

THE WINDLASS

Vol. I No. 4. APRIL 1957



Stonebridge—the start of the Wey and Arun canal

Photo R. Davis

“THE WINDLASS” is the bi-monthly journal of
THE LONDON and HOME COUNTIES BRANCH of
The Inland Waterways Association.

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THE LONDON AND HOME COUNTIES BRANCH OF THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION

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The Chairman's Column

The Branch is highly honoured in that following her visit to the Boat Show at Olympia, Dame Margot Fonteyn, D.B.E., has consented to become a Patron of the Branch. We look forward to the possibility of seeing both Dame Margot and Mr. Betjeman at some of the Branch functions.

Your Committee has been exceedingly busy during the first few weeks of 1957. Successful Public Meetings have resulted in the formation of a Steering Committee, consisting of Representatives from the I.W.A., the local authorities and all the other interests such as sailing clubs, anglers, Sea Scouts, etc. This Steering Committee has the task of forming a constitution for the Lee & Stort Development Committee, which will be formed in the near future.

The Film Show which took place on 7th February at the Princess Louise, High Holborn, was again highly successful, and everyone enjoyed Mr. Brooker's interesting address on the Growth of the Hire Cruiser Industry on the Norfolk Broads. The attendance was so large that it seems as though we shall shortly have to seek a larger hall in which to stage our film shows.

Your Committee's endeavours recently have been devoted to fixing an attractive programme for the Summer season and this has proved exceedingly difficult.

The original programme of boat trips and outings had to be entirely recast and modified owing to the fact that many boat operators were not in a position to accept bookings owing to the shortage of diesel fuel. Details of the trips that we have been able to arrange however, are given under "Forthcoming Events." Other future activities under consideration are further demonstration cruises, by a number of cruisers, similar to that which took place up the River Lee & Stort last year. The rivers Wey and Medway and the Aylesbury Arm are possibilities.

It is hoped to stage "Operation Flyboat" next October with the co-operation of British Waterways, when a 4 or 6-berth cruiser will attempt to reach London from Birmingham in under 48 hours. Further details later.

In addition to the proposed Lee and Stort Development Committee, sub-Committees have also been formed by your Branch Committee to deal with the Medway, the Stour and the Basingstoke Canal.

Hon. Secretary's Notes

It has been brought to my attention that one of our members arranges some wonderful Canoe Camping Holidays, which take place on the Rivers Wye and Avon from the beginning of May until the middle of October. All enquiries should be addressed to Mr. P. G. Lawrence, 20, William Way, Letchworth, Herts.

I now have an assistant, Mr. Christopher Groves of London Rowing Club, Embankment, Putney, S.W.15, to whom all routine enquiries regarding membership should be addressed. Please also write to time with regard to car badges and other things of this nature.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Please reserve these dates now!

APRIL 28th (SUNDAY). Springtime special! A cruise on the Medway through the garden of England. The launch will leave Strood at 11.30 a.m. and will arrive at Maidstone by tea-time. Accommodation is very restricted so apply for tickets as soon as possible (sending cash with application) and in any case not later than April 15th, to Mr. Groves, whose address appears at the top of page 2. The charge is 12/6 for members and 15/- for non-members; please take packed lunch. Ham salad teas will be available at 3/-, please state if tea required when booking. Trains from London are the 9.52 a.m. from London Bridge arriving at Strood at 11 a.m. or the 9.49 a.m. from Cannon Street which arrives at Strood at 11.4 a.m. Strood pier is opposite Strood station. *Warning!* The boat is not fitted with a canopy so please bring waterproofs. Members returning to London by train will leave Maidstone at about 7 p.m.

JUNE 16th (SUNDAY). Launch trip on the Upper Thames leaving Salter's quay, Windsor, at 11.30 a.m. and proceeding through Bray, Maidenhead, Boulter's Lock, Cliveden Reach, Bourne End and Marlow to Henley, arriving there at about 6 p.m. We shall be passing through the new electrically operated Cookham Lock. The launch will only have on board I.W.A. Members and their friends. The most suitable train to Windsor is the 10.12 a.m. from Waterloo which arrives at 11.2 a.m. Trains leave Henley at 6.4 p.m. and 7.4 p.m. arriving at Paddington at 7.29 and 8.29 respectively. Members should take a packed lunch with them. High teas will be served on board at 4/6 per head.

Please apply for tickets as soon as possible to Mr. Groves (whose address appears at the top of page 2), and in any case not later than June 9th. Please state if you wish teas to be booked for you. Launch tickets are:—11/6 for members and 13/6 non-members.

JULY 5th (FRIDAY). Annual General Meeting at the "Princess Louise," High Holborn.

JULY 21st (SUNDAY). A trip on the Chelmer and Blackwater. Full details will appear in the next issue of "The Windlass."

AUGUST 31st (SATURDAY) A proposed trip round the London Docks.

SEPTEMBER 22nd (SUNDAY). A trip on the Basingstoke Canal from Odiham in a horse-drawn barge.

OUR SOCIAL SECRETARY ALSO REPORTS

I was delighted to see so many members at the last film show and hope that our future activities will be equally well attended.

May I once again ask for suggestions from members for future activities? It would help enormously if we only knew the sort of social our members would support.

In future Committee members will be wearing badges to distinguish them from other members, and we would like all our members to know that the Committee will be only too happy to help them and welcome them at our functions.

HEATHER TALBOT.

FROM THE WATERWAY AUTHORITIES

Teddington Barge Lock will be undergoing repairs and will be closed to traffic between the following dates:—

April 8th to April 12th inclusive and May 6th to May 13th inclusive.

Teddington Launch Lock will be available for traffic during these periods.

STOP PRESS—British Waterways stoppages arrived too late for insertion.

Mr. C. GROVES, is changing his address to The Vicarage, Sonning-on-Thames.

Waterways of the Home Counties

4. KENNET & AVON NAVIGATIONS

George Westall, in his book "Inland Cruising on the Rivers and Canals of England and Wales" (1908), says of the Kennet & Avon: "On the whole no other canal leaving the Thames affords such excellent facilities for pleasure boating, nor more fascinating scenery than this, whose whole course extends through a tract of wonderful picturesqueness almost from end to end." He continues: "The navigation tolls for pleasure craft are exceedingly heavy and really ought to be revised, the charges being quite prohibitive to all but the well-to-do. A comparison will show there is not one among the other navigations of the country which imposes one half of the toll as is here demanded, and, although the facts have been represented to the proprietary, no redress has followed."

For the next forty remaining years of G.W.R. ownership (they purchased in 1852) up to Nationalisation redress still did not follow; but charges were further increased as part of the policy of discouraging traffic—a policy which included unsuccessful attempts at abandonment or closure between 1926 and 1929.

The G.W.R., however, carried out maintenance which kept the waterway in fairly good navigable order—difficulties caused to the occasional boat whose owners knew their rights and insisted on passing, chiefly resulting from infrequent operation of the canal.

The waterway is in three sections: The River Kennet Navigation from Thames (at Reading) to Newbury opened about 1720 (for detailed history see "Kennet Country"—Fred S. Thacker, or Money's "History of Newbury"); the River Avon Navigation from Hanham (Bristol) to Bath opened about 1728; and the Kennet & Avon Canal Navigation, linking the two, commenced 1796 and completed 1810 by the famous civil engineer John Rennie—so completing the route between London and Bristol.

The whole waterway passes craft of 73ft. length, 14ft. beam, and at least 4ft. draft, with a headway of about 8ft. 6ins., i.e. a maximum size boat to carry 70 or 80 tons.

The River Kennet section originally took "Newbury sized Barges" with a beam of about 17ft. and carrying 110 tons, but after the Kennet was absorbed by the Kennet & Avon Canal Coy., they obtained power to reduce the gauge to that of the rest of the canal, and although some Kennet locks were made smaller, many are still near their original size, 130ft. long and of the original and almost unique "turf sided" pattern. This extra length is a most useful advantage in that it enables a tug and lighter to pass nearly every lock between London and Newbury in one lockage.

The Kennet & Avon, as well as being the only direct route between the Thames and the Bristol Channel, is the only route across England for broad beam and full length boats. On the Leeds and Liverpool length is restricted to some 60ft. The River Kennet "cuts" were constructed with a surface width of 50ft., and the rest of the Navigation 45ft. The earlier character of the Kennet section is at once apparent with its timber bridges—mostly swing type, and "turf" locks, while on the canal proper locks are of brick and masonry, as are nearly all the bridges.

The total number of locks from Reading to Hanham (86½ miles) is 106. The waterway leaves the Thames at about 150ft. above sea level and steadily climbs the Kennet Valley to Hungerford with locks fairly evenly spaced, reaching about 250ft. above sea level at the twentieth lock at Newbury. The climb, after Hungerford, continues up the valley of the Dunn to Bedwyn and Crofton, where is the main reservoir and pumping station with its famous James Watt type pressure/vacuum beam engines built about 1796-1800, each doing about 10 strokes per minute at 1 ton of water per stroke. These must be the oldest engines in the world still in regular use, and lift water from the reservoir to the summit level, which is reached after a further mile and flight of five locks above Crofton.

The summit level at Savernake is nearly 450ft. above sea level, about two miles long, and passes through Bruce Tunnel—502 yards—of large bore and good headway. This tunnel passes under Savernake Station, from south to north of the railway, and over its eastern portico is a large and magnificently lettered stone as follows:—

"The Kennet & Avon Canal Company inscribe this Tunnel with the name Bruce, in testimony of their gratitude for the uniform and effectual support of the Rt. Hon. Thomas Bruce, Earl of Ailesbury, and Charles Lord Bruce, his son, through the whole progress of this great National Work, by which a direct communication, by water, was opened between the Cities of London and Bristol A.D. 1810."

This stone should be cleaned, and letters blacked, so that it can be seen from the near-by railway.

At the pretty village of Wootton Rivers the canal commences to descend again to the sea through four locks, which are followed by a level pound winding for 15 miles through the Vale of Pewsey, past Pewsey Wharf, Wilcot, and Honeystreet, with its timber yards, which—until discouraged by G.W.R.—were responsible for much canal traffic and where canal boats, wide and narrow, were built. There is a fine view of the White Horse a mile to the north. After Horton, and its two bridges, comes the ancient Wiltshire market town of Devizes, and the famous flight of 29 locks which drop the canal from about 420ft. to 200ft. in less than 2½ miles. From near the top are fine views over the Avon Valley. On Prison Bridge, near the top of this flight, there is a marble tablet carved as follows:—

"This Tablet is Erected by the
Kennet & Avon Canal Company,
To the Memory of
John Blackwell,
who, during 34 years, superintended the
works of the canal
as their Engineer
with fidelity, vigilance and ability
1849."

After just under two miles, and the Seend Feeder entry (a natural supply, everything above here relying on the Crofton Pumps), there is the Seend flight of 5 locks and after another two miles are the two Semington Locks just below which is the junction with the abandoned Wilts & Berks, a canal that was of extra narrow gauge and which once ran to the Thames at Abingdon, via Melksham, Swindon, and Wantage. Also at Semington is a handsome aqueduct of one arch. The next pound, of 5½ miles, goes by Hilperton Wharf, Trowbridge, and another single arch aqueduct over the railway, to Bradford on Avon Lock, with its fall of 10ft. 3ins.—the deepest on the Canal.

This is followed by a nine mile level pound of exceeding beauty along the steep sides of the Avon Valley via Limpley-Stoke to Bath top lock, twice crossing river and railway by Rennie's famous aqueducts of graceful architecture and massive engineering, at Avoncliffe and Dundas.

At the west end of Dundas Aqueduct is the junction with the closed Somerset Coal Canal. When the G.W.R. closed this to build a railway (now also closed) on its bed, they quite needlessly cut off the water this canal fed to the Kennet & Avon, so depriving it of an almost vital feeder. A little further on, at Claverton, is a Pumping Station where until recently a waterwheel-driven pump in the River Avon supplied water to the nine mile pound. This has now been replaced by a temporary diesel pump.

At Bath the Canal drops into the River Avon by a flight of seven locks, and the waterway then becomes a River Navigation, passing six more locks to Hanham where the river becomes semi-tidal. After other locks in the Port of Bristol, one reaches the sea at Avonmouth.

By the early 1920s G.W.R. policy had caused practically all carrying traffic to cease, except for a little from Bristol to Semington Mill which may have lasted until the early 1930s. The last "pair" to Newbury were the Emanuel Smith boats Speedwell and Richmond, steered by W. Blakeman, with wheat in 1925. About this time the timber firm of Robbins, Lane and Pinniger at Honeystreet took action in the High Court because the G.W.R. were not keeping proper navigability for their craft. Also, about this time, motor boat passenger traffic which was developing on the picturesque nine-mile pound from Bath to Bradford was killed by mal-administration of maintenance.

The bad administration, also killed ordinary small-boating at towns on the Canal—including the 15 mile pound from Devizes, and on the water at Newbury there was seldom even a canoe during the period between the Wars. During that time, however, a certain number of motor cruisers and converted canal boats passed through, also some Thames passenger steamers being transferred to or from the Severn area. One was the 70ft *Gaiety*, which is still at Evesham. In the 1930s, a fair amount of dredging and renewal of lock gates, etc., was carried out—partly resulting from the Robbins, Lane and Pinniger action and the unsuccessful attempt at closure.

Soon after the last War more private motor boats were quietly passing through, despite no efforts whatever to secure traffic—or even to let people know the route existed and in 1947 the Motor Narrow Boat *Westminster* went from Thames to Avonmouth and returned with a load of grain to Newbury. About this time, also, Mr. N. P. Davis brought his converted Motor Narrow Boat *Calisto* to Newbury (after being officially informed in writing by the railway that the locks were too short for his boat!) and, after some discouragement, started a fleet of hire dinghies there which were an immediate success and which have since considerably expanded.

In 1949 the "K. & A." was transferred from railway to British Waterways administration and a better policy was hoped for. Later that year the narrow boats *Colin* and *Iris* brought a cargo of paving slabs from Birmingham to Newbury, and in the first part of 1950 the boats *Columba* and *Kenelm* (John Knill) commenced the regular work of carrying salt from Middlewich to Newbury—

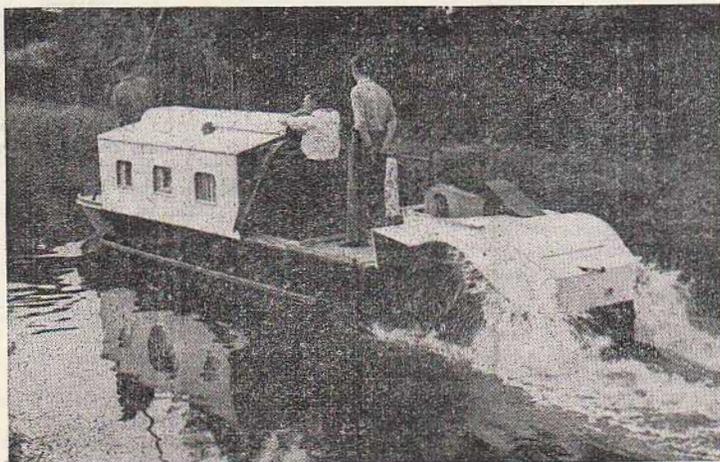
a long haul of over 200 miles for which canal transport is best suited—and at Whitsun a rally of cruisers from the Thames to Newbury was held. *Colin* and *Iris* also commenced a regular turf carrying contract from Newbury to Hampton-on-Thames, despite extreme lack of co-operation by British Waterways regarding loading.

Just after Whitsun a stoppage of undeclared duration was announced between the Thames and Newbury, owing to the alleged condition of Heales and Burghfield Locks. It is doubtful if their condition necessitated an immediate or prolonged stoppage and the work was not in fact carried out for many months. After Parliamentary questions it was announced that the section should be re-opened in about a year, but, in fact, it has not yet been re-opened. Despite expenditure on some major jobs, normal routine maintenance (and regular movement of maintenance craft—of great value in all aspects) practically ceased, allowing things to rapidly become more derelict in the last six years.

In 1950-51, hire cruiser trade commenced westward from Newbury with the experimental stern-wheeler *Wayfarer*, working the 35 miles stretch from Newbury to Devizes with regularity. The Motor Narrow boat *Colin*, 3ft. 6ins. draft—precluded from her proper work by the stoppage—did many successful passenger trips between Newbury and Kintbury, 6 miles and 6 locks to a 2-hour schedule and sometimes in one hour and forty minutes. The more the canal was used the better its condition.



Newbury Lock.



Sternwheeled Craft.
"Wayfarer"

Because of the success of *Wayfarer*, the 45ft. x 10ft. Stern-wheeler *Formidable* was completed at Bath and came through to Newbury ready for the 1952 season, and the motor boat passenger trips to Kintbury recommenced at Easter, to a printed time-table.

Soon after Easter, 1952, a lock just above Newbury was allowed to go out of action for want of minor repair, despite offers of the utmost help and even of financial assistance from users of the waterway and of the availability of a competent outside firm to do the work.

This has restricted the boats at Newbury to a 3-mile length, sometimes less, and subsequently the length thus put out of use have taken on a more abandoned appearance.

In 1954, by which time no improvement had taken place, two High Court Writs were issued on behalf of those wishing to use the "K. & A."

The British Transport Commission then promoted a Private Bill to extinguish the public right of use and to "prepare a scheme for the future."

In February 1956, however, the Government announced the "Bowes" Committee to recommend on all aspects of the future "set-up" of the water-ways. The B.T.C. Bill was vigorously opposed by the Inland Waterways Association, Kennet & Avon Canal Association, a number of firms and individuals, and the Local Authorities, and, as a result, and of the good work of numerous M.Ps, the Bill was revised to allow *no* further deterioration, pending time for action to be taken on the "Bowes" recommendations, and in this form it became an act last August with powers of enforcement in regard to maintenance. Although the Act, during an Interim Period of not more than 4 years, is to stop the canal getting into a worse state, but the right of use still exists where locks and bridges are in working order, the Commission are, during that time, protected from persons enforcing the right of through navigation, and are permitted to put in dams of a temporary nature instead of renewing lock gates if this is more economical. Recently British Waterways drawings of dams of a far too "permanent" nature have appeared!

Recent independent engineering and water supply surveys have shown that the "K. & A." could be quickly reopened to a light flow of traffic, and later to heavy traffic, at very moderate cost, and the water available was found to be adequate.

A lift at Devizes, in place of the flight, might be useful both to simplify traffic working, and to save water.

There should be full co-ordination between navigation and land-drainage aspects (up to the present there has been little or none) under one authority. This could lead to considerable economy and increased efficiency.

The increasing use of the Canal around 1947-52 had rapidly improved its condition (also skill and interest of staff), and deterioration since (due to disuse) has been most marked. Nothing will keep a waterway like this as a decent amenity and asset anything like so well as *regular* use. It is important to get traffic moving again where, and as soon as, possible. There is no doubt that with a little intelligent economic publicity both carrying, hire trade, and private traffic could reach useful proportions, and that use of all the Canal's present and potential assets could bring substantial income.

At the moment, for traffic from outside, the waterway is in fair order with use of locks between Bristol and Bath, and from the Thames up to Burghfield or Sulhampstead, and boaters should use these sections as much as possible. The return toll is 15/- for powered craft, and 10/- for other boats using locks.

J.G.

COMMERCIAL CARRIAGE ON INLAND WATERWAYS

What seems a very simple matter has become a very complicated one—the reasons are many and varied but the fact remains. Not that it need be so, two centuries of precedent, local practice, personal whim, outside pressures and inside reactions have combined to bring it about.

When Brindley began it was easy, there was coal at A, it was needed at B, it travelled by boat because there was no railway and only roads.

It is often said that waterborne carriage is the cheapest and so, in my opinion, it is. But it is not always the apparent factor, low powered propulsion which effects the economy. The fact remains that, perishable goods excepted, canals can handle almost anything, but must compete with road and rail to obtain traffic. It has become noticeable that, over the past few years, nobody seriously claims that the railway is the best medium for transporting general goods. Rail is no longer a serious rival to an efficient waterway service. It is the motor lorry which challenges the barge, compartment boat or narrow boat. So now it is generally—but not universally—accepted that canals can only compete with certain categories of traffic:—

1. From ship to waterside premises.
2. From waterside premises to ship.
3. Between waterside installations.
4. Where warehousing is provided at canal depots for consignors or consigned vehicles.
5. These traffics should all be in full boat or barge loads.

So far it seems fairly simple, although hardly ambitious. But even so there are a host of hidden snags. Port regulations, port dues, wharf dues, Trade Union rules, tidal conditions, transshipments, fluctuating amounts of traffic. All these artificial difficulties have to be contended with. But in most areas one drawback has disappeared with nationalisation—the variation of tolls on long trips passing over several canals. Now a single through toll can be obtained although these vary strangely and no scale of charges is published. The toll is based on the nature of the traffic and the length of the haul. Where nationalised craft are concerned, of course, the payment is merely from one account to another. As a rough guide the canal toll seems to be about a penny a ton mile. In some countries the waterways are toll free.

The charge to the customer, therefore, has to cover all dues and tolls, fuel costs, wages and relevant depreciation of craft. In point of fact, I believe, the charge made is based on what the traffic will bear rather than what the cost of carriage will be.

There are still more things to be considered. Ease of loading and unloading, time spent waiting for either operation, balancing the speed of an empty return run against the revenue of a loaded one. Time spent on maintenance and docking, delays on family boats due to illness or maternity cases, industrial or colliery holidays, strikes in the docks, pits or factories—but rarely on the “cut.”

Here then is the background; now what is actually going on on the canals? I exclude the local estuarial traffics because these are different types of craft, different working conditions and a different set of problems, however, except where a monopoly of carrying is in force both carriers and customer look quite well on it.

The main long distance canal hauls are between the London area and the Birmingham district: from the Warwickshire coalfields south towards London; London to Wellingborough; Birmingham and the Black Country to and from Manchester and Merseyside; between Merseyside and the Potteries from Liverpool towards Leeds. There is light traffic on the Oxford Canal and the Worcester and Birmingham, there is intensive local traffic, mainly in coal, on the Birmingham Canal Navigations, in the West Riding and around Wigan.

Considering the lack of real modernisation it all works surprisingly well. The number of locks per mile is often heavy, compared with the continent, although distances and heights do not compare with those on French or German Waterways. If we take a pair of boats working from Brentford to Birmingham we find that they cover about 134 miles with 140 locks. In four days working probably 15 or 16 hours will be spent in locking.

But the picture is not necessarily so black a contrast as that given by Mr. Ives of British Waterways recently. He compared road and canal operating between London and Birmingham. A man with a 15-ton lorry does a round trip in a night, carrying thus 2,250 ton miles. (N.B.—Not only does he have an exceptionally large lorry, and no mate, but he works a supershift, two 5½ hour drives plus loading and unloading time at midnight—say a twelve hour shift.)

The narrow boat and butty carry 50 tons 35 miles a day, giving a total of 1750 ton miles shared by the crew. Thus we are told “one man with a lorry earns three times more revenue than one on the waterways.”

Let us consider the same case rather more fully and from a different angle. Suppose superman and his super-truck do five return journeys a week (60 hours). Then he shifts 16,500 ton miles a week. Let us assume he draws £15 in wages. Diesel oil will have cost about £25 for 1100 miles; taxation is negligible, and we will ignore the heavy depreciation. So 16,500 ton miles cost £40 to move, or 437 ton miles per pound sterling.

Now the boats. Let us allow them the same phenomenal turn-round afforded the truck. As we know, boatmen with loaded boats continue working without regard to hours or days. Hence carrying 52 tons they will carry 12740 ton miles per week. Cost in wages say £20, in oil about £5; total £25. Tolls accrue to British Waterways anyway. We will ignore the relatively light depreciation. Thus 12740 miles cost £25, or 509 ton miles per pound expended. Cheaper by a seventh.

Interesting subject, isn't it?

PATRICK SAUNDERS.

From the Editor's Cabin

The Chelmsford Boating Club will be holding its annual Chelmer Canoe Race on June the 16th, the course being the entire length of the thirteen miles of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation from Chelmsford to Heybridge Basin (near Maldon). Details of the race, entry forms etc., are available by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the Hon. Race Secretary, Chelmsford Boating Club, Moulsham Mill Lane, Baddow Road, Chelmsford.

The Honorary Secretary of the I.W.A. is also the Press Officer of the Surrey Amenity Council; this body takes a very lively interest in canals along with many other important subjects. Both the preservation and planting of trees ranks high on their list, the latest development in this direction being the proposed planting of trees along a somewhat ugly length of Thames riverside. The drainage section of the Thames Conservancy do not appreciate the presence of riverside trees where dredg-

ing is carried out by dragline excavators, which is a practical point to bear in mind.

The latest edition of "Middlesex Quarterly" features an article on canals which is based on Hassell's book of 1819 entitled "Tour of the Grand Junction Canal." Another article in the same issue outlines the L.C.C. policy for canals. The Middlesex Touring Club has organised two whole day canal boat excursions for May 4th and May 5th respectively.—A chance for recruiting new members?

"The Observer" of February 17th had an article on cruising on the Canals, and at this juncture I would like to issue a word of praise for the Hostelboats that have been started by the well-known I.W.A. member Mr. Patrick Saunders, they should do much to enable many folk to be introduced to the joys of travelling on Inland Waterways and be a source of great fun to youngsters on school holidays or vacation.

Since giving Mr. Chapman's report on conditions at the Brentford end of The Grand Union I have been informed by the Divisional Manager (B.T.W.) that British Waterways have made available to the Education Authority land for the erection of a new modern school at Bull's Bridge. In the meantime boat children attend the local school at Norwood Green where they use a separate classroom under their former teacher.

With the advent of another boating season I would like to appeal to members to contribute articles on any cruises they make (preferably within the Home Counties). Besides articles please send along any news items you may glean on your travels.

The Westminster Devozes Canoe race will be held again at Easter, any members that care to help please contact Mr. R. Mack, N. B. Hawke, Common Lane, New Haw, Weybridge.

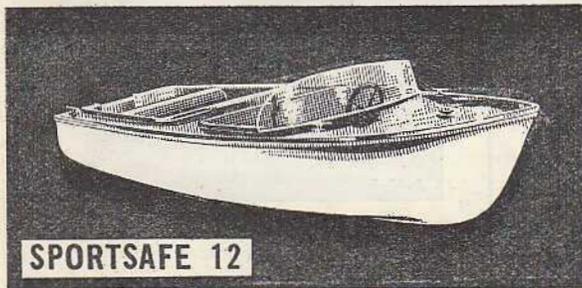
By the time this issue leaves the printers the new Thames Conservancy Offices, slipway and yard at Reading should be complete. No doubt the many technicians and staff will be glad to move into modern quarters after a long spell in temporary buildings.

To our members interested in rowing and sculling I can thoroughly recommend a visit to a very pleasant hotel in Putney—"The Coach and Eight," for therein is a really first class collection of rowing pictures, trophies and other material of great fascination to all watermen. Messrs. Whitbread have published an attractive, well illustrated book that not only describes the exhibits in detail but also gives a first class survey of the history of boat-racing.

The Thames sailing barge match is to be held on June 19th, whilst the Medway event will be a few days later (the 21st). It is possible that the Thames Sailing Barge Preservation Society will enter their bowsprit barge "Memory."

The "Cutty Sark," which is being preserved for all time at the National Maritime Museum, is due to be opened by H.M. The Queen and H.R.H. Prince Philip on June 25th.

PETER CHAPLIN.



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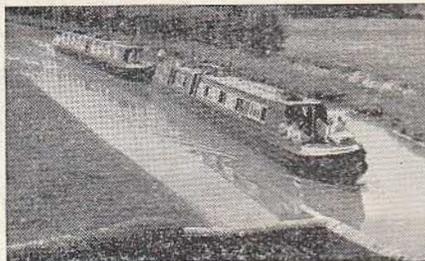
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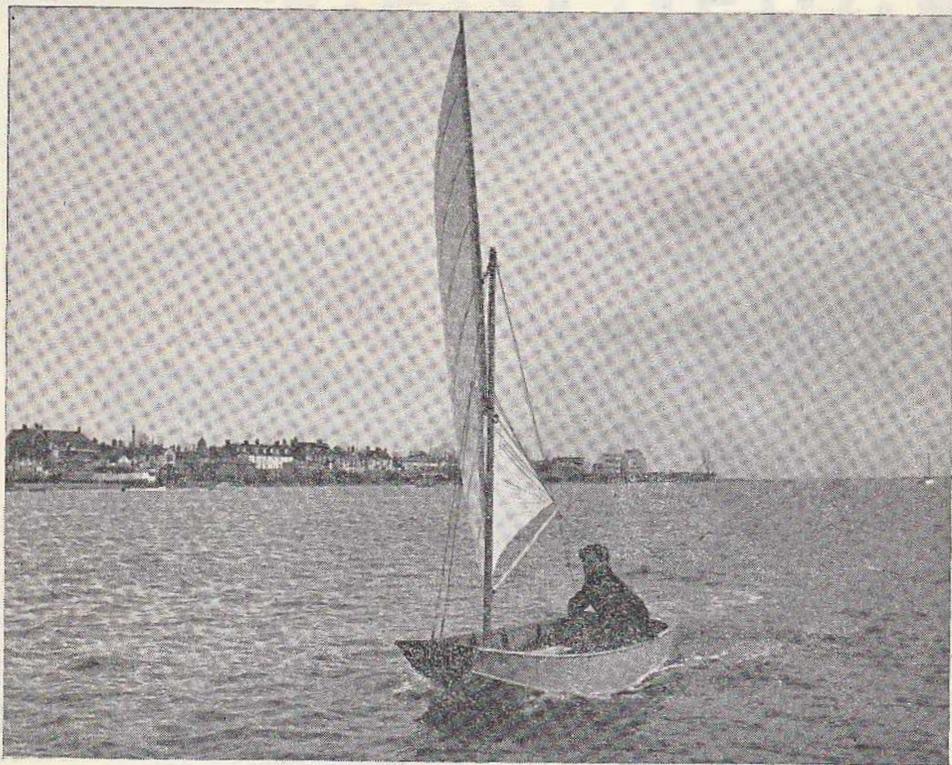
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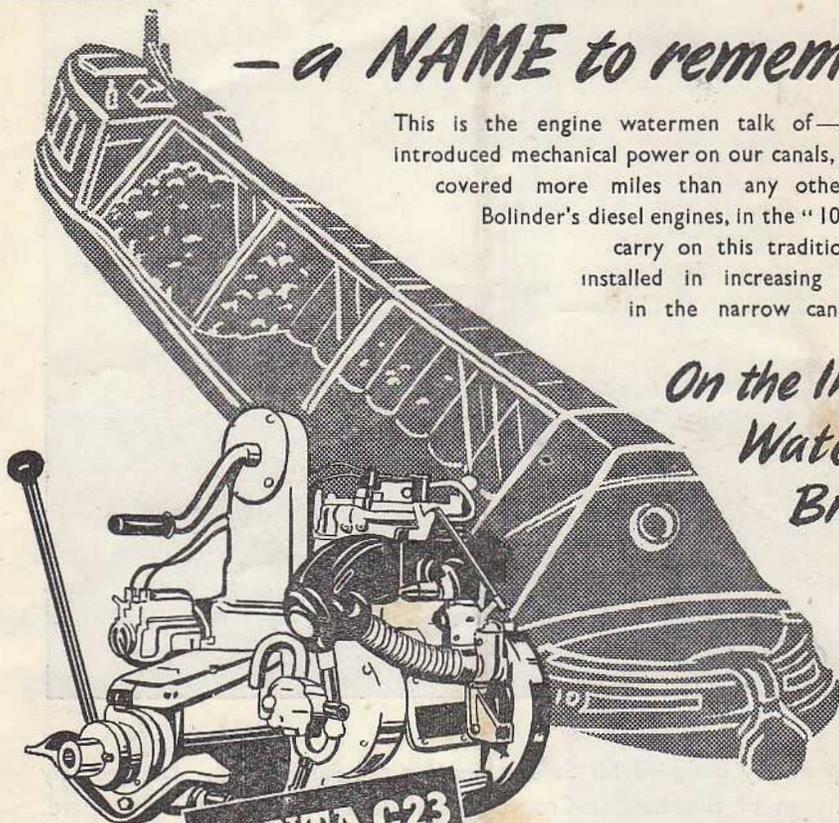
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