

Symposium on Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Engineering: The Early Years 1828–1830

Saturday, July 24, 2010
1 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Shepherd University
The Auditorium of the Byrd
Center for Legislative Studies
Shepherdstown, West Virginia

Program

**Benjamin Wright, C&O Canal Chief Engineer
June 1828–Fall 1830**

Steve Pennington, PE, PLS

**Charles Ellet, Jr., Assistant Engineer, 5th Residency, C&O
Canal Nov. 1828 – Apr. 1830**

Emory Kemp, Ph.D.

**C&O Canal Engineers and Engineering in the First Years of
Canal Construction**

Robert J. Kapsch, PE, PhD; and Denis McMullen, PE

Panel Discussion Moderated by Sam Tamburro (NPS):

Robert Kapsch, Emory Kemp, Denis McMullen, Steve Pennington
followed by Q & A from the audience

Note: There will be a FREE INTERPRETIVE WALK
AT 10 A.M. AT LOCK 38 on the Canal across from
Shepherdstown. The walk will include discussion
of the lift and river locks and the importance of
this location to the C&O Canal.

Sponsoring Organizations:

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Association,
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park,
and Shepherd University



Shepherd
UNIVERSITY

Symposium fee:

General registration: \$15
Members of sponsoring organizations: \$10

Register with the C&O Canal Association (candocanal.org)
Registration form at candocanal.org/news/symp_reg.html



background...

The idea of a symposium open to the general public on the C&O Canal's early engineering grew naturally out of the recognition that this year is the 200th anniversary of Charles Ellet Jr.'s birth—a young assistant engineer who would become a major figure in America's mid-19th century engineering achievements. The new transcriptions of the Ellet papers from his time on the C&O provide a remarkable picture of the C&O's engineering corps under Benjamin Wright at the beginning of the canal. Scheduled for the afternoon of July 24th at Shepherd University in Shepherdstown, WV, this event brings together a unique collection of experts who will share their expertise and insight on Wright and Ellet as well as the complexities of the construction and engineering that the new company experienced as it began building the first third of the canal.

In a project that began last summer, the large collection of Charles Ellet's personal papers held by the Special Collections Library of the University of Michigan are being catalogued for the first time. Those from Ellet's time on the C&O Canal, until he left in April 1830 to study engineering abroad, have been made available to the C&O Canal National Historical Park where volunteers have transcribed them. The documents include letters from Chief Engineer Wright, C&O Canal Company president Charles Fenton Mercer, Inspector of Masonry W. Robert Leckie, company clerk John P. Ingle, and Resident Engineers Herman Boye and Alfred Cruger. They contain detailed specifications for the Monocacy Aqueduct and provide an astonishing window on the function of the engineers, changes to the engineering corps, and developing difficulties with building materials, workmanship, and contractors.

For further information:

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