

FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING HENRY BERRY (1720-1812), LIVERPOOL'S SECOND DOCK ENGINEER.

*Contributed by Stanley A. Harris, A.C.I.S.*

AS the result of further researches in the Liverpool *Town Books* light has been thrown upon two important points discussed in the paper, *Henry Berry (1720-1812), Liverpool's Second Dock Engineer*, published in volume 89 of these *Transactions*.

The first point concerns the date upon which Berry was appointed Dock Engineer. A *Town Books* entry dated 5 April, 1766, recording the fixing of Berry's salary as Dock Engineer at eighty guineas per annum, was quoted in the paper, and comment was made that this entry did not state specifically if he was appointed at that date or had held the post for some time. Two recent discoveries in the *Town Books* reveal that Berry almost certainly succeeded Steers as Dock Engineer immediately after the latter's death in 1750. A *Town Books* entry dated 3 July, 1751 (seven months after Steers' death), reads: "Mr. Henry Berry, Engineer to the Docks, admitted free gratis." An entry nine months later (15 April, 1752) reads: "It is Ordered that Mr. Berry be appointed overlooker at the Docks to carry on the Works there and Superintend and Pay the Workmen, and that he be allowed and paid out of the Dock receipts the yearly sum of Fifty two Guineas for his Service and trouble."

From these two entries it would appear that the Council looked upon Berry as their Dock Engineer from the date of Steers' death, and that the order of 15 April, 1752, was promulgated to regularise his position.

The entries further prove that the "new" graving dock constructed in 1756 and the two graving docks constructed in 1765 were the work of Berry.<sup>1</sup>

The other point is equally important. In the paper the suggestion was made that Henry Berry constructed the Sankey Canal, and that various authorities erred in attributing its construction to John Eyes, of Liverpool. The suggestion receives valuable support from an entry in the *Town Books* under date 7 May, 1755, which reads: "It is ordered that liberty be given to Mr. Berry for Two days a week to attend the making Sankey Brook navigable, he providing and paying a skilful person to supervise the work of the Docks in his absence." This entry, in conjunction with Berry's obituary notices in the Liverpool newspapers, the reference to him in the House of Commons *Journals*, and the gift to him of a silver cup by the proprietors of the Canal after the completion of the work, proves beyond reasonable doubt that he was responsible for the construction of England's first real canal.

<sup>1</sup> These three graving docks were constructed on the west side of the Dry Basin (now the Canning Dock). The two constructed in 1765 are still in existence.