

The Warwick and Birmingham Canal

An Act Received Royal Assent on 6th. March 1793 to build a canal from Saltisford, Warwick to the Digbeth branch at Bordesley, Birmingham. The route was surveyed by Samuel Bull and James Sherriff. William Felkin became engineer.

Total distance of 22 miles, 120 yards.

21 locks were built at Hatton to raise the canal 146' and 6 at Knowle to raise it a further 42' there was a 9.75 mile summit level, with 6 locks built at Bordesley to drop down to the Digbeth branch. It was decided to build the locks narrow, but the bridges 14'wide and the tunnels 16'wide.

Major earthworks (cutting and embankments) at Rowington, and the Shrewley Tunnel (433 yds. Long, 12'9" high, and 16'3" wide).

With work practically finished, the first boat-load of coal arrived at Warwick on Dec. 19th. 1799.

Water supply initially provided by a Boulton and Watt engine installed at Bordesley to lift water 45' from the Digbeth branch. This proved inadequate so a 31 acre reservoir was constructed at Olton.

The Warwick and Birmingham canal became part of the Grand Union Canal Co.

Work began in 1929 on the construction of 51 new wide locks from Napton to Knowle, and 5 new locks to replace the 6 at Knowle. This project employed up to one thousand men in the early 1930s, with the Duke of York travelling from Paddington to Hatton by train and thence by wide boat "Progress" to the top lock to perform the opening ceremony on 30th Oct. 1934.

(Have forgotten where this information was obtained from)