

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

NAVIGABLE RIVERS, CANALS,

AND

RAILWAYS,

OF

GREAT BRITAIN,

AS A REFERENCE TO

NICHOLS, PRIESTLEY & WALKER'S

MAP OF INLAND NAVIGATION,

DERIVED FROM ORIGINAL AND PARLIAMENTARY DOCUMENTS

IN THE POSSESSION OF

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, Esq.

LONDON:

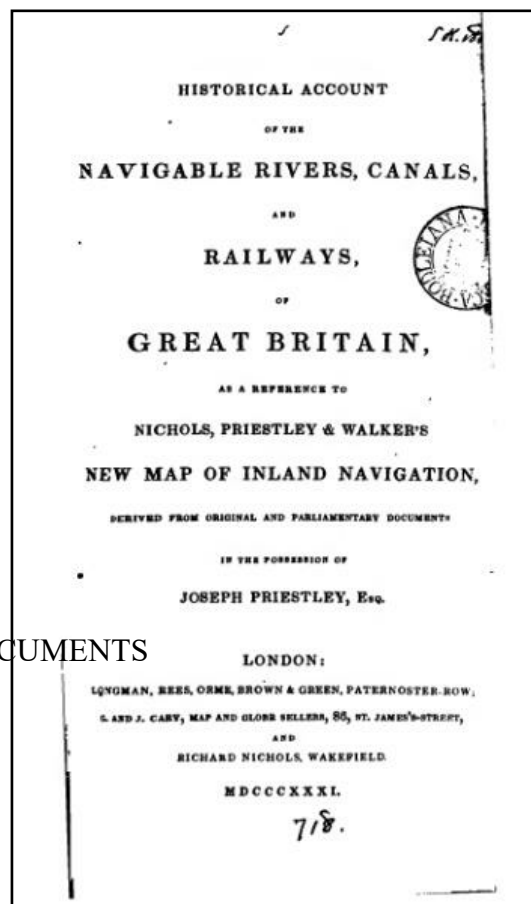
LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN & GREEN, PATERNOSTER-ROW,

G. AND J. CARY, MAP AND GLOBE SELLERS, 86, ST. JAMES'S-STREET,

AND

RICHARD NICHOLS, WAKEFIELD.

MDCCCXXXI. JO. PRIESTLEY.



WYRLEY AND ESSINGTON CANAL.

32 George III. Cap. 81, Royal Assent 30th April, 1792.

34 George III. Cap. 25, Royal Assent 28th March, 1794.

This canal, under authority of the first act of parliament passed respecting it, commenced at Wyrley Bank, in the county of Stafford; and from thence, running at first in a southerly course over Essington Wood and Snead Common, and thence south-easterly by Bloxwich, it proceeded to near Birch Hill, in the parish of Walsall; near Snead Common a cut was made from it, which taking a westerly course, and passing by Wednesfield, joined the Birmingham Canal near Wolverhampton. By the act obtained in 1794 for extending this canal, another cut was made, which, commencing at Birch Hill, took a northerly direction as far as Pelsall Wood, and from thence passing in an easterly course by Brown Hills, Cats Hill, a little to the south of Lichfield, and by Treford, it connects with the Coventry Canal near Huddlesford; there are also two branches; one from near Cats Hill to Hay Head Lime Works, and the other from near Pelsall Wood to Lords Hay; besides a small branch to a colliery on the south side of Essington Wood.

The act of 1792 is entitled, 'An Act for making and maintaining a navigable Canal from, or from near, Wyrley Bank, in the county of Stafford, to communicate with the Birmingham and Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, at or near the town of Wolverhampton, in the said county; and also certain collateral Cuts therein described from the said intended Canal.' It incorporates the subscribers to the undertaking by the name of "The Company of Proprietors of the Wyrley and Essington Navigation," and empowers them to raise amongst themselves, for the purposes of the act, the sum of £25,000, in two hundred shares of £125 each, and, if necessary, a further sum of £20,000, either amongst themselves or by mortgage of the tolls and rates, and to take the following tonnage rates.

TONNAGE RATES

For all Corn and other Grain, Hops, Timber and other Things, (except Coal, Coke, Iron, Iron-stone, Lime, Lime-stone, Rock-stone and other Minerals) 2d per Ton, per Mile.

For the above excepted Articles 9d ditto.

Boats of less than Twenty Tons passing any Lock to pay for Twenty Tons.

No Vessels to pass to or from this canal into the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, unless the Water in this Canal shall be at least Six Inches higher than that in the Birmingham and Fazeley, at the Junction of the Canals, and all surplus Water is to pass into the Birmingham Canal, the Proprietors of which may take the Water used in Lockage upon certain Parts of this Canal.

The proprietors of the Birmingham Canal may take, for all goods which are carried from this into their canal, the following

TONNAGE RATES.

For all Goods which shall be landed within One Mile of the First Lock leading towards Autherly..... 2d per Ton.

For ditto carried towards the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, and which shall pass through any Lock 6d ditto.

The act passed in 1794, entitled, '*An Act for extending the Wyrley and Essington Canal*,' empowers the company to raise amongst themselves, for the purpose of extending this canal as stated in the first part of this article, the sum of £75,000, and, if necessary, the further sum of £40,000, to be divided into shares of the same value as those in the first act, and authorizes their taking the following

TONNAGE RATES.

For all Coal, (except Slack or Coal used for burning Lime-stone or Bricks) Iron and other Minerals, and except such Coal as has passed on the Wyrley and Essington Canal. and has paid Nine-pence per Ton, and shall not pass through any Lock 0s 9d per Ton.

For such of the above Goods as shall have paid Nine-pence upon the Wyrley and Essington Canal or upon this Canal, and shall afterwards pass through the Lock at Cats Hill 1s 3d ditto.

For such of the above Goods as shall be produced from Ground situated below the Lock near Cats Hill, and shall be conveyed between Cats Hill and Huddlesford 2s 0d ditto.

For all Slack or inferior Coal for burning Lime-stone and Brick, Lime-stone and Lime, not passing a Lock 0s 6d ditto.

For such as shall have passed on the Wyrley and Essington Canal, and shall pass a Lock ... 0s 9d ditto.

The act directs that the company shall purchase the shares of such proprietors as shall not be satisfied with the extension.

Mr. W. Pitt was the engineer employed on this canal, which is twenty-four miles in length from the Coventry Canal to its junction with the Birmingham Canal. In the first eight miles of this distance to the reservoir at Cannock Heath is a rise of 270 feet, by thirty locks; and the remaining sixteen miles to the Birmingham Canal is level. In the first half mile of the Wyrley Branch, from its leaving the main line, is a rise of about 36 feet by six locks; and the remaining three miles is level. The branch to the Essington Colliery, which is about a mile in length, has a rise of about 24 feet by four locks. The branches—to Hay Head Lime Works, five miles and a half in length; to Lords Hay Coal Pits, two miles and a half; and to near Walsall, half a mile long, are all on the same level with the Long Pound.

This canal is of great service in conveying the produce of the mines which abound in its vicinity to the manufactories of Wolverhampton and its populous neighbourhood; and by its connection, through the Coventry Canal, with the Trent and Mersey Canal to the north and the Oxford Canal to the south, a communication is opened with the Rivers Treat and Mersey, and also with the River Thames.