



Heritage Value Statement
Burritts Rapids - Lock 17
Rideau Canal National Historic Site
DRAFT July 27, 2017

Context

What is a Statement of Heritage Value?

A Statement of Heritage Value is a record that confirms that a Parks Canada asset, or collection of assets, meets the Agency's requirements to be a cultural resource. It provides a summary history of the cultural resource, its heritage value (why it is important), and its character-defining elements (aspects of the resource that express its heritage value).

Approvals

The statement of heritage value requires approval by the Field Unit Superintendent and the Director of Cultural Heritage Policies and is designed to support decision-making about management of a cultural resource.

Interpretation

Assistance to interpret the Statement of Heritage Value can be sought from a Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Advisor or a CRM specialist.

Assessments of Impacts

When changes or interventions are proposed to cultural resources, the proposed changes and interventions are subject to an assessment of impacts using the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. This is not to preclude changes or interventions, but rather to reduce possible negative impacts to the heritage value of the cultural resources.

Flexibility of Implementation of Changes and Interventions

Sustainable conservation calls for a flexible and integrated approach that balances CRM with other Agency objectives. If negative impacts are expected to the heritage value of a cultural resource, these can often be reduced or eliminated through mitigations developed in consultation with the CRM Advisor. If mitigation is not possible, alternate approaches to certain aspects of a project, or alternative means of preserving heritage value, can be recommended (for example, preservation through heritage recording and subsequent interpretation).

Responsibility for Decision-Making

Decision-making about an intervention on the cultural resource remains with the Field Unit Superintendent.



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Description

Landscape

The lockstation comprises lock 17 and much of the shores of the channel to the South of the island of Burritts Rapids. Burritts Rapids lock station is between Long Island Locks 14-16 to the north, and Lower Nicholson, Lock Station 18, to the south. The lockstation site is accessible by road on the south shore, along 673 River Road, west of Kemptville north east of Merrickville (coordinates: 44°58'56.6"N 75°47'11.4"W). The site includes: a lockstation, three earth embankments, dam and weir, and a swing bridge, all of which are spread across the island. The lock site is on the east end of the island that the village of Burritts Rapids also sits on. The dam and weir sit on the other side of the island, and the swing bridge lies in the center of the island. The lock station is forested and the surrounding area is mostly rural.

Burritts Rapids was one of the first settlements on the Rideau River, predating the Canal. Colonel By arrived in 1826, and Burritts Rapids was thriving with trade. The townsite and post office were established in the 1830's. The village, however, lost its commercial importance in the early 20th century.



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The fixed bridge north of the town is in the same location as one of the earliest bridges across the Rideau, built in 1824 (and rebuilt in 1920 and 1983). Some time after 1845, a mill dam was erected slightly upstream and crossed the entire channel, with a waste weir, serving the saw and grist mills (south side). The remains of this dam are extant.

In approximately 1832, a timber high level fixed bridge was constructed across the channel of the canal (south end of town), just upstream of the present day swing bridge. By the early 1850s, it was replaced by a timber swing bridge in the location of the present 1897 steel truss swing bridge.

To the north of island, on Donnelly Drive is the historic Christ Church, completed in 1832 and one of the earliest churches on the Rideau River, on land donated by Daniel Burritt in 1830 for a church and burying ground.

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Lock and Channel

The site is comprised of a single lock chamber. The lock chamber is 70 meters long and is 11 meters wide, and has a lift of 2.7 meters. The lock sits on the east end of the 2.5km canal cut created the thin island that Burritts Rapids resides on. The contract for the construction of the lock site was signed with Philemon Wright and Sons.¹ The canal and lock were completed in 1830.² The walls, wing walls, gate monoliths, and coping are made of stone, while the lock invert is a combination of timber and concrete.³ There is a lockhouse on the south side of the canal by the lock. The first lockhouse was a small designed to be a blockhouse, a small military structure, but it did not come to fruition. A history of buildings on the Rideau Canal suggests that the lockhouse was completed in 1836.⁴ The lockhouse was eventually demolished during the 1914-1915 season and a frame structure replaced it.⁵ During the period between 1905 and 1906, one pair of the lock gates were renewed.⁶ Between 1909 and 1910, major repairs were done to the lock chamber. The south chamber wall and both upper wings were removed and rebuilt. The lower lock gates were also renewed.⁷

Swing Bridge

800 meters from the lock station on the canal is the Burritts Rapids single lane swing bridge (coordinates: 44°58'48.4"N 75°47'45.9"W). The bridge is located at the south end of Grenville Street. The bridge is an asymmetrical truss design, which combines a Pratt and a Fink truss that is unique on the Rideau Canal.⁸ The Fink portion being the taller section on the north side of the bridge. The bridge is a combination of a steel structure, and a wooden deck, and masonry base. The site contained an earlier timber swing bridge that was built to accommodate the newly constructed canal. The original bridge was built in 1824, and subsequently replaced in the early 1850s with a timber

¹History of the Rideau Waterway, Page 42

²Burritts Rapids History, page 2

³Rideau Water Assessment of Structures, Page 32

⁴166-020(P) Buildings erected during the First Twenty Years of the Rideau Canal, page 10

⁵1916 DRCAW, pdf pg. 327, page 299

⁶1907 DRCAW, pdf pg. 306, page 186

⁷1911 DRCAW, pdf pg. 300, page 271

⁸1991-072 to 081(F), page 147



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swing bridge.⁹ The current bridge was built to replace the previous in 1897.¹⁰ The pivot point of the swing bridge is on the north side of the shore, and swings to the west. It is noted for being one of the few examples of a hand-turned swing bridge along the Rideau Canal.¹¹ Annual reports from the Department of Railways and Canals, between 1900-1925, note that only minor repairs have been done on the swing bridge, referring to a majority of them as sundry repairs. More specific repairs include: painting of the swing bridge and approach between 1901 and 1902,¹² sandblasting and repainting between 1913 and 1914,¹³

The swing bridge sits on masonry abutments and walls.¹⁴ The masonry that the bridge sits on is thought to be a leftover of the early timber bridge from the 1850s.¹⁵ A survey from August, 2016 states that the masonry and abutments seem to be in good order, given that there is no bulging or misaligned stone.¹⁶ It is assumed that the masonry foundation lies on bedrock, and would contribute to the lack of shifting or movement.

In 1925-1926, a bridgehouse was constructed for the bridge master, which replaced a house that was constructed in 1851.¹⁷ It is located 35 meters north of the swing bridge on the east side of the road. The house still stands at 1 Grenville Street, and has been repurposed as a public library.

Weir and Spillway Dam

On the west end of the island a combination weir and dam on the Rideau River (coordinates: 44°58'41.2"N 75°48'27.9"W). The weir contains two bays and has a length of 20 meters, and the dam likewise has two bays and is 6.4 meters long.¹⁸ The original weir-dam combination were built between 1827-1831. It was subsequently destroyed in 1847, and rebuilt with an oak timber crib dam and rock fill later that year.¹⁹ During the winter of 1903-1904, ice had built up and damaged the icebreaker on the weir and the far side of the dam.²⁰ The east pier of the dam was rebuilt, and the dam and weir repaired and sheeted with 3-inch planks between 1906 and 1907.²¹ The timber waste weir was removed and rebuilt, and the top of the dam was concreted to carry flashboards during the 1913-1914 season.²² The weir was rebuilt with concrete in 1930 and the dam was rebuilt with concrete in 1951.²³

⁹ Burritts Rapids History, page 1

¹⁰ Burritts Rapids Swing Bridge DSAF, page 6

¹¹ Burritts Rapids History, page 2

¹² DRCAW, pdf 221, page 171

¹³ DRCAW, pdf pg. 333, page 333

¹⁴ Burritts Rapids 3516011. Page 7

¹⁵ 3516011-000, page 3

¹⁶ 3516011-000, page 21

¹⁷ 1991-072, page 147

¹⁸ Burritts Rapids History, page 2.

¹⁹ Underwater Archeological survey, page 203

²⁰ DRCAW 1905, page 273, page 209

²¹ DRCAW 1908, page 283, page 167

²² DRCAW 1915, page 333

²³ Underwater Archeological Survey, page 203



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Bridgmaster's House

The Burritts Rapids Bridgehouse or Bridgmaster's House is located in the village of Burritts Rapids, which occupies an island between the Rideau River, and the Rideau Canal. The house is a two-storey, gable roofed structure clad with cove wood siding. An open, gable-fronted porch protects the front door. The main road through the village crosses the canal adjacent to the Bridgehouse on a steel swing bridge. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

The house, which provided accommodation for those operating the swing bridge, is associated with the Post-Confederation use of the Rideau Canal for transportation purposes. The current swing bridge, combining Fink and Pratt truss design and dating from 1897, is associated with the bridgmasters who lived in the house. The bridge continues to be used as a means of crossing the canal to the town of Burritts Rapids, a Loyalist settlement of the 1790s. Although the house is now used as a library, knowledge of its original function makes it a local landmark to residents of the area.

The house is a good example of vernacular frame construction from the period -- a rectangular side-hall plan, two storeys in height clad with cove siding, with a cedar-shingled gable roof. The house retains its small front entrance porch, while the single-storey frame addition at the rear, dating from 1898, is clad in cove siding like that of the main structure. The house retains its interior layout, much of the woodwork and, apparently, the original windows. The functional residential design of the building reflects the early twentieth-century commercial and recreational use of the canal system and exhibits the competent craftsmanship of the period. Inspection and maintenance of the building fabric should be carried out routinely.

The Bridgmaster's House and its setting remain essentially unchanged since the 1920s. The house forms part of the streetscape of the town, while the lawn extends down to the water and bridge as it did historically.

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Earth Dam

Along the site is three earthen dams which were built in 1830 along with the rest of the site. There is a the Trial Earth Dam, which spans 500 meters from the swing bridge to lock 17, along the north side of the canal. The second earth dam, Access Road Earth Dam, which runs 400 meters, spans from the swing bridge to the concrete dam, along the north side of the canal. The final earth dam, the North Earth dam, sits on the Rideau River near the concrete dam. It runs north-south and is 50 meters long.²⁴ Between 1908 and 1909, high water levels as a result of the spring thaw caused

²⁴ AOA – Burritts Rapids Earth Dam, page 1



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some washouts of the north side embankment. Repairs were completed with stone and portions of the embankment was raised.²⁵

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Heritage Value

Landscape

The Burritt's Rapids Lockstation landscape is a cultural resource of national historic significance that is a fundamental resource of the Canal system and integral to the Rideau's unique historical environment.

The lockstation landscapes of the Rideau Canal are fundamental resources of the canal system and integral to the Rideau's unique historical environment. The Canal landscapes were evaluated in terms of the retention of historic circulation patterns, the spatial inter-relationships of buildings, engineering works, open spaces and other landscape features, plus the overall impact of new features on or near the stations.

The lockstation landscapes of national significance are valued for their:

- associative and physical connection with the construction and early operation of the canal;
- contribution to the unique historical environment of the canal system;
- visual and historic associations with heritage communities along the canal system such as Chaffeys Locks, Newboro, Merrickville, Burritts Rapids, and Ottawa;
- role as landmarks and providing a sense of continuity along the canal system;
- surviving historic layout and configuration including their open spaces and circulation patterns;
- surviving historic views both within and beyond the station boundaries;
- contextual and heritage settings for the stations' buildings and engineering works.

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Lock and Channel

The lock and channel through the Snye are considered *cultural resources of national historic significance*.

Engineering works of national significance on the Rideau Canal are valued for their:

- direct relationship to the original construction achievement;
- contribution to the unique historical environment of the canal system;
- integral role in the continuing operation of the navigation system;
- surviving physical attributes of form, material and function;

²⁵ DRCAW 1910, page 260, page 260



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- manual mode of operation; and
- contribution to knowledge relating to early 19th century engineering and construction techniques.

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Swing Bridge

The swing bridge at Burritt's Rapids is considered a *cultural resource of other heritage value*.

These engineering works of other heritage value on the Rideau Canal are valued for their:

- association with the commercial and recreational use of the canal;
- association with corridor communities and expansion of the canal system;
- role in the continuing operation of the canal;
- evidence of changing construction technologies;
- manual mode of operation;
- surviving physical attributes of form and material.

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Weir and Spillway Dam

The weir and spillway dam at Burritt's Rapids are considered *cultural resources of other heritage value*, as per the values described above for the swing bridge.

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Bridgmaster's House

The Burritt's Rapids Bridgmaster's House is considered a *cultural resource of other heritage value* for its:

- direct association with the construction, operation and maintenance of the canal during the military period;
- direct association with the defence of colonial Canada;
- physical evidence of the original purpose of the canal;
- functional design qualities;
- surviving physical attributes of form and material;
- contribution to the unique historical environment of the canal system;
- contribution to the historic character of the lockstation.

The Burritts Rapids Lockstation "Bridgehouse" is also a *Recognized Federal Heritage Building* because of its historical associations, and its architectural and environmental values.

Historical Value: The Burritts Rapids Lockstation, Bridgehouse, which provided accommodation for those operating the swing bridge, is associated with the post-Confederation use of the Rideau



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Canal for transportation purposes. The Bridgehouse was built as a residence for the bridgmaster, and replaced an earlier one from the 1850s. The bridge continues to be used as a means of crossing the canal to the town of Burritts Rapids, a Loyalist settlement of the 1790s. The house is now used as a library.

Architectural Value: The Burritts Rapids Lockstation, Bridgehouse is valued for its good aesthetic design and is a good example of vernacular frame construction from the period. The functional residential design of the building reflects the early twentieth-century commercial and recreational use of the canal system, and is evidenced in the interior's side hall plan. Good craftsmanship can be seen in the woodwork; overall this exhibits the competent craftsmanship of the period.

Environmental Value: The Burritts Rapids Lockstation, Bridgehouse maintains an unchanged relationship to its site and is compatible the historic character of its streetscape setting in Burritts Rapids. It is a familiar landmark to local residents and visitors.

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Character-Defining Elements

Landscape

The elements of the cultural landscape at Burritt's Rapids that contribute to its heritage value are its:

- Current historic layout and circulation pattern, including open spaces and circulation routes and pathways, such as;
 - The pathways crossing the locks onto the island embankment toward the wharf, and
 - The pathway along the island from the lock to the township.
- Functional arrangement, and the relationships and views between lockstation components, such as:
 - The direct relationship and views between the swing bridge and Bridgmaster's House,
 - The relationship of the lock to the township of Burritts Rapids;
- Landforms in the landscape, such as:
 - The island embankment, on which Burritts Rapids Township is located;
 - The earth dams, including their locations, general massing, and purpose.
- Design, dimensions, materials, architectural features, and finishes of the lockstation buildings and engineering works, and their footprints and profiles in the landscape, for example, the:
 - Earth Dam
 - Lock office, shed, and lockmaster buildings and outbuildings (garage)
 - Locks
 - Channel
 - Waster Weir and Dam



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- Swing bridge, and its masonry abutments and walls;
- Wharves east and west of the lock and on the opposite side of the island from the lock;
- Visual and historic associations with Burritts Rapids as a heritage community along the canal system, such as:
 - The location and close relationship of the bridge and Bridgmaster's house in relation to the town,
 - The location and relationship of the lockstation to the town,
 - Submerged remains of the early timber dam, and
 - Potential submerged remains of an earlier bridge.
- Historic views within the lockstation grounds, such as:
 - Views of the historic stone swing bridge abutments upon exiting the locks to the west (to Nicholson's)
 - Views of the historic stone swing bridge abutments upon approaching the locks from the west (from Nicholson's)
 - Views of the rugged, natural shoreline east and west of the swing bridge, and the lock;
- Known and potential terrestrial and submerged archaeological resources pertaining to both indigenous and historical occupations, and evidence of construction and early operation of the canal.

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Lock and Channel (Canal Cut)

Key elements contributing to the heritage value of the Burritts Rapids Lock includes:

- its contribution to the integrity of the landscape and the unique historical environment of the canal system;
- its manual mode of operation; and
- its form, dimensions, design and functional qualities and materials, for example:
 - its masonry construction;
 - its overall arrangement, including angles and connections;
 - the wooden lock gates and assemblies, including the type of timber as evolved over time to address the operational and durability needs of the Canal;
 - the valves and opening mechanisms;
 - the architectural signature and details, including but not limited to:
 - coursing patterns;
 - joints and their profiles; and
 - iron works.

Key elements contributing to the heritage value of the Canal Cut include its:

- form;
- massing;
- composition;
- finish;
- in-situ location on the Rideau Canal;



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- continued functional use; and
- contribution to the integrity of the cultural landscape, for example:
 - circulation and land patterns related to this portion of the canal, such as its alignment and access points, and shorelines at the time of designation; and
 - its profile in the landscape.

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Swing Bridge

Key character-defining elements contributing to the heritage value of the Swing Bridge at Burritts Rapids include its:

- strategic location joining Grenville Street on both sides of the canal cut;
- dimensions, design and functional qualities, for example:
 - its unique asymmetrical Pratt and Fink combination truss design, with the pivot point on the north shore, swinging to the west;
 - its wooden decking, steel structure, and masonry base, which is possibly from the 1850s bridge;
 - its manual operation;
 - its general massing and low profile silhouette;
 - the landscape elements such as track and abutments that support the bridge; and
 - the adjacent submerged archaeological resources associated with previous bridge iterations; and
- proximity and relationship to the Bridgmaster's house.

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Weir and Spillway Dam

Key character-defining elements contributing to the heritage value of the Dam and weir include their:

- location;
- function for flood and water control;
- surviving physical attributes of scale, design and materials, such as their:
 - length,
 - two-bay design;
 - concrete construction;
 - low profile.
- contribution to the integrity of the landscape and the unique historical environment of the canal system; and
- any adjacent extant remains of previous weirs or dams.

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Bridgmaster's House

The elements of the Bridgmaster's House that contribute to its heritage value are:

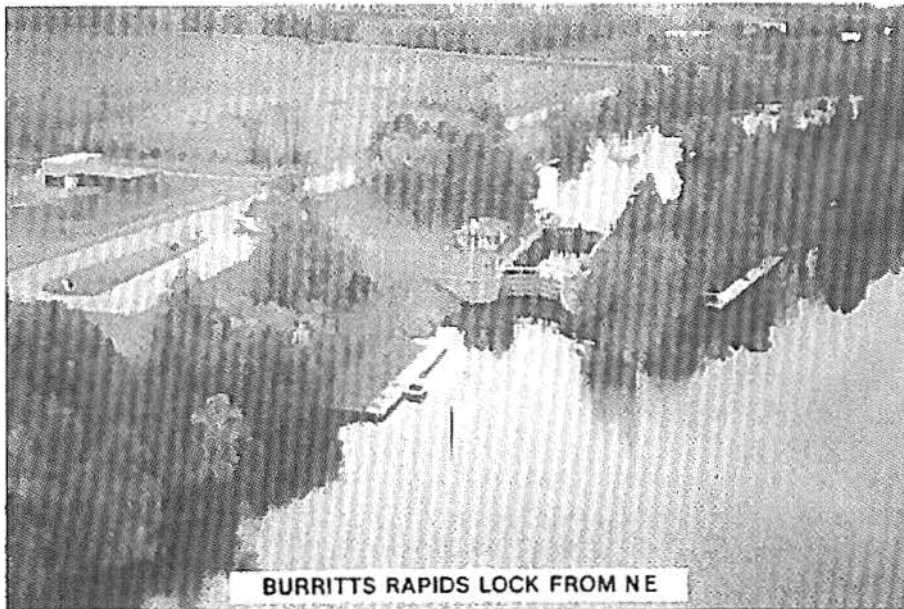
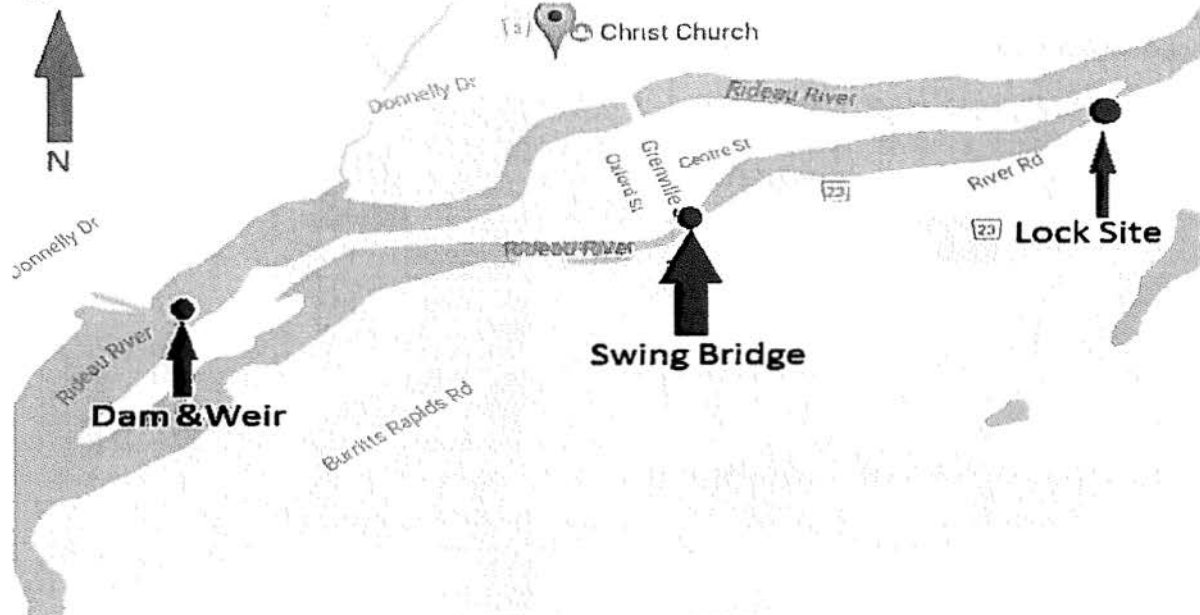
- Its good aesthetic, functional design and quality materials and craftsmanship, for example: the
 - two-storey massing;
 - the cedar-shingled gable roof, and the chimney;
 - the frame construction and the exterior clad with cove woodsiding;
 - the regular placement of the windows and doors;
 - the small front entrance porch and the single-storey frame addition;
 - the interior configuration, including the painted wood-plank floors.
- The manner in which the Burritts Rapids Lockstation, Bridgehouse maintains an unchanged relationship to its site, and is compatible with the historic character of its streetscape setting in Burritts Rapids. It is a familiar landmark, as evidenced by:
 - its ongoing relationship to its grassed site and to the adjacent swing bridge;
 - its overall scale, design and materials that are compatible with its village streetscape surroundings;
 - its familiarity within the area due to its role as a community library;
 - its visibility due to its prominent location on the town's streetscape adjacent to the water and swing bridge.

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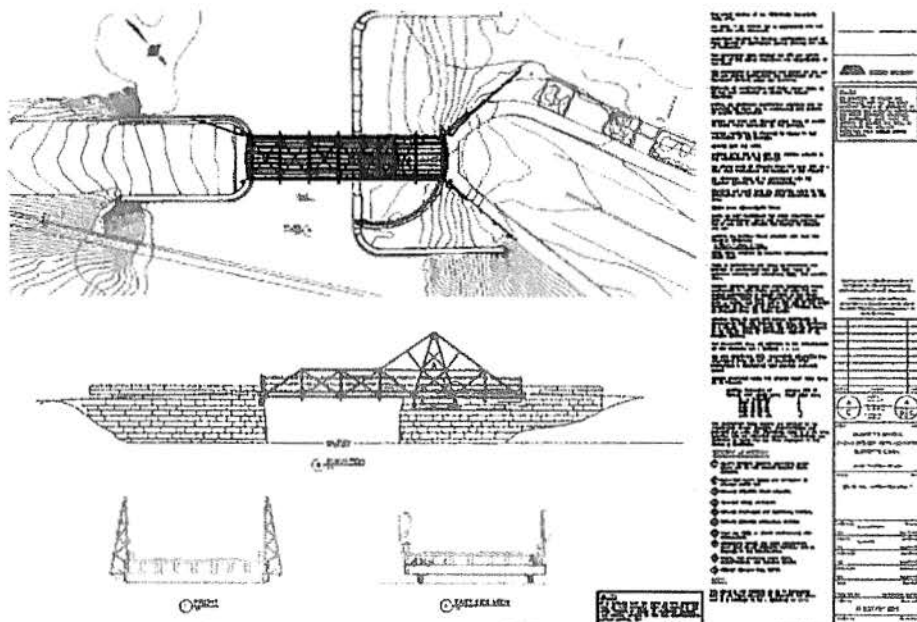
Appendix A - Photos





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Swing Bridge Diagram

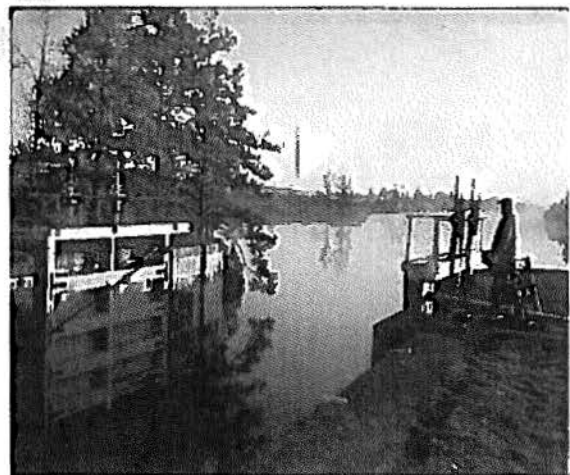
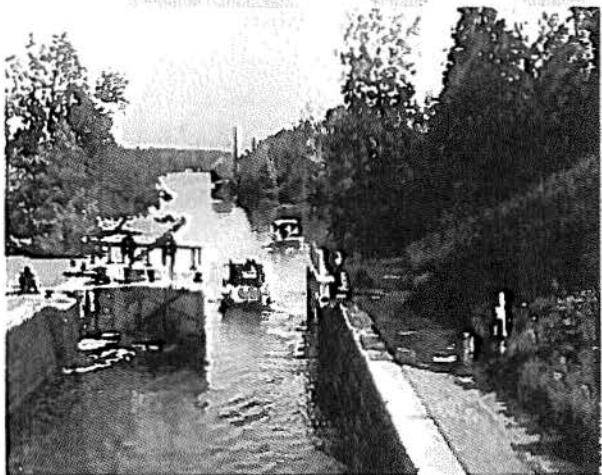
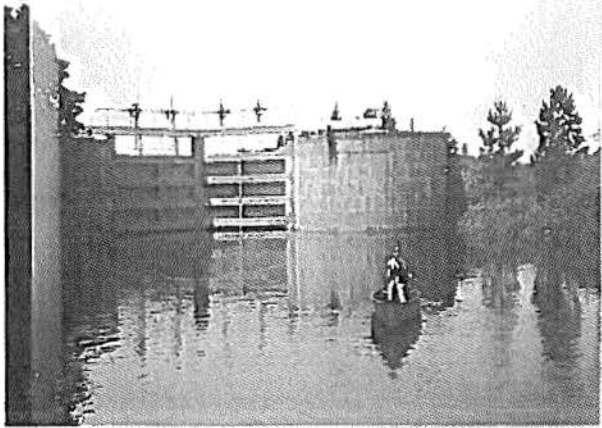
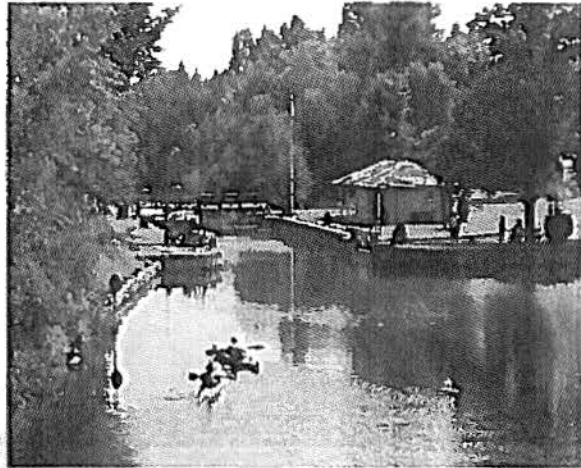
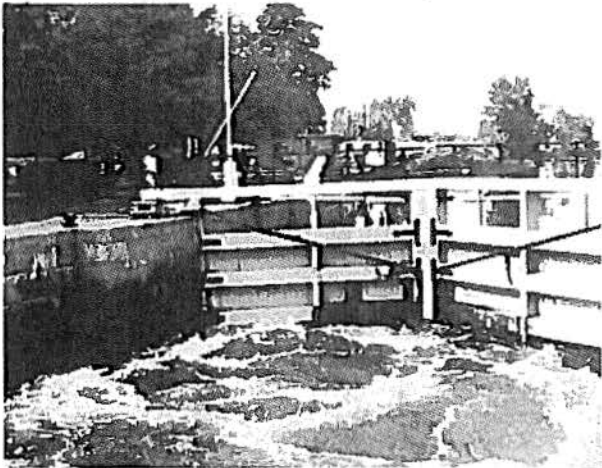


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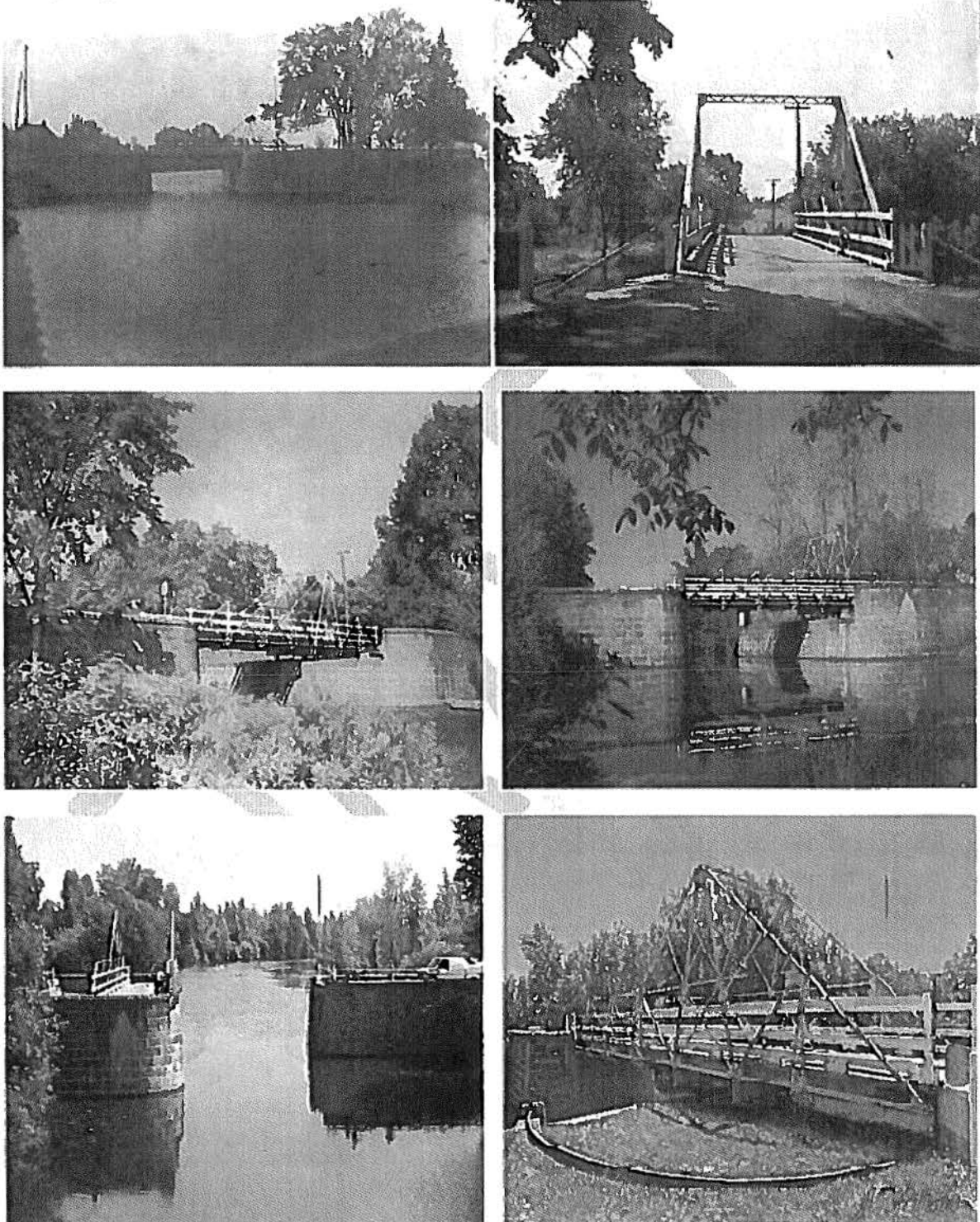
Lock Station (Downstream entrance)





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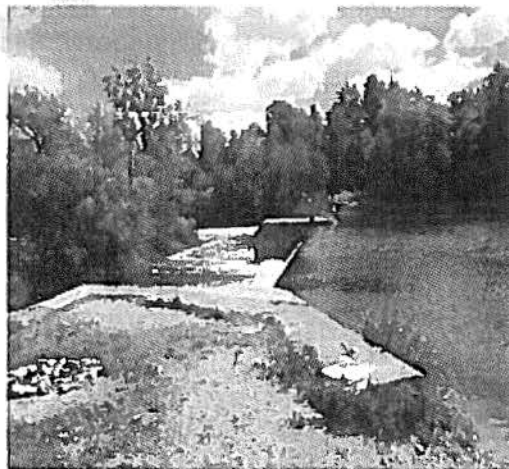
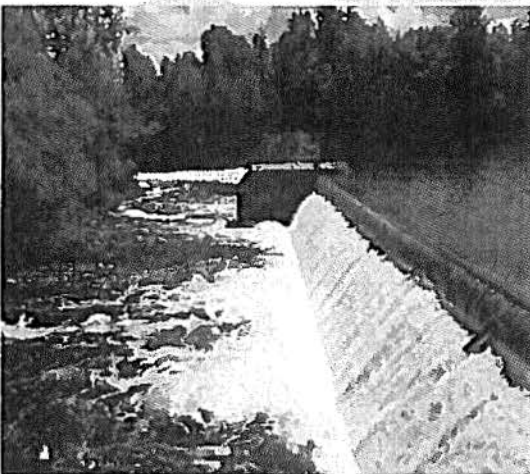
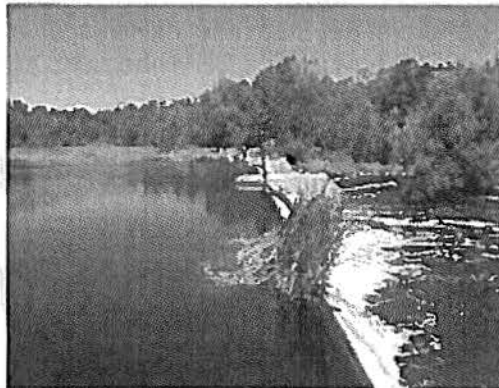
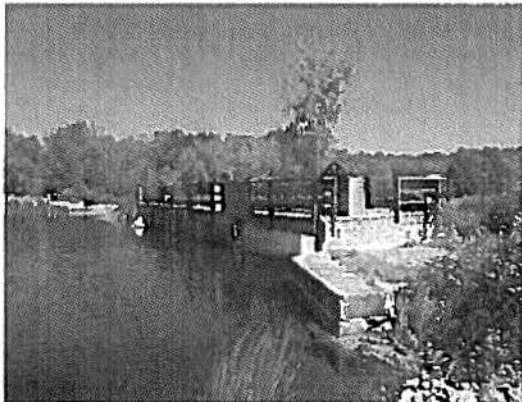
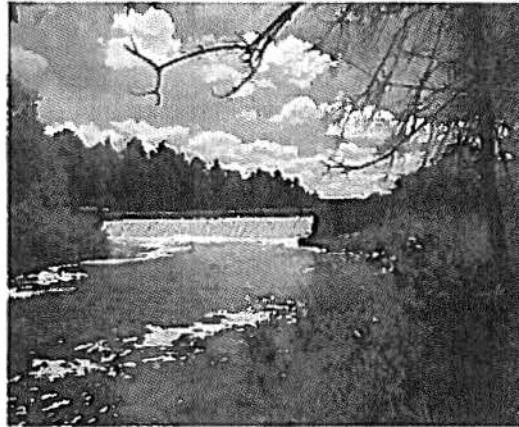
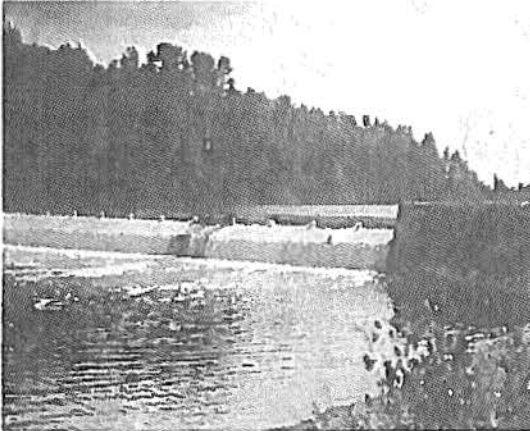
Swing Bridge





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Dam and Weir



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