

8 THE NARROWS

In order to avoid the terminal basin being left high and dry, should a breach occur elsewhere on the canal branch, 'stop planks' were inserted in grooves at this narrow point.

9 THE 'NEW' FOUNDRY, LOWNDES ROAD

From this point on the trail can be seen the 'New Foundry', described as such in 1821. Built in 1820, by John Urpeth Rastrick himself, and thus of both historic and architectural significance, it replaced an earlier octagonal foundry and was listed in 1983.

It is a rectangular, two-storey building enclosing a working space 100ft by 45 ft, this being made possible by Rastrick's pioneering wrought iron roof trusses, more fireproof and stronger than wooden beams. Although now surrounded by more modern buildings, its decorative features are still apparent.



10 CAST IRON PLATES

By the canal side at this point are recently uncovered iron plates, described as being former boiler plating probably from the Ironworks, a useful by-product of iron production.

11, 12 IRONWORKS BRIDGES

At the bend were two basins leading into the Ironworks, each entered beneath a bridge.

The first bridge is a cast iron structure, cast at Coalbrookdale because Bradley's was, at the time, primarily a manufacturer of iron bars and hoops. It is most unusual for castings to bear the name of their customer as well as manufacturer.



The second bridge is a brick roving bridge with iron plates along the parapet and enclosing a barge arch into the works.



Here, in 1828, were built the 'Stourbridge Lion' and the 'Agenoria', the former destined for Honesdale, Pennsylvania, the latter for the Shutt End railway, a few miles away.

13 IRONWORKS RAILWAY

The plan overleaf shows the route of a railway from the New Foundry to the canalside, from where iron products were loaded onto boats by crane. This railway is shown on 1885 O.S maps but had gone by 1903. A small section of track still remains. It seems possible that both the Lion and the Agenoria began their journeys from Stourbridge along this track to be loaded onto boats on the canal.



14 RIVERSIDE

This early nineteenth century house was built for the manager of Stourbridge Ironworks, later John Bradley & Co.

Its 'blind' windows are notable as is the size of the roof slates. Until recently it even had an iron linepost in the garden. The only access to the house is through the Iron Works, hence the lack of appeal as a dwelling today and its former deterioration. If fully restored, it and its outbuildings and garden could form the nucleus of a permanent Bradley, Foster and Rastrick heritage centre.

15 IRONWORKS WHARF CRANE

John Bradley's 1800 lease of land from the Stourbridge Canal Company was "in order that they might erect a forge, steam engine, workshops and other buildings thereon". A further lease in 1808 was conditional on all supplies of coal to the Ironworks being brought by canal, very lucrative for the Canal Company in that at least 10,000 tons of coal a year would have been unloaded at the Ironworks Wharf.

A crane base remains, having been uncovered as part of an M.S.C. scheme.

16 DRY DOCK



The wooden narrowboats that served the Ironworks were probably built and repaired here, and in fact the old workshops, now in ruins and with an early iron roof structure can be seen to the rear. A large anvil was set in part of the workshops, confirming their role. Water flow into or out of the Dry Dock was controlled by a system of sluices.

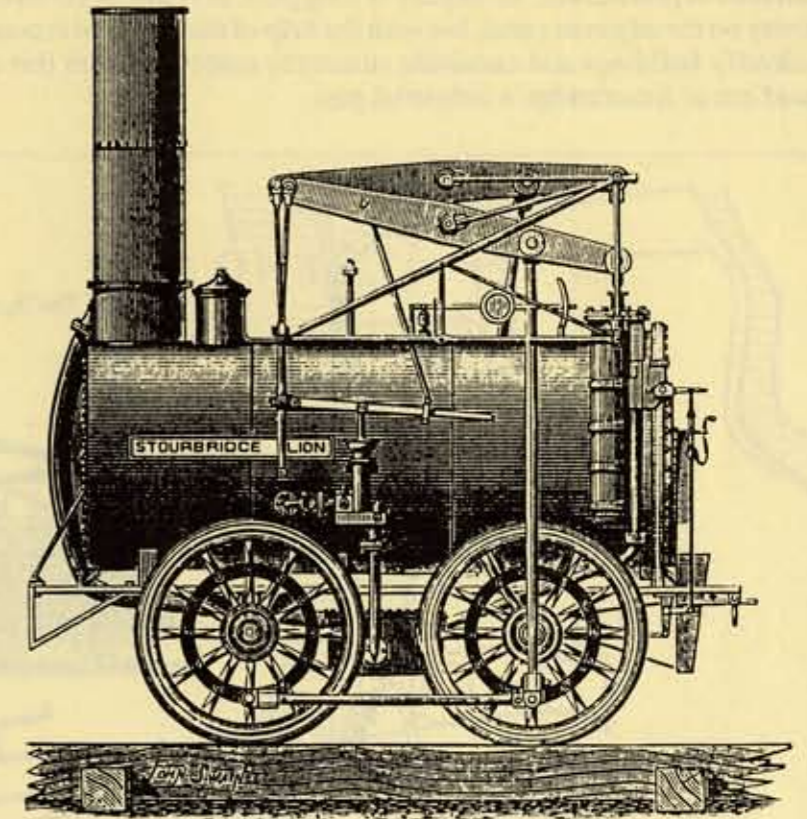
17 OVERFLOW CHANNEL

When the level of water in the canal rises, usually after heavy rain, the overflow runs over the weir and down the overflow channel into the lower level of the River Stour. Water from the Dry Dock was also drained into this channel.

Across the River Stour from the western end of the overflow Channel, 160 Maple trees have been planted, to celebrate the 160th Anniversary and the American connection.

The Stourbridge Lion and Agenoria Trail

Canal Street, Stourbridge



*To celebrate the building of the
Stourbridge Lion and Agenoria
locomotives in 1829*



Planning and Architecture
Department

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The Stourbridge Lion and the Agenoria were, respectively, the first locomotive to run on a commercial railway in the Americas, and the first in the Midlands, a full year before the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.

Both were built at Stourbridge, at Foster, Rastrick & Co's Foundry and Ironworks, and 1989 marks the 160th anniversary of their historic first runs on August 8th and June 2nd, 1829.

Foster, Rastrick & Co. had, since 1819, been major ironfounders and manufacturers and Rastrick had been building locomotives for Richard Trevithick since 1808. When in 1828 he was asked to build engines for America, he constructed them to an improved early design. The four engines, 'Stourbridge Lion', 'Delaware', 'America' and 'Agenoria', were in fact the only locomotives Foster and Rastrick ever produced. The Delaware and Hudson Canal Company's fourth locomotive was built at Robert Stephenson's works in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where Rocket was then under construction.

Stourbridge Ironworks still stands, and although extended over the years, it remains in production. Its heyday is long past, as is that of commercial activity on the adjacent canal, but with the help of this leaflet it is possible to identify buildings and canalside structures associated with this celebrated era of Stourbridge's industrial past.

1 CANAL COMPANY OFFICES

Dating from 1849, this imposing building probably replaced an earlier, smaller structure. It was constructed for the Stourbridge Canal Company, who had owned the canal and adjacent land since the 1770's.

The company would have been particularly busy and prosperous in 1829, before competition from the railways began in earnest.

Behind the offices ran a railway line from Stourbridge Town Station serving the Iron Works.



2 WEIGHBRIDGE Situated outside the offices, this is where the company would have weighed loads before they were allowed onto boats. Every company had its own scale of charges. Before this weighbridge was installed, more primitive methods were used.

The weight of a vehicle and its load would be shown on a scale inside the weighbridge office.

3 THE BONDED WAREHOUSE

Originally built in 1779 and extended in 1849, the Bonded Warehouse is a robust canalside building with walls up to 18 inches in thickness and with internal beams supported on cast-iron columns.

In 1829 it was a simple, two-storey building, with no arcading onto the wharf.

Hoists within the 'lucams' at front and rear of the building originally lifted goods to all levels.

Virtually derelict in the 1970's, it has been fully restored and is now a successful centre for leisure activities and the arts.



4 WHARFSIDE CRANE

Recently installed here, this crane is of a standard waterside pattern whose design probably hasn't changed much since Rastrick's time. It was erected on the site of a former crane.



5 FORMER CANAL TUNNEL

The canal once continued a further 230 yards to a Great Western Railway transhipment basin, through a low tunnel. A railway branch line from Stourbridge Station descended steeply to the basin, with a spur along the canal bank to John Bradley & Co's works.

6 OLD WHARF REMAINS By repute, the Stour was the first West Midlands waterway to be made navigable, when in 1665 Andrew Yarranton 'improved' it by building 'flash' locks, some of which are still visible along the Dick Brook.

By means of these inefficient locks, navigation was possible up to Stourbridge town for about twenty years until floods in the 1680's destroyed much of the work, and funds couldn't be raised for repair.

"I made the river navigable from Stourbridge to Kederminster...and carried down many hundred tons of coales, and I laid out near one thousand pounds in scheme for making the Stour navigable, and there it was obstructed for want of money", according to Yarranton.

A recent archaeological dig has uncovered foundations that could be those of Yarranton's town wharf.



7 SITE OF YOUNG'S STEEL MANUFACTORY

Now an anonymous part of the steel stockholders' premises, this was the site where, as early as 1835, one Joseph Young was manufacturing steel. This site is therefore important to the history of metal production in Stourbridge.

