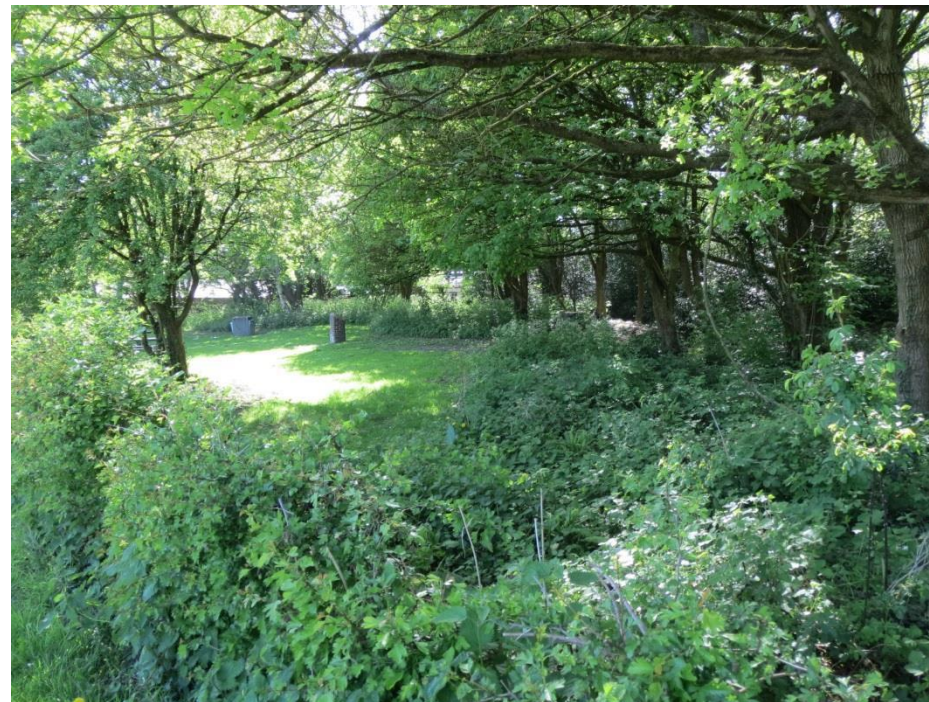


This length of canal opens out to feeder reservoirs on the offside, the top one being used for fishing and the lower one for mooring accessed by floating jetties. There is a walk around the perimeter and this is one of the sites popular with visitors.



Lock 19 which sits between the two reservoir ponds has an additional timber truss bridge, No 35a at the heel which is need of repair.

At the back of the towpath in a wooded setting there is a car park and picnic area as this is a popular destination.



Discussions with the Warwick canals about a connection here broke off in 1793 as the Stratford company favoured its own canal link to the Oxford Canal. In 1795 an act authorising a 1.75 mile link here, was then amended to be much nearer. That link opened in 1802.

When the Stratford started constructing the southern section in 1812 the original junction lock was modified, which led to an argument about water. a new junction lock, number lock 20 was built off the lower reservoir to end an expensive legal dispute in 1818.



The line of the original lock has now been reopened and connects the pound below lock 21 . This means that to stay travelling down the Stratford the locks go from 19 to Lock 21.



Lock 21 has single gates top and bottom and the lockside is block paved in Baggeridge brindle bricks.



Bridge 36 is the first of a series of listed structures that cluster around Lock 21. This includes, two cottages, foreman's house workshop buildings, 2 lock chambers and a former maintenance office. Details of their listing are in the Gazetteer section. Bridge 36 is unusual in that it takes a towpath route over the canal at the top of the lock, therefore there is more brick abutment and parapets, however this is elegantly achieved with the characteristic cantilevered split deck.



Former canal maintenance office.



A short arm leads off from lock 20, the 1818 lock, to the Grand Union canal, having locked down from the Stratford, which was a requirement of the original canal companies agreement, that the Warwick and Birmingham canal should not loose any water.



This arm passes under the mainline railway, over Rising Brook and under the towpath bridge with a large housing extension site pending construction at the junction with the Grand Union. The planting that screens the site is to be retained and thickened, to avoid adverse impact on the charcter and appearance of the historic canal assets.



Canal workshop now Trust's volunteer base. Managers house below



The first of the six barrel vaulted cottages sits alongside a link from the lower basin through to the arm. The roof is a mixture of brick rubble and lime mortar, covered in asphalt. The arch roof being an expedient reuse of some of the timber formwork supporting structures used to construct the brick bridges. Quite small they have often been extended not altogether sympathetically.



Transport infrastructure shared the same line through the landscape, with rail following the Warwick and Birmingham Canal toward Birmingham ,so that the canal and the rail are close, and the moorings here, both visitor and winter moorings suffer train noise, particularly freight traffic at night. It is a reminder that pictures of tranquillity are not always what they seem. This is also evident went after lock 26 the canal is oversailed by the M42 with the attendant intrusion audibly as well as visually..



At the end of the eighteenth century a network of waterways had covered the Birmingham area making it possible to send Birmingham goods, by canal, to many parts of the country. The success and usefulness of the Birmingham Canal Company Act 1768, stimulated other companies to obtain Acts, it was the period of canal mania.

An Act was passed in 1793 authorising the construction of a canal, to link Stratford-upon-Avon with Birmingham and the Black Country. It was envisaged coal from the Dudley area, firebricks, and salt would travel south, and agricultural produce, grain, and limestone would be carried back. a survey, , was made by John Snape, who proposed a route from a junction with the Worcester and Birmingham Canal at Kings Norton through to Stratford-upon-Avon via Hockley Heath. From Hockley Heath the proposed canal would follow the Old Warwick Road for a short way, then turn southwards, passing near to Lapworth church, and run parallel with Tapster Lane joining the valley of a little tributary of the Alne at Preston Bagot. Capital of £120,000<sup>2</sup> was raised for the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal from landowners and farmers along the route, outside interested parties and Stratford businessmen, who were keen to see their town drawn into the canal system.

Work, under the direction of engineer Josiah Clowes, began in 1793 at the northern end, and by May 1796 the canal had reached Hockley Heath. Although no major engineering work had been done on the stretch, the money was exhausted.

The route of the canal was again changed to make it pass through the village of Lapworth including locks and to join the Warwick-Birmingham Canal by a link at Kingswood. A further Act was passed in 1799 authorising another £50,000 to be raised and Fresh surveys were made and a new engineer, Samuel Parker, continued the work in 1800 and was complete by May 1802.



Competition between the Warwick and Birmingham Canal and the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal was very intense especially in the coal carrying business. Despite that, trade on the Stratford Canal flourished for about 40 years. At the height of canal prosperity a Stratford trader, Richard Greaves, noted that 50,000 tons of coal arrived at Stratford, 16,000 tons of limestone being sent to Birmingham; 181,700 tons of merchandise giving receipts of over £13,000 in 1838.

Despite this, the shareholders had never had a very good deal. In 1825 the Company's £75 shares were quoted at £16.50. In 1846 the Oxford, Worcester & Wolverhampton Railway Company offered £173,322 for the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal Company and the shareholders were happy to sell. The railway companies were obliged by statute to maintain the canals and the Stratford Canal continued to operate but made changes to save costs including losing staff.



KINGSWOOD JUNCTION



SIDE POUNDS CREATED AT THE JUNCTION 1800

The 1841 census gives the names and records actual occupations of the canal employees.

The canal manager was John Kershaw. He lived in a Georgian house beside the canal where, until the waterway was completed to Stratford, the 'Navigation Office', toll clerk, etc., had also been situated. Charles Allen, described as a 'writing clerk' was probably the toll collector and lived in a quite large house overlooking the Kingswood junction pool. The toll-collector checked the boat cargo, gauged the boats and collected the toll. The details of each boat using the canal, the tonnage carried at the depths marked on the boat's hull, were recorded in an official book which was issued to all toll offices. To gauge a boat the toll-collector simply checked the boat's freeboard, or area above the water line, against the book, worked out the toll which depended on the commodity, per ton per mile and collected the money. Such men were picked for their honesty and were usually well paid, £70 per annum plus a house being about average in 1840

Richard Soley, the canal carpenter, occupied the lock-house in the middle of Kingswood Basin and Edward Bayliss, the canal carpenter, the lock-house behind the *Boot Inn*.

The long flight of locks nearby was managed by lock-keeper James Robinson, who lived in a small cottage at the top of the flight.

There were five lock-keepers recorded at Lapworth in 1841 - Richard Smith, James Robinson, William Howse, Jacob Allen and Richard Rogers, paid about £50 pa.

Altogether there were 10 canal employees and their families living and working in Lapworth in the 1840's and 1850's. In later decades this was reduced to seven or eight employees, one or two of the craftsmen apparently doubling as lock-keepers. In 1871 and 1881 the five lock-keepers of 1841 had been reduced to two, one living in the cottage at the top of the long flight of locks behind the *Boot Inn* and the other beside Walter's locks No. 28 above Lowsonford.



The character of this canal is rural despite its nearness to large settlements and at times the impact of traffic noise from the M40. It is desirable to maintain the historic bridge and lock and cottage structures, but also the cut itself in order to best preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the corridor. The setting of these assets is part of the experience of passing along this early infrastructure either on the towpath or afloat. New buildings introduced into this setting should be compatible with what is there. Access can be improved, and surfacing introduced which respects the rural character.

Generally being within an area of green belt introduces restraint. Designation as a conservation area will also protect the landscape character and existing structures from ill-considered development, without banning all change. Enhanced use by local people, as well as visiting tourists, will celebrate the value of this historic asset, broaden understanding of its significance and how what is of value may be maintained.

William James, an enterprising local figure saw the River Avon navigation linked to a completed canal and later his proposed railway to Paddington with branches to Coventry and Cheltenham.

More money was needed to complete the canal and in 1809, under a new Act, 2,000 new shares were offered at £30 each. There was no rush to buy and only 1452 shares had been taken up by February 1810. The southern section of the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal is 13 miles long and has 36 locks between Kingswood and the Avon. Work began in 1812 and was completed to Wootton Wawen in 1813. Another £30,000 had to be raised in 1814 plus £35,000 more in 1815, but finally the canal was opened all the way through to Stratford in June 1816. Earlswood Lakes, north of the district, which supply the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal with water, were authorised in 1815.

Of the fifty four locks on the Stratford canal, Lock 2 near Lapworth Hall to Lock 33 at Yarningdale are in Warwick District. All of these are narrow locks with single gates having ground paddles by the top gate and gate paddles at the bottom gates, some twin and some single. The lock chambers were originally brick lined with sandstone copings from the Forest of Dean. The integrity of the chambers and wing walls, particularly on the southern section, has survived despite patching and repairs with a wide variety of different materials. The chamber copings having also been repaired in a variety of brick, stone and concrete infilling.

Canal workshops at Kingswood in a brindle brick and plain tiled roof are a good example of functional but not plain design.

Bridges run from Bridge 25 near Hockley Heath to 44A on the way down to Stratford at Yarningdale Common; the numbers going south to Stratford, whereas the Grand Union is numbered north to Birmingham. The design of bridges, particularly the cast iron decks split to allow tow ropes to pass through are a distinct characteristic of the South Stratford.

The sweeping brick parapets are a key element too. The Horseley Iron works aqueduct at Yarningdale, dating from 1834, is the boundary of Warwick district. It is the smallest of the aqueducts, the others part of the 1813-16 works under Whitmore, are at Wootton Wawen and Bearley/Edstone. Cast Iron Aqueducts are rare. There were diamond shaped signs added by Great Western Railway to proscribe weight limitations on some bridges.

The southern section has many features not found in the earlier northern part particularly, the unique barrel roofed lock houses and the heel bridges with a gap for the tow lines, designed by the engineer Josiah Clowes. The split bridges were built of iron, in two sections, so that the tow line could pass through the slot between them without casting off.



Lock 22 has had a heavy engineered bridge in the style of a split bridge added to take the towpath to east side of the canal, set in very blue brick abutments with sloping brick paving.



Lock 23 is a turf sided lock chamber with red brick and stone copings and single gates top and bottom There are views out in both directions and listed

buildings; Broome Hall and Catesby Farmhouse clearly visible from the towpath.



Bridge 38 is a traditional split bridge with metal deck topped with gravel. This is listed as a good example.



The towpath remains on the east with bridges serving farms as needed. This went to Brome manor , along with Kingswood and Lapworth one of the three manors in Lapworth Parish



Lock 24 – the heel quadrants are well built but feel imposed as they sit above the level of the coping. Some of the first restoration work has been replace during the National Trusts stewardship, whilst more recent work was done by British Waterways and follows patterns used nationally. The Canal & River Trust are anxious to ensure that work carried out is researched and seeks to reinforce local distinctiveness.



The towpath hedge is hawthorn with a tree lined offside where sheep are using the canal as a drinking place.

From kingswood to Dicks Lane the canal is enclosed within a tree lined corridor with vignettes out to the countryside beyond.



Here the motorway comes into view on the offside and substantial national grid cables cross the canal just above Dick's Lane Bridge. Seasonal changes clearly register on the appearance but also on the character of the area. The canal was designed to pass through this close landscape of undulating pasture and wetland and copses.

Originally the boat families lived ashore in canal side cottages but after the coming of the railway, pressures to keep the boats continually working forced many families to live wholly aboard. Of the boats tied up at Lapworth on census night 1861 five were the permanent homes of the families aboard the boats,



Lock 25 has a brick and cast iron heel bridge – bridge 39, GWR diamond plaques and some interpretation. Dick's Lane leads under the railway and back up to Turner's Green at the Grand Union canal. There is evidence of archaeology at Dick's lane, the site of a Roman tile kiln.

Dicks Lane Wharf was a major trading post, although nothing is now left but the pool. Here coal was landed and agricultural produce and lime loaded. Nearby was another lime-kiln and there was road access to Rowington and to Lapworth and Bushwood. The purpose of the canal was, of course, the transportation of goods and here and there along its route were wharfs where commodities needed, or for sale by, the local community could be set down or picked up.

There were at least five wharfs for coal, lime, grain and other goods to and from Birmingham and the black country as well as to Stratford. The first wharf in Wharf Lane was beside the canal bridge. The second wharf was specifically for coal and was at the end of a branch canal, 250 yards long, which started beside Wharf Lane Bridge and ran parallel to Wharf Lane. It crossed Spring Lane by a drawbridge and ended at the rear of Dowdeswell House, which was then the house and business premises of successive coal dealers. The branch canal was closed and filled in c.1870's .

The wharf at Pinner's Bridge also dealt chiefly in coal, the occupant of the adjacent house usually being a coal dealer. John Hannes who lived there in 1861 also dealt in lime, a small lime-kiln being set into the canal bank a little way from the wharf. Here limestone would be burnt to convert into lime; it was then suitable for use as a fertiliser, or in the making of mortar for building purposes. There was a wharf at Lowsonford just within the Lapworth parish boundary.



Trade on the canal steadily increased to a peak in 1838, with 181000 tons of coal in that year; but with the coming of the railways was gradually taken from the canal. The canal company sold out to the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway Co in 1856. Ownership passed to the Great Western Railway in 1865 and to the State on Nationalisation in 1948.



Lock 26



the motorway crossing is bridge 39a



whilst this little heel bridge at lock 27 is bridge 39



A November view of a wooded cutting after leaf fall. The man made structure looks as if it belongs in this landscape. The cut follows the brook that runs between Finwood and Bushwood. The more wooded margin is now on the west side. Both the canal and the shortlived rail connection are tree lined.



Lock 28 is an isolated home with plenty of wildlife



Canal society marker



lock 30



Also built as part of the 1813 works are six barrel vaulted lock cottages, as well as one at Kingswood Junction, where there is also a canal managers house with a polygonal front overlooking the canal; there is one at Dicks lane, lock 25; an isolated one at lock 28; lock 31 at Lowsonford, with lock 34 at Yarningale being beyond the district boundary, as is the remaining barrel vaulted cottage at lock 37

North of Lowsonford, a single track railway from Henley in Arden joined the main line in 1894. The course can still be traced , as can the abutments seen alongside the Stratford upon Avon canal. The service only lasted 20 years. The line ran close to the road which crosses the railway and meets Dicks lane at Turner's Green. The canals are still less than half a mile apart until the GU heads East and negotiates Rowington Hill by cutting.



Bridge 40



Fifteenth century grade 2 Fleur de lys public house has been a popular eating place since Mr Brookes started making his pies. The operation moved and took over the former Navigation Mill at Emscote on the Grand Union in Warwick in the late 1900's.



The landmark trust lock cottage lowsonford lock 31 ned's lock grade 2

The cottages' construction is described as four brick walls that enclose a space 14 ft. by 35 ft. Iron tie bars along the top of the brickwork are joined at the corners to make a flat rectangle and strengthened by cross bars. The brickwork was then continued upwards, curving over to form a roof as when constructing a masonry bridge.



A view from Our Warwickshire



Bridge 41 grade 2



Lock 32



Former accommodation lift bridge no longer required



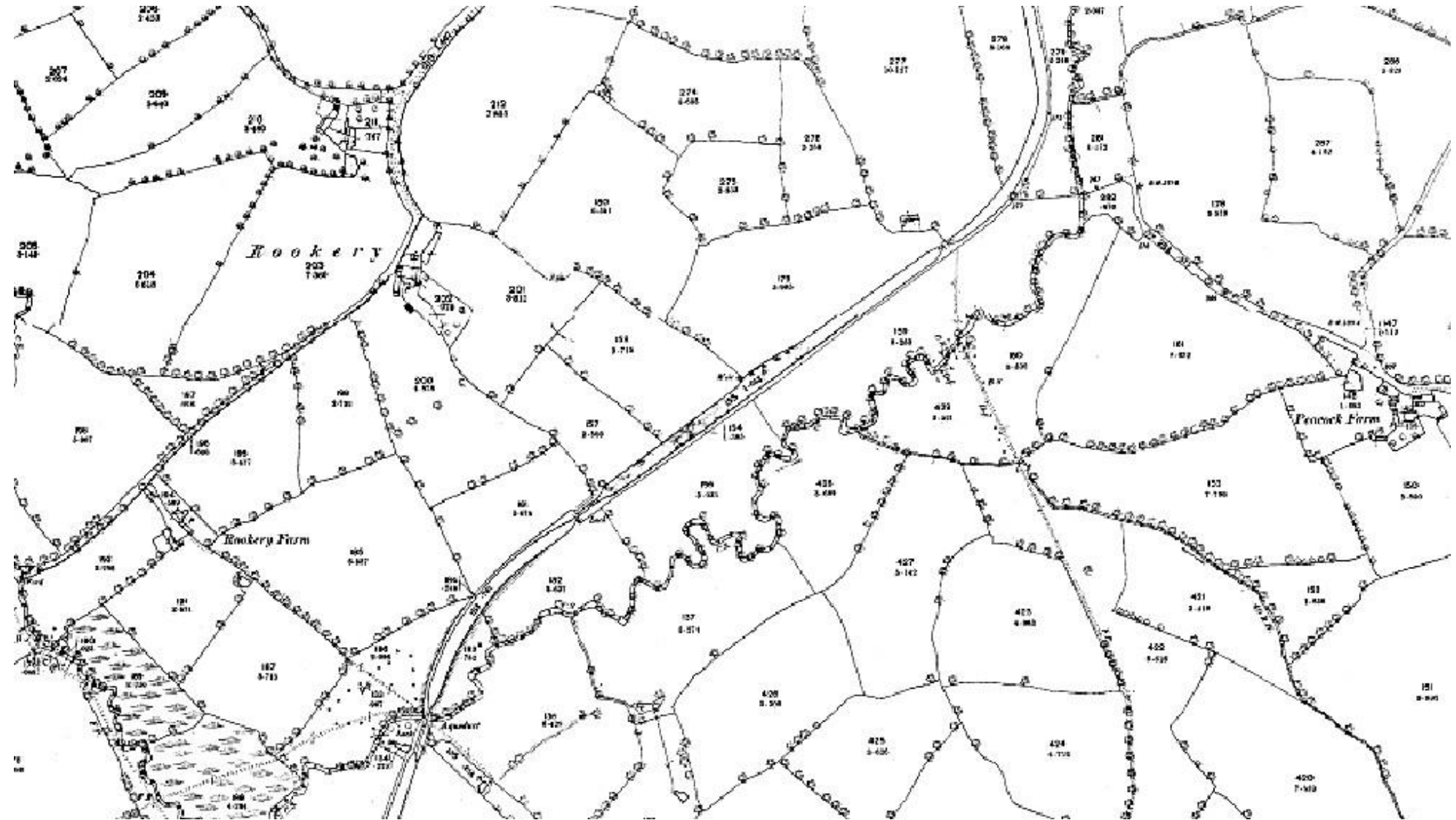
Lock 33



Bridge 44



Lock 33





Kingswood to Stratford is the last phase of the canal to be built, 1812-16. Engineer William Whitmore with William James.

2\* Yarningale Aqueduct (HEW 655) - one of three cast iron aqueducts on the southern section of the canal. Built 1834 (long after the opening of the canal in 1816) to replace an earlier structure washed away by a flood. This was the result of a breach on the Warwick and Birmingham

The other two aqueducts on the Stratford canal are large and located at Wootton Wawen and Edstone are in Stratford District. NGR SP 184664



Lock 34



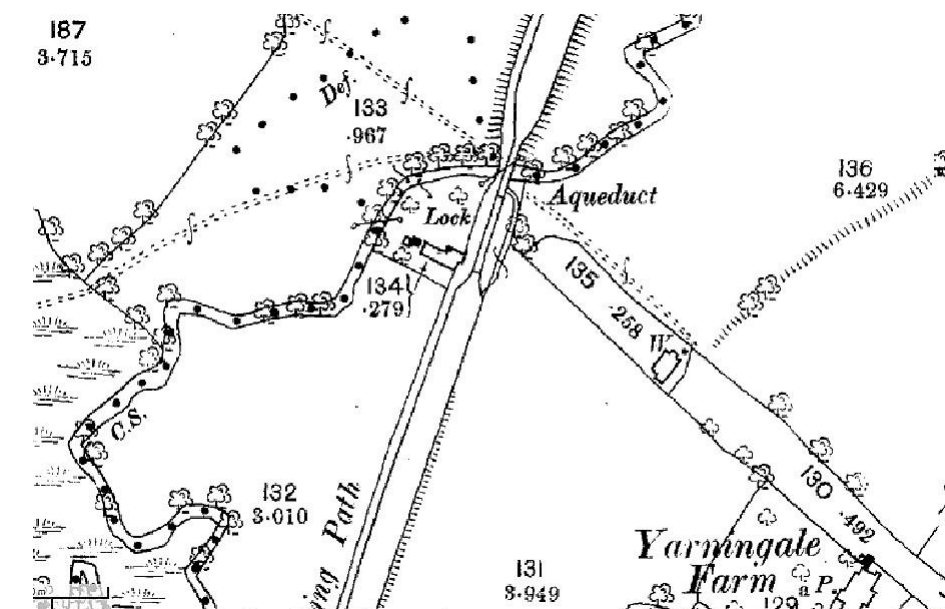
Lock 34 and cottage with large property attached

**Aqueduct. 1834.** Cast-iron trough with integral towpath with iron railings, moulded handrail and brackets. Brick abutments with stone coping. 2 small plates attached to west side of aqueduct, one inscribed: 'HORSELEY IRON CO', the other one immediately below inscribed: '1834'. This aqueduct replaced an earlier one which collapsed.

The South Stratford Canal was constructed between 1793-1816 at a cost of »500,000. 13.5 miles of the canal from Kingswood Junction, Lapworth to Stratford-upon-Avon was leased by the National Trust in 1960 from the British Waterways Board for restoration. The Trust acquired the freehold c1964. Part of the aqueduct lies in Rowington parish in Warwick District.

Listing NGR: SP1839366381

Listing description grade 2\*



Plan of the lock side with the small aqueduct over the brook.

The Stratford upon Avon Canal was authorised by an initial Act of Parliament in 1793, and additional Acts in 1795 and 1799. Cutting began in November 1793 at Kings Norton on the Worcester and Birmingham Canal.

A stop lock had been installed at Kings Norton to control the flow of water from the Stratford to the Worcester and Birmingham canal. The company also had to pay compensation tolls for making the junction with the Warwick and Birmingham. It is not surprising that they had to raise additional capital in order to extend their line southwards from Kingswood the game of the descent to the Avon was heavily locked.

As completed the canal was twenty five and a half miles long and had cost £297,000 to build. The major constructions on the canal include 56 locks, a 352 yard 16 feet wide tunnel, a large single span brick aqueduct and three cast iron trough aqueducts, three high embankments and a reservoir.

The work progressed in various stages until the completed canal was opened at its junction with the River Avon at Stratford on 24th June 1816.