

## The Humbers

During the November 5th work party, debate arose about the buildings in and around which we were working and how they were once connected. We knew they had acted as a transshipment depot between the railway and the canal but, with all trace of the railway gone, where had the lines been?

Issue 7 of S&News gave a brief history of the Humber Arm, but just to recap, the Humber Arm was opened in May 1844, more than 10 years after completion of the Newport Branch. It was about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile long and ran in a straight line from near the Dukes Drive Aqueduct to the Duke of Sutherland's Lubstree wharf on Humber Lane. Tramways linked the wharf with the Lilleshall Company's various works.

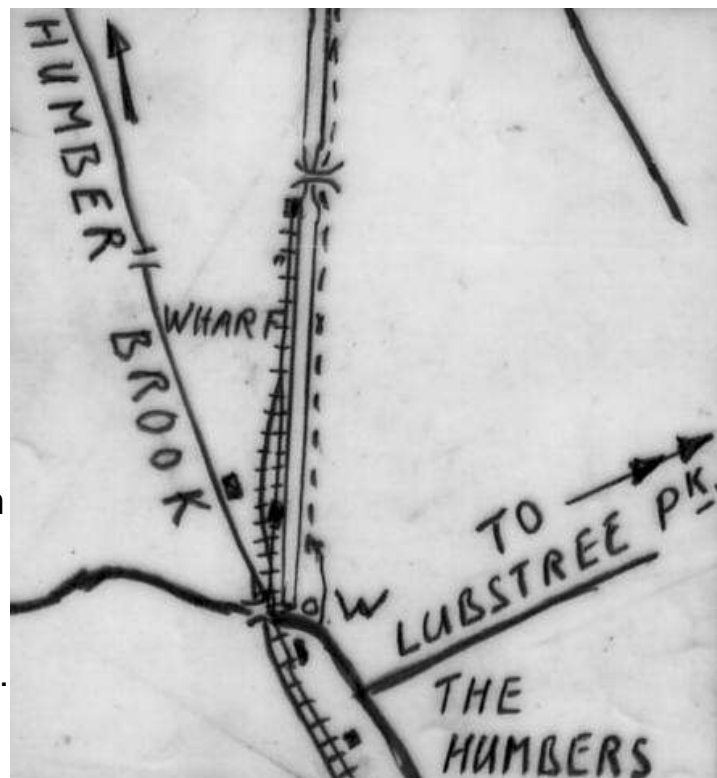
In 1870 the canal company, keen to divert traffic from the Trench Incline, agreed to lease Lubstree wharf from the 3rd Duke and pay a wharfage rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d a ton. In order to carry, what was clearly a substantial trade, they diverted 30 boats from their fleet for the purpose. At the same time a standard-gauge railway line was built from the Lilleshall Company's works to the wharf to replace the tramways.

By 1880 the arm was carrying only fluxing stone. Tolls were reduced to try and promote trade. This must have been a fairly successful move for a further siding was built and in 1891 and 1905 the lease on the wharf was renewed.

In 1922 however, the Duke of Sutherland decided to close Lubstree wharf and the railway line to Lilleshall. Thus the last traffic on the Humber Arm ceased.

The map shows the wharf and railways as they were in about 1880. In the triangle between the Humber Brook and the canal lie the Wharfinger's House and the transshipment shed, with the railway running through it (the photos on pages 9/10 clearly show the doorways through which the railway ran). At the end of the railway, by the bridge, is the stationary engine house used to pull carriages along the wharfside.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone who can add to the history of this interesting site.



*Steve Bean*

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