

**BRITISH CANALS: IS
THEIR RESUSCITATION
PRACTICABLE?**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649405152

British Canals: Is Their Resuscitation Practicable? by Edwin A. Pratt

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

EDWIN A. PRATT

**BRITISH CANALS: IS
THEIR RESUSCITATION
PRACTICABLE?**



AQUEDUCT AT PONTCYSYLLTE (IN THE DISTANCE).
(Constructed by Telford to carry Ellesmere Canal over River Dee. Opened 1803. Cost \$4,17,000. Length, 1007 feet.)
[Frontispiece.]

BRITISH CANALS:

IS THEIR RESUSCITATION
PRACTICABLE?

BY EDWIN A. PRATT

AUTHOR OF "RAILWAYS AND THEIR RATES," "THE ORGANIZATION
OF AGRICULTURE," "THE TRANSITION IN AGRICULTURE," ETC.



LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1906

NU

Hist. Econ.
Harding
11-29-30
22668

PREFACE

THE appointment of a Royal Commission on Canals and Waterways, which first sat to take evidence on March 21, 1906, is an event that should lead to an exhaustive and most useful enquiry into a question which has been much discussed of late years, but on which, as I hope to show, considerable misapprehension in regard to actual facts and conditions has hitherto existed.

Theoretically, there is much to be said in favour of canal restoration, and the advocates thereof have not been backward in the vigorous and frequent ventilation of their ideas. Practically, there are other all-important considerations which ~~ought~~ not to be overlooked, though as to these the British Public have hitherto heard very little. As a matter of detail, also, it is desirable to see whether the theory that the decline of our canals is due to their having been "captured" and "strangled" by the railway companies—a theory which many people seem to believe in as implicitly as they do, say, in the Multiplication Table—is really capable of proof, or whether that decline is not, rather, to be attributed to wholly different causes.

In view of the increased public interest in the general question, it has been suggested to me that

0 11-11-30 W. J.

the Appendix on "The British Canal Problem" in my book on "Railways and their Rates," published in the Spring of 1905, should now be issued separately; but I have thought it better to deal with the subject afresh, and at somewhat greater length, in the present work. This I now offer to the world in the hope that, even if the conclusions at which I have arrived are not accepted, due weight will nevertheless be given to the important—if not (as I trust I may add) the interesting—series of facts, concerning the past and present of canals alike at home, on the Continent, and in the United States, which should still represent, I think, a not unacceptible contribution to the present controversy.

EDWIN A. PRATT.

LONDON, *April* 1906.



CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY	I
II. EARLY DAYS	12
III. RAILWAYS TO THE RESCUE	23
IV. RAILWAY-CONTROLLED CANALS	32
V. THE BIRMINGHAM CANAL AND ITS STORY	57
VI. THE TRANSITION IN TRADE	74
VII. CONTINENTAL CONDITIONS	93
VIII. WATERWAYS IN THE UNITED STATES	104
IX. ENGLISH CONDITIONS	119
X. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	142
APPENDIX — THE DECLINE IN FREIGHT TRAFFIC ON THE MISSISSIPPI	151
INDEX	157

