

WINDLASS

No. 45 DECEMBER, 1964

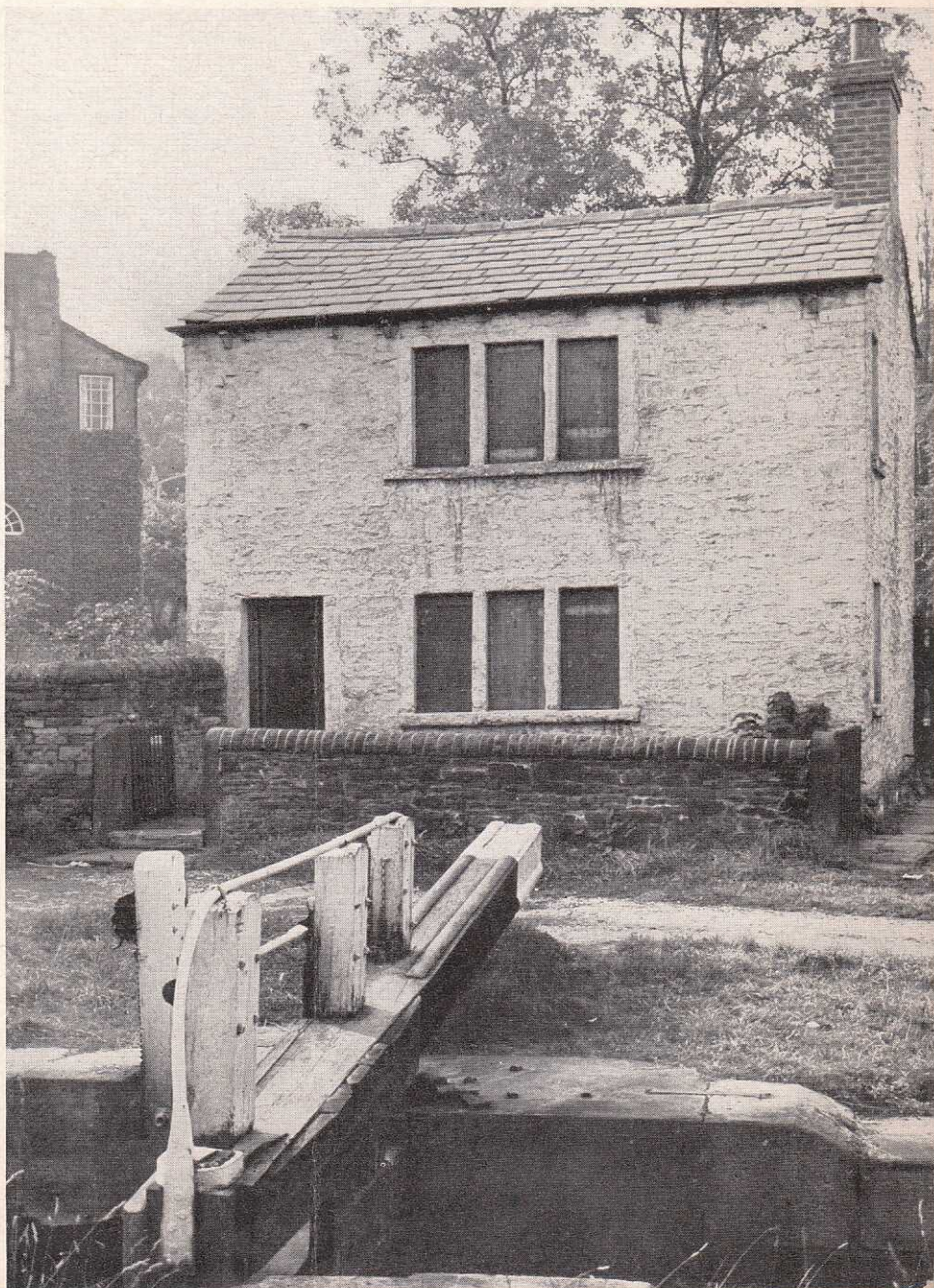
MERRY CHRISTMAS

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INSIDE**

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

1/6

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Windlass : Hugh McKnight, The Clock House, Upper Halliford, Shepperton, Middlesex. **Hon. Social Secretary :** James C. Street, 52 Moreton Street, S.W.1. **Hon. Membership Secretary :** Dr. R. J. Saunders, 10

Lyford Road, S.W.18. **Lee and Stort :** Dr. Ray Glaister, 3 Beulah Road, Epping, 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; **Thames :** Stanley Tims, Messrs J. Tims & Sons, Staines, Middlesex. **Grand Union :** Oliver Turner, 57 Fitzroy Road, N.W.1. **Other Members of the Committee :** Geoffrey W. Hart, 48

Lemsford Road, St. Albans, Herts; Geoffrey Brown, 51 Balmoral Crescent, West Molesey.

Non-Committee Member on the Staff of Windlass :

Dispatch and Circulation Manager : Martin Spratt, 57 Oxberry Avenue, S.W.6.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

AT this time of year people have grown to expect a certain seasonal activity in the sale of raffle tickets, requests for tombola prizes and help, financial and otherwise for a wide variety of worthwhile causes. With so much accustomed activity certain appeals are bound to be overlooked, and it is for this reason that I am taking advantage of these "Notes" to mention two causes for which your support is especially required.

As all of you will have realised, some no doubt with relief, there was no Branch Derby Draw this year; this was by way of being an experiment, for your Committee felt that with so many Draws taking place throughout the year it might perhaps be a good idea to only hold one, but if this is to be our future policy it is absolutely essential that this one Draw is an overwhelming success. Some Members may not fully realise that it has only been the success of our Draws that have kept the Branch solvent, and it is therefore vital that if we are to keep our black bank statement every Member must make an intensive effort to sell as many tickets as possible.

The prizes this year are better and more numerous than before, so pester your friends, haunt your enemies and sell all the tickets you can, plenty more always available. Please, make this year's Christmas Draw the largest and most successful yet.

The second appeal which I make to you is on behalf of the Canal Boatmen's Institute, an organisation which exists solely to help all those whose work is connected with the canals — boatmen and their families, lock keepers, lengthmen, etc., and of course all those who, having retired from service on the waterways still live adjacent to the

canals they know so well. These people, many of whom have spent a lifetime on the canals are surely deserving of all that we can do for them, and it is at this time of year that their Missionary, Mr. F. J. Chapman makes his annual Christmas Tour of the canals, during the course of which he will travel as far North as Coventry, cover nearly 800 miles and visit approximately 285 people. Of these some 140 are elderly, often living alone and in poor health, and very often they openly weep when their Christmas parcel is delivered, not just because of the presents therein, but for the fact that someone has remembered them. Then there are the children who number around 100, and this year Mr. Chapman hopes to obtain sufficient gifts to make up a parcel for all the Mothers on the canal. These then are the people to be visited, for each of whom an individual parcel is made, for after all what would Christmas be without a parcel to open? For the adults food and clothing are the most acceptable gifts, whilst the children naturally prefer sweets and toys, but not books. Whilst these items are always most gratefully received by Mr. Chapman for distribution, money is of greater use, for with food often being the most wanted gift, he is then able to ensure that those in need are fully cared for.

All contributions and gifts of any kind should be sent to Mr. F. J. Chapman, at the Canal Boatmen's Institute, The Butts, Brentford, Middx. Please help this very worthy cause, and I hope that when I go with Mr. Chapman on one of his trips this year it will once again be a matter of travelling in an overflowing van, the contents of which will bring happiness and the spirit of Christmas to all those along the canal.

Around the Waterways

RIVER WEY

The National Trust have announced the name of the Assistant Manager, whom they have appointed, as Mr. E. E. Avery. Mr. Avery has spent much of his life abroad, working in Portuguese East Africa for a commercial firm dealing with shipping, lighterage and harbour work. He will be moving to Hambledon, near Godalming about Christmas, and took up his duties on November 1st.

The second Godalming Water Carnival and Fete was organised by the Godalming Round Table in aid of the Local Betatron Appeal and other charities on Sunday, 20th September. This took the form of Comic Boat Races in circular 'rubber dinghies', with a number of stalls on the adjoining bank of the River Wey.

Following the Whitsun Rally members of the Branch were invited to attend, and despite short notice six boats belonging to members were present. Three of these were outboard dinghies and gave trips on the river, while on the bank other members manned a gaily decorated information stand. A large number of people were present, and perhaps in future it may be possible to make the event an occasion for a larger assembly of craft.

Coxes Lock has recently been closed for about a fortnight for new upper gates to be fitted and repairs to be carried out to the lock chamber.

RIVER MEDWAY

The Branch's public mooring at Tonbridge has been used by more boats than ever this year, being particularly appreciated by holidaymakers wanting to stay overnight in the town. Again the Association's lock pass scheme has been taken up by more boat-owners than ever this year; twenty-six handles being issued. This scheme which gives complete freedom of movement up and down the river is of very great benefit, particularly above Yalding.

There have been reports during the summer of some conflict between bailiffs of Messrs. A. C. T. Fisheries Ltd., and boat owners between Yalding and East Peckham. This company now leases angling rights on both banks of the river between these two places. The River Medway Sub-Committee would be interested to hear of any incidents that have taken place between bailiffs and members. Please write to Mr. D. Salmon, Springhill Cottage, Yardley Park Road, Tonbridge.

DEREK SALMON.

RIVERS LEE AND STORT

The annual canoe race was held on October 4th with great success. There were over 120 entries for this event, which now counts in the Hasler Trophy, the victor ludorum for canoeists.

RIVER STOUR

The River Stour Action Committee on Sunday, September 13th, organised their second cruise of the year. This time, as for several years, the cruise was from Langham to Brantham Mill, a total distance of nearly 7 miles. As usual the object of the cruise was to draw public attention to the committee objects of reopening this section of the river to larger craft, and in the interim period, of exercising the rights of navigation. The trip was held in glorious weather and attracted considerable interest among the holiday makers at Flatford. The event was reported in the *East Anglian Daily News* and the local press.

It is regretted that the proposed River Stour booklet has not yet been received at the printers. After a protracted search the drafts were found to have gone to South Africa. Their travels would surely make interesting reading in themselves!

During the summer months the Harwich Branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club have been investigating on behalf of the Committee the underwater condition of both Brantham and Flatford Locks. Their report follows.

Report on the inspection of the locks at Flatford and Brantham on 5th July, 1964, by the Harwich Branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club for the Stour Action Committee of the Inland Waterways Association

FLATFORD

Upstream Unit. Gates held partially open by branches wedged in the joint. Posts in good condition, gates also with paddles and chains intact. Cill has been oak faced. Depth of water above gate 6 ft. plus 2 ft. 6 in. silt, head of water 4 ft. 6 in.

Downstream Unit. Gate and posts in quite good order but paddle controls broken. Cill in perfect condition making good seal. Clearance of gate 9 in., depth of cill 1 ft. 6 in.; depth of water on upstream side 4 ft. plus 1 ft. 6 in. silt. Depth on downstream side 3 ft. at cill shelving to 6 ft. 6 in. in 10 ft.

BRANTHAM

The lock was closed and so was left filled. This did not particularly impede the work.

Upstream Unit. Planking leaking very badly above water but better below. Cill O.K. Paddles in position but chains broken.

Downstream Unit. Planking leaking very badly above water but better below. Cill O.K. Paddles in position but chains broken.

Walls of Lock. North Wall — cracking and collapse causing 12 in. depression at crack and inward collapse of 12 in. Slight crumbling of wall also near lower gate.

South Wall — there is a latent cracking but this is not through fracture.

Detail of Main Collapse. Above water the cracking is in 6 ft. of wall and at 14 ft. has caused a very irregular crumbling hole 4 ft. 6 in. at base and 2 ft. 6 in. high but not clear enough for the passage of a diver. The concrete at the hole crumbled in the hand as it was touched. The water is 14 ft. 11 in. deep, the wall 9 ft. 6 in. when it meets the old piling.

The area of scour behind the wall was a semi-circle of 17 ft. radius, funnell shaped to a 3 ft. radius shaft 10 ft. down.

It was observed that this is not a single crack but a group within a few feet which could easily collapse both downward and inward.

The River Stour Action Committee recently met and Mr. Riggs of Brantham Mill stated that the road he was constructing to Brantham Lock should be finished by Christmas. It will, therefore, now be possible for vehicular access to be obtained to the Lock. The Committee have accordingly decided that repairs should be carried out to Brantham Lock in Spring 1965. **Volunteers will be required to carry out the repairs on two consecutive weekends, and any Branch members who would be prepared to assist should contact Mr. J. E. Marriage, Budds Farm, Highwood, Chelmsford.**

It is proposed to repair the hole in the Lock wall by placing shuttering on the outside and pouring readi-mix concrete into the hole. It is estimated that the cost will be within the £20 allowed by the Branch.

The Committee are holding their Spring protest cruise on the section of the river on which no cruise has so far been organised. It is planned that this will start from Wormingford Mill and end at Langham. Persons wishing to take part should contact Mr. Ivor Cane of Victoria House Private Hotel, 17 Cliff Terrace, Hunstanton, Norfolk.

J. E. MARRIAGE.

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COMING EVENTS . . RECENT ACTIVITIES

1964/65 WINTER PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 13th January, 1965 at London Bridge House, commencing at 7.30 p.m. A talk entitled "British Waterways in the next five years" will be given by Mr. A. M. Allen, the General Manager of the British Waterways Board.

Thursday, 18th February, 1965 at London Bridge House, commencing at 7.30 p.m., a talk will be undertaken by Mr. J. R. Collett, the Chief Navigation Officer, of the Thames Conservancy and will be entitled "River Water Control" with particular reference to the River Thames.

March, A.G.M. and Films.

Saturday, April 24th, Annual Dinner at the House of Commons.

Whitsun, Branch Rally at Harlow.

THE REGENT'S CANAL CRUISE

This cruise, which was undertaken to show the need for more frequent opening of the locks on the Grand Union and Regent's Canal, was a resounding success and triumph for organiser Oliver Turner.

The first contingent consisted of five cruisers from St. Pancras Yacht Basin, followed by narrow boats *Swan* and the inevitable *William*, with more smaller cruisers bringing up the rear. Our lock-full passed down the canal without incident, and, not for the first, invaded the maritime aloofness of the Regent's Canal Dock. After burning up a few laps of the basin to test the engines for the tideway, we tied up to a buoy almost larger than our boat. Soon the Commercial Road Locks emitted the two narrow-boats, and from then on there was a spasmodic stream of boats of all types and sizes. There were inboards and outboards and even a motorised punt, whose crew were apparently willing to risk their lives on the tideway. There were cheers when Hugh McKnight in *Dorymouse* arrived unexpectedly from the wrong direction; following a string of lighters into the Dock from the river.

It was a wonderful sight when the flotilla emerged into the river, the craft gently rearing and plunging in the Lower Pool on the last of the flood. Glimpses of the punt, now well sheeted up could be seen between the crests of the waves. The narrow-boats, however, for once unrestricted by waterway dimensions shot ahead, and the convoy began to spread out.

Commercial traffic was practically non-existent and the normally thronged entrances to the Lon-

don Dock and the Surrey Commercial Group were clear. Just below Tower Bridge is the entrance to Telford's St. Katherine's Dock. The Lock has modern gates which are hinged at the cill and lowered hydraulically to the chamber floor, vessels thus passing over them.

At Brentford the flotilla dispersed, some to continue up the Thames; others to enter the Grand Union Canal and proceed through Brentford and up the Hanwell Flight of locks also especially opened for the occasion. It should not, of course, be necessary to have to make special arrangements to have locks opened for us. Furthermore, the bumpy, choppy trip in the tideway would be a necessity for all craft if the hovercoach scheme commented on at length in previous issues became a reality.

FILMS

The request for details of Members' films and slides (particularly of the Stratford Festival) has met with a very disappointing lack of response. Members appear to be too modest about their efforts. Come on, you shy little violets, they can't be as bad as all that! Details please of films to Geoffrey Hart, and slides to James C. Street. You will find their addresses on page three of this journal.

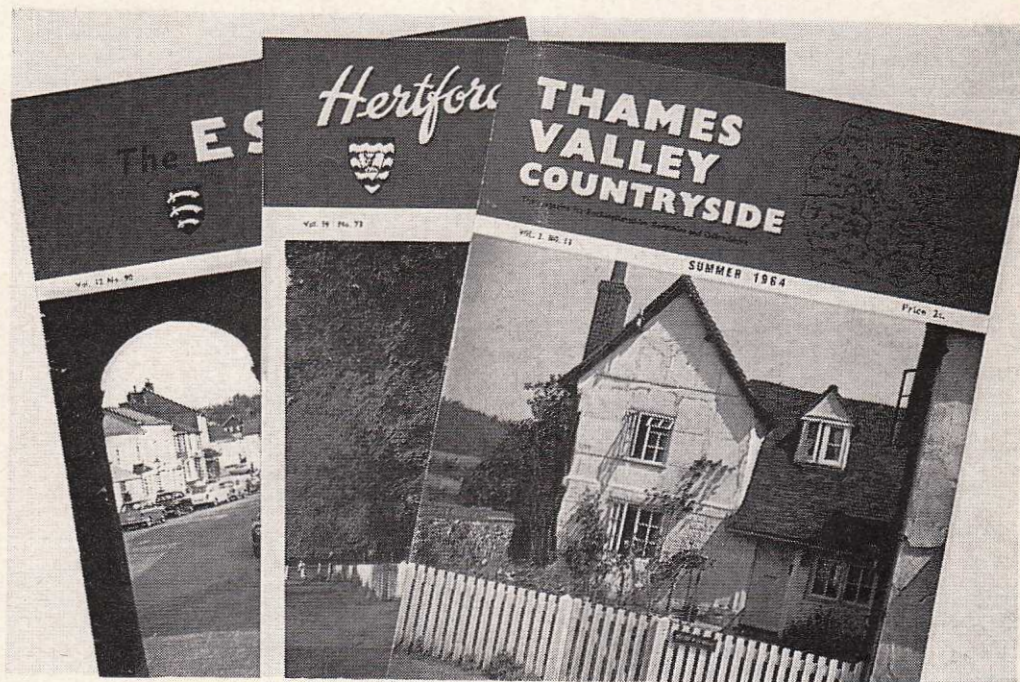
RIVER WEY HANDBOOK

Sales of the River Wey Handbook, the Branch's first waterway publication, have been very encouraging, and the first edition is now nearly cleared. The Branch therefore decided to put in hand a reprint as soon as possible.

Whilst every care was taken to ensure that the facts in the book were as accurate as possible, nevertheless it may well be that some errors did in fact creep in. Therefore would members who have noted any mistakes or who have suggestions concerning useful information which might be included in the next edition please write as soon possible to Mr. D. Salmon, Springhill Cottage, Yardley Park Road, Tonbridge, Kent.

GREETINGS

Birthday Greetings to our Member, Stuart Burton, who was 90 on October 29th. One of the most active boating members of this Branch, Mr. Burton attributed his longevity to being busy and therefore happy, and to being in love! A telegram of congratulation was sent by our Branch Chairman on behalf of the Committee and Branch Members, which judging from all I have heard and read, expressed the way we all feel. Many more years of happy cruising to you, Mr. Burton.



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LOCK COTTAGES

BRITISH Waterways Board have at last issued a list of vacant lock cottages. Enough has been written on the subject of the wanton destruction of canal-side cottages to make further comment unnecessary. Suffice it to say here is the chance for those of us who have sighed longingly for a 'waterside retreat away from it all' to prove our sincerity!

Contact the Estate Officers direct for more information, and notify the Head Office of this Association of purchases. (Not the Hon. Editor—please!) Cottages already on offer to interested parties are marked with an asterisk, and the address of the cottages are followed by the name of the local authority, and remarks.

SECTION 1

COTTAGES NOT SUBJECT TO DEMOLITION ORDERS OR OTHER ARRANGEMENTS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

*Regional Estate Officer,
British Waterways Board,
1 Dock Street,
Leeds, 1, Yorkshire.*

Small Hedges Bridge House, Fishlake, Nr. Thorne, Yorkshire. (Thorne R.D.C.)

Westfield Bridge House, Kirk Bromwich, Nr. Doncaster, Yorkshire. (Doncaster R.D.C.) Undertaking given to Local Authority in 1961 that house would not be let to family with children of school age in view of access difficulties.

Hazleford Old Lock House, Hazleford, Bleasby, Notts. (Southwell R.D.C.) Situated on island in River Trent which presents access difficulties.

The Cottage, Shardlow Depot, British Waterways Board, Shardlow, Derbyshire. (Castle Donnington R.D.C.)

Stensons Lock House, Canal Side, Cotenahay, Ilkeston, Derby. (Ilkeston Corporation.)

Cranfleet Old Lock House, Long Eaton, Notts. (Long Eaton U.D.C.)

Mexborough Top Lock Old House, Mexborough, Nr. Doncaster, Yorks. (Mexborough U.D.C.)

*Regional Estate Officer,
British Waterways Board,
Lime Street Chambers,
Liverpool, 1.*

Canal Cottage, Consall, Cheadle, Cheshire. (Cheadle R.D.C.)

Canal Cottage, Malkin's Bank, Sandbach, Cheshire. (Congleton R.D.C.)

464 Crewe Road, Nr. Sandbach, Cheshire. (Sandbach U.D.C.) To be let with warehouse attached.

No. 1 Canal Cottage, Norbury Junction, Norbury, Staffs. (Stafford R.D.C.)

3 Canal Cottages, Barbridge, Nr. Northwich, Ches. (Nantwich U.D.C.)

No. 3 Canal Cottage, Norbury Junction, Norbury, Staffs. (Stafford R.D.C.)

No. 5 Canal Cottage, Norbury Junction, Norbury, Staffs. (Stafford R.D.C.)

No. 7 Canal Cottage, Norbury Junction, Norbury, Staffs. (Stafford R.D.C.)

No. 1 Hand Green, Tiverton, Cheshire. (Tarvin R.D.C.)

No. 2 Hand Green, Tiverton, Cheshire. (Tarvin R.D.C.)

Canal Cottage No. 9, 100 Station Road, Marple, Cheshire. (Marple U.D.C.)

Canal House, Portland Street, Ashton Junction, Ashton, Manchester. (Ashton-under-Lyne Corporation.)

Dean Cottage, Old Lock, Upholland, Nr. Wigan. (Upholland U.D.C.)

26 Bradley Street, Church, Blackburn, Lancs. (Church U.D.C.)

Canal House, Carr Road, Nelson, Lancs. (Nelson Corporation.)

No. 2 Canal Cottage, Town Lane, Whittle-woods, Chorley, Lancs. (Chorley R.D.C.)

Greenfield Cottage, Barrowford Loo, Barrowford, Yorkshire. (Barrowford U.D.C.)

*The Estate Officer,
British Waterways Board,
Willow Grange, Church Road,
Watford, Herts*

*Somerton Deep Cottage, Somerton, Oxon. (Ploughley R.D.C.)

Cottage, The Tunnel, Farnborough, Oxon. (Southam R.D.C.)

Cottage, Top Lock, Glascote, Tamworth, Staffs. (Borough of Tamworth.)

Cottage 257, Canal Side, Bodymoor Heath, Cardworth, Warwicks. (Tamworth R.D.C.)

*Cottage, Canal Side, Anstey, Nr. Coventry. (Rugby R.D.C.)

Cottage 260, Canal Side, Bodymoor Heath, Cardworth, Warwicks. (Tamworth R.D.C.)

*Cottage, South End, Braunston Tunnel. (Borough of Coventry.)

*The Estate Officer,
British Waterways Board,
Dock Office,
Gloucester.*

Canal Cottage, Bathampton. (Bathaven R.D.C.)

Canal House, Dundas. (Bathaven R.D.C.)

Lock Cottage, Seend, Nr. Devizes, Wilts. (Devizes R.D.C.)

Reservoir House, Icknield Port Road, Birmingham. (Birmingham Corporation.)

Cottage, 5th Lock, Riders Green, West Bromwich. (West Bromwich Corporation.)

SECTION 2
COTTAGES SUBJECT TO DEMOLITION
OR CLEARANCE ORDERS

*Regional Estate Officer,
British Waterways Board,
P.O. Box No. 9,
1 Dock Street,
Leeds 1, Yorkshire.*

*Mountsorrel Lock House, 18 Sileby Lane, Mountsorrel, Nr. Loughborough, Leics. (Borrow-upon-Soar R.D.C.) Demolition date, 4.2.64.

12 West Bank, Stainforth, Nr. Doncaster. (Thorne R.D.C.) Clearance date, 30.5.63. Anticipated demolition will be required by Local Authority within six months.

*The Estate Officer,
British Waterways Board,
Willow Grange, Church Road,
Watford, Herts.*

*Cottage, 14th Lock, Napton, Warwicks. (Southam R.D.C.) Demolition date, 25.2.60.

24 Sutton Stop, Hawkesbury, Coventry. (Bedworth U.D.C.) Demolition date, 26.2.64.

5 The Wharf, Hillmorton, Warwicks. (Rugby Borough Council.) Demolition date, 26.2.64.

Below: Carr St., Nelson. Right: Somerton Deep.

Below right: Whittle-le-Woods.

Cottage, Sutton Stop, Longford, Coventry. (Bedworth U.D.C.) Demolition date, 26.2.64.

*The Estate Officer,
British Waterways Board,
Dock Office,
Gloucester.*

*Canal Cottage, Four Locks, Stourton, Wilts. (Seisdeon R.D.C.) Demolition date, 28.2.63.

Canal Cottage, Gilwern, Brecon. (Crickhowell R.D.C.) Demolition date, 26.3.64.

Canal Cottage, Reedswood, Walsall. (Walsall Corporation.) Demolition date, 27.1.61.

*Regional Estate Officer,
British Waterways Board,
Lime Street Chambers,
Liverpool.*

9 Water Lane, Newport, Salop. (Newport (Salop.) U.D.C.) Demolition date, 13.5.64.

Cover Photo. by Hugh McKnight; illustrations by Elizabeth Cooper.



THE RIVER THAMES SOCIETY CONFERENCE

by MICHAEL APLIN

FOR their Second Conference and Seminar the River Thames Society came down river from old-brick to red-brick and stopped at Reading University where the delegates assembled on Friday evening the 11th September.

After dinner, and with the aid of the Assistant Secretary of the Society who acted as guide and torch bearer, we made our way through the University grounds to the theatre where, in great comfort, a film show had been arranged, and I arrived in time to see the National Trust film "Break-Through" with David Hutchings in the lead. This film created considerable interest and comment, both at the time it was shown and around the bar afterwards, and I would like to stress here that although the Society is primarily concerned with the Thames it is also keenly interested in the canals adjoining it, with several of the Society's Members belonging to the I.W.A.

Saturday was one of those perfect mornings which made one reluctant to remain indoors, however this natural reluctance was soon forgotten due to the interest of the lectures and the quality of the Speakers. The morning opened with the Presidential Address by Mr. R. Gresham-Cooke, M.P., who, after welcoming those attending spoke about the Thames, showing as he did so that his is no idle Presidency, for the Thames is a river about which he is well-informed and cares greatly. The first Address of the day was given by Dr. B. A. Southgate, Director of the Water Pollution Research Laboratory who spoke on the "Problems and Control of River Pollution". This was an authoritative talk given by an acknowledged expert, and we all learnt a considerable amount about the constant research that is carried out to discover better methods of purifying our water supply, and of the many successes and advances that have been made during recent years.

Then followed a most excellent and enjoyable talk by Mr. R. R. Bollard, Administration Officer of the Thames Conservancy, on "The Work and Duties of the Thames Conservancy Board". This talk was particularly enjoyed and much enlivened by an admirable display of colour slides which had been taken during the past Season. Amongst many interesting points made by Mr. Bollard was that there are now over 800 registered launches on the Thames. The interest invoked by this talk was such that there was insufficient time to deal with the very many questions which Members wished to ask, but fortunately extra time was made for this during the afternoon. This talk was an ideal one to have before lunch, for one had the opportunity to continue the discussion over a drink and a meal and the opportunity was

taken by all.

The first session of the afternoon was given by Mr. Michael Dower, Town Planning Officer of the Civic Trust, and of course one of those responsible for the ambitious scheme for the development of the Lee Valley. He spoke on the subject of "A Planning Policy for Recreation in the Upper Thames Valley". He explained that the Thames Valley is the principal centre of recreation for Londoners, and as such it is vitally important to rigidly control its development, though at the same time whilst he thought it wrong for more people to live there he did feel that holiday accommodation in the riverside towns should be improved thus encouraging more people to visit the area. To improve the Thames is made appreciably more difficult by the fact that no less than 38 planning authorities are concerned, and this is where the RTS could, and indeed already does a vital job in helping to bring these bodies together to discuss the problems of developing, in the best way, the amenities of the Thames Valley. Mr. Dower stressed the importance of the various canals and tributaries which lead off the Thames, and thought that the RTS should combine with the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust to help restore that waterway.

An interesting point made by Mr. Dower was that a recent survey in America showed that 40% of Americans' recreation centred around water, and included such things as skin diving, boating, fishing, water ski-ing, etc., etc. Naturally as leisure time increases so will the importance of our waterways, and it is therefore extremely important that only the most careful planning should be allowed in the Thames Valley. His talk was most interesting and several suggestions for future consideration by the Society were made during this stimulating talk which was followed by a general discussion in which Mr. Collett and Mr. Bollard of the T.C. took part, thus giving Members the opportunity to ask a wide variety of questions on matters relating to the Thames.

To finish the afternoon Mr. T. M. Megaw, a consultant engineer for the recently opened Dartford/Purfleet Tunnel spoke on the problems and difficulties encountered during its construction, and having long been fascinated by tunnels built under rivers I found the talk of great interest. Incidentally the success of the tunnel has been such that it is expected to repay the money borrowed for its construction some two to three years earlier than had been anticipated. The talk finished at 6.0 p.m. and we then had sufficient time for a short break before dinner at 7.0 p.m.

(To be continued)

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By J. D. CRANFIELD

No. XIII PEMBREY CANAL

THIS is necessarily a short article. The canal in question never had a spectacular career and lasted only a few years. However it formed part of the main line of railway to West Wales at a later date. Although it was connected to other canals in the same area which were also converted, these latter formed a different railway, in many ways other than mere name, and will therefore be dealt with separately.

In 1819 Pembrey Old Harbour was built, and four years later a private canal was constructed by Gaunt & Co., lessees from the Earl of Ashburnham. This was to bring iron ore from the Kidwelly & Llanelly Canal to the intended blast furnaces at Pembrey. Anthracite was another traffic, for shipment from the harbour. The waterway was 2 miles long with one lock at Pen-y-bedd, and terminated 400 yards short of the old harbour. It was connected to the latter's pier by a branch of the tramway from the harbour to Pembrey New Pit. Completion was probably at the end of May 1824, but the canal's existence was destined to be short as it was superseded in 1837 by an extension of the Kidwelly & Llanelly Canal. The older line remained in existence until at least 1843 as in that year it was to be leased to A. W. Hillary for 60 years at £220 per year. The Earl reserved the right to import lime, manure, agricultural produce, and building materials, etc., free, and to export coal at half the usual toll. The agreement was terminable within one year.

Whether this agreement went through is a moot point, for in 1845 the South Wales Railway was incorporated. Part of the canal was to be used for the new railway. The Earl must have sold the waterway at this time as no deviation was authorised later for the railway on the section. Pembrey Old Harbour, a tidal port, had by this time been superseded by Pembrey New Harbour

(now Burry Port) and the canal was obviously somewhat of a liability to the Earl.

The railway was opened on 11th October, 1852, as part of the section from Landore to Carmarthen. Due to a shortage of rails it was opened as a single line west of Pembrey, but was later doubled on 8th February, 1853. An interesting point is that Barlow rails were used. These were -shaped and were laid directly on the ballast with no sleepers or other support. As can be imagined this led to trouble later on and they were replaced from 1857 by bridge rails and timbers, the broad gauge standard. This gauge was used as the line was a protege of the Great Western Railway and connected to it.

On 1st August, 1863, the South Wales Railway was amalgamated with the united Great Western and West Midland Railways. From then on the history of the line becomes integral with that of the G.W.R. and is well documented elsewhere. The line is now an important part of the South Wales rail system, forming a stretch of the main line to the west.

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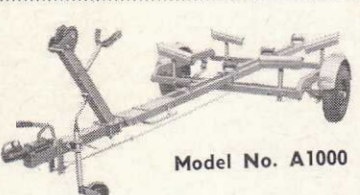
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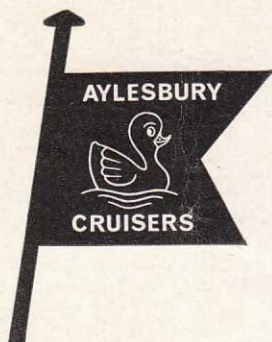
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