

JOURNAL OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE
CANAL SOCIETY.

THE — 10 th
HEREFORD WHARFINGER
WINTER 1985



Middle Basin of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal.

25p

FREE TO
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The system's only real shortcoming appears to be the difficulty of directing the bucket. After the first few passes, it tends to form a narrow channel of its own in the material, and elaborate measures are required to get it to follow a new course. Although saturated material on each flank tends to slump into the rift over a period of days, care is required to prevent penetration of the puddle through the bucket scouring too deeply.

Although the capacity of the bucket itself was only about three cubic feet, the volume of material moved with each pass exceeded that by a factor of three or four. As a result, the tractor was frequently on the limit of its traction. In retrospect, it would have been better to have rigged the haul rope so that the bucket travelled at half the speed of the tractor, thereby nearly doubling the pull on the bucket.

I would like to formally thank Mr David Doakes of the Stroudwater Thames and Severn Canal Trust for the loan of the dragline bucket, and Mr Brian Avery of Sparrows Crane Hire, Gloucester, for generously donating the steel wire rope.



Bucket arriving at river bridge

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Wharfinger: So they weren't very popular when they did that?

Bill: They weren't, no. But of course they owned it, right up as far as Huntington Pool I believe. And they had the rights of it, so we could do nothing about it.

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Wharfinger: It's been widened as well, at some time, hasn't it?

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than on the ground sometimes.

Not that I ever went there much. We used to have more fun sitting in the front room watching the people go by. And there used to be thousands going down sometimes.

Wharfinger: For the Races?

Bill: For the Races. Only on an Easter Monday - only one day a year. But there used to be thousands going down. They'd start coming about half past eleven and they'd be on all the morning till about two. All across the road and the pavements would be thronged with them. You'd hardly believe it to see the people that had come down.

Wharfinger: They wouldn't be just from Hereford?

Bill: They'd come from Birmingham, South Wales, all over. Make a day out of it. And about that particular time, the buses started to get on the roads. And they'd come down by the busload! Not one bus, but 14 or 15 buses following one another. All heading for Grandstand Road.

Wharfinger: Your father must have seen a lot of changes.

Bill: The thing is, in Dad's day they used to do it all on foot. He used to be off at about 4 o'clock in the morning for douting - to put the lights out. He was out again about 4 o'clock in the afternoon to put them back on again. He used to have a district of his own. And then in the daytime when they had time to spare they used to go round cleaning. Cleaning the lamps with a chamois leather, going round with a ladder. I could very often hear him saying the worst time of the year was the winter, the lamps hadn't got the trap-doors in them then and the regulators wouldn't turn on automatically, they used to have to get up there and light them themselves. In the bottom of the lamp it was tapered down, so a 2-inch glass ball could run down and cover the hole at the bottom. Well, in the winter when the condensation got bad, it'd freeze this ball into the hole, and they had to thaw it out. They might be there two hours trying to get this ball free before they could get the light on.

Dad saw a good many changes. He remembered when he was a boy, he used to come in from the country. He lived in Wellington when he was a very young chap, when he was 6 or 8, he'd come in on a Wednesday on a horse to bring the shopping orders in, to be picked up on the Saturday.

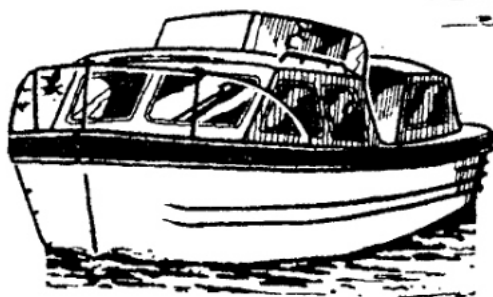
He used to think nothing of that - and back the same day, of course. Good old Dad. He saw the bikes come in, he saw the motor cars come into operation, and he heard the wireless as well!

Wharfinger: Thank you very much indeed.

The Wharfinger's roving reporter was Robin Andrews.

We are very sorry to hear, as we go to press of the death of Bill Stinton's wife.

We wish to extend our deepest sympathy, our thoughts are with him.



SUPPORT THE WATERWAYS!

Canal Exhibition. Photographs, drawings and maps of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal will be on display at Camera Craft, 53 St Owen St, Hereford from Monday 13th January to Saturday 25th January from 9am - 5.30pm Monday-Friday. All welcome.

MORE ARTICLES REQUIRED PLEASE!

Why don't you have a go at writing something for the Wharfinger? Articles on all subjects related to canals would be most welcome - perhaps you could tell us about an enjoyable or amusing canal holiday you've had. Or for the benefit of the less experienced among us, how about some tips on what to do and what not to do on a canal holiday, which stretches of canal to avoid, which hire firms you've had satisfaction from? We can't print photos, but we can take clear line drawings or sketch maps. So get those pens out and start writing! We also welcome letters, poems, puzzles, news items and anything else you think might be of interest to other readers. We are also happy to carry small ads, so if you've got something you want to sell, or if you're looking for something, then advertise it in the Wharfinger Classified ads are free, for trade ads apply to the Editor for advertising rates.

EDITORIAL ADDRESS:

Mike Potts, 3 Cranstone, Upper Breinton, Hereford.

* * * NEWS IN BRIEF * * *

Jumble and Bric-a-brac Sale. Our thanks go to Peter and Fiona Woodfield for all the hard work they put into a sale at the Percival Hall to raise much-needed funds for the Society. The sale took place on Saturday 16th November and was well attended, raising in the region of £25. It is hoped to hold another in the spring - if you are willing to assist in any way, please contact Peter.

Christmas Work Party Party. The emphasis here is on party rather than work. This year's party will take place on Sunday 22nd December at Crew's Pitch. As before, we will aim to do some work in the morning, weather permitting, but the main event will be the party in the afternoon. It is hoped to keep the cost down to £1 per head. Names to Robert or Emma Barnes, please.

Social Evening in Gloucester. Thanks to Marilyn Slinn for putting on a very enjoyable evening on Saturday 5th October at her home. It was well attended from Hereford, Ross and Gloucester, the food and wine were much appreciated and we were made very welcome by our hosts.

WORD-SEARCH

Nothing too taxing for that after-Christmas period - we offer a seasonal medley of words associated with canals and Christmas festivities. The sort of Christmas where you want to put your skates on and go out on the frozen canal. See how many words from the list below you can find hidden in the grid on the opposite page. Words can read from right to left as well as left to right, upwards as well as downwards, and diagonally. Circle each word as you find it - we've done one to get you started.

A very Merry Christmas to all our readers!

AQUEDUCT

BOAT

BRIDGE

CANAL

CAROL

HOLLY

LOCK

MISTLETOE

PARTY

REINDEER

ROBIN

SANTA CLAUS

SKATES

SLEDGE

SNOWMAN

STOCKING

TUNNEL

WHARF

HAPPY

CHRISTMAS



CHRISTMAS CARDS

HGCS Christmas cards are now available, price 35p each, from Camera Craft, 53 St Owen St, Hereford. Printed on gloss paper, the front shows a print of Hereford Canal Basin in the mid-19th century, and the wording inside the card is "Best Wishes", so they can be used as greetings cards as well as Christmas cards. Help support your Society!

H A P P Y E G D E L S D
E O D O J T R V L O X N
B A L K N Y E E R U W C
O B P L A N I D D O Q A
A G O L Y S N O W M A N
T O N T D O D P O D N A
R B R I D G E R V A X L
I C O N E D E M I C E A
S K A T E S R U T N U L
T U B W S H S Q N V K L
Q L A Q U E D U C T W O
E R X L M M T E Q E H R
F I R P C H O T C O P A
C H E M F A R K S T A C
U W V R L J T E T E R Y
Q U A R O B I N I L T L
C H I N C O P X A T Y A
W G N I K C O T S S U W
E N M Q N U H K E I Q N
M A S C H R I S T M A S

CANAL WALK / CRUISE

On Sunday 20th October, a lovely mild autumn day, about 25 of us gathered at the Hereford Swimming Baths car park and set off for Llangynidr locks on the Abergavenny-Brecon Canal.

This very pretty canal originally ran from Brecon to Pontypool where it joined the Monmouthshire Canal, taking it on to Newport with an arm to Crumlin.

At Llangynidr we walked along the towpath and admired the locks. We were fortunate for as we approached the first lock in the flight a boat was entering. The couple on board were rather taken aback at the sight of so many spectators, especially as it was the first lock they had ever negotiated.

After viewing this beautiful set of locks - a lovely sight in the autumn sun - we moved on to the short Asford Tunnel, where we watched a boat and several canoes pass through.

From here we travelled the short distance on to Talybont, where we picnicked by the lift bridge. We were not fortunate enough to see this impressive bridge open - being rather late in the season the canal traffic was very light.

After our lunch we hurried back to Goytre Wharf where we collected our two boats. They were quite large enough for our party and we soon got under way.

It was plain to see some of the difficulties that were encountered in constructing and maintaining this waterway as it seemed to cling to the hillside, often with very little to hold it there. Most of us had a go at being Captain during the cruise. The afternoon was very pleasant and the pretty countryside was very peaceful. Some of us got off the boat and walked alongside to reboard at the next bridge. We met few boats but saw many moored. It was obvious that this was a very popular waterway.

After about two hours it was time to reluctantly turn round and head back for the boatyard, having had a most enjoyable day. As a bonus due to a good attendance and a lower hire fee for late season, our Society's funds gained the sum of £21.

As this proved very popular I will try and organise another in the spring providing enough interest is shown.

Mike Potts



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ONLY £1-50

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VOUCHERS
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LATEST KONICA FBI
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RESTORATION NEWS

13

Our use of the Smalley excavator to the West of Skew Bridge had produced very worthwhile results by mid-August. But we still had no means of clearing the channel directly beneath the bridge except by hand, and this had proved highly laborious. What we needed was some means of moving the material within reach of the Smalley. A simple method of doing this was thought out, and given a trial at our September work party. It has proved successful, and the bridgehole is now two-thirds clear.



In addition to our usual plant, the system required a small dragline bucket, two pulley blocks and several hundred feet of steel wire rope. Its operation involves a tractor making repeated passes over a thirty yard length of towpath, hauling alternately the haul rope and return rope. This results in the bucket moving to and fro through the bridgehole. As there is no positive means of emptying the bucket, the system relies on its moving more material during the forward pass than the return. In practice, it is about 75% efficient.

It was vital to prevent a buildup of material at the end of the bucket's travel. The Smalley could operate between passes of the bucket, but extra care was required. It was also desirable to pump the channel dry before work started, as the repeated movement of the bucket created a slurry which was not readily handled by the Smalley.

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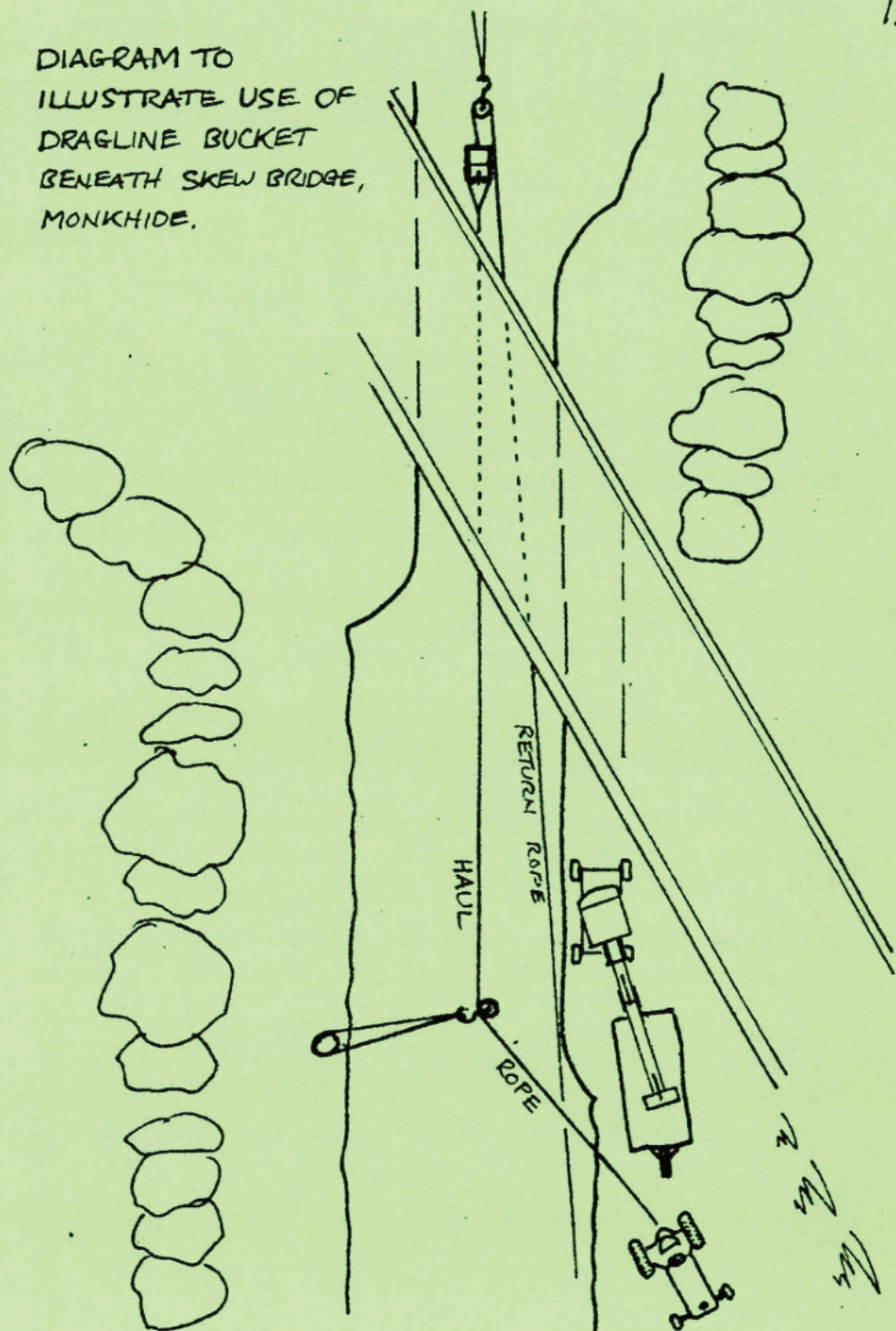
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DIAGRAM TO
ILLUSTRATE USE OF
DRAGLINE BUCKET
BENEATH SKEW BRIDGE,
MONKHIDE.



Christmas GIFTS

BOOKS

"THE HEREFORD & GLOUCESTER CANAL"	
by David E Bick	£3.95
"WALKING CANALS"	
by Ronald Russell	£5.95
"STOODWATER AND THAMES & SEVERN CANALS TOWPATH GUIDE"	
by Michael Handford & David Viner	£5.95
"THE DIARY OF A ROWING TOUR FROM OXFORD TO LONDON IN 1875" by Howard Williams.	£4.50
"THE THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL"	
by Humphrey Household.	£9.95
KEY RINGS	
With address pad. Wild bird motif	50p
MAPS	
"A NEW MAP OF THE KINGTON- LEOMINSTER- STOURPORT CANAL" by Geo Hendrick.	£1.95
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ILLUSTRATED NOTELETS PACK OF TEN	
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SOCIETY CHRISTMAS CARDS	
HEREFORD CANAL BASIN. With envelopes (each)	35p

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we will refund postage if we can deliver, locally.

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ORDERS TO; Mike Potts or N JEFFERIES

