

PURPOSE and PROMOTION

Paper 1

in a series on the

History

of the

Brecknock & Abergavenny Canal

by

John Norris

Following the publication of my guide to the canal in 1991, it was suggested that I should produce a short history of similar size and format, ready for publication to coincide with the bi-centenary celebrations to mark the passing of the 1793 Act which authorised the Brecknock & Abergavenny Canal. It seemed like a good idea at the time!

In the event, pressure of work delayed completion beyond the bicentenary year and, with the deadline past, I had the opportunity to do more first-hand research than I had originally intended, causing further delay.

Eighteen years later, and five years after I stopped looking for fresh stones to turn (though I still turn stones offered to me!), the History is still some way from completion. Anxious as I now am to get into the public domain at least some of the information I have gathered, and the interpretation I have put on it, I have therefore decided to publish the History as a series of papers on specific topics, with the complete set ultimately being available in bound form.

In the series as a whole I shall be concentrating primarily on the canal itself and giving less attention to the associated tramroads, which have been comprehensively covered in Gordon Rattenbury's *Tramroads of the Brecknock & Abergavenny Canal*.

I have set myself four aims:-

1. To paint a comprehensive picture of the Brecon and Abergavenny Canal, both as a specific canal and as a typical example of a late eighteenth century canal.
2. To try provide answers to the many questions that I and others have asked.
3. To make more widely available information not otherwise readily accessible.
4. To dispel a few myths that have grown up over the years.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to many people and a fuller acknowledgement will follow when the series is complete. Meanwhile I must particularly thank Ian Wright, Jennifer Duncan, Ray Haydon and my wife Mary for their invaluable help with information, research, transcription and interpretation.

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John Norris, The Birches, off Wickham Hill,
Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex. BN6 9NP
email: JRN@orpheusmail.co.uk

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