

Extracted from the book "Priestley's Navigable Rivers and Canals" by Joseph Priestley which was originally published in April 1831. NOTE: The book was originally called "Historical Account of the Navigable Rivers, Canals, and Railways, of Great Britain".

## BASINGSTOKE CANAL.

18 George III. Cap. 75, Royal Assent 15th May, 1778.

33 George III. Cap. 16, Royal Assent 28th March, 1793.

THIS canal commences from the navigable River Wey, one mile and three quarters south from the village of Weybridge, and about three miles from its junction with the River Thames. Its course from hence is south-west, passing Horsell, and Pirbright, to Frimley Wharf, whence it takes a southerly course to near the village of Ash, where it crosses the little River Blackwater, and enters the county of Southampton. To this point of the canal it is fifteen miles, and there is a rise, from the River Wey, of 195 feet, by twenty-nine equal locks. This part of the canal is 36 feet wide, and 4½ feet deep, and the locks admit vessels 72 feet long, and 13 feet wide, carrying fifty tons. From this point it is level to Basingstoke, a distance of twenty-two miles.

In its course from Ash Valley, at a distance of two miles, it crosses the mail road from London to Winchester; and about a mile from hence, westward, the canal is carried across a valley of three quarters of a mile in breadth, by a very fine aqueduct; from hence it proceeds westward, passing Dogmersfield House, and close to the town of Odiham, to Grewell, where the canal enters Grewell Hill Tunnel, half-a-mile and one-eighth in length, and from which, being entirely in chalk, which yields vast quantities of water, the principal supply is obtained for lockage, &c.; From hence, the canal proceeds, passing Old Basing, to the town of Basingstoke, where it terminates. The summit level of the canal, of twenty-two miles, is 38 feet wide, and 5½ feet deep, and the total length is thirty-seven miles.

There is a reservoir, at Aldershot, for the supply of this canal, which was completed in 1796; and also a feeder from the River Lodden.

This canal was made under the authority of an act, entitled, '*An Act for making a navigable Canal, from the town of Basingstoke, in the county of Southampton, to communicate with the River Wey, in the parish of Chertsey, in the county of Surrey, and to the South-East Side of the Turnpike-Road, in the parish of Turgiss, in the said county of Southampton,*' and the subscribers, consisting of thirty-three persons, (amongst whom were the Earl of Worthington, the Earl of Dartmouth, the Earl of Portsmouth, and Lord Rivers), were incorporated by the name of "The Company of Proprietors of the Basingstoke Canal Navigation".

They were empowered 'to raise among themselves £86,000, in eight hundred and sixty shares of £100 each, with further power to raise a further sum of £40,000, if necessary. The affairs of the company are managed by twenty proprietors, who form a committee, and who are under the control of the general meetings of the company.

Lime, Lime-stone, Paving-stone, Chalk, Dung, Soil, Marl and other Manure for Land	1d per Ton per Mile
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For all Goods, Wares and Merchandize, and other Things	2d ditto, ditto.
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Gravel, Sand and other Materials for Roads, (except Paving-stones) are exempt from payment of Toll, when the Water is running through the Gauge, Paddle or Niche of the Lock.

Vessels not to exceed Thirteen Feet in Breadth, and Seventy-two Feet in Length; and Vessels of less Burthen than Fifteen Tons, shall not pass through any Lock with out leave.

In this act, the proprietors of the navigation of the River Wey agree to receive only one shilling per ton for all descriptions of merchandize, &c.; passing on the Wey River, between this canal and the Thames; and they further agree to keep their locks of the length of 81 feet, and 14 feet wide.

By an act of the 33rd George III. entitled, '*An Act for effectually carrying into Execution an Act of Parliament of the Eighteenth Year of his present Majesty, for making a navigable Canal from the town of*

*Basingstoke, in the county of Southampton, to communicate with the River Wey, in the parish of Chertsey, in the county of Surrey, and to the South-East Side of the Turnpike-Road, in the parish of Turgiss, in the said county of Southampton,'* it is stated that the sum of £126,000, authorized to be raised by the preceding act, is all expended; that their works are not completed, and that they have incurred some debt: they are, therefore, empowered to raise, upon loans or annuities, on mortgage of the tolls, the further sum of £60,000, with which sum they were enabled to finish their works, which were opened in 1796.

The trade upon this canal consists chiefly of coals, deals, groceries, bale goods, &c.; from London; and the exports are timber, flour, malt, bark, and earthenware.