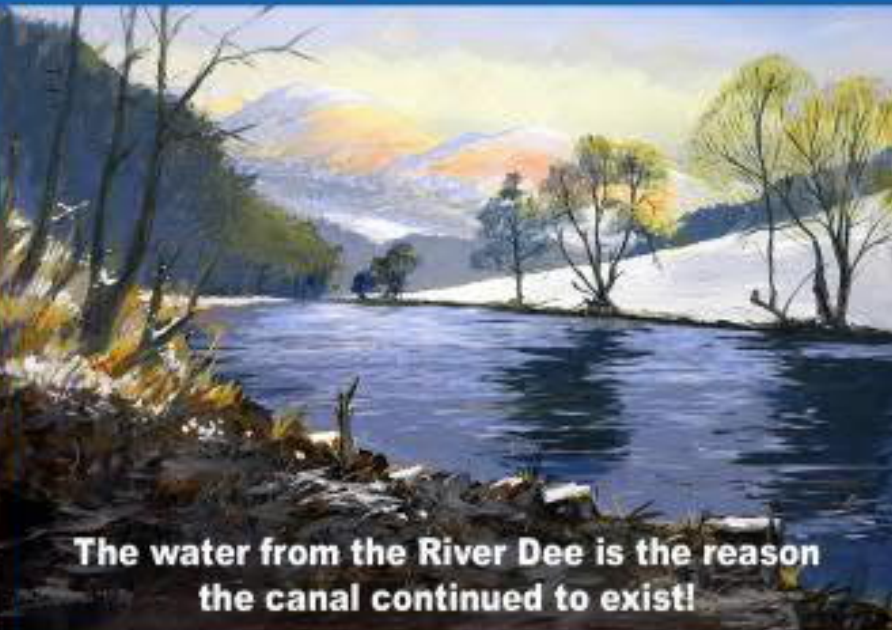


THE CANAL - ARM INTO WHITCHURCH

The Whitchurch Arm opened in 1808 from New Mills to Sherryman's Hill. It was extended in 1811 to the Mill Street Basin. The wharf is now Brookes Court.

The Ellesmere/Llangollen Canal?
 Opened in the early years of the 19th Century, by 1939 canal traffic had virtually ceased. All remaining parts of the Ellesmere Canal network were closed to navigation by Act of Parliament in 1944. The canal from Hurlleston to Llangollen was retained as a conduit to carry drinking water for Crewe and Nantwich and as a water feed for the Shropshire Union Canal.



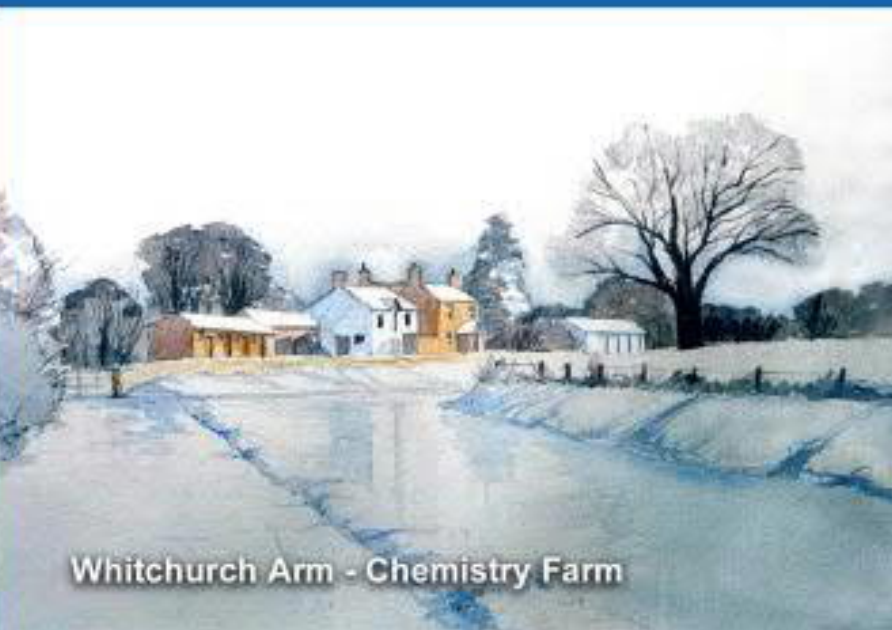
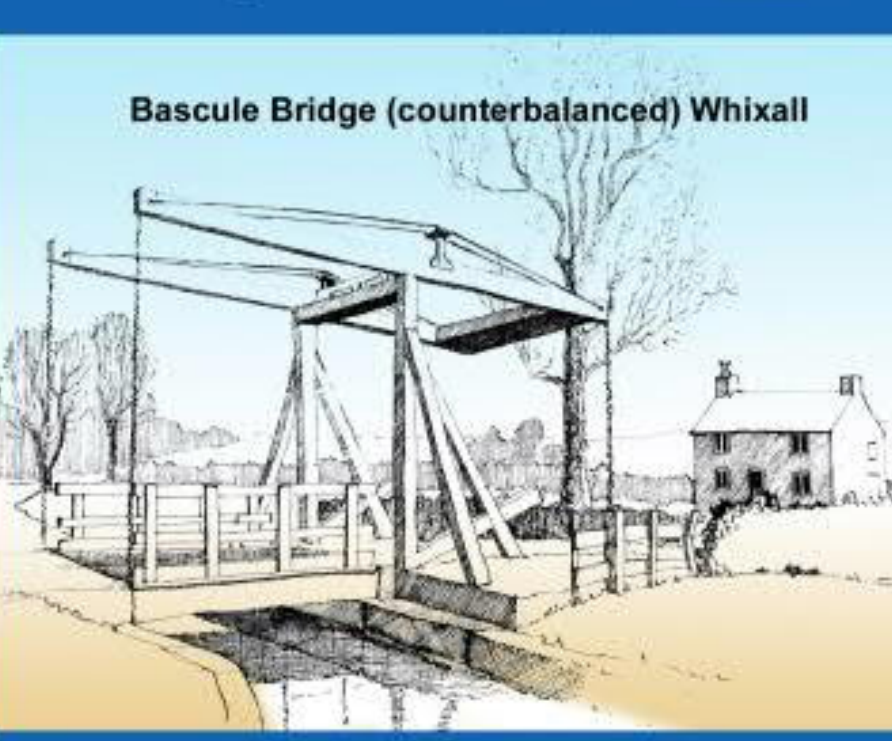
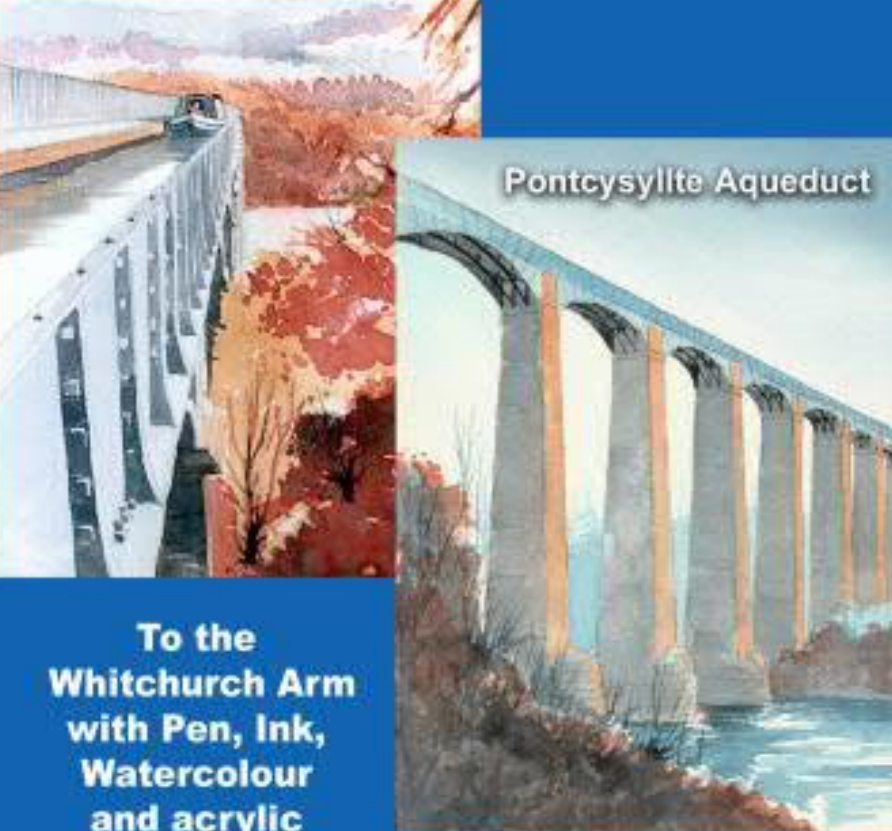
The water from the River Dee is the reason the canal continued to exist!

In 1955 an agreement with the Mid & South East Cheshire Water Board secured the canal's future. British Waterways rebranded the canal in the 1980s calling it the Llangollen Canal.

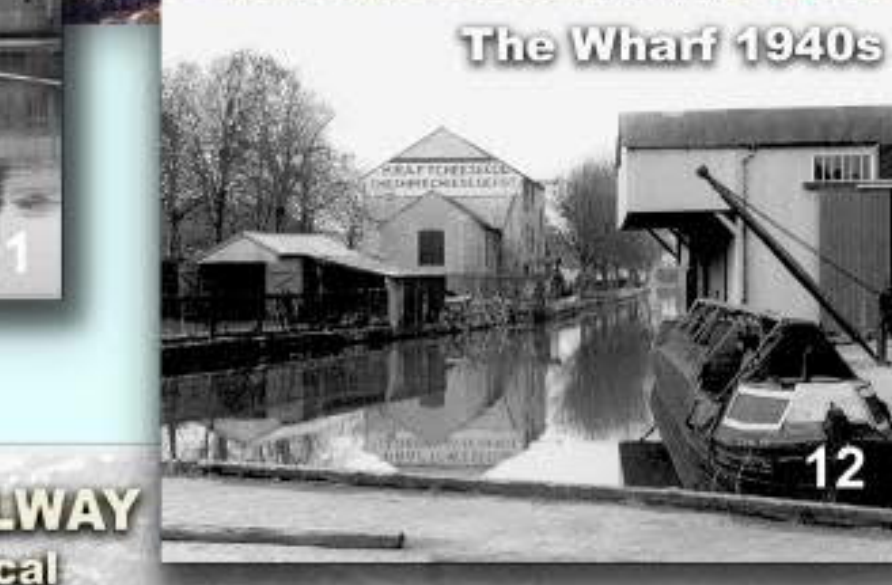
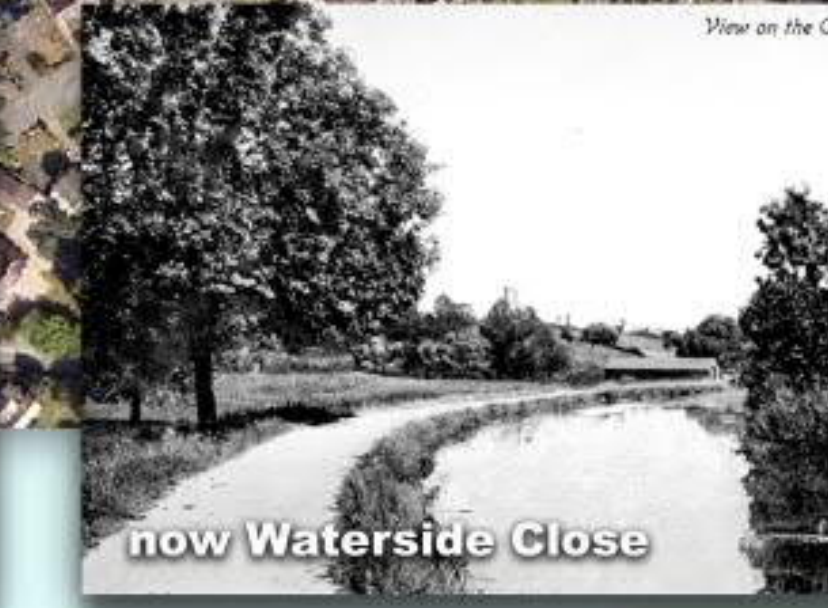
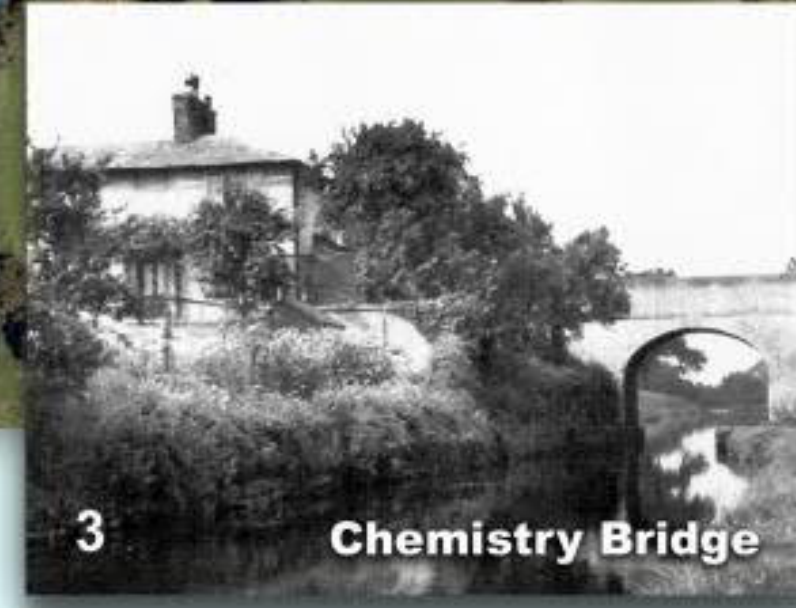
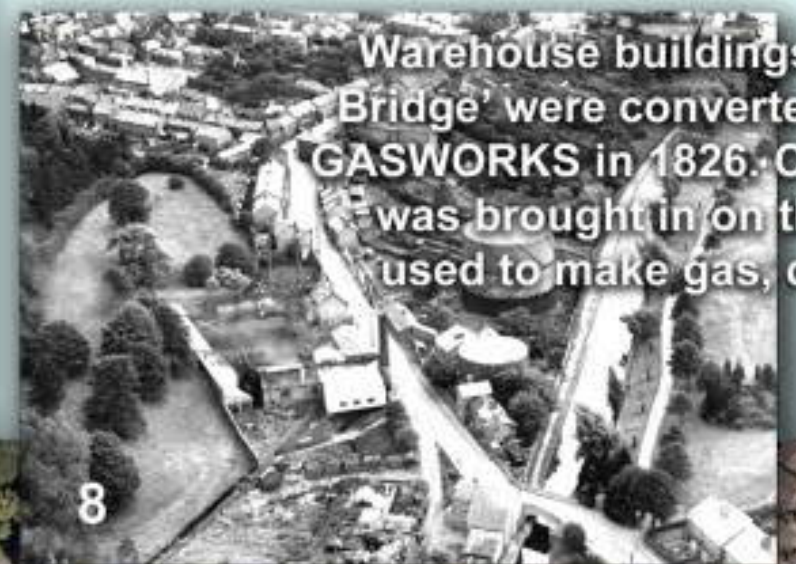
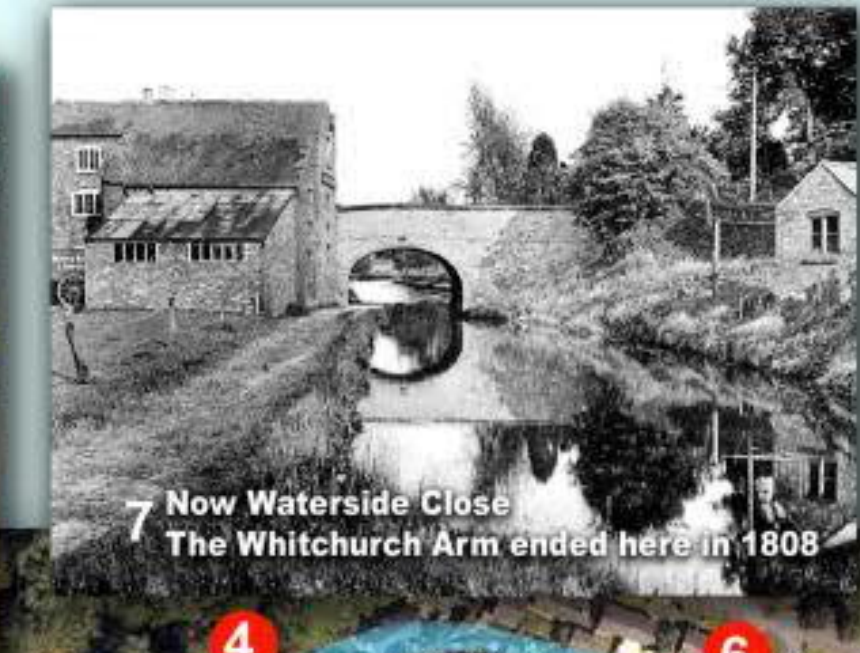


The water for the Llangollen Canal is drawn off the River Dee at the Horseshoe Falls - near Llangollen

In 2009 11 miles of the Langollen Canal - from the Horseshoe falls to Chirk Bank - was awarded World Heritage Site Status.



Coal In Cheese Out



The original Whitchurch Arm was closed and filled in by 1950. However, a group of enthusiasts formed the Whitchurch Arm Trust in the mid-1980s. Later renamed the Whitchurch Waterway Trust, it secured grants to fund the restoration of the first section of the arm. The 1st Part of the Restored Arm was opened in 1993.



Panel Erected in 2017 by the Whitchurch Waterway Trust

The panel is part of the first stage in the construction of the Whitchurch Canal Basin: grant provided by EAFRD.

Whitchurch Waterway Trust website: whitchurchwaterway.uk

Whitchurch Information website: whitchurch.info

Whitchurch History and Archaeology Group Website: whitchurch-histarch.uk

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas

design, compilation and photography by WHAG member Philip Walker

Silk Mill Smallbrook

In 1831 a purpose built, coal powered, steam driven silk mill was erected alongside the canal by speculators. It was planned to take 200 workers. With extra thick walls it was proposed to have a further 3 floors added; a work force of 500 was projected by the developers of the silk mill! It is possible that the developers got the Whitchurches mixed. It was stated in the sales documentation that Whitchurch was 'where many already acquainted with the trade reside and can be employed at low wages'.

Whitchurch Hampshire had a thriving silk industry at the time. By 1850 the Silk Mill had closed. Converted to cottages, it is now Smallbrook Buildings.

Canals underpinned the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. They linked developing industrial areas with ancient river waterways and coastal waters. The canal network allowed vast quantities of coal, raw materials and finished goods to be transported cheaply and smoothly around the country. However, steam powered trains would soon take over!

FROM CANAL TO RAILWAY

In 1837 William Smith, a local builder, opened a small iron foundry in Dodington. It expanded and, perhaps to be closer to the canal, moved to the corner of Mill Street and Castle Hill in 1860. By 1879 the company had an iron foundry and engineering works in Talbot Street with direct access to the railway line. The Castle Hill site became a wholesale ironmongery depot and offices (now Colour Supplies).

WH Smith Foundry aerial views taken 1938

Shrewsbury to Crewe train line opened 1958