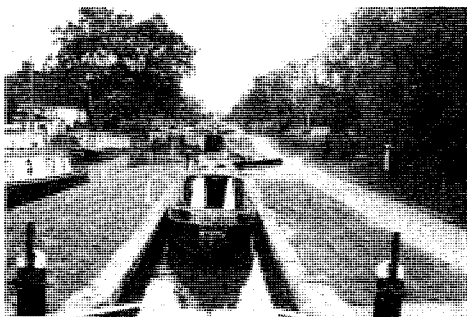
Woke to a lovely warm, sunny day. Had breakfast on deck. Some lovely new mosquito bites on right knee and left thigh - visibly growing! Ken and I remarked on how changed the canal is - for the better - since British Waterways took it over from the National Trust. I could never make out why the N.T. neglected it (almost to the point of closure). They usually do things so well. It is all much smarter - affluent looking, even!

Down to Kingswood Junction through those famous Lapworth Locks. Took on water and, while we were stopped, a boat of German visitors passed us. They went up the first

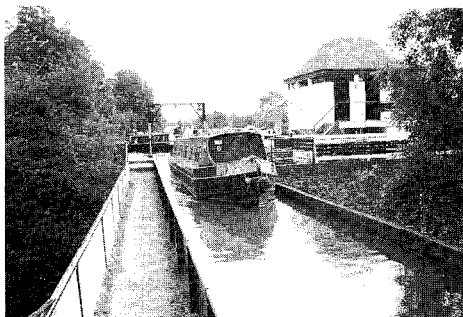
lock and emptied it again with one boat waiting to come down and none in sight going up! For you non-boating types this amounts to a hanging offence. We witnessed this 'misdemeanour' quite regularly and always with foreign visitors. Are they told at the yard to leave the locks empty even though there are boats waiting? That evening we heard that the Lapworth Flight was operating on restricted hours due to shortage of water - I'm not surprised!

Through Kingswood Junction again and down eleven very slow locks to Lowsonford. Into the Fleur de Lys pub - changed quite a bit but remembered it well. Very good lunch. Had all showered on the move so filled up with water again. Turned v. cloudy - looks like rain? Met a very pleasant B.W. lengthman who showed us how to hold a "slipping" paddle by putting the windlass on the wrong way round and using it as a stop. Just one more trick of the trade - I wonder if it would work on the difficult "friction" paddles on the Rochdale?

Planning our handover decided to moor overnight at Bridge 53 near the Anglo-Welsh yard at Wootton Wawen. This is where the cast iron aqueduct crosses over the frantically busy A34 and where we have previously joked about "low-flying narrowboat" signs. Checked with the yard for pump-out and diesel at 8.30 tomorrow morning. Simon made sandwiches (worth



Coming down Lapworth Locks on the Upper Stratford Canal, with washing out to dry.



"La Maitresse" crossing the A34 by aqueduct at Wootton Wawen.

noting) and then we made our way to the Navigation - well, more fell off the towpath into it! Much changed from pub to restaurant - didn't eat but the food looked good and reasonably priced. Rang Keith Noble to let him know we were still alive and afloat and arranged a handover place for Saturday. Very tired - late night - 10.30!

Friday, 7th July

Destination - Stratford-upon-Avon

Weather - Fine and sunny

Distance - 7 miles

Locks - 21

Another sunny day after one of the worst night's sleep I have ever had - goodness knows why. To Anglo-Welsh for pump-out and diesel. Over Wootton Wawen and Edstone aqueducts. Canal very silted - not short of water, the top of the silt is just too near the bottom of the boat! Didn't stop at Wilmcote (Mary Arden's House - been before!) but saw two pot-bellied pigs and some tufted white ducks! Ken also saw a yellow wagtail. Soon into "industrial" Stratford and to the boatyard we were stopping at - only it had gone! Western Cruisers at Bridge 65, Lock 52 is no more - just a fenced-off cleared site. So we locked down to Bancroft Basin, right outside the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. Whole area improved - new buildings, new banks, new towpath - even a new bridge under the A34 - no need to duck any more!

Bancroft Basin was packed, in some parts three abreast, so did a sharp U-turn and left

- Goodbye Stratford! Well, not quite - we moored up just outside the basin in a welcome but unusual gap.

Walked into Stratford - heaving with tourists - and to the Mucky Duck (Dirty Duck to some) for several drinks and a soak-up of the strictly Stratford atmosphere.

Parted company with Si who went off for a wander and we went to the N.T. shop (one of the biggest in the country, naturally). One of the assistants said "Goodness, you're English!" Came as quite a surprise! Went to the bank, found an Indian Restaurant for tonight, went to a florist's and wine shop for Keith and Jill's pressie and back to the boat.

Here we were welcomed by the couple in the next boat "Barleycorn", HCS members who had seen the HCS sticker on "La Maitresse". Their first question was "Do you know Alwyn Ogborn?!" (ex-editor of Pennine Link). It turned out they moored next to him at Marple! Small world.

They reported stone throwing and moorings lifted the previous night so we decided to up sticks and move back to the winding hole above Lock 52, just out of the town centre. This way Keith and Jill could please themselves which way they headed tomorrow.

Blistering hot evening - must remember to ring the dog breeder in Cannock - she is looking after Bill for us. Also the Nobles to tell them the rendezvous has changed. Did all this and, apparently, Bill has had a whale of a time - and is a lot thinner!



Bancroft Basin, Stratford. Note the permanent crowd of gongoozlers in the distance (watching boats lock into and out of the River Avon).



Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon.

This fortnight has gone very quickly and my fears at being fed up after so long on board were absolutely groundless - mind you, the weather has helped!

Walked into town, took all of ten minutes, parted company with Simon, again, who went to a fringe theatre. We went to the Indian spotted earlier and had a super, very tasty and spicy meal. Leisurely walk back shop-window gazing (which HE will do if the shops are closed). Some excellent ones but a lot of naff touristy stuff as well. How quiet Stratford was - hardly a soul to be seen - the tourists had gone and it was bliss. Collapsed into bed at 10.45. Simon rolled in at midnight!

Saturday, 8th July

Destination - HOME!

Very fitful night - looking forward to my own bed. Cleaned boat - all done by 9am -

brasses included. Very hot sun - going to be yet another scorcher. Sorry to be leaving "La Maitresse". Ken *reversed* cleanly into the winding hole - clever in a narrowboat.

The Nobles arrived with friend Colin at 9.50 - quick cup of coffee with them after loading and unloading cars. Off to Warwick, four days by canal, 8 miles and 15 minutes by road and dropped Simon at Kate Boats for his car. Said goodbyes. Called at Hilton Park on M6 for sandwiches and coffee. Picked up slim Bill (near Acton Trussell on the Staffs and Worcs Canal) and glad he remembered me! Home before two.

Photos: A. & K. Wright

NEXT TIME:

HCS member Winifred Wilson describes the voyage from the South Oxford to her husband's home town - HUDDERSFIELD.

PEARSON'S - PENNINE WATERS

PEARSONS' CANAL COMPANION PENNINE WATERS

A Review by Keith Noble

When your editor and I were navigating last summer to the tune of Pearsons' Canal Companion, Pennine Waters, we may well have disturbed people on the towpath with a succession of groans, howls and chuckles induced by the verbosity and irrelevancies of the text. When he asked me at very short notice to review the guide for Pennine Link, I immediately agreed. As author of the West Yorkshire Waterway Guide, which overlaps Pennine Waters, I was glad of the opportunity to be as subjective as Michael Pearson himself unashamedly is.

Lumps of flowery prose and chunks of personal experiences, which can only be of interest to the author, pepper the text. However it is also packed full of facts which, overall, make it an interesting read, especially to someone like myself to whom railways are just as important as canals.

Published by the author's own firm, there is unfortunately no one to edit out the relatively few irritating bits. This is a pity because they give the impression that the writer is indulging in an ego trip rather than setting out to produce a competent, user-friendly guide. The straightforward style with which Pearson describes the Huddersfield Broad Canal, could well be taken as an exemplar for revising the rest of the text in a future edition.

I must honour my promise to PLink's editor and quote some of the more awful bits. How about "*Exhilaratingly androgynous, the landscape combines the feminine allure of pastures backed by waves of moorland, with the masculinity of industry and urbanisation. Chameleon like the canal seems to alter its character and sexual persuasion ...*"? In case you didn't recognise it, that's Rishton on the L&L which "... *is imbued with XY chromosomes ...*" - not very PC, even if you're more susceptible to purple prose than I am. This is the sort of imaginative writing encouraged by some teachers of

English whom we should encourage to take a career change.

And again "*... the canal keeps trysts with fauns and nymphs in glades of ancient woodland ...*" doesn't conjure up a conventional view of the West Riding, even if Cottingley is but half a league down the valley. "*... scrambling ... to do homage to the old queen's - Victoria, that is, not La Rue - Jubilee Tower ...*" is an attempt at humour which misses the mark. "*... Pennine hills flagellate themselves into a frenzy of millstone grit revivalism ...*" means little to me even though I have the advantage of living in them and I'm not at all sure what image it would convey to a reader in Tunbridge Wells. I'd rather pay less for plainer text.

With that off my chest, I can now be a bit more objective. Both text and maps are what one expects in a guidebook, indeed, perhaps a little more. Some of the few errors were probably correct when surveyed. Pubs in particular change their identity with alarming frequency nowadays. A few interesting snippets may have been lifted from my Guide, but as that is almost free of errors it would be difficult to prove! HCS members will wince at the claim for the Rochdale's summit, at 601 feet above sea level, being the highest navigable pound in the country. Presumably Mr. Pearson has yet to visit Standedge.

Mr. Pearson describes the worthily redeveloped Leeds waterfront in ecstatic terms but I can't pretend to share his "*... adrenalin-pumping ...*" experience. On the other hand "*... the degeneracy of the Calder in the neighbourhood of Ravensthorpe ...*" is an overstatement of a rather dull bit of the Calder & Hebble. Perhaps it was raining on his visit there but sunny in Leeds.

In the interests of record, rather than from an urge to pick a nit or two, there are one or two points which could be corrected in a future edition. The Calder & Hebble was never leased to the L&Y Railway though it was very briefly, and illegally, to the Manchester & Leeds. The A&CN leased the C&HN for 21 years which would have been a more significant comment. Closure of the

Halifax Branch should not be ascribed to the LMS Railway Act 1944 - the Calder & Hebble was independent up to 1948. The Huddersfield Narrow may have opened in 1811 but the Rochdale had been complete from Sowerby Bridge to Todmorden by 1798 and throughout by 1804.

Travelling east from Wigan to Castleford, although the text occasionally leapfrogs a bit, it is generally co-ordinated with the maps. Unfortunately, to continue thence, westwards to Sowerby Bridge and Littleborough, the maps have been turned upside down. This is confusing and it would have been much better to have broken the sequence of the itinerary at Castleford to follow the Calder Valley downhill towards the east instead of up.

User-friendly guides include local facilities with the general text. Pearson lists them separately at the end which is inconvenient, even when you've discovered where to look. Facilities outside identified settlements tend to get missed out. The pubs and shops at Johnson's Hillock/Wheelton appear on the map but there are no other details. Similarly on Map 6, Rishton gets a detailed mention in the gazetteer at the back, but neither Church nor Clayton le Moors do. Both of these have at least as much to offer, but get no more than the map symbols.

Booksellers tell me that Pearsons' guides are popular and I do have several myself. Perhaps, like me, a lot of boaters are suckers for any guide to the area they are visiting. Given the choice of just one, I'd go for Nicholson any day, especially in its new format, despite inaccuracies and poor updating. Five of the new Nicholsons' guides (@ £9.99 each = £49.95) cover about the same area as nine of Pearsons' (@ £7.95 each = £71.55). Whatever is unique to Pearson I can do without and it certainly doesn't justify the extra cost. In my judgement, subjective of course, neither is as good value for money as the West Yorkshire Waterway Guide available from HCS bookstall (£2.95) or from me (£3.40 including postage & packing).

K.N.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

It's been quite a hectic few weeks on the Press front. The long-awaited "Millennium signing" was the obvious occasion for some good PR work, when the newly created Huddersfield Canal Company publicity machine eased itself (I nearly said 'creaked') into action.

Along with this was the unexpected news about the possible re-opening of the disused Diggle rail tunnels. This even hit the dailies and professional magazines and some of them caught on that there was a canal tunnel nearby - hence some unexpected publicity, finishing off with ten minutes of Channel 4 News on Monday, 3rd November.

The Independent made a stab at an article

but missed the way somewhere with a diagrammatic view of four tunnels, one of which was labelled "waterlogged"! And how!

Elsewhere, my article in Pennine Link 121, "What Next for HCS", was obviously read in the right places. An Oldham Evening Chronicle report tells of the approval by Saddleworth Planning Committee of a scheme at the canalside Victoria Works. The scheme includes hotel, restaurant, chandlery, a few houses with workshop/studio facilities, parking etc. Apparently Oldham Council (who have the final say) are also quite keen. Hopefully the site will leave room for more canal-related activity. I still see marina/hire boat potential there. (Ed.)

Canal-side Building Will Cut Green Belt

Huge visual and environmental benefits justified a small housing incursion into the green belt as part of a canal-side development, Councillor Phil Woolas told Saddleworth Planning Council last night.

Despite misgivings from three councillors, the committee agreed and backed a proposal to transform the landlocked Victoria Works at Wool Road, Dobcross, into a mixed, canal-related complex.

It would include a restaurant, public house and hotel, chandler's shop, four houses with studio/workspace and landscaping.

Planning consultant Alan Chorlton told the committee this was an "ideal opportunity" to link development of a prime Dobcross canal-side site to the reopening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

The site was now totally inadequate for the operations of New Age Plastics, an expanding business heavily involved in producing new products from recycled materials.

Serious environmental problems were being created and negotiations for a site in Oldham were well advanced, but they were dependent on redevelopment of the existing site.

Difficulties

Company boss Alan Bradford said the Victorian building was not designed to accommodate modern industry and highlighted some of his difficulties. "I am not cutting and running, I am going to reinvest in Oldham" he said.

Mr. Chorlton said a high-quality environment would be created, with existing historical and canal-related features incorporated where possible.

The scheme fitted with Oldham's tourism strategy and if the plan failed the site would remain a major blot on the landscape into the next century.

The original stone flour warehouse would be retained to form the nucleus of the complex, with the remaining poor quality buildings demolished.

"It is essential that the redevelopment is

Committee backs complex proposal

carried out in conjunction with the works to the canal," he said.

"If this does not happen and the present mill complex remains, with or without New Age Plastics, then a glorious opportunity will be lost to minimise the effect of all the construction work and maximise the combined effect."

Several searching questions were put, with Councillor Dorothy Shaw asking for public toilets to be linked to the development and councillor John McCann having misgivings about traffic from the pub and any increase in the size of the hotel.

Councillors Derek Heffernan and David Atherton both liked the development, but were concerned at the precedent of approving housing in the green belt and wanted to see the four homes removed from the plan.

Special

But the chairman, Councillor Robert Birse, pointed out it would not be the first special case. A deal had been done to permit housing development at Buckley Wharf, Uppermill.

Conditions recommended by the committee were that the height of the hotel be restricted to three stories and that, if possible, improvements be made to the access.

Oldham Evening Chronicle 7.10.97

Snippets from two articles which read rather strangely when put near each other! (Ed.)

Old Rail Tunnels May Reopen For Freight

Two old Stanedge (sic) railway tunnels may reopen for freight traffic, after being closed for 30 years.

The news has been welcomed by Councillor Chris Davies, but he will be putting some searching questions about its effect on the Huddersfield Canal Stanedge Experience plans to Oldham Council's Community Services Subcommittee tonight.....Councillor Davies says early proposals for the Stanedge Experience, which is linked to the canal reopening, involved

using one of the old rail tunnels, to provide a transport link with the canal tunnel.

"This plan has been scaled down and I don't think the rail plans should affect the canal reopening, but it needs clarifying," he said.....

Oldham Evening Chronicle 27.10.97

Freight Trains to Run Through Standedge?

Plans to run a coast-to-coast rail freight route through part of Oldham could sink a portion of the £multi-million Huddersfield Narrow Canal rebirth scheme.....

.....But the news has come as a blow to Huddersfield Canal Society, who have attracted £millions in government and lottery funding for re-opening the adjacent historic waterway through the Pennines. Their proposed 'Standedge Experience', which they hoped would feature a canalboat/rail tourist attraction, would no longer be possible.....

.....Cllr. Chris Davies welcomed news of the scheme. He said: *"Every survey shows that people want to see more freight shifted by rail."*

But he warned that the scheme would kill any hope of a rail/canal tourist attraction. He said: *"I just don't see that it will happen now. Personally, I have always regarded the Standedge experience as being a complete nonsense."*

"It is the longest canal tunnel in Britain but it is also the most boring."

The Advertiser 30.10.97

Tunnel Vision The Pennine Way

Two redundant 19th century Pennine railway tunnels that link Lancashire and Yorkshire may be reopened for freight cargo in an effort to ease heavy traffic congestion on the M62.

The Stanedge tunnels, three miles long and hundreds of feet underground, run from Oldham to Marsden and were in operation until 1966 when two closed due to a slump in the railway industry.

They run alongside a third tunnel providing a link for passenger trains and a limited freight service.

But now Railtrack say that a boom in rail travel has caused them to look into opening the historic tunnels again for freight cargo - enabling them to run more passenger trains on the existing line.

The tunnels would link an East to West coast railway network from Liverpool to Hull which Railtrack hopes will persuade hauliers to send their cargo across the Pennines by train rather than truck.

Most freight travels by lorry along the parallel M62 - described by many as the "worst motorway in Britain".

The tunnels - built between 1848 and 1894 by the London Midland Scottish Railway Company, as part of the great Victorian railway boom - are only one of a number of routes under consideration.

David Wiggins, spokesman for Railtrack said yesterday: *"We want to reverse the current trends and get more freight back on the railways. The trains will give hauliers greater flexibility and allow us to improve our passenger service. We can't see any objections to our plans as everyone will welcome an easing of M62 traffic."*

Another Pennine route enjoying restoration is the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which runs alongside the railway line and joins Manchester to Huddersfield. Today the Huddersfield Canal Company receives £15 million from the Millennium Commission to reopen the 20-mile canal by the year 2000.

At the heart of the reconstruction plan is the Standedge canal tunnel which interconnects with the railway line. Lying 644 feet above sea level and 638 feet below the Pennines, it is the country's highest and deepest canal tunnel as well as the longest at just over three miles. Built at the end of the 18th century, it fell into disrepair after the second world war.

Huddersfield Canal Company now has a total of £31 million to complete engineering works to open the last of the blockages. They had already received £12 million from English Partnerships, a government-funded development agency.

Alan Stopher, project co-ordinator from Huddersfield Canal Company, said yesterday: *"We can now push for the reopening. It will link the canal network across the Pennines, provide jobs in the Colne and Tame valley and bring environmental and amenity improvements to local people."*

The Guardian 28.10.97

2000 Here We Come

Huddersfield Canal Company directors celebrated on Tuesday when they signed the official Millennium Commission agreement.

The Commission has invested £15 million into reopening the canal and present at the event at Staley Wharf was Chairman of Stalybridge Development Group, Councillor Kevin Welsh, and Councillor Phil Wilkinson.

Cllr. Welsh said: *"I can't think of a better way of celebrating the Millennium than the reopening of this historic canal."*

"We especially welcome the renovation in Stalybridge as it will be a catalyst for the major regeneration of the town."

Deadline for the work is the end of 2000 which will restore the historic Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

This will involve engineering works to open the last of the blockages and make it navigable from Stalybridge to Huddersfield.

Along with the Millennium Commission cash is £12 million from English Partnerships and support from the newly formed Huddersfield Canal Company, Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside councils, British Waterways and the Huddersfield Canal Society.

The Reporter 30.10.97

IN BRINDLEY'S FOOTSTEPS

EXPLORE THE RED ROSE FOREST IN SALFORD

(A self-guided 14 mile walk taking in the sites and scenes of Salford, Trafford and Wigan's industrial past, from Castlefield to Leigh).

The bit in parentheses above is enough to put some people off but it was copied from the front of a superb 18 page booklet published, I think, by Salford City Council and written by Royston Futter, Project Co-ordinator, Steam, Coal and Canal, with help from the local history libraries of Salford, Trafford and Wigan.

The walk takes 6 - 7 hours, depending on your pace and is divided into 9 stages so that you can split the walk up into easy distances from your car, if you wish.

You are advised that the walk is unsuitable for disabled people or children in pushchairs and that, since some stretches are a bit remote, it is wiser to travel in pairs!

The booklet describes Brindley's association with the Duke of Bridgewater and the development of some of the first canals in the British system. In the descriptions we visit the incredible new development/redevelopment at Castlefield, Barton Swing Bridge, Patricroft, Nasmyth's Bridgewater Foundry, the 'iron' canal at Worsley, Astley Green Colliery and the Bridgewater Canal at Leigh.

Altogether a superb document - whether

you go on the walk or not! And there's more - other leaflets in the Explore Red Rose Forest in Salford Series are:-

In Lowry's Footsteps, Salford Quays Heritage Trail and the Worsley Village Heritage Trail.

They are all available, free of charge, by phoning Gavin Burns on 0161 736.9448. (The above information is printed in microscopic detail in red letters on a blue background - I nearly missed it!)

This really is one of the best publications of its kind I have ever read - try it!

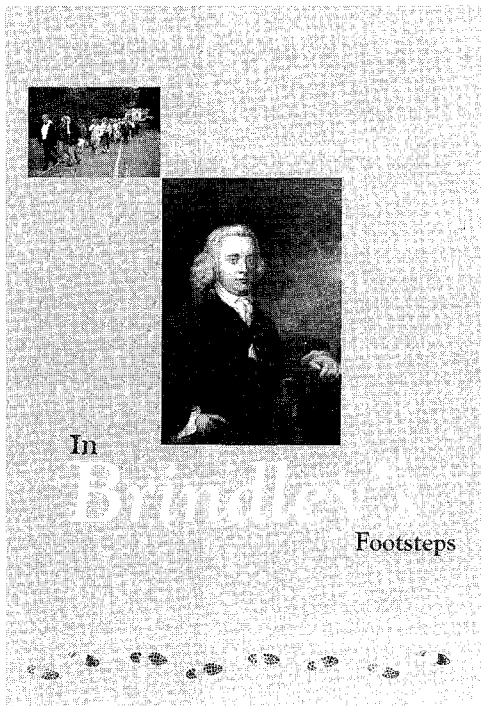
Also of interest is "Steam, Coal and Canal", Britain's first Linear Industrial Heritage Park, which will run along the Bridgewater Canal Corridor, initially from Barton Aqueduct to Leigh Basin and, eventually, be extended all the way from Castlefield to Wigan Pier. Its supporters include Salford, Trafford and

Wigan Councils, Manchester Ship Canal Co., Trafford Park Development Corporation, The Association of Greater Manchester Councils, Red Rose Forest, Red Rose Steam Society (Astley Green), Terry Adams Ltd. and Bridgewater Boatbuilders.

Any enthusiasts who want more information should contact the Project Co-ordinator, Royston Futter, at

*Jubilee House,
51 Crescent,
Salford
M5 4WX
(Telephone:
0161 737 9877).*

Ken Wright



IWA NEWS

Brian Haskins, former BW Engineer who provided support and guidance to restoration schemes in the North West, including our own, has been made a Vice-President of IWA, as has David Hutchings, the one man most associated with the restoration and operation of the Upper Avon Navigation.

BW intend to apply to have 16 lengths of canal upgraded from "Remainder" to "Cruiseway" which means they could spend more on them - if they had the money. Another list, including Huddersfield Narrow Canal, would be automatically upgraded upon completion of restoration (to full through navigation one assumes). Excellent news and it does seem that BW are changing gear.

BW is still beset with money problems, a lot of it because, as a Government funded body, they can't borrow in the open market like others can. One possibility is to change to a Trust (like the National Trust) with members - except that there are doubts whether anybody would want to join! In any case, it will not be during the life of this Government, apparently. One blessed relief - privatisation is not being considered.

The IWA welcomes the above initiative and backs any request to Government for extra funding to reduce the enormous maintenance backlog.

The IWA hopes all this will be a step towards a new national navigation authority covering all inland waterways equally.

IWA is still resisting strongly the proposed BW licence increases which are bound to force less well-off boaters off the waterways.

There has been a growing number of complaints about the workmanship in laying fibre optic cables under towpaths across the Midlands.

IWA are concentrating heavily on LEAPs (Local Environment Agency Plans) complaining that they do not give adequate attention to the Environment Agency's statutory duties concerning recreation and heritage, including industrial archaeology and the built environment (e.g. canalscape).

The Henley National Waterways festival, in its new format, was a great success and many lessons were learned for next year. It made over £30,000 plus £3,000 from the sales marquee and £2,500 from WRG's Pantomime - good going - they can come and do one for us!

IWA have made five grants totalling £3,900 to restoration schemes recently.

IWA has called for a rethink on the role of The Waterways Ombudsman. They want the Ombudsman to be separated in all respects from BW or other navigation authority (at present it almost seems a BW appointment). Also the post should cover all navigable waterways, not just BW. All this is the tip of an iceberg that has had hundreds of column centimetres of comment in various waterway magazines recently. Lady Ponsonby appears to have "retired hurt" having done an admirable job. Her replacement is Stephen Edell, the former Building Society Ombudsman and a former Law Commissioner.

There was sad news in September when the much publicised "opening" of the Aston Locks on the Montgomery Canal was postponed. The pound below the bottom lock has complex technical and ecological issues that make immediate navigation difficult and, despite considerable discussion with British Waterways and English Nature, these issues remain unresolved.

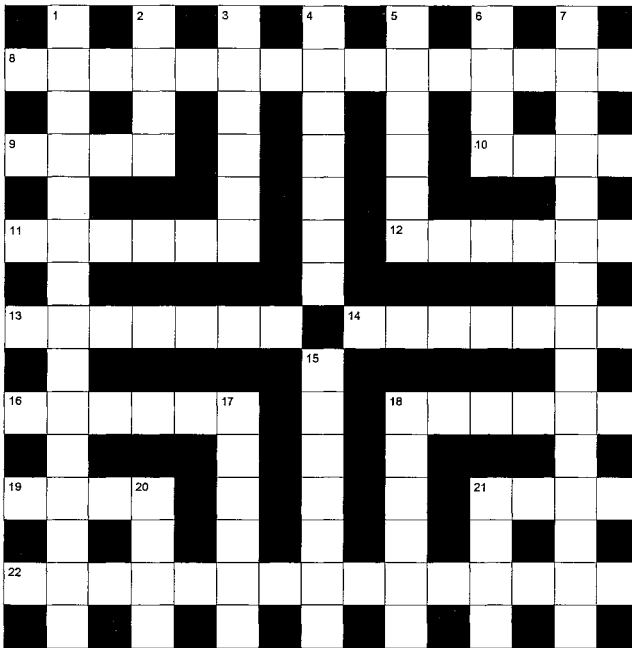
One disappointment is the failure of a European funding bid which could have resolved the matter. Another disappointment is that of the many IWA and WRG (Waterway Recovery Group) members who have selflessly given their time and money throughout the history of the Montgomery restoration.

This is a major set-back in the national waterway restoration movement.

HCS will *not* be attending the second National Conference of Waterway Societies in November. One would have thought we could have done some useful own-trumpet blowing. After all we are probably the largest and most successful restoration society still in business.

Ken Wright

CANAL CROSSWORD - 19



DOWN

1. His Majesty with soot on his foot where the Southern Oxford rises, we hear (5,6,4).
2. Dog reckons he could tackle a monster (4).
3. Famous engine manufacturer on a famous Scottish aqueduct (6).
4. In boating terms the first comes second to the captain (7).
5. In a cove at the waterside find a bird (6).
6. Famous railway junction - a good place for recruitment of boat staff? (4).
7. I throw a heavy weight below ground on the Regents canal (9,6).
15. Dash to a large building on part of the northern BCN (7).
17. Small boat found in a dank, dark room we hear (6).

ACROSS

8. Soon after rising III find V here on the L & L (7,4,4).
9. A stooge expects a joiner to know his mouldings (4).
10. Wire which carries excess water (4).
11. As he passed the mast Ernie was amazed to find that the boat was going backwards! (6).
12. Ought to turn right on top of Pontcysllite but was retained in the container (6).
13. In Hunstanton find an Erewash lock (7).
14. Busy insects with a heavy weight taking a cut round Nottingham (7).
16. Lou fed us while we cleared the mess on the propeller (6).
18. Hit a short saint whilst tied up at a Yorkshire wharf (6).
19. A shoe that might get Dutch Elm disease? (4).
21. Mighty NE river (4).
22. A former Standedge 'stand in' between Tame Valley junction and the Old Main Line (5,4,6).

18. Beginning and ending with a blessed man looking forwards and backwards respectively, you are capable of finding a lock on the Regents canal (6).
20. Boy named after the valley of the Caledonian Canal? (4).
21. The musical quality of Taunton's river? (4).

The solution to this crossword is given at the foot of the inside back page.

'Narrow Boat' by L.T.C. Rolt

*In the fourth and final selection of excerpts from **Narrow Boat**, Ken Wright chooses a few snippets, at random, which give a general impression of the breadth of detail in the book.*

*Tom Rolt's writings inspired Charles Hadfield, Robert Aickman and Frank Eyre, together with Rolt, to form the **Inland Waterways Association** and begin what we know today as the **waterways restoration movement**.*

We are indebted to Mrs. Sonia Rolt, the widow of the author, for permission to publish these articles.

Time was when they built the long wooden boats at Tooley's yard, but now, owing to the decline of canal traffic and the introduction of the steel boat, their work was confined to repairs. The average

wooden narrow boat requires docking about once every three years, so that this work was spasmodic and, despite the fact that the family were prepared to tackle any job in the way of joinery or wheelwrighting that would tide them over, there were times when the yard fell slack. Because of this, George, the elder son, had been forced to take a job at the new factory on the outskirts of the town. This is a typical instance of the way in which the craftsman is being compelled to forfeit the birthright of his hereditary craft and lose himself in the modern industrial system, where the skill of hands is subordinate to the rapidity of the machine. Perhaps one day we shall awaken from the spell of the machine and realise how much natural art and skill we have lost in this sorry process.

One of the most damaging effects of modern mechanised industry is the intensive specialisation it involves. The so-called skilled operative acquires such a mechanical dexterity by performing a single repetition job that he becomes as helpless as a raw apprentice when confronted with a strange task, or if he is deprived of his costly jigs and tools. Your true craftsman, on the other hand, is infinitely versatile, because he relies primarily upon the hand and the eye, the finest and most adaptable tools in the world.

-----oooOooo-----

Inside the tower two perspiring individuals from a local firm of watchmakers were busily engaged in winding the church clock. This was no mean task, for no less than four great weights had to be raised from the base of the tower. These operated the movement, the quarter chime, the strike and the carillon. This last was installed in commemoration of Victoria's Jubilee, and interested me greatly, because although I had heard the carillons of Dursley, in the South Cotswolds, and of the bell tower of Evesham, I had never before seen the mechanism. The movement was similar to that of a child's musical box, being operated



'Narrow Boat'

by a revolving fibre drum studded with brass pins which tripped the spring-and-cam-returned bell-cranks that were connected to the bell clapper by cables. When it was desired to change the tune, the drum could be moved laterally along its spindle so that another set of pegs was brought into action. Unfortunately the Banbury carillon was in a sorry state of repair, many of the pegs being worn or broken, so that only two of the original six tunes were still playable. I was lucky to see it at work, for in order to conserve its failing energies it was only set to play twice during the day. We watched and waited until the clock, ponderously ticking, crept to the hour and tripped the release. Then the old machine came to life with a most prodigious whirring and jangling of cables, and, high overhead, the bells rang out. There is a great serenity in the sound of a carillon, especially if it be heard distantly on a windless evening of high summer, or upon the hills. Then this measured repetition of simple notes voicing the passing of time seems also to express that unhurried, unshakeable continuity which is the very essence of country life. I hope that the Banbury carillon will not fall silent, but it will be an even sorer day if that tradition which it voices, albeit brokenly, should perish.

-----oooOooo-----

We had therefore decided to spend this time exploring a river which, alas, 'Cressy' could never visit, for the Upper Avon Navigation has lain derelict since 1873. Only traces of the ruined locks remain, while the channel is in places so shallow, in others so beset by dangerous currents, that to attempt such a journey even in a canoe would be to court disaster.

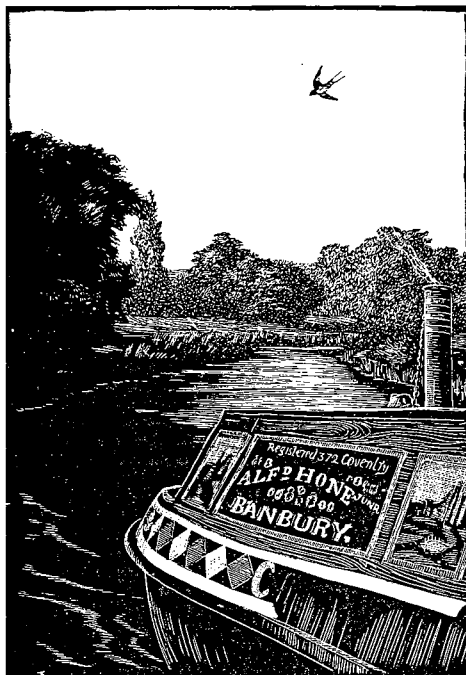
-----oooOooo-----

The Stratford-on-Avon Canal has been broadened into an ornamental lake where it passes through the grounds before the Theatre, and this is well enough, but whoever was responsible for laying out the gardens has committed the unforgivable crime of throwing an ugly horizontal bridge across the centre of the lock by which the canal joins the Avon. The lock, otherwise complete, is thus not only made impassable,

to the great inconvenience of the owners of the small pleasure-boats on the river who had been accustomed to move their craft onto the canal in times of flood, but it is entirely robbed of its naturally practical and pleasing appearance, and looks, surrounded by flower-beds, as incongruous as a rick staddle stone in a suburban garden. An arched bridge of traditional canal style built just above or below the lock would have made a world of difference at little extra cost, but the imagination of the designers of municipal gardens seldom seems to rise above little baskets, cast-iron seats and strictly regimented flower-borders.

-----oooOooo-----

We entered Salmon's Lock, the first on our journey. Because we were locking uphill the lock chamber was empty, and the cavernous walls of dripping brick rose high above our deck with only a few inches to spare on either side. When we had closed the bottom gate behind us and raised the top sluices or 'paddles', the pent-up water thundered into the lock, foaming about 'Cressy's' bow like a



We met only one fellow-traveller

mill race, so that the bright paintwork glistened with spray. This is the spectacular and satisfying reward for the labour of lifting the heavy paddles, a sight I have never tired of watching, seated on the lock beam as the boat lifts gently upward. As the lock fills, calm slowly returns to the water, until only flecks of foam and little eddying whirlpools remain, and the one sound is the gentle scraping of the rope bow fender against the lock gates. We always made this labour of lockage a leisurely affair unless we were holding up another boat, but the boatmen who have their living to earn work their way through with deceptive speed and send a member of the crew hot foot along the tow-path to prepare the locks in advance.

When we moved out of the lock into the 'pound' above we soon left all trace of Banbury's outskirts behind, and found ourselves winding through deserted water-meadows beside the Cherwell, our only spectators the cattle on the banks, who looked up from their grazing to gaze in mild curiosity, wisps of lush grass protruding from the corners of their mouths. No one who has not experienced it can fully appreciate the unending fascination of this tranquil voyaging. The movement of the narrow boat is like nothing else in the world; as Temple Thurston so aptly wrote, 'it is no motion, or it is motion asleep'. Stand on 'Cressy's' fore deck with eyes closed, and no sense of motion is left, open them and you see the bluff bows gliding over the still water, while the ever-changing scene of

trees and hills, fields and farms drifts past at so measured a pace that the eye has full time to ponder every detail. These spells of idleness are made more pleasurable because they alternate with the labour at the locks, and we passed through three more before we came to Cropredy at five o'clock that evening.

-----oooOooo-----

We sat drinking contentedly in this quiet place, listening to the leisurely quarter chime of the church clock and trying to decipher one of the old puzzle cards, once so popular in country inns, which hung on the wall opposite, yellowed by years of exposure to shag-tobacco smoke. It ran:-

'Here's to Pa! nds Pen Da S

O Cl alh OURin ha? R.M.

Les Smi rT Ha! ND Fu nle T fr;

i E nds HIPRE ign B eju, St. an

d Kln, dan Devil sPe,AK of N One.'

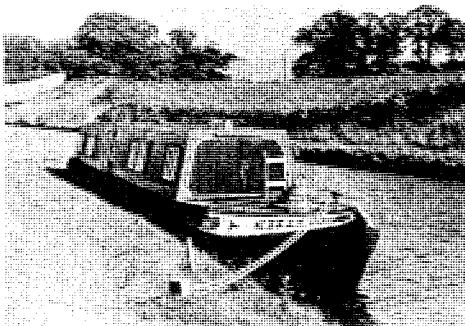
The moral sentiment is excellent, but beyond this I can give no clue, for beneath it in heavy type was the clause: 'N.B. NO TEACHING ONE ANOTHER TO READ THE ABOVE UNDER FORFEITURE OF A QUART OF THE LANDLORD'S BEST ALE.' A translation in print would therefore be unpardonable, and render me liable for at least a barrel should I visit 'The Red Lion' again.

(I remember this puzzle on the wall of a 'cyclist's rest', the George and Dragon on the A57 at Woodhead, shortly after the war. The pub is long since demolished. Ed.)

-----oooOooo-----

It was here that we found our first canal inn.

Approached by a rough track, it stood in the fields on the side of the canal away from the village, and, with outbuildings grouped around the house, it looked like a small farm, except for the faded sign of 'The Bull and Butcher' over the door. Inns such as this fulfil the same purpose as the great posting-houses of coaching days, for they are recognized 'stages' on the water roads where many generations of boatmen have been accustomed to tie up and stable their horses for the night. Today they are fast



Cressy on her wartime mooring at Tardebigge where *Narrow Boat* was written. A Frank Nurser water-can is on the hatch cover of Cressy's fore-end (LTC Rolt)

going the way of their great predecessors, for the motor-boat is emptying their stables and bar parlours. Though the motor travels little faster than the horse, it does not tire, so that once-familiar moorings become filled up with mud, the rings rusty from long disuse, while far into the night the boats pass by.

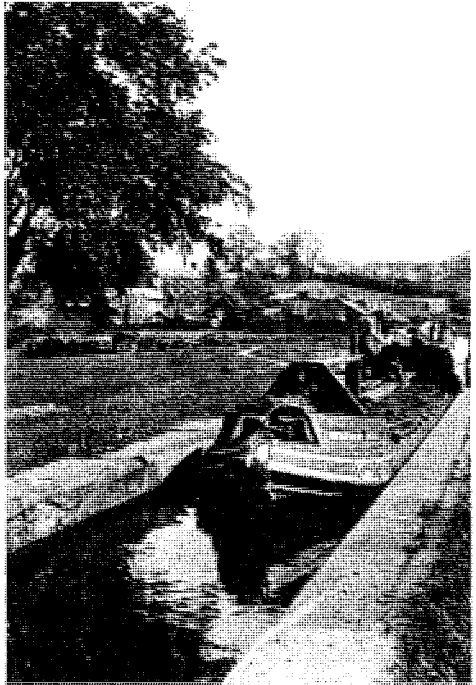
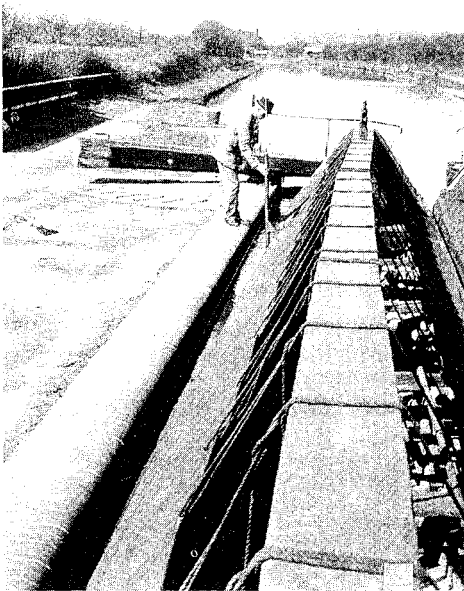
Thanks to the survival of horse-drawn traffic on the Oxford Canal, 'The Bull and Butcher' has been more fortunate than many inns we encountered subsequently, and we had not been long at our moorings before the first wayfarer arrived and led his horse over the bridge to the stable. By the time dusk fell there were half a dozen boats moored beside us, the womenfolk standing at their cabin doors exchanging gossip while they polished brasses, mopped paintwork or peeled potatoes. Children called shrilly to

each other and dogs padded eagerly to and fro along the gang-planks, whining to get ashore. There was a pervasive odour from some simmering stew-pot, and the smoke from the brass-bound stove chimneys rose straight in the windless evening air.

-----oooOooo-----

And so I could go on; in four excerpts I have only dipped into the first 60 pages of the 200 in the book. Give yourself a treat and read it all - and try some of Tom Rolt's other work, written in an altogether different style. I'm still hoping for "Landscape with Canals" or "Thomas Telford" for Christmas!

Ken Wright.



Cowley Lock on the Grand Union Canal. The toll clerk checks the tonnage on the boat when the lock is full by measuring the 'dry inches' between the boat's gunwale and the water level (Collection of Hugh McKnight).

See also John Harwood's description of 'gauging' on page 45. Ed

The Christopher March boat *Heather Bell*, built by Nurser Bros. of Braunston, working down Tardebigge Locks on the Worcester to Birmingham Canal. It was from this boat that the scheme for training women to man narrow boats arose. The first encounter between the work crews and Cressy took place in Tardebigge flight (Collection of Hugh McKnight)

'Narrow Boat' is available from IWA (Sales) Ltd. price £9.85 including post and packing.

Telesales No. 0171 586 2556

Tom Rolt Books available from IWA:-

Autobiography

Landscape with Machines £9.85

Landscape with Canals £9.85

Landscape with Figures £9.85

Transport

From Sea to Sea (Canal du Midi) £16.00

Other Tom Rolt Books

Sleep No more - *Railway, Canal and other stories of the supernatural*

(Sutton Publishing Ltd) £4.99

Railway adventures - *Tallylyn Railway* -

(Sutton Publishing Ltd.) £14.99

The Making of a Railway - *The Building of the Great Central Railway*

(Sutton Publishing Ltd) £12.99

Extracts and Photos courtesy of Sonia Rolt and
Sutton Publishing Ltd. ©

HCS COUNCIL NEWS

22nd October, 1997

The Treasurer was concerned that stock market values are reaching a peak. We are to take serious professional advice on when and what to sell.

Currently our investments are worth over £800,000 but over £550,000 is earmarked for various projects, the largest being our contribution to Standedge Experience.

The Millennium Contract is being engrossed (as at 22.10.97) and signing will take place shortly. Other related agreements between the partners are reaching completion after months of legal wrangling.

Some minor site clearance has started in Huddersfield to allow site surveys to take place.

The Society is one of the four representatives on the Standedge Experience, the others being BW, Kirklees and the new Huddersfield Canal Co. A management system for delivering the Experience is being negotiated after which expert consultants will be appointed. Many ideas are being tossed about at present.

Alec Ramsden (Press Officer) is our rep. on the newly formed HCC (Canal Co.) Publicity and Marketing Group which comprises publicity, marketing and tourism expertise and has members from all the partners.

HCS Restoration Ltd. is installing lock gates at Lock 12W, the vertical gate at Lock 23E

is now operational. HCS (R) have been offered some work on other canal sites (not Huddersfield Narrow) to keep them going in the doldrum period but, overall, the situation is still far from resolved. The future for the workforce, especially the office staff, remains uncertain and of great concern.

The Sales force took over £3,000 in 1997 - down on previous years, blamed on washed out or even cancelled festival dates. A new book list is being produced to advertise sales in Pennine Link.

On the boats - Greater Manchester has lost its propeller (*careless! Ed.*) and Oldham Otter is being used to train new recruits.

The restoration volunteers have done very little recently due to weather and shortage of people.

A discussion took place on the Society's Millennium Event/s. Early planning essential as sites, marquees, PA equipment etc., are already being booked! The Society's role in 2000 was questioned and is to be discussed at the next meeting.

The Editor of Pennine Link came in for *six* separate items of criticism for Issue No.122. One was for *not* exercising his Editor's privilege, another - from the same complainant - was for doing just that!

Ken Wright

ALAN, OUR HERO

The following story has been promoted from the general heading of "What the Papers Say" because its hero is not only an assistant on the trip boat "Pennine Moonraker" he is also one of the youngest, keenest volunteer workers for Huddersfield Canal Society. He is a member of the Saddleworth Festival Committee.

In what little spare time he has he also helps on the technical side at Saddleworth Players theatre and with other theatrical events in the area.

Well done, Alan.

HERO'S LIFE-SAVING LEAP

Teenager Alan saves canal-fall pensioner

Diggle teenager Alan Siddall was hailed a hero after diving into the Huddersfield Narrow Canal to save a one-legged pensioner.

The 17-year-old, part-time, narrow-boat worker jumped into action when the 74-year-old man tripped over a canal-side mooring rope at Saddleworth Museum, Uppermill, yesterday (Sunday, October 12, 1997) lunch time.

Alerted by shouts as the pensioner plunged into 6ft-deep freezing water, Alan threw off his shirt, ran to the side and dived straight in to pull him clear.

The Oldham College theatre sound and lighting student even managed to retrieve the man's false leg, which became detached as he struggled in the water.

The rescued man was kept warm at the near-by Waggon and Horses pub before being taken to the Royal Oldham Hospital for precautionary checks.

But his wringing-wet teenage rescuer was back escorting passengers aboard the trip boat within 30 minutes - after a quick change of clothes and a warming drink.

Alan, of Hillside Avenue, said: "It seems the man was admiring the sign-writing on the side of the boat when he caught a rope and lost his balance.

"I was busy sweeping up at the other end. I didn't see him fall, but a woman shouted: 'He's gone in, he's got a false leg, he can't swim'.

"They say you don't think twice, but I suppose I must have thought about having to carry on working afterwards because I pulled off my shirt first.

"I'm just glad I was there because the water was rather chilly for an elderly man who can't swim, and other people around seemed to be just pointing and shouting."

Alan's boss, skipper John Lund, who was away from his boat as the drama unfolded, said: "I'm absolutely proud to have Alan as part of my crew. His actions were a credit to himself and the boat.

"He is a hard-working lad who doesn't think about his own safety at times. He is just the type to dive straight in, literally so on this occasion.

"It says everything about this incredible young man that he was back at work less than 30 minutes after his soaking, refusing even to take time for a shower.

"The man wanted Alan's name to thank him later. We are just glad that he was able to see the funny side. He left in good spirits in the ambulance."

Alan added: "I know a lot of people are saying I'm a hero, but I don't think so. I was just the man of the moment, daft enough to jump in the water."

Oldham Evening Chronicle



Alan at the Saddleworth Canal Festival.
Photo: B. Minor

Profile - Jo Young, Membership Secretary



To be asked to write one's own profile was for me quite daunting. Who would want to know about some-one they have never met? Hopefully Members will know me a little better on reading my efforts, so here we go!

Born in London I moved to Oldham on marriage after living on the Isle of Wight, in Bristol and Oxford in my earlier years. It was while working at a Barnado's Home in Berkshire I met husband John, then a handsome airman, and we married in 1954. Our only son Phil., his wife Marion and teenage Grandsons Andrew and Adam also live in Oldham and are Members of the Society ... of course!

Eight years ago I took early retirement from Local Authority employment having completed 35 years with the Social Services Department. This work was solely involved with children, primarily with those of pre-school age, latterly with adolescents, too.

To mark my retirement I was given local press coverage, complete with photograph, which amongst all the usual accolades suggested I was to use my new-found spare time in doing some voluntary work. This was a true statement but I did have in mind something of a caring role, either with children or the elderly. How then did I become involved with a Canal Society? What did I know about canals? Absolutely nothing!! Thank you Alwyn (the then Editor of Plink). A telephone call was made. He

had seen the press article and had just the job for me! The Society needed a Membership Secretary. The rest is history, thanks to the persuasive Mr. Ogborn!

So, since 1990 I have been actively involved in the Society and have to say I do enjoy it. I have learnt about the history, development and subsequent restoration efforts as I have gone along. My enthusiasm prompted John to become involved too and, until his recent illness, he was a licensed Boatmaster who could be frequently seen driving the Society's tripboats, helping at Festivals and generally using his skills in designing and making money boxes, bookends and the like for sale on the Society's Sales stand. He was also responsible for building the Membership Secretary's cabin erected at Festivals to keep me dry on the inevitable rainy days we all have to contend with.

Back to me. My philosophy in joining any organisation in an official capacity is to give as much as I can. I hope and believe I have kept to this. I can be found at HCS Head Office on half a day a week when I process new membership, annual renewals and even write polite letters to those who have failed to heed their renewal reminder! For my sins I Chair the Promotions group which meets monthly to look at how we can enhance public awareness of the work the Society does. Of course I am a member of the HCS Council, hence the reason for this deliberation.

Apart from my role with the Society I am Secretary of the local branch of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and sit on many Committees associated with Childcare activities. Gardening, needlework and caravanning are my other hobbies.

In the early years of working with the Society it was surprising how many Members thought that I was a man, having a name like Jo. I am never called Josephine, thankfully, it just does not fit my character.

What has the Society given me? Without doubt a worthwhile unpaid occupation/

interest where I have been fortunate to meet many very nice people and even a few celebrities, David Essex and Bill Owen to name two. My involvements at Festivals have been experiences in themselves, something out of the usual run of things and something to be recommended. Believe me it is fun to dress up in Victorian narrowboat folk's dress but I suppose you need to be a bit of an exhibitionist to enjoy doing this. Why not try it?

Will my 'job' be needed after complete restoration? I believe so, for the Society will then need, perhaps even more so, a volunteer force to ensure the Huddersfield Narrow and its associated activities are maintained to a standard we would all wish. We haven't come this far without our members.

Being involved in the caring profession all my working life I have often been asked whether Lottery money to the sum of £15 million can be justified to restore a canal? Could it not be put to better use? I argue that it is justified, for surely to improve the environment is a bonus for all who choose to take up one of the many recreational pursuits on and around the canal. Good recreational provision makes for happy, healthy people in a more pleasant place to be. So much of our surroundings are blighted by squalor and neglect that to have somewhere pleasant to visit must be a bonus. It should also be remembered that restoration and all that entails will create many much needed fields of employment.

To conclude I would just like to invite any one of our valued Members to do as I did, become involved with a credible organisation that can offer you friendship and a feeling of achievement. It doesn't cost anything (other than time) but can mean so much to those who will benefit from our efforts, the general public.

It would be remiss of me not to use my 'profile' spot to ask you all to continue to offer your support and to try and recruit friends and colleagues to join the clan.

Jo Young



Jo and husband John lend a hand to crane out the Marsden Shuttle.

Photos: Collection of Jo Young

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Ken,

The River Runs Uphill

Some years ago I recall reading a review of Robert Aickman's 'The River Runs Uphill'. Too mean to acquire my own hardback copy at that time, I waited for a paperback version which never appeared.

My recollection is that the book gave his account of the disunity which clouded the early years of IWA and no doubt sought to justify his own part in it.

The book included an account of the last through passage of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal which, with Tom Rolt and others, he made in Ailsa Craig.

Rolt's version of events is well known but Aickman's is not and I should like to read it for myself. There does not appear to have been a reprint, my local public library failed to locate a copy for me and I have never seen one offered for sale second hand.

If any members of HCS and/or readers of PLink would be willing to lend or sell me a copy, or to put me in touch with someone who can, I should be very glad to hear from them.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Noble,
The Dene
Triangle
Halifax
West Yorkshire.

Dear Mr. Wright,

"Pennin? Link" is always interesting reading, and a most professional journal. Thank you for all your work in producing it.

One of the most welcome items in the journal is "The Wife's Tale". Please thank the writer for me when you next see her. Presumably you will see her before long? Perhaps she will forgive a couple of minor technical comments on Part 34.

Firstly, use of the new cut at Lapworth does not save water when leaving the G.U. for the Northern Stratford but only when turning left into the Southern Stratford. The cut was dug (re-dug?) to save the water used in ascending lock 20 on the branch and then descending lock 21 on the Southern Stratford but it is immaterial whether lock 20 or 21 is used when going north.

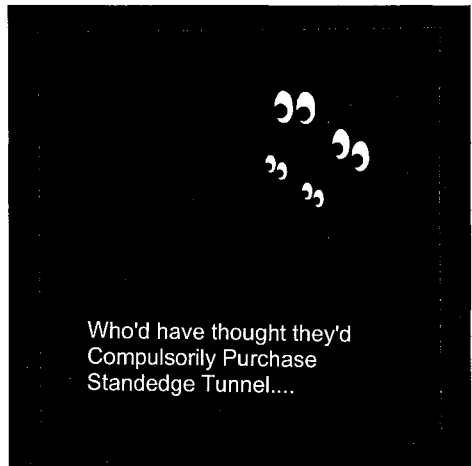
Secondly, the Northern Stratford *has* been much improved, but *not* since BW took the canal over from the National Trust, for the Northern never was in the control of the N.T.

However, these small points do not detract from the pleasure "The Wife" gives with her successive instalments of her saga. Long may she continue.

Yours sincerely,

R.F. Barker,
Sutton Coldfield

Thanks for the interest, compliments - and corrections! And I shall thank "the wife" when I bring her a cup of tea in bed tomorrow. Ed.



The Building Of Britain's Canals: Running

The fourth and final part of John Harwood's look at the background to our canal system.

PART 4 - RUNNING THE CANAL

In April 1811 the Committee of the Huddersfield Canal Company ordered Rooth to "*inform the public that the Huddersfield Canal is completely navigable for the conveyance of goods, wares and merchandise and all other materials*".

The building is over, the engineers and navvies (from navigators) have moved on to other work, the official ceremonies have been held and the partying is over - now the canal must make money. To make it operate a team of people were needed and these were:-

The committee - responsible for all major decisions, approving contracts with carriers and sanctioning major items of expenditure through:-

The Secretary who would be in charge of all day to day administration - paying bills, banking, (hopefully) paying dividends, dealing with legal problems and co-ordinating the work of all other staff. To help him would be:-

The Clerks - firstly the toll clerks; located at strategic points along the canal, they would gauge boats by taking a reading of how deep the boat was lying in the water at four points and by averaging these points and referring to a register of boats (new boats were always 'gauged' by being loaded with test weights - the depth of the boat in the water then being recorded at set tonnages) and calculating the weight of the cargo. The weight could then be multiplied up according to the scale of tolls for different cargoes. Some cargoes travelled toll free (especially manure - consider how many horses were kept in towns in those days!) but boaters were not beyond covering a highly rated cargo with a lowly rated one to make an extra bob - the toll clerk had to know all the tricks! The clerk could now

collect cash for the tolls or, in the case of a credit arrangement, make his returns to the head office where more clerks would issue invoices and monthly statements. Also recorded here of course was the expenditure and wages records etc.

The Lock keepers (sometimes doubling as toll clerks) were employed not so much to assist boaters as to watch over water use and generally look after the company's interest. The old boaters were not above ramming gates to open them, opening paddles to flush boats out of locks and most certainly not bothering to close gates or paddles behind them. All these activities could cost the company dearly in respect of repairs and water loss. As boaters were usually paid by the load time meant money. The first boat into a long flight of locks would get unloaded sooner and be on a return trip, not unnaturally therefore severe conflicts arose to the extent of fist fights for priority into the locks and whilst, no doubt, the lock keeper would wish to keep out of the fights he would also be bound to ensure that company property was not damaged during the process!

The lengthsmen (the term is almost self-explanatory) was responsible for keeping an eye on a set length of canal and reporting major problems and dealing with smaller ones. His major preoccupation was with the integrity of the banks, looking for signs of weakness prior to a burst and especially monitoring water levels during bad weather to release excess water from the canal.

Where a canal had a narrow tunnel inspectors would be needed to ensure that boaters followed the rules regarding the hours of access in order that traffic jams did not occur within the tunnel. Also found at many tunnels (prior to the introduction of boats with engines) would be official 'leggers' who for a set fee would take boats through the tunnel by legging on the walls and/or roof whilst the boat crew took the horse over the tunnel.

At the company workshops joiners would be involved in making locks gates and other timberwork whilst blacksmiths forged the iron parts necessary to the canal - parts for gates, paddle gear, bridges, etc.

---oooOooo---

I hope you have enjoyed this brief look at how our canal (and others) came into being. If I have succeeded in stimulating some interest I hope that this list of suggested reading on the history and building of the canals will help you further.

BOOK LIST ON CANAL BUILDING, HISTORY, ETC.

First and foremost:-

"Pennine Passage" - the history of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal by Michael Fox and Peter Fox, a rather limited stock is available at the Tunnel End Canal & Countryside Centre, Marsden.

The 'Hadfield' Histories. Thirteen books on the history of Britain's canals plus two more on Ireland. The definitive work on the subject. These focus on the story of the canal companies and are packed full with details of revenues, tonnages carried, etc. and regrettably now more or less out of print (a few new copies are around) and have to be sought out second hand. Specialist canal bookshops advertise in *"Waterways World"* and *"Canal and Riverboat"*.

"The Canal Builders", Anthony Burton, M & M Baldwin. Detailed study of the actual building of the canals.

"The Canals of Britain", David D. Gladwin, Breedon Books, £14.99. A look at the canals from the start through to today.

"The Great Days of the Canals", Anthony Burton, Tiger Books International, £17.99. Similar to previous.

"The Archaeology of Canals", P.J.G. Ransom, Worlds Work Ltd.

"The Illustrated History of Canal and River Navigations", Edward Paget-Tomlinson, Sheffield Academic Press.

"Building Britain's Canals", David Gladwin, K.A.F. Brewin Books.

"Waterways in the Making", Edward Paget-Tomlinson, The Landscape Press. £10.95.

"Canals and Their Architecture", Robert Harris, Godfrey Cave Associates Ltd.

"William Jessop, Engineer", Charles Hadfield and A.W. Skempton, David & Charles, £12.50

"James Brindley, Engineer", Cyril T.G. Boucher, Goose & Son Ltd.

"Thomas Telford", L.T.C. Rolt, Penguin.

The Oakwood Press have an extensive list of publications on railways and individual canals and many canal societies publish their own histories.

John Harwood

Note: In the next issue of Pennine Link we hope to publish a list of books available through the Society - we might as well have the profit! Ed.

How others see us ... !

Palace equality...

THE story 'Prince Charles wants more blacks on his staff' is vintage stuff.

Like 'Airships - the lorries of the future,' 'How our old canals could become vital trade arteries of the new millennium' and 'Elvis seen in El Paso diner' it comes from a repository of rubbish used to fill holes on quiet news days.

This time we're told Buckingham Palace will advertise for staff as 'an equal opportunities employer'.

Isn't there anyone at the palace capable of seeing the irony in such a phrase when applied to a monarchy?

Daily Mail 3/11/97

NEW MEMBERS & BACK ISSUES

THE SOCIETY WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

- 2457 Mr Finch, [REDACTED]
2458 Mrs Eden-Hughes, [REDACTED]
2459 Mr Whitehead, [REDACTED]
2460 Mr Hughes, [REDACTED]
2461 Mr Parkinson, [REDACTED]
2462 Mr Bilsborough, [REDACTED]
2463 Mr & Mrs Preece, [REDACTED]
2464 Mr Johnson, [REDACTED]
2465 Mr & Mrs Dawson, [REDACTED]
2466 Mr Gee, Slaitwaite, [REDACTED]
2467 Mr Powell, [REDACTED]
2468 Mr Makin, [REDACTED]
2469 Mr Hoare, [REDACTED]
2470 Miss Ingrey, [REDACTED]
2471 Mr Porter & Son, [REDACTED]

THE FOLLOWING BACK NUMBERS ARE AVAILABLE FREE FROM:

John Maynard, 29 Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham, Yorkshire.

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*Please note that certain issues are now reduced to single copies only - so, first come, first served!
Also, the issues listed are the only ones held, please do not request issues which are not on the list.*

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD NO. 19

ACROSS 8. Bingley five rise 9. Ogee 10. Weir 11. Astern 12. Trough 13. Stanton 14. Beeston
16. Fouled 18. Staith 19. Clog 21. Tyne 22. Ocker hill tunnel

DOWN 1. Kings sutton lock 2. Ogre 3. Kelvin 4. Officer 5. Avocet 6. Crew 7. Islington tunnel
15. Rushall 17. Dinghy 18. Sturts 20. Glen 21. Tone

COMING SOON ...

WEST SIDE MEETINGS

Wednesday 14th January

General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.

Wednesday 11th February

General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.

Wednesday 11th March

General Meeting at the Tollemache Arms, Mossley, 8.00pm.

In the next Issue of Pennine Link ...

Foxton Inclined Plane

Profile - Brian Minor, Festivals Officer

Poetry Please

IWAAC Final Report

.... *plus all the regular features*

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