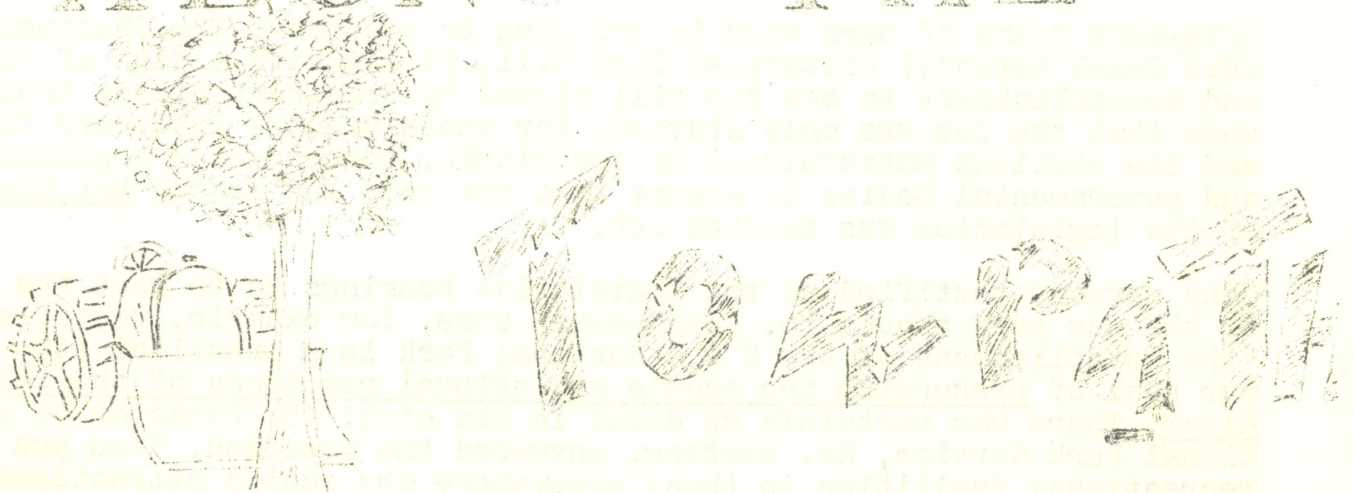


ALONG THE



VOLUME II NUMBER 3

19 OCTOBER 1971

FOLLOWING THE BULLDOZER TRAIL

Over-development and over-use are the forms of pollution that currently threaten the future of the C & O National Historical Park. The environmental health of the C & O Canal is an index to the environmental health of the entire Potomac River basin, so says the Canal and River Rights Council with which the C & O Canal Association held a joint get-together on October 16 in the Dams No. 4 and 5 areas to see jointly the status of construction in those areas and to discuss courses of action. Others from various national and local conservation organizations joined the group which began its session at the Western Maryland Sportman's Club. Representing the C & O Canal Association were our President, Smith Brookhart; Vice-President Walter Boardman; Level Walker Chairman, Tom Hahn; and various Level Walkers. We began our active part of the day by walking from the upper parking lot at Dam No. 4 on the new road past the guard lock and on up to the cliff area where bulldozing had been stopped prior to blasting off the face of the cliff or any cementing had been done. A lively session ensued between Acting Superintendent (Antietam-C & O Canal Service Group) and Jack Berkson, attorney-at-law who had obtained a Temporary Restraining Order preliminary to an injunction to prevent further callous destruction of the natural environment of the park; members of the Canal and River Rights Council; Grant Conway, Anson Courter, Smith Brookhart, Walter Boardman, and Tom Hahn of the C & O Canal Association; and other interested parties present. This debate was a little one-sided, since the Superintendent, George Church, was greatly out-numbered, but it was certainly evident to all that although the Park Service was doing what it felt was right for what reason no of us could figure out, the needs and desires of the thinking American public certainly were not. The theme which developed as we worked our way through the day was there simply had to be a mechanism to either make the Park Service want to do what its users wanted--otherwise force them to, with certainly the former alternative the one that appealed to many of us. (Continued on page 9)

C O N S T R U C T I O N O N T H E C & O C A N A L

(The following is a public statement made by your editor, Tom Hahn, representing the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Association and the American Canal Society regarding certain construction on the C & O Canal.)

After many years of hard work in bringing to enactment the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Bill, it was with a sigh of relief and accomplishment to see the bill signed by President Nixon, though we knew that the job was only started, for ahead was the necessary funding and the vigilant watchfulness by individuals, conservation organizations and governmental bodies to ensure that not only the letter but the spirit of the legislation was carried out.

Many persons testified at the legislative hearings as to what the goals of the new park should be. Congressman Gude, for example, testified that, "the establishment of the C & O National Park is a practical step toward our goal of preserving the scenic and natural resources of the Potomac River. There was certainly no doubt in his mind! The Director of the National Park Service, Mr. Hartzog, answered the question, "You put your recreational facilities in those areas where the scenic attractions and the historical values are most significant?" by replying, "I would probably say just the opposite, because you want to keep those nationally significant, scenic, and historic areas free of development so they don't intrude on it."

In the first part of the H. R. 658 proposed bill were the words, "In order to preserve, restore and interpret the historic and scenic features of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and to develop the canal's potential for public recreation..."--a clear statement that scenic features were to be preserved.

We had hoped that the early appointment of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission would lead to a good sense of direction even though the guidelines were very broad, and that the Secretary of the Interior would in fact use the commission to help guide him. We were hopeful (perhaps naive is a better word), but the commission has as yet to be named.

Some of us may have thought people like Shirley A. Briggs of the Rachel Carson Trust for the Living Environment, Inc. and of the Audubon Naturalist Society a bit narrow when they suggested that the legislation contain such a phrase as, "Preservation of natural and scenic values," so that we might have some point to bring to the attention of the Park Service later on if any such questions arise." How prophetic! Others of us ignored this point in spite of the bad experience at Widewater where the habitat was unnecessarily destroyed by heavy equipment and the knowledge that the canal has been subjected to the ill-advised use of herbicides (See enclosed photo #1). We were too taken up with a common saying, "Let's get the canal for the Park Service and save it from them later."

It was with some dismay that I learned of the construction ("development") at Dam No. 4 and the plan to destroy a part of a beautiful cliff, the latter of which seemed to have little relationship to the preservation, restoration, and interpretation of the park. I suspect that it was more a ready means for maintenance and park ranger vehicles to carry out their assigned tasks. Certainly a commendable administrative move, but not in keeping with the spirit of the park legislation.

CONSTRUCTION ON THE C & O CANAL(Continued)

It was with even more dismay that I learned that the area between Dam No. 5 and Two Locks had been the victim of heavy construction work. This little area of canal, not quite a mile and a half long, was one of the most scenic on the entire canal. In point of fact it had been my choice earlier as a Level Walker of the C & O Canal Association. I remembered taking a photo at the place where the cliff comes almost to the river's edge a couple of years ago and remarked to my wife recently that she might consider a sketch of it for the next section of the Towpath Guide, to be used on its cover. In order to better evaluate what I had heard about the construction and read of it in the newspaper, I visited the area on 3 October and was first disappointed with the road which had replaced the old towpath, and the debris left along the side of the towpath spilling into the river, the latter not a big problem, but still unattractive. The thing that really floored me was the concrete road around the face of the blown-off cliff. I really couldn't believe it at first and was sick about it, as that particular scene can never be restored now. Though the scene has to be seen to be appreciated as to what has happened, photo #2 shows the cliff area two years ago and photos #3 and #4 show the area on 3 October 1971, and I believe the viewer can decide for himself which scene is the one which he would like to see while hiking along the towpath. This scene is about 15 mile from road access in one direction, and .2 mile from road access in the other direction, a distance which should not boethr even the least intrepid Park Ranger. The towpath is not for the convenience of the Park Service alone, it is primarily for the users of the canal, and we do not like our towpath to be a graveled or a concrete or a dirt road, we like it to be a towpath.

I really believe that those who are making decisions regarding the canal in the Park Service feel that they are doing a public service and that the deeds done or contemplated at Widewater, Dams No. 4, Dam No. 5, and in other areas not discussed here are in the public interest by providing more recreation, better access and better surveillance for the protection of the park and the public. I know many of the persons involved in the Park Service and I have no doubt that each and every one feels that he is a conscientious public servant. I believe that the major difficulty is the lack of a clear definition of what the new canal should be and who should do the interpreting--obviously the Park Service considers that their role.

It would seem to me that the destruction of habitat and scenic views done should not have been allowed in the past and must not be done in the future under the guise of restoration, preservation, interpretation, etc. The early appointment and use of the canal commission would have prevented much of this furor. Unfortunately some of the things done cannot be undone, but they certainly can be prevented in the future.

There is a basic issue here--that of the interpretation of the meaning and intent of both the letter and the spirit of the canal bill and the spirit of those who both encouraged the legislation and those who brought it to fruition. I submit that the spirit of the legislation has been abused and therefore urge that this abuse be curbed through appropriate legal or administrative action.

8 October 1971

Thomas F. Hahn, Captain, U. S. Navy

TELEGRAM FROM GILBERT GUDE TO GEORGE B. HARTZOG, JR.

OCTOBER 7, 1971

GEORGE B. HARTZOG, JR., DIRECTOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON, D. C.

IN REGARD TO PRESENT CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES AT DAM NUMBER FOUR ON THE C & O CANAL, I URGE IMMEDIATE HEARINGS AND CONSULTATION WITH POTOMAC VALLEY CITIZENS PRIOR TO ANY ADDITIONAL CONSTRUCTION OF ALTERATION OF FEATURES OF THE C & O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

UNTIL THE C & O CANAL ADVISORY COUNCIL, A VITAL LINK BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND PARK SERVICE OFFICIALS, HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, HEAVY-HANDED CONSTRUCTION ALONG THE CANAL WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH DEEPLY INTERESTED CITIZENS IS AT LEAST A VIOLATION OF THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW.

A THOUGHTFUL, CAREFUL RESTORATION AND CONSTRUCTION WHICH PROVIDES A BALANCE BETWEEN HISTORIC, RECREATIONAL AND NATURAL OPEN-SPACE ELEMENTS OF THE CANAL AND ADJACENT LAND WAS CALLED FOR IN THE HEARINGS ON THIS LEGISLATION.

LITIGATION BY CONCERNED CITIZENS HAS RESULTED FROM LACK OF SENSITIVITY BY OFFICIALS TO COMPREHEND THIS TRUST AND SPIRIT OF THE C & O CANAL ACT.

GILBERT GUDE
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
8TH DISTRICT MARYLAND

VIEWS OF DAM NO. 5 TO FOUR LOCKS LEVEL WALKER, CHARLES MORRISON RE WORK

You have asked my views about the "improvements" to the C & O Canal towing path between Guard Lock No 5 and Lift Lock 47.

I view any change like this with mixed feelings because I recognize that in our kind of society compromises have to be made between many points of view, many of them valid, but some of them conflicting.

For my own part I would have been happy if enough money might have been appropriated to restore some of the canal structures, to prevent progressive deterioration of others, to provide interpretive information centers at convenient places, to keep the towpath clear, and to provide sanitary facilities along the way. I am not certain that I want to see much of the canal rewatered unless it be within constant surveillance of the park rangers.

I have realized, however, that these improvements would not occur as long as the canal remained in the status of a national monument. I supported the National Historical Park bill with some trepidation because I knew that its passage would alter the character of the canal right-of-way in ways that I could not predict. The sponsors of the bill were politically astute in stressing the recreational potential of the canal, and without this argument I doubt whether the bill would have been approved or even introduced.

Members of the C & O Canal Association made use of the argument in promoting passage of the bill, and the Park Service is responding, I suppose, in a way they think Congress intended. They are opposed by landowners along the canal, particularly by those who occupy vacation cottages(Cont'd)

VIEWS OF LEVEL WALKER CHARLES MORRISON (Continued)

and in some cases have preempted the towpath as a sort of extension of their property. This kind of opposition leads to an exertion of effort in what is being done, and perhaps in this case the Park Service overdone it.

In any event, the complainants are accepting the role of conservationists, which is in my opinion they are not, unless it is in the continuance of their specious claim to privileged access to the river across the canal and/or towpath. I understand the difficulties of the Park Service even though I am sorry that they have destroyed some ancient landmarks...

Apart from my personal views I think the C & O Canal Association ought to express its concern to the Park Service, If it does not have an advisory group then one ought to be formed and the Park Service asked to confer with it concerning changes which will seriously alter the character of the present canal structure.

In particular I believe that a historian ought to be assigned to the C & O Canal administrative headquarters at Sharpsburg so that he can verify restorations as they are planned and executed to insure their conformity to the historical background of the canal...

THE AMERICAN AND INTERNATIONAL CANAL SOCIETIES

Though it is too early to make our formal announcement, there are two important canal developments taking place about which many of you will be interested and on which we would solicit your views--the founding of the American and International Canal Societies. There are three of us doing the preliminary spadework on both organizations--Bill Trout, expert on the canals of Virginia; Bill Shank, Pennsylvania canal expert and Editor of Canal Currents, and Tom Hahn, Chairman of the Level Walkers of the C & O Canal Association. It is our intent to have published a newsletter and we are discussing an annual journal for both organization, but we are making our way slowly and carefully, to ensure that whatever we set up is beneficial to all concerned.

In order to get things going in the American Canal Society, we are formulating our ideas, gathering information pertaining to various American canals, and beginning our correspondence with both individuals and officers of the various canal organizations to solicit their ideas as to what kind of organization we want and what our goals will be.

Paralleling the foundation of the American Canal Society at a slower pace is the founding of the International Canal Society, which society is intended to serve as a start for a more coordinated exchange of those interested in canals on an international basis.

By the next issue of Along the Towpath you can expect to hear more details about these organizations--we are still on the drawing board as far as many of our ideas are concerned. Again, if any of you have any ideas you would like to express, please let me know, and address your thoughts to :

Capt Tom Hahn, USN
Acting President
The American/International Canal Societies
7535 Will Street
Ft. Meade, Maryland 20755

LEVEL WALKERS REPORT

1 Miss Rae T. Lewis Georgetown Tidal Lock to Old Boat Incline 0.00 continues as the Washington Area reporter, keeping officials of the C&O Canal Association aware of events associated with the canal and its environs as well as being a steadfast adviser on canal affairs. Rae went off on a field trip with the New Jersey Canal Society to visit canals in New Jersey (?), New York, and Canada and promises to have for Along the Towpath an account of that trip for our next issue.

2 William Johnson Old Boat Incline to Lock No. 5 2.1 showed many old canal prints and negatives to friends at the Annual Reunion, including a photograph of his father in a loaded canoe going through Lock 5 with the upper gate being tended by his friend Willard who was the locktender there for many years. Another negative showed the old swinging cable bridge that went out to the island at Great Falls.

3 Philip J. Stone Lock No. 5 to Cabin John Creek 5.0 reports that the towpath, locks, and appurtenant structures continue to be in good to excellent condition, and that the Brookmont picnic area has been equipped with several additional tables. "Cabin John Creek is still heavily polluted by sewage entering the stream from an overloaded sewer some distance above its mouth... The National Park Service is redeveloping the former Glen Echo Amusement Park into a "community park"... but the old buildings along the top of the palisades continue to present an eye-sore to users of the canal. Traffic on the George Washington Memorial Parkway has increased substantially since the parkway has been made a through route into Canal Road at Chain Bridge. Vehicles are both visible and audible to canal users in the Glen Echo-Cabin John stretch..."

4 Ronald Wilson Cabin John Creek to Lock 14 7.5, B.O. Box 186, Cabin John, Md.. 20731 has been assigned as Co-Level Walker on this section. Our only Level Walker who lives in a lockhouse. Welcome Ron!

7 John Anderson Great Falls to Swains Lock 14.3, of 10300 Westlake Drive, Apt.#307, Bethesda, Md. 20034, has been reassigned from Section 56 to Co-Level Walker on this section.

10 Alan and Anna Mighell Seneca Aqueduct to Tenfoot Island 22.8 have been assigned as Co-Level Walkers. They comment, naturally enough, first on the flood damage to Seneca Aqueduct, "The outstanding event of the year at Seneca was the September flood caused by 11" of rain in 2 days. This flood caused extensive damage to the towpath. The Seneca Aqueduct was severely damaged and part of it was washed away. Thus, until repaired, one cannot walk north of Seneca coming from Swains Lock... The Seneca area is a disgrace and it is difficult to accept that a National Park in Montgomery County could be in such bad condition." They then list the problems which in summary are: Pollution of water and area; obnoxious presence of motor boats; unsightly trash and overflowing trash cans in picnic areas; poor public facilities--bad toilets, poor food, limited parking; danger at aqueduct and parking lot; towpath rough for bike riding upstream from Seneca. It appears as though the Mighells are off to a flying start with the Level Walkers. We all are looking forward to working with you.

11 Grant Conway Tenfoot Island to Sycamore Landing 25.0 did extensive field work throughout the summer and provided much needed historical information as well for Section Two of the Towpath Guide. Thank you Grant!

13 Edwards Ferry to Ft. Harrison Island 30.8 Constant Southworth provided a very interesting canoe canal trip photo taken in 1924 for Section Two of the Towpath Guide. Credit in the guide was accidentally omitted. (Cont'd)

LEVEL WALKERS REPORT (Continued)

16 Anson C. Courter Lock 26 to Monocacy Aqueduct 39.4 provided an update to the Towpath Guide material.

17 Ray P. Teele Monocacy Aqueduct to Nolands Ferry 42.2 and Mrs. Teele undertook considerable field check work to bring the Towpath Guide material current, in many cases providing material which the Level Walker assigned had not. Thank you very much for your work!

19 Lyman Stucker Point of Rocks to Catoctin Aqueduct 48.2 report that he is checking further on the history of Point of Rocks and Landers.

23 Orville Crowder Harpers Ferry to Dam No. 3 60.7 told us recently of his recent trips to Mongolia and Japan and other far-flung spots and plans for the World Nature Center. Orville will be around for a couple of weeks this fall for those friends who would like to contact him. During the visit with him in Harpers Ferry we once again thanked him for the use of his notes for the Towpath Guide. We may even get Orville back on the towpath in-between one of his world jaunts!!

24 Dam No. 3 to Dargan Quarry 62.4 Jimmie Porter on the way to the parking lot at work the other night told me that things remain pretty much the same on his section. He passed on the opinion (which I share) that the Park Service should proceed very slowly with the opening of any further access points, even with proper supervision. Jimmie mentioned that his last camping trip at the Antietam campground would indeed be his last one because of the behavior of its inhabitants, the casual control by over-worked Park Rangers of which is inadequate--offenders merely wait until the ranger(s) move along.

28 John C. Frye Shepherdstown to Lock 39 72.8 remarks, "I feel this is one of the area's of the canal that should be cleared and rewatered. The beauty of this section can be rivaled only in some of the Allegany County sections. The high cliff to the berm, the canal scooped right out of the high hill, and the towpath high above the river is found on no other section east of Allegany...The first job of development has got to be the removal of that auto bridge on Lock 38. It is an eyesore and completely destroys the beauty of the shallow lock." We agree completely--not only on this lock but on many others. A more suitable foundation than the lock walls should be found for auto crossings (which we believe are largely unnecessary in any case). John has offered to share with us for the use of the Towpath Guide pictures of the canal which he has, particularly those of Lock 38. Several persons have mentioned that they think it would be nice to have pictures of the canal in older times. We agree and will include such photos in the next section of the Towpath Guide. But, since we have no historic pictures, we will have to depend on you readers to help us out. All pictures (old and new) will receive the utmost of care and will be returned after use. Appropriate line credit will be given to the contributors. Please help us make the next section of the Towpath Guide a good one.

29 Eugene E. Maddex Lock 39 to Snyders Landing of 201 Stanwix St., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15222 was recently assigned as Level Walker to this section, along with his son Lee Maddex. Welcome to the group! Also recently assigned as Co-Level Walkers to this section were Lee and Barbara Barron of Barron's Country Store (and Canal Museum) at Snyders Landing. All Level Walkers and others interested in the canal are welcome to stop by the store and visit with them. You will find this pause one that more than refreshes--besides they very loyally sell the Towpath Guide among many other articles of interest and need to the hiker, biker, or casual visitor.

LEVEL WALKERS REPORT (Continued)

30 Harold A. Cramer, Sr. Snyders Landing to Lock 40 76.7

31 Harold A. Cramer, Jr. Lock 40 to Marsh Run Culvert 79.4 compiled a report on their sections from the eyes and ears of the Boy Scouts from Troop 672, of Glen Burnie, Md. Their report contains events of the activities of the scouts, and their observations of flora, fauna, and the material aspects of canal structures and the surrounding area. And, more recently, beautiful color pictures were submitted by the Cramers. Thank you. The Barrons of Barrons Country Store(as mentioned under Section 29) have been assigned as Co-Level Walkers to this section as well, because of their presence right in the middle of the sections, their connections with canal people, and a genuine interest in the canal. This home address is: 8 Shady Nook Ave, Catonsville, Md. 21228.

SECTION 32 and 33 covering Dam No. 4. Please keep all of us informed as to what is going on in this area--the outcome of what happens at this particular point on the canal--the stopping of construction--could well set the pace for what happens to the rest of the canal in the future.

34 Victor P. Conrad Charles Mill to Foremans Ferry 88.1 advises us of the death of Mrs. Conrad, who shared his love of the canal. Please accept the condolences of your fellow Level Walkers.

38 Melvin I. Kaplan/Harry P. Turner Williamsport to Pinesburg Station 99.3 submitted a number of newspaper clippings concerning the C & O Canal and Antietam Battlefield. Mel Kaplan points out in his report that many with English bikes have found their way into his store with repair problems and he draws the conclusion that the lightness of the English bike makes it undesirable on many parts of the towpath, And he stresses this point when asked for information regarding biking the towpath. For those of you living in the Williamsport area, the Towpath Guide is for sale at Kaplan's Store at 1 Fenton Avenue(in Williamsport).

40 George W. "Hooper" Wolfe Old RR Bridge to Dam No. 5 105.0 looked fit as a fiddle when we saw him recently. Hooper has been doing a lot of traveling recently, showing his canal slides and lecturing to business, church, and school groups.

SECTION 40 and 41 covering Dam No. 5. We were surprised to hear from another Level Walker and the newspaper of the extensive "road" work between Two Locks and Dam No. 5. Keep your eyes on the developments in that area and please pass along your observations and opinions.

41A C. S. Baker Lock 47 to McCoys Ferry 108.6 reports that his section is in an excellent state of repair as to the towpath and area around the locks and that the boat ramp is actively used by fishermen and boaters.

48/49 Hancock to Lock 53 124.1 Walter S. Boardman keeps in touch with us as the Vice President of the C & O Canal Association.

56 Jeremy F. Parker Green Ridge Station to Lock 61 151.2 of 6222 Broad Street, Washington, D, C. 20016, is the new Level Walker to this section. (John Anderson is now Co-Level Walker on Section 7.) The Parkers recently reported on their first visit to the section, reporting on its access, general terrain, state of the canal, features, and the river.

57 John W. Beck, Jr. Lock 61 to Lock 63 1/3 provided the fine maps used in Section Two of the Towpath Guide. Thanks again!!

63 Bonnie Troxell Oldtown to Kellys Run Culvert 167.0 provided a very fine report. What about the rest of the Level Walkers in Cumberland???

FOLLOWING THE BULLDOZER TRAIL (Continued)

We then traipsed upstream a ways to contrast the untouched portion with that which had man's brazen imprint on it--and I think those present had no difficulty in deciding which they preferred. Even the boy scouts who rounded the rough surface around the face of the cliff had no difficulty and some even stayed on their bikes, so--I don't think anyone needs a concrete road in order to enjoy an outing--and think of the money which could be saved!!

After having lunch (brown-bag style) at the Western Maryland Sportsman's Club, we discussed what our mission should be and the alternatives there-to. Avenues of approach to ensure adherence to sound environmental practices and the cessation of the current-type construction/development discussed were: public hearings; appeals to congressman, both informally and through resolutions; the need for the C & O Canal Advisory Council to be appointed and function NOW; an Advisory Council outside the purview of the Secretary of the Interior; and others. The meeting ended with unanimity to have the Canal and River Rights Council act as the focal point for all organization having an interest in the development of the canal, and that the CRRC will pursue all avenues of approach with advice and counsel of the various organizations present. Your chairman pledged the active support of the Level Walkers, regardless of the actions which may or may not be taken by the C & O Canal Association as a whole. Let me hear from you as to your views of what actions you would like to have supported.

Our next stop was at Dam No. 5 from which point we went to the cliff area $\frac{1}{2}$ mile upstream, following the new towpath "road". The contrast here was startling, since the face of the cliff had been blown off and the towpath raised and a concrete road apron installed in its place. Here was the evidence of what would be done at Dam No. 4 and other places if the Park Service continues unrestrained. Then on by towpath road to Two Locks.

Further conversations took place at the residence of William (Bill) Beard who offered the hospitality of his home to the group. The view from the tops of the cliffs is spectacular--except for the one which is blown off, of course. Mr. Beard's home will be the scene of a meeting with Rep. Goodloe Byron this week--the topic of the meeting being the development taking place in the area, along the canal.

NEW C & O CANAL FACILITIES

We recently stopped by and visited with Larry and Candy Fawley at Pennyfield Lock, where they have converted an old barn or stable into a bicycle and canoe rental place. Bikes are \$1 hr/\$4 day and canoes are \$1.50 hr/\$5 day. They are a very nice couple and have a real interest in the canal, so stop by and visit with them some day. Good luck!

Another new enterprise in the River & Trail Outfitters in the Sandy Hook area. Just short of the Sandy Hook Bridge (340) over the Potomac, turn right a hundred yards or so up Valley Road, and there you are. In addition to bikes and canoes (including white water type), boats, trail tents, back, and day packs, rail foods, maps and publications are available, including the Towpath Guides. They are open on weekends and provide a service where none was available before. We hope you do well!

CONOCHEAGUE CREEK AQUEDUCT INCIDENT OF 1920

BY MELVIN H. KAPLAN

In 1920 the berm parapet of the Conococheague Aqueduct collapsed while a boat was in the aqueduct, but the mules and crew did not fall into the creek as many suppose. I was eleven years old when the incident happened, and remember it quite well, and knew when I heard that (later) that the crew and mules fell in that something was wrong, because one drop to the creek below would surely tell a person that no one could survive such a fall without being injured, so I set out to prove it.

Here are the facts concerning this incident: On April 18, 1920, Frank Myers, Captain of Boat No. 73 stopped at Big Pool, his home, to let his step-daughter, Viola Davis leave the boat to visit the family while Capt. Myers and his step-son Joseph Davis proceeded to Williamsport and tied up at Steffey and Findlay's wharf about 500 yards west of Lock 44, where the boat was unloaded on April 19th. Early on the morning of April 20th., with Capt. Myers steering the boat and his step-son Joseph driving all the mules, which was a three-mule team, they left for Cumberland intending to stop at Big Pool to pick up the step-daughter, who was the other member of the crew. At 5:00 a.m., while going through the aqueduct, the boat struck the east end of the berm wall a light blow. Capt. Myers saw the wall beginning to waver and immediately called to his step-son who was almost at the western end of the berm parapet. There were no members of the crew or mules on the boat when it fell into the creek. The boat remained in the Conococheague Creek until the 1936 flood, when it floated down the Potomac River and remained high and dry on the towpath, where subsequent high water caused it to break up and float away.

As well as from my own memory, I secured the information from the following:

1. Mr. David Wolfe, a former canal boat captain and who was a good friend of Capt. Frank Myers. Mr. Wolfe told me that Capt. Myers talked several times with him about the incident.

2. Mr. McKinley Shank who was an eye witness to the incident, and would have been a casualty if he had left home a little earlier on his way to work at the Pinesburg Quarry. Mr. Shank told me that he was just a short distance from the east berm end of the aqueduct, as he always walked the berm parapet on his way to work, when he saw the wall collapse, the boat going through the break, Capt. Myers jump from the boat, and his step-son standing at the western end of the aqueduct with the mules.

3. The Thursday evening issue of the April 20, 1920 newspaper, "The Hagerstown Daily Mail."

4. Mr. Lauren Myers, Sr., son of Capt. Myers who was born July 1920. In talking with Lauren whom I have known for quite some time, but didn't know he was a son of Capt. Myers until I started researching the aqueduct break, he told me that he often heard his father talk about the boat going through the break in the berm aqueduct wall, how the mules were saved, and how he jumped from the boat. Lauren also informed me that his father died in 1950 and his step-sister Viola and his step-brother Joseph died several years ago.

(Mr. Kaplan is President of the Williamsport C & O Canal Club, Inc and the Level Walker from Williamsport to Pinesburg Station. The Towpath Guide is for sale at his grocery store at 1 Fenton Avenue in Williamsport.)

SECTION OF THE MONTH

PAW PAW TUNNEL

BY ALAN D. FRANKLIN

(MILE 154.48 ((LOCK 63 1/3)) TO MILE 156.3 ((MD. ROUTE 51)))

1. Historical Background. Most of the information in this article on the history and background of the Paw Paw Tunnel comes from an admirable NPS report, "The Historic Structure Survey Report, Tunnel, Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, Part I, Historic Data Section", by John F. Luzader, Historian, dated March 1965. This report, or rather an article based upon it, has been published in a very readable form in Vol. 4, No. 4, of Valleys of History, Autumn 1968, by the Area Development Department, Potomac Edison Company, Downsville Pike, Hagerstown, Md. 21740.

The major feature of the Section, and indeed one of the major features of the entire canal, is the Paw Paw Tunnel. It was built as a bypass to some very difficult terrain along the Potomac in the Paw Paw Bends. Here the river makes a series of gargantuan loops. The tunnel route cuts across one large double loop, taking one mile where the river takes six. While the tunnel route involved cutting through over 3000 feet of solid rock, the Maryland shore of the river route contains some impressive cliffs coming right down to the river. To have followed the river would have required either crossing to the West Virginia shore and back, hacking the canal out along those cliffs, or damming the river at the lower end of the bend to form a slackwater and cutting only a towpath along the cliffs or on the West Virginia side. These alternatives were thoroughly debated within the Canal Company, and, thanks largely to the enthusiastic advocacy of a newly-appointed Engineer, Charles B. Fisk, the tunnel plan won out. It was February 1836 when the decision was made to go ahead with the tunnel, and completion was set for July 1838. In actual fact the job was not done until 1850.

Two other men, in addition to Fisk, were largely responsible for the eventual building of the tunnel. Fisk's assistant, Elwood Morris, played a very significant part as principal liaison between the company and the contractor. The latter, Lee Montgomery, was not around at the finish, and emerges finally as a tragic figure. Against all sorts of odds, some but by no means all of his own making, he succeeded in driving the tunnel through, although not in finishing the entire job. In doing so, he apparently sunk his own resources, and himself. Having grossly overextended his own credit, he was finally caught in one of the periodic financial crises of the Canal Company and went under. The tunnel he had largely built was acclaimed a Wonder of the World, while he was tossed aside, a sacrifice to creditors he had indebted himself to trying to fulfill his contract. He disappears from sight in a welter of litigation. No wonder a local legend among the superstitious for many years had it that the tunnel was haunted by a headless man!

Montgomery accepted the contract to build the tunnel in the spring of 1836. He was a Methodist minister who was also a contractor, having previously built at least one tunnel, for a railroad. He appears to have been a rough, tough customer, but energetic and not unimaginative. Bricks were scarce in the area, so he brought in a patented brick-making machine and set up his own brick works, unsuccessfully as it turned out. Much of the work involved cutting through rock and the construction of sophisticated brick-work and masonry. The Irish laborers who built so much of (Continued)

SECTION OF THE MONTH (Continued)

the canal weren't particularly skilled in these things, so he brought in English masons and English and Welsh miners, as well as local Pennsylvania (and Maryland) "Dutch" masons and laborers. These moves, rational as they seemed, were later to contribute very much to his downfall.

Montgomery had accepted the contract at much too low a cost. On all sides there was a great deal of over optimism as to the ease and speed with which the job could be done. The rock formation through which the tunnel was to be dug was a natural arch of shale, thus promising protection from cave-ins. On the other hand, it was not recognized that the same formations, in the deep cuts at each end of the tunnel, would easily slide - in fact, the formation is sometimes called "slickenslide"! - and these slides drastically slowed down that part of the work. It was estimated early on that "a single hand can bore from seven to eight feet per day... ..", whereas in actual fact the rate of progress was something like ten to twelve feet per week. It was a large undertaking, employing as many as 400 men at one time. Rising costs and unexpected expenses bedeviled Montgomery from the beginning, and by the end of the first year he was already trying to renegotiate his contract. Overruns have a long history! Because of the lack of funds he fell behind in his payments of wages to his men, and the resulting unrest and discontent further reduced his efficiency. The company itself was slowly going bankrupt, and never could help him much. The company paid off in monthly installments, according to how far the work had progressed. However, as an earnest of the contractor's intention to fulfill his contract in its entirety, a certain percentage was retained by the company, to be paid at completion of the work. While the company from time to time relinquished portions of this retained money to help keep Montgomery going, he was forced to invest more and more of his own resources.

During 1836, there were riots among the Irish laborers on other portions of the canal, but Montgomery managed to keep his work force going without interruption. In early 1837, however, unrest among his men over the pay situation and rivalries among the various national groups he had taken so much pains to recruit finally exploded into violence. The Irish terrorized the work camps and drove off the British workers for a time. Again in 1838 more riots occurred, Irish vs English and "Dutch". A tavern at Oldtown was destroyed, and the workmen's shanty camps were burned. In May 1838, a general strike occurred along the whole line of the canal, based on the failure of the contractors to meet payrolls. Local militia, who by this time sympathized strongly with the workers, reluctantly turned out to restore order. Montgomery fired and blacklisted 130 men, and work resumed. Again in 1839, more rioting broke out, this time in Little Orleans, downstream from the tunnel, and once again the militia had to be called out. Evidence of the Irish in Little Orleans can be found in the graveyard of the little frame Catholic Church there, St. Patrick's.

Somehow, despite failing finances and violent unrest, work continued through 1840 and 1841, but in 1842 the Canal Company collapsed, and work on the entire canal ceased. It had been completed and was operating as far up as Dam 6, at mile 134.1, about 20 miles below the tunnel. In addition, much of the stretch above the tunnel, to Cumberland, had been finished. Montgomery, who now disappears in a maze of lawsuits, his personal fortune sunk in the abortive attempt to finish the tunnel, had actually driven it through, but a good deal of work remained. North of the tunnel, the deep cut had been plagued by slides and was not fully cleared, and of course the canal in this cut had to be completed. The tunnel itself was not yet finished, and still had to have the brick lining installed. Morris by this time had found that Montgomery and his patented machine made poor brick. Fortunately for the canal itself, State and (Continued)

Federal interests were involved. Ways were found to raise enough money to resume work, under a new contractor in 1847. By 1850, the tunnel and canal were finished and open to traffic.

The construction was an impressive feat. It involved not only 3118 feet of tunnel, but also 200 feet of deep cut at the southern and 890 feet at the northern end. In order to speed the work, two sets of vertical shafts were dug down from the hill overhead (two shafts per set to provide ventilation) until tunnel level was reached, and then digging was carried out along the tunnel line in each direction from there. Together with the faces moving in from each end, there was thus a total of six active digging faces, although because of the slides in the deep cut, the face at the North Portal was not as active as the others. The vertical shafts were 8' in diameter, with 23' between the centers of each one in a pair. Each pair was located in a ravine overhead to shorten the vertical distance. One pair was about 370' in from the North Portal, and the other about 900'. They can be located inside the tunnel by the dripping of water that flows down them and through the brick lining, and can also be located on the hill above by the digging scars still visible.

The digging of the tunnel was done by blasting out the big pieces with black powder and then reducing them with sledges and picks. The spoil was either hauled up the shafts by winches and then carted to spoil heaps in the ravines by (probably horse-drawn) rail cars, or else hauled out of the portals by rail cars to spoil heaps mostly on the river side of the canal at either end. These heaps are still clearly visible, particularly above the towpath downstream of the tunnel.

There must be many tales and legends about the tunnel. In closing this section of the report I am going to pass on two that I picked up from a man by the name of Canfield, who was a foreman or crew-boss when the National Park Service first renovated the tunnel in about 1957. One of these tales involves an Irishman and a mule, who operated a sort of elevator at one of the vertical shafts as the tunnel was being dug, bringing loads of rock to the surface and lowering men and supplies. The Irishman and the mule shared a characteristic - a very short temper. They quarreled more and more as the work went on, until one day the mule kicked the Irishman where it hurt. Incensed, the Irishman kicked back, only unfortunately the mule was standing at the edge of the shaft. Down he went, to land angry but unhurt at the bottom (this is the part I can't really swallow - those shafts were some 400 feet deep). Only now there was no way to get him to the top again, so the Irishman, in addition to other duties, had to lower bales of hay and buckets of water down the shaft to the mule until the workers could link up the tunnel coming in from a portal to get him out.

Canfield also told of bitter arguments that would go on when two boats would meet in the middle. There was a custom of sending a boy on ahead through the tunnel to post a lantern at the other end, so that an oncoming boat from the other direction would know that the tunnel was already occupied and would wait his turn. This didn't always work, however, and from time to time canal boats, with their stubborn captains, would meet in the middle. On one memorable occasion, neither side would back down, not for days. Boats piled up for miles, bets were laid, and company accountants tore their hair. Finally the Section Superintendent in the area could stand it no longer. He went out to the nearby farms and bought all of the green corn that he could find, and then at the upwind end of the tunnel he built a roaring fire and threw on his green cornstalks. With remarkable speed the dispute was settled and the tunnel cleared. (Cont'd)

2. Description of Section

a. Location - the section is located in the Paw Paw Bends of the Potomac River, and can be found on the Paw Paw, W. Va.-Md. quadrangle in the 7.5 minute series of the USGS topographic maps. The upstream end is close to N 39°32'37" and W 78°27'42" at the bridge carrying Maryland Route 51 across the canal. The section runs almost due north from there to Lock 63 1/3, at about N39°34'00" and W 78°27'20". The most convenient entrance is from the Route 51 bridge. To reach this entrance from the Washington area there are a number of almost equally convenient routes. Interstate I70 from Baltimore (70N) or Washington (70S), by way of Frederick or Hagerstown, passes close to Hancock, Md. There take US Route 522 south across the Potomac to Berkeley Springs, W. Va., and then W. Va. 9 West. This joins W. Va. 29 and turns north to Paw Paw, becoming Md. Route 51 after crossing the Potomac. Or those who dislike interstates can go west from Washington on US 50 to Winchester, Va., take Va. Route 127 west to join W., Va. 29 north to Paw Paw. After crossing the Potomac River at Paw Paw into Maryland, Route 51 first passes under the Western Maryland RR and then crosses over the canal.

No formal parking is as yet provided where the canal and Md. 51 cross, but the shoulder of the road is wide enough at the south end of the bridge to accomodate a number of cars safely. A farm lane leads down from this southern end of the bridge, on the west side of Route 51, to the towpath. The owner of the lane has obviously had trouble with parked cars blocking his lane, and has indicated his desire for relief by posting unofficial "No Parking" signs. If visitors would stay on the shoulder of Route 51, there would be no inconvenience to anyone. This lane, besides leading to the owner's house, also enters directly on to the towpath. There has been a Park Service gate across this entrance for some years. In times gone by, the gate was left open and the visitor could drive down the towpath to the tunnel entrance. However, in recent years, the NPS has been discouraging the use of cars on the towpath, and this gate has been kept closed. Turn right onto the towpath to embark upon the section and to reach the Paw Paw Tunnel.

b. Mileposts

156.3 This is the Route 51 bridge and the beginning of the section.

156.2 A lane slopes down from the towpath, leading to a small camp or picnic ground on the banks of the Potomac. This is a very pleasant place to stop. There are two clean outhouses, a trash can, and a nice view of the river. There were no picnic tables at last visit. Water is available at a pump by the side of the towpath 0.3 mile further on downstream, toward the tunnel.

Between the canal and the river, running from this campsite back upstream to the Western Maryland RR, is a field which at the time of this writing had recently been leveled with a bulldozer, revealing literally thousands upon thousands of old bricks. In fact, the surface is made up of bricks and brick pieces mixed with river silt. The bulldozer had pushed out several largish trees, and in their roots could be seen many bricks, attesting to a certain antiquity for the bricks. Near the upstream end of the field, in the shadow of the railroad, the bulldozer has uncovered a quantity of cinders and coal. At the downstream end, actually on the small campsite, there stands an old, deserted frame house, which appears to have been the old Section House, headquarters of the Superintendent of this section for the Canal Company. The foundation of this house is made of brick, which, being a rather unusual foundation material, suggests that there was a ready supply of brick at hand, with no other uses, when the house was built, also suggesting that Lee Montgomery's brick-making machine was somewhere in the field, with the kilns perhaps at the upstream end where the cinders and coal were found. (Continued next issue)

SECTION TWO OF THE TOWPATH GUIDE

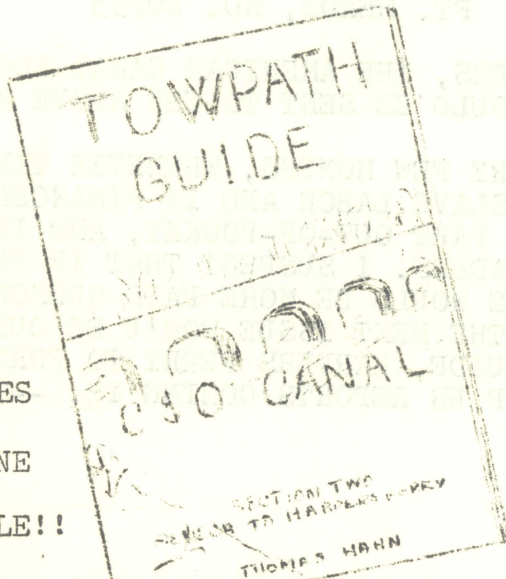
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