

THE WINDLASS

No. 33 DECEMBER, 1962



"Jason" in the Grand Surrey Docks

Photograph I. Davies

Journal of
THE LONDON and HOME COUNTIES BRANCH of
The Inland Waterways Association Ltd., Published alternate months

1/-

"MAID" LINE CRUISERS LTD.

FERRY YACHT STATION
THAMES DITTON
SURREY

Tel.: Emberbrook 1078 (3 lines)

(Alternative Turn-round Points at Reading and Brinklow, near Coventry)

★

We have been appointed Sole Booking Agents for other cruisers operating on the Thames, the Severn, and the Canals from Kingston, Tardebigge, Bunbury, Gt. Haywood, Macclesfield, Cosgrove, Tewkesbury, Cropredy, etc., also on the lovely River Shannon in Ireland.

We have also been appointed Agents for a fleet of new cruisers operating on the River Marne in France.

Over 90 craft cruising on the Upper Thames, Oxford, Grand Union, Worcester & Birmingham, Shropshire Union and other Canals.

MODERN SELF-STARTING DIESEL & PETROL ENGINES
ELECTRIC LIGHT :: SAFETY GAS INSTALLATIONS

Foam rubber mattress. Refrigerators. Gas cookers with ovens.
"Kecold" cold boxes. Running hot water systems.

Full Details in our 100-PAGE COLOUR ILLUSTRATED BROCHURE

Many 1963 bookings now being taken.

RIPARIAN OWNER SERVICE Landing Stages, Bank Protection

Mobile equipment available Thames and Inland Waterways. Fittings for D.I.Y. construction. Surveys undertaken. Plans prepared. From a Willow tree to a complete river frontage, consult . . .

T. HARRISON CHAPLIN LTD.

Meadhurst Park Nursery
Sunbury-on-Thames

Est. 1907 Telephone: 3371
Illustrated brochure on request

THE WILLOW WREN CANAL CARRYING COMPANY

Largest independent traders on the waterways between London and the Midlands, also offer facilities for pleasure boat owners:

Docking, Engine Installations, Conversions,
Electrical Work — also suppliers of
traditionally painted canal ware

Yard: BRAUNSTON, NORTHANTS

Main Office: DURHAM WHARF, BRENTFORD, MIDDX. — Tel.: ISLeworth 7282

J. TIMS & SONS LTD. STAINES, MIDDLESEX

Phone:
STAINES 52093

Cabin Cruisers and Self-drive Launches for Hire

Moorings, Storage, River Bank Petrol
and Oil Service, Calor Gas, etc.

:: Entrance from Chertsey Lane ::

Please mention The Windlass when replying to advertisements.

THE LONDON AND HOME COUNTIES BRANCH
OF THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION LTD.

Patrons : Dame MARGOT FONTEYN de ARIAS, D.B.E.; JOHN BETJEMAN, C.B.E.

Chairman : DAVID HORSFALL, n.b. Adelina, Woodham Lock, West Byfleet, Surrey

Hon Secretary : David Harman, 3b Drayton Road, Tonbridge, Kent. **Hon. Treasurer** : Dr. Robert J. Saunders, 10 Lyford Road, S.W.18. **Hon. Press Secretary** : Major M. Stephen, Furzefield, Cowfold, Horsham, Sussex. **Hon. Editor** : Miss Claire Johnstone, Willow Cottage, Timsway, Staines, Middx. **Hon. Advertisement Manager** : David Cooper, 8 Chatsworth Road, Chiswick, W.4. **Hon. Social Secretary** : James Street, 52 Moreton Street, S.W.1.

Other Members of the Committee

Thames : Brian Ambrose, 40 Egmont Road, New Malden (Malden 4322); **Lee and Stort** : H. A. H. Burgess, 11 West Street, Hertford; **Kennet and Avon** : Ray Glaister, 75 Herons Wood, Harlow, Essex; **Wey** : Bryan Nicoll, n.b. Arcturus, Guildford Wharf, Friary Street, Guildford, Surrey; **Chelmer and Stour** : J. E. Marriage, Budd's Farm, Highwood, Chelmsford, Essex; **Medway** : Derek Salmon, Springhill Cottage, Yardley Park Road, Tonbridge, Kent; Mrs. G. Spratt, 57 Oxberry Avenue, S.W.6; **Thames** : Stanley Tims, Messrs. J. Tims & Sons, Staines, Middx; **Grand Union** : Oliver Turner, 57 Fitzroy Road, N.W.1.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

WHEN these notes appear our waterways will have barely a month left of traditional administration. The new Transport Bill, when it becomes law, will remove most of the rights and privileges the waterways have enjoyed: rights which have existed from time immemorial on navigable rivers and been incorporated by wise legislatures into Acts designed to extend the navigation system of the country. In my notes I have more than once referred to these rights, but a reiteration of what they are and what their cessation will lead to would not be amiss.

There is no doubt that in the New Year our waterways will be most dangerously placed. Unless the Minister really does clear out the "old guard," which has been responsible for so much of the decline in the prosperity of our waterways, there is little doubt that early abandonment of most of the system (certainly Class III and probably much of Class II of the Board of Survey) must be envisaged.

Clause 43 of the Bill provides that the new Authority shall be empowered "to make such charges for their services and facilities and to make the use of those services and facilities subject to such terms and conditions as they think fit." As was stated in Bulletin 66, this Clause, of a form unique to British Transport legislation, is in effect a charter to close the entire waterways system. The powers conferred by this Clause make one fear the worst when it is realised what sordid and dishonest measures have been used in the past to effect closure where no such powers were available. The build-up of Russian missiles in Cuba was perfectly open and above-board; no attempt was made to conceal their existence: but did such frank erection of lethal missiles in any way diminish their potency?

Just how under-hand some of British Waterways activities are has been revealed by the results of a Study Group appointed by the Branch Committee which has been investigating the accounts of British Waterways relating to carrying activities. For years—since 1947, in fact—the carrying fleet of the country has run at a loss. On the basis of that loss British Waterways have reduced their carrying activities, especially so far as narrow boats are concerned, presumably on the argument that the less activity in an unprofitable venture the less deficit on that venture. But what does "deficit" mean? It is a figure recorded in the accounts, but when you observe that the receipts of the carrying fleet are annually very much greater than the working expenses the suspicion that there is "something rotten" creeps in. The deficit is simply arrived at by transferring a large part of those receipts to British Waterways (non-carrying) as toll charges on British Waterways' own vessels. The charge made has every year been sufficient to turn the working surplus into a deficit. Up to 1955, that is. By that year the diminishing fleet, unable to sustain the too-heavy administrative costs, really began to make a loss—but only a small one. Even in 1961, the real loss on the carrying fleet was less than £20,000: just look in the British Waterways accounts for that year and see what it appears as!* If that sort of behaviour has been carrying on under the present legislation, which more or less safeguards our rights, what can we expect in the future when the rights have been removed?

* In addition there is a mysterious item which can only be classified as "miscellaneous expenses"; the amount is over £500,000, or a third of the expenditure. Surely we are entitled to a breakdown of the figure.

Around the Waterways

RIVER THAMES

REGULAR users of the Thames will no doubt be familiar with the cluster of islands at the foot of Hart Lock Woods roughly midway between Pangbourne and Goring. They give an Amazonian touch to an otherwise typically English pastoral scene, and hereabouts is the site of Harts Lock, long since vanished for ever.

Recently a scheme was put forward to remove these islands, the reason being that they stand in the middle of a long, wide, straight stretch of river which otherwise had the potential makings of a regatta course on a par with that of Henley, and possibly even reaching Olympic standards. It is understood, however, that the scheme has now been abandoned, as one of the two county council planning committees who had to be approached has turned it down. Furthermore, it now transpires that the resulted course would after all fall short of the required standard for Olympic rowing events.

Whilst one must commend the public spirited owner on his enthusiasm on behalf of international sport, most Thames lovers must surely breathe a sigh of relief that the islands have been relieved.

This is not the place to argue the pros and cons of this particular scheme, but had it come off there would surely have been created a precedent whereby many a familiar feature of the Thames, and other waterways, could be removed or completely altered, probably in some cases to serve an ulterior motive. We on the Thames are too inclined to take the complacent view that "it can't happen here." This time it nearly did!

Those of you who have spent many a frustrating hour waiting to get through Bell Weir Lock at week-ends, will be delighted to learn that hydraulic mechanism is being installed at the moment. This should greatly speed up passage through this serious bottleneck. Not the least sorry to see the passing of manual operation at this lock will be Robin Carter, the long-suffering and over-worked keeper at this busy spot.

STANLEY TIMS.

THE Thames Conservancy reports the following locks will be closed for traffic for repairs: Shepperton, December 3rd-10th; Culham, December 3rd-17th; Days, January 7th-21st; Bray, January 14th-28th; Marlow, January 14th-February 25th; Bell Weir, January 28th-February 11th; and Benson, January 28th-February 18th. All dates inclusive.

RIVER MEDWAY

Tonbridge Pleasure Boat Mooring

THE season for free mooring for visiting boats ended on the 30th September and by that date 45 craft had used the facilities that we have provided. That the mooring is appreciated by visitors is confirmed by the number of appreciative comments I have received; some people have even taken the trouble to write to me on their return home. It even induced one lapsed member to renew his subscription, the cash being paid over as we passed one day in Sluice Weir lock.

Winter Moorings

Two boats are at present moored for the winter at our site, both owned by I.W.A. members. As one owner remarked to me, he prefers paying his winter mooring fee to the I.W.A. so that the Association benefits from it. This is a good point. There is still room for one or two boats if any members wish to lay up at Tonbridge until 31st March, 1963. The charge is 3d. per foot per week.

Future Plans

If members have any ideas for possible improvements to the navigation that they would like the River Medway Sub-Committee to consider, would they please write to me as soon as possible.

DEREK SALMON.

RIVER STOUR

THE Branch Committee recently authorised the River Stour Action Committee to spend up to £20 on emergency repairs to Brantham Lock. (See cover photo of *The Windlass* last August—Ed.) This will involve the plugging of a hole through the base of the lock wall. This will prevent soil behind the wall from being washed away.

The Action Committee hope to undertake this work in the next month or so, concurrently with work which our member Mr. Riggs is to undertake at Brantham Mill, thereby saving, it is hoped, in transport costs for the materials. Volunteers to help undertake this work should write to Ivan Cane, Hon. Secretary to the River Stour Action Committee.

The Harwich branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club are in the course of carrying out an underwater inspection of the four surviving locks, with special reference to Brantham Lock. Their report will considerably help in the repair of the lock.

Following the success of the River Stour Rally, the Action Committee decided that two should be

held in 1963. The first will be in April or May from Sudbury to Bures and will be aimed at exercising the right of navigation on this portion of the river. The second, in September, will be drawn over the same course as this year, with the object of drawing public attention to the possibilities of reopening the locks to navigation.

J. E. MARRIAGE.

GRAND UNION CANAL

Locking up Times, London Area.

BBRITISH Waterways announce the following locking up times with effect from 29th October, 1962, for the Winter period.

Regent's Canal

All locks.

Monday to Thursday — 8 a.m.-4.30 p.m.

Friday — 8 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Saturday — 8 a.m.-Noon.

Sunday — CLOSED.

Hertford Union

All locks.

Locking up times as for Regent's Canal, but locks are kept locked; passage can only be gained by giving ONE DAY'S prior notice to Paddington Traffic Office (Tel. CUNningham 6101).

Grand Union Canal

Thames Lock, 101.

Monday to Sunday — open according to tide, usually 2-3 hours before and after every high water. (For details phone Isleworth 8941.)

Brentford Lock, 100.

Monday to Friday — 6 a.m.-6 p.m.

Saturday — 6 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday — CLOSED.

Locks 98 and 99.

Monday to Sunday — open 24 hours.

Hanwell Flight, 97-90.

Monday to Friday — 6 a.m.-7 p.m.

Saturday — 6 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday — CLOSED.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Last downhill craft must enter lock 90 1½ hours before locking up, and last uphill craft must enter lock 97 two hours before locking up. Previously the locking time allowance was one hour in each direction. British Waterways announce that the new times will be strictly adhered to.

Cowroast and Marsworth Flights.

Monday to Saturday — 6 a.m.-8 p.m.

Sunday — 6 a.m.-6 p.m.

Aylesbury Arm.

We are glad to report that this Arm, previously locked, is now open Mondays to Fridays for 24 hours.

The locking up times on the rest of the canal are very similar to those in operation last winter, generally 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays, and to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Any members who experience difficulty over the Sunday closing are asked to send details to the Editor.

Opening of New Brentford Locks

ON October 24th, Sir Reginald Kerr declared open, in the presence of the Mayors of Brentford and Chiswick and Heston and Isleworth and other officials, the reconstructed Thames Lock, No. 101, where the Grand Union Canal enters the Thames at Brentford. The old hand-operated lock, for long a serious bottleneck as craft can only enter and leave for about three hours before and after high water, has been replaced by hydraulically-operated duplicate locks; a member present on the opening day reported that they both looked handsome and were working well.

The new locks, 85 feet long, 18 feet 6 inches wide and with a depth on the sill of 6 feet, will enable 18 feet beam Thames lighters to reach the canal warehouses at the Brentford Depot, where lock 100 was also recently widened and equipped with mechanically-operated gates. They should also ease the passage of pleasure craft, which have often been delayed as a result of the numbers of commercial craft trying to go through during the restricted hours of opening; although on a busy day, with barges being thrown out of the lock with a power winch, care will always be required in negotiating this entrance to the canal. If pleasure traffic continues to increase, perhaps one day British Waterways may be able to install small boat locks both here and at Brentford, similar to those that are provided at Teddington. Meanwhile, I hope many more people, especially those with craft based on the Thames, will try coming up the Grand Union Canal.

OLIVER TURNER.

RIVER WEY

THE Guildford Belle, of which some mention was made in our last issue, was built for private use only, and the pleasure trips mentioned will be made by the owner and his family. This craft has been accepted at Lloyds for registry as a British ship. It is believed that she is the only privately built boat to be so accepted.

The Water Board are going ahead with a scheme to take up to a million gallons of water a day from the River Wey at Millmead, Guildford. The water will be for domestic use, and will not be returned.

F. H. HUGHES.

CHELMER & BLACKWATER

THE Essex River Board have recently announced that their half-a-million pound flood prevention scheme to the rivers in Chelmsford is about to be started. This will involve the construction of an electrically-operated sluice, the making of new channels, and the widening and straightening of both the River Chelmer and the River Can. As part of the scheme boat rollers are to be built around the new sluices. This will enable boats to pass directly from the Chelmer and Blackwater on to the town rivers. Previously sluices, with no adequate means of portage barred the way. The Chelmsford Town Hall have agreed to pay the cost of the rollers. This enlightened step will no doubt lead to the increased use of Chelmsford's rivers by boats.

J. E. MARRIAGE.

BOOK REVIEW

THE IDENTIFICATION OF COMMON WATER WEEDS. Bulletin No. 183 of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Obtainable from H.M. Stationery Office, price 3s. 6d. Published 1962.

THIS booklet, written by Mr. R. J. Chancellor of the Agricultural Research Council's Weed Research Organization at Kidlington, Oxford, contains details of thirty-four species of plants that grow in water in the British Isles. They are divided into three groups: floating, submerged and emergent. Those major menaces to navigation along neglected waterways are all here; it is good to be able to name them.

R. M.

LEE & SHORT HIRE CRUISERS Hallingbury Mill, Nr. Bishop's Stortford

Slipway and Moorings in lovely surroundings — 29 miles from London

41-seat Day Cruiser for Charter

2/3/4 berth Cruisers for your holiday on the Rivers Stort and Lee.

Brochure 6d. from —

55 Scarborough Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex
Telephone: Southend 77660

COMING EVENTS RECENT ACTIVITIES

DECEMBER 6th. Winter Film meeting at A.E.I. House, Victoria, 7 p.m. for 7.30 Refreshments available. The films to be shown include "There Go the Boats," "Broad Waterways" and "Boats to Birmingham," which are British Waterways publications, loaded with propaganda. Bring your own pinches of salt.

JANUARY 24th. Winter Meeting at Bridge House Restaurant, London Bridge, 7 p.m. for 7.30. Mr. Mitchell, of Mitchell Lighterage Co., will talk on Lighterage, with anecdotes, and will also perform some conjuring.

FEBRUARY 28th. Meeting at A.E.I. House, Victoria, on Civilised Transport.

MARCH. The Annual Dinner. Date to be announced.

THE LAST OUTING, 1962

ON Sunday, 14th October, a cruise was organised along the Grand Surrey Canal by the Branch in conjunction with the Port of London Authority, the visit being probably the first of its kind was arranged by the Inland Waterways Association. The voyage was made in Mr. John James' *Jason*.

To many South Londoners, the Surrey Canal is probably little known. Although only four miles long, including the short Peckham Branch or Arm, it carries nearly 200,000 tons of cargo per annum, mostly timber, oil and hemp. Prior to the closure of the South Metropolitan Gas Works, about 1,000 tons of coal per week also went along the canal.

Originally a waterway from the Thames to Epsom was proposed, although the first Act of Parliament in 1801 authorised a canal from Rotherhithe to Mitcham only. By 1811 the Canal had reached Camberwell. As it became increasingly difficult to raise funds for further extension, the Company became more interested in their dock activities and in 1855 changed their name to the Grand Surrey Docks and Canal Company and were empowered to build the Albion Dock. In 1864 the various dock companies amalgamated to form the Surrey Commercial Dock Company. In 1909 both the Canal and Docks came under the control of the P.L.A.

Our journey started by the Canal Lock on the south side of Greenland Dock at Rotherhithe. This is the only lock on the canal. The level of the canal is 3 feet to 4 feet 6 inches below the water level of the docks, according to the tide. The original entrance to the canal by Lavender dock is no longer used. *Jason* was soon making her way past the many barges, some with fanciful names. The average load of a timber barge is 50-60 tons but some can carry up to a 100 tons. They are towed along the canal by tugs, as many as six barges forming a tow. Where water transport is available, it is the most economical means of carriage for bulk cargoes like timber and coal. For the first half mile to Blackhorse Bridge, Evelyn Street, Deptford, the canal strikes south, then turns in a westerly direction.

A number of bridges span the canal, some worthy of mention. Of the several railway bridges, one has a double span. The Deptford Wharf Branch of the Southern Region, a goods line opened in 1849 which has never had a passenger service, crosses the canal twice, first by a girder bridge and then by a lift bridge. Adjoining the latter is a small signal cabin named "Liftbridge." The bridge is lifted at night and on Sundays. Glengall Road Bridge, Camberwell, opened in 1858 has decorative ironwork, a feature of many canal bridges throughout the country.

On our left, just beyond the lift bridge and another railway bridge, we passed the entrance and basin, which are virtually all that remains of the Croydon Canal, closed in 1836. It was taken over by the London and Croydon Railway, now part of the London Bridge to Croydon line. The railway was opened in 1839; the section from Croydon to Anerley was built on the old canal bed.

Between Glengall and Trafalgar Road Bridges, we left the Main line of the canal which terminates near Walworth Road and navigated the Peckham Arm, the only public section of the canal. There is new housing development by Boathouse Walk, S.E.15. About 120 feet of the Peckham Arm has been filled in to make a larger wharf. A P.L.A. boat assisted *Jason* in turning to return to the docks.

The Surrey Commercial Docks cover a land and water area of about 390 acres. Although various cargoes are handled, timber predominates. Approximately 750,000 tons of timber are unloaded annually, about 600,000 tons of which are transferred to barges and nearly a third of this tonnage goes along the Surrey Canal for distribution. Timber laden barges also cross the Thames to the River Lea destined for the furniture factories of Tottenham and Edmonton. Each week about 500 barges are used in the Surrey Docks which have no rail connection.

At the conclusion of the Docks Cruise, we partook of an excellent lunch in the P.L.A. Canteen by Russia Dock. Before leaving we said goodbye to the P.L.A. Vessel, which had done so much to make our trip a success by clearing a path for us amongst the many barges, no mean feat of navigation. Whilst in the docks, we had seen two large cargo vessels arrive.

In conclusion the author wishes to thank the Chief Information Officer of the Port of London Authority for his assistance in the preparation of this article. Grateful thanks must also be extended to the Branch Committee for organising the trip, the Port of London Authority for their co-operation, and John James and *Jason* who provided us once again with a memorable trip.

EDWARD TREBY.

ON THE AIR

ON the B.B.C. programme "Down Your Way," broadcast on November 4th from Stourport On Severn, listeners heard our member, Mr. H. Abbot, describe the development of his hire cruiser firm, Canal Pleasurecraft Ltd. Undoubtedly the factor contributing most to his success has been the operation of craft specially designed by himself for use on canals. In fact, several other hire craft operators now use boats of Holt Abbott's design, and several have been built for private owners.

The Canal Pleasurecraft fleet of nine boats are based at what can only be described as the ideal starting point for a canal cruise. Over 1,700 miles of waterway are open to the hirer, and, including lock working, an average speed of 2½ m.p.h. can be maintained. These facts, obvious to our members, were made clear in the broadcast.

Incidentally, we are pleased to welcome Canal Pleasurecraft Ltd. to the ranks of our regular advertisers, commencing with this issue.

1963

NATIONAL RALLY

SITE

WILL BE

Little Venice

RAILWAYS FROM CANALS

by J. D. CRANFIELD

PART VI

THE SALISBURY & SOUTHAMPTON CANAL

SALISBURY had early in the 17th century tried to obtain communication with the sea by the improvement of the Hampshire Avon, but with very limited success. One of the well-known episodes of the early Canal Mania was the famous "Ride to Devizes." Here proposals were put forward for canal communication with Salisbury but most went the way of other schemes of the time. Those ideas that survived eventually turned into several projects for the area, including one for a canal from Salisbury to Southampton.

This canal was projected in 1791 and a complete survey made the following year. It was to be 27 ft. wide, 4 ft. deep and capable of taking boats 60 ft. x 8 ft. The route was from Salisbury to Kimbridge, on the Andover Canal, 14 miles away, then down the latter for 9 miles to Redbridge and finally on to Southampton by another 4½ miles of new canal parallel to the coast. This latter part ran as far as the old part of Southampton and then turned inland, entering a tunnel, 880 yards in length, diagonal to and slightly below the level of the present railway tunnel. After emerging from the depths it proceeded parallel to the present Canal Walk to a point near the quay, passing under the old gaol. A branch was to run from the exit of the tunnel to Northam, ¾ mile away. Sea locks were to be constructed at the Platform and Northam.

While the Salisbury—Kimbridge section was accepted as useful to the area, the Southern end was greatly attacked. Southampton was already connected to Redbridge by the Test estuary, which was capable of taking far larger craft than the proposed canal could. However, the canal's Act was passed in 1795. The company had a capital of £86,000, £56,000 in shares and £30,000 additionally, half in shares and half on mortgage. A reciprocal toll agreement was made with the Andover company, and then Joseph Hill was appointed engineer.

The Southampton part was started almost immediately. Trouble was soon experienced with water in the tunnel, and in March 1797 it was decided to cut and cover most of it. In January 1798 Rennie was consulted, and as a result tunnelling went on, but bad workmanship by the contractors had already left its mark.

In May 1798 the last call was made on the £100 shares, and then an extra one was asked for to pay the previous month's wage bill. By this time the capital was more than expended. So far

part of the tunnel had been cut, and the canal thence to Redbridge was nearly ready after trouble had been ironed out in the embankment between the canal and the river estuary. The rest of the work was partly done, but nothing was ready for traffic.

An investigation was then called for to look into the accounts and also to see about collusion between engineer and contractor. Rennie was also called in to survey the whole line and estimate the cost of finishing the navigation. In 1799 he stated that an additional £30,000 was needed to finish the work, which was nearly at a standstill. It was decided to complete the Southampton part, other than the tunnel, and the Salisbury from Kimbridge to Alderbury Common, 2 miles from Salisbury. To finance this, shareholders were asked to allow calls on their shares up to £135. Joseph Hill was dismissed and Rennie recommended George Jones as the new engineer. A new Act granted authority to raise the £30,000 allowed by the first Act, also an additional £10,000 by mortgage. The Andover Canal contributed £2,000 for the Salisbury part, and work began again in September 1800. On the 26th April, 1802, the Salisbury section was opened to West Dean, with seven locks in use. By June 1803 it was opened to the 15th lock at Alderbury. From the wharf here a wooden railway was laid to the turnpike, 629 yards away. Traffic had now begun but rates were soon cut to try to attract more.

On the Southampton part the line was opened from Redbridge to the west end of the tunnel. In this state the canal remained, as no more money was coming in. The tunnel was incomplete, by a mere 23 yards, and the rest of the navigation was nowhere near being finished. The company met for the last time on the 18th March, 1808, with debts of £25,000. Traffic to Alderbury dried up at about this time, but the Southampton section had been out of use for some two years. By 1834 the proprietors had mostly taken back their land, the locks had been demolished, and the canal filled in.

This was not to be the end of the canal's history, however, as the two separate sections were later used by two railway lines as part of their routes.

The Southampton section was used in part by the Southampton & Dorchester Railway, an independent proposal in which the London & South

Western Railway was originally interested. However, the L.S.W.R. later deserted the scheme in favour of another route. In 1844 the Southampton & Dorchester agreed that the Great Western Railway should lease the line and, therefore, intended to build the railway on the broad gauge. This infiltration by the G.W.R. was another aspect of the railway war mentioned in the case of the Andover Canal, and was against the agreement between that company and the L.S.W.R. about invading each other's territory. The latter company took the matter to the Board of Trade, with the result that the new line was built on the narrow gauge. It was sanctioned in 1845 with powers for the L.S.W.R. to lease the line. Before construction could begin an application to Chancery was necessary to clear up the effects of the defunct canal company. The opening, on the 1st June, 1847, was delayed by collapses in the Southampton tunnel where it intersected the old canal tunnel. This railway is now the busiest in the area and forms part of the main line to Bournemouth and Weymouth.

The section from Kimbridge through to Salisbury was used by the Bishopstoke & Salisbury

Railway, later another section of the L.S.W.R. This was one of the lines that made Bishopstoke, later Eastleigh, the important rail centre it now is. The railway was sanctioned in 1844 and opened on the 1st March, 1847. At the Milford goods depot at Salisbury, part of the original terminus still exists. The old goods shed is original, as is one of the platforms, a weigh-house, and even a wooden lavatory, surely one of the oldest in the country. This station ceased to be used for passengers in 1859 after the line to the G.W.R.'s Fisherton Street station was opened. This railway is another of those used as a through route to Southampton, and also by trains by-passing the port. With the Andover Canal this navigation provided three sections of south Hampshire's rail network.

Why did the Salisbury & Southampton collapse? Here the answer is a simple one — lack of money and much shoddy management and workmanship. The Southampton was undoubtedly an unnecessary drain on financial resources. However, it is more than likely that if the navigation had been completed it would have disappeared with the Andover, its only connection.

A Day by the Kennet & Avon

by BRYAN NICOLL

HAVING a day's holiday to come and wanting to be away from the noise and rush of everyday life, we decided to return home after a weekend in the West Country by following the length of the K. & A. This was done by Mini car after doing a "reccé" of the River Avon Navigation from Bath down to the floating harbour of Bristol.

As the first six locks had been inspected the previous day, the morning found us by Lock No. 7 at the junction of the Canal with the Avon in Bath. The scene gave one a profound shock, both at the squalor of the neighbourhood and the condition of the flight of locks with their intermediate pounds. One felt that a rehabilitation of the canal would quickly be followed by a clearance of canalside property which ought to have been condemned years ago. Within a matter of a ten minute walk, the scene was a complete contrast — one of peace and quiet at Sydney Wharf, with its wharfside buildings beside the canal covered with autumn leaves. Two more bends and the dramatic sight of a tunnel entrance with a house built over the portico. The towpath then followed through the tunnel to emerge into a "sunken garden" within a garden. Here the canal winds

through the famous Sydney Gardens, through a second tunnel to give onto a view of the Avon Valley above the city.

Time now to drive by car to our next call—the Dundas Aqueduct. Here the scene gave one the key to the engineering feats required for the canal's construction. No photograph could surely take in the views nor the atmosphere of the first "crossing" of the Avon by the canal, and the junction of the old Somerset Canal, its last lock chamber now forming part of a flower garden but still clear to see.

Bradford-on-Avon, with its wharf and lock next demanded our inspection. The whole area, with dry dock and warehouse, was in good repair save for the inevitable missing windows. Pressing on now to Semington, where the roving bridge over the old Wilts canal clearly showed the junction with the K. & A. A filling station with adjacent general store within a few hundred yards along the main road made one realise that a note ought to be made for future reference, should one again be able to cruise this waterway.

Next, a pilgrimage to the famous flight at Devizes was a must — the reward, a sight fully up to expectations, but with the sad sight of

neglected lock gates and small trees growing in the lock chambers between apparently sound chamber walls. Honey Street and its wharf showed with its slipway obvious signs of a bygone industry of boat repairs. The wharf is still used for goods—waste paper stored for transport, but alas by road.

Pewsey Wharf now sought our attention with our son Michael eager to be out of the car to inspect. Freshly painted entrance gates, fences and cottage immediately caught one's attention, not to mention the ample entrance for both private and commercial vehicles giving onto hardstanding beside the wharf edge. Severnake High Level Station was next on our list, for here lives Pat Burke with her family in the actual buildings on the platform. No trains or lines pass through the station now but an association exists with inland waterways, for here Pat works at her potters wheel to create her pottery decorated with narrow boats and canal patterns. A short walk away, and Bruce Tunnel can be inspected on the summit level.

On by car now to Hungerford and the wharf close to the main road bridge. The impression was that of a striking similarity to that of the

wharf at Honey Street and in much the same condition. Finally, a dash to Newbury Lock and the eastern end of the Canal and the junction with the River Kennet Navigation. Here the standard of maintenance is quite different for no less a person than John Gould is on hand to keep a watching brief on things. Round the corner from the lock is a bus station with a definite canal association. Here one sees buildings strange in shape to a bus terminus, but not so to the perceptive eye which realises that the buses now stand on what was a canal basin beside the navigation.

Darkness of the October evening now precluded further exploration save for the memory of our visit to the famous beam engines at Crofton, still waiting to do their job once more of pumping water into the canal from reservoirs across the cut but now resigned to watch the work being given to a diesel engine in an insignificant hut.

Maureen, my wife, is now truly converted to the K. & A. after our fleeting visit and is at a loss to accept that the canal is not busy with craft for surely, she comments, the condition of parts of the waterways are far better than those of navigated canals of the Midlands.

NEW MEMBERS

WE welcome the undermentioned who, having joined the Inland Waterways Association and residing in the Branch area, are automatically made members of the London and Home Counties Branch for a year. We sincerely hope that at the end of their first year they will think it worthwhile to pay the Branch annual subscription of 5s. in order to continue their Branch membership. The number of Branch memberships that lapse at the end of the first year is considerable. We feel sure that some of these are accidental and result from the Branch subscription being overlooked. Please note that this amount should be paid to the head office.

MILLER, J. L., 26 St. John's Avenue, S.W.15.
PYLE, Miss J. E., 6 Hartington Road, Chiswick, W.4.
RIMINGTON, J., The Lodge, Langham, Colchester, Essex.
COLBOURNE, K. M., "Kentine," 66 Cissbury Crescent, Saltdean, Nr. Brighton, Sussex.
AYLESBURY CRUISING CLUB, c/o. 5 Rothesay Avenue, Greenford, Middx.
CHRISTIE, T., 95 Thames Side, Staines, Middx.
DAY, V. P., 29 The Glebe, Leigh, Reigate, Sussex.
MORGAN-OWEN, J. G., c/o. Messrs. Glyn, Mills & Co. Holt's Branch, Kirkland House, Whitehall, S.W.1.

VENABLES, Dr. P. H., 62 Whyteleafe Road, Caterham, Surrey.
POWNALL, R. H., 67 Vivian Avenue, Hendon, N.W.4.
BALL, Miss C. S., Morar, Trodds Lane, Merrow, Guildford, Surrey.
BUCHANAN, J. D., Deanscroft, Oakham, Rutland.
HARWOOD, Miss B., 58 Temple Fortune Lane, N.W.11.
HINDSON, Miss J. M., 34 Howitt Road, N.W.3.
JOHNSON, Mrs. W., 58 Temple Fortune Lane, N.W.11.
LEMARE, R., Friends School, Saffron Waldon, Essex.
PHILLIPS, The Hon. Eiddwen S., 15 St. Mark's Crescent, N.W.1.
SCRUTTON, Mrs. H., 34 Howitt Road, N.W.3.
RUSSELL, J., Orchards Hill, The Avenue, Haslemere, Surrey.
SANDERS, J. L., 75 Frizlands Lane, Dagenham, Essex.
TAYLOR, P. A., Carmanyll, 84 Whitelands Road, High Wycombe, Bucks.
CLAPHAM, M. J. S., 26 Hill Street, W.1.
TAIT, Commander A. G., 29 Chelsea Park Gardens, S.W.3.
BAKER, E., 10 Old Hall Close, Hatch End, Middx.

AMENDED ENTRY

ROWE, Brian H., c/o The Midland Bank Ltd., Kingsway, W.C.2.

A GLANCE BACKWARDS

Edited from "The Percy Anecdotes"

by JOHN SHELDON

WITH the exception of the nations of antiquity, the Chinese are the first who appear to have cultivated the science of inland navigation, and even at this day, they stand unrivalled in this respect. In the empire of China, there is not a town, or even a village, which has not a canal, by which navigation is rendered so common, that almost as many people live on the water as on the land.

The great canal, which is also called the royal canal, is one of the wonders of the world. It was finished about the year 980; 30,000 men were employed 43 years in finishing it. It runs from North to South, extending from the city of Canton to the extremity of the empire; and by it, all kinds of foreign merchandise entered at that city, and conveyed directly to Peking, being a distance of 825 miles. Its breadth is about 50 ft. and its depth about six-and-a-half, so that it is sufficient to carry vessels of considerable burthen, which are managed by masts and sails, as well as by oars; some of a smaller sort are towed by hand. The emperor of China is said to employ ten thousand ships. This canal passes through, or near, 41 large cities; it has 75 vast sluices to keep up the water, and pass the barques and ships where the ground will not admit of sufficient depth of channel, besides several thousand drawbridges and others. Innumerable canals are cut from this main canal, and the whole empire abounds with canals, rivers, lakes and rivulets.

These canals are cut through any kind of private property, gardens, plantations, or pleasure ground; not even the gardens of the emperor, or any of his governors, are exempted; but when the work arrives at the garden or pleasure ground, the governor, or even the emperor himself, digs the first spade of earth, and pronounces with an audible voice, "This is to let those of inferior situation know, that no private pleasure shall obstruct the public good." There are bridges over these canals of three, five, seven, or more, arches, to open a free communication with the country. The middle arch is generally very high, that barques and barges may pass under it with their masts standing. When the water is high, and liable to overflow the neighbouring fields, they take care to open the sluices to convey it away, and to keep it at a certain height in the canal. There are inspectors appointed to survey the canal, and visit it continually; and workmen always ready to repair the damaged places.

Father Magallante tells us, that there is a passage by inland navigation, from one end of the empire of China to the other, being a space of 600 French leagues, or 1,800 miles, and that a traveller may go this whole distance entirely by canals or rivers, except a single day's journey by land, to cross a mountain; an advantage which this Jesuit, who made the voyage himself, observes, is not to be found in any other kingdom or state in the universe.

In China one large canal generally runs through every province, and a vast number of smaller ones are cut from that large one, which again are subdivided into still smaller, or rather rivulets, that end at some village or great town; sometimes they discharge themselves into a lake or large pond, from which all the adjacent country is watered; so that these clear and plentiful streams, embellished by a great number of fine bridges, bounded by neat and convenient banks, equally distributed through vast plains covered with a prodigious number of towns and cities, whose ditches they fill, and whose streets they form, at once render China one of the most fruitful and most beautiful countries in the world.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

"The Thames Welcomes You . . ." By Peter H. Chaplin. 4/- post paid. An ideal Christmas gift. T. Harrison Chaplin Ltd., Meadhurst Park Nursery, Cadbury Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middx.

TOYS WANTED

This Christmas give a toy for a child of the working boats. Send them to Mr. F. J. Chapman, Canal Boatman's Institute, The Butts, Brentford.

Classified advertisements are an excellent medium for getting rid of what you don't want, and obtaining what you do. Why not give it a try? Rates are 3d. a word, minimum 3/-, box numbers 1/- extra. Box number replies should be addressed care of the Editor.

Canal Pleasurecraft (Stourport) Ltd.

STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN, Worcs. Tel.: 2970

**FIRST TO DESIGN AND BUILD MOTOR CRUISERS
ESPECIALLY FOR USE ON THE WHOLE OF THE
CANAL AND RIVER NETWORK**

*2 to 6 berth fully equipped and comfortable motor cruisers for
hire on the canals and rivers Severn and Avon*

Latest types include these unique special features :—

- ★ CLOSED-CIRCUIT KEEL COOLING
- ★ HOT WATER TO ALL CABINS
- ★ LARGE FULLY OPENING WINDOWS
- ★ GAS COOKING WITH OVEN AND GRILL
- ★ PYE TRANSISTOR BUILT-IN RADIO
- ★ ELECTRIC SHAVING POINT
- ★ LARGE REFRIGERATOR
- ★ FORMICA SURFACES
- ★ ELECTRIC LIGHTS
- ★ WIPE-CLEAN LYONIDE DUNLOPILLO CUSHIONS

ILLUSTRATED BROCHURE ON REQUEST

W. SPRATT & SONS

POWER TOOL and TOOL SPECIALISTS

620 Fulham Road, London, S.W.6

Stockists of :—

BRIDGES
BLACK & DECKER
COBRA
BURGESS

STANLEY
RECORD
WODEN
ECLIPSE
KING DICK
ELORA
SURFORM

FORMICA
WAREITE
LACONITE
BALAWALL
LAWN MOWERS
GARDEN TOOLS, ETC.

POWER TOOLS

HAND TOOLS

EVERYTHING FOR THE HANDYMAN

Telephone : **REN 3577**

Please mention The Windlass when replying to advertisements.

Printed by Foundry Press Ltd., Brereton Printing Works, Bedford, and Published by
THE LONDON AND HOME COUNTIES BRANCH OF THE I.W.A. LTD.