

# Building Report Pratt's Wharf

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**The site of Pratt's Wharf in October 2007 (OS Grid ref: 82507375).  
Viewed towards Kidderminster.**

Reference to this wharf is made in many canal guides [1-3]. According to 'A Towpath Guides to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal' by Ian Langford the wharf was named after Isaac Pratt of Henwick; and that the lock may have been constructed c1840.

There is no doubt that Pratt's Wharf is the original name for this site. It is referred to as such in the Poor Rate list of 1833 for Oldington, Sutton & the Lea in Kidderminster Foreign [4]. A property at Pratts wharf was owned by Lord Foley, and occupied by Henry Turner; the value was £1.19s. The next door was a house occupied by T.Mann and owned by the owner of the canal, the value being £1.17s.

However, there appears to have been a subsequent transmutation of the name to 'Platt's Wharf' in local history books, [5,6], Kidderminster Shuttle [7], and OS Survey maps [8,11].

The Wharf, or what remains of it, is situated in-between Number 11 Bridge at Falling Sands, and Number 10 Bridge at Oldington Lane. It is on the left hand side of the canal as you walk the towpath to Stourport.

An over-bridge recently restored in 2007 is evident and the former lock remains are visible ending at the River Stour. The lock fell into disuse in 1948 [9]. The paddle mechanism at the Stour end remained there in 1972, but by 2007 this had gone.

However, a wharf existed here before the lock was constructed. The River Stour was made navigable for a mile to serve the Wilden Iron Works. Prior to the lock being constructed goods were transhipped from the canal at Pratt's Wharf to smaller craft using the River Stour. The Canal and the Stour are at this point only yards apart.

Accommodation was provided for a lock keeper and a clerk [2] but there remains no trace of these buildings. The traffic is recorded as coal and iron to Wilden Works. The branch was about 1 mile long.



**The lock that connected the canal to the Stour, at Pratts Wharf in October 2007.  
Viewed towards the canal.**



**The old entrance to the wharf under the restored over bridge.  
Viewed towards the canal**

**Sources**

1. 'The guide to The Kidderminster Rally of Boats 1772-1972'.
2. 'A Towpath Guides to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal' by Ian J Langford, Cambridge: Goose & Son 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. 1974
3. 'Pearson's Canal Companion Stourport Ring' by Michael Pearson, J M Pearson & Son Ltd 1987.
4. Worcester Record Office BA4776/4.
5. 'Kidderminster since 1800' by Ken Tomkinson and George Hall (1975)
6. 'All Saints Church, Wilden' by Nic Harvey (2003)
7. 'When bombs fell on Kidderminster', Kidderminster Shuttle, 7<sup>th</sup> October 1944
8. OS Survey maps since 1881: 'old-maps.co.uk'.
9. Worcestershire County Council Historic and Archaeological Service, Historic Environment Record (HER) WSM12001
10. The Staff at Kidderminster Library.
11. OS Map of Kidderminster Wards 1912, and OS 1885 map, Kidderminster Library

**Location**



**Pratt's Wharf is marked in Pink. (Note the name Platt's Wharf on the map.)  
1912 OS Map of Kidderminster Wards [11]. Grid Ref: SO82507375**

**The 1883 map shows clearly the interlinking lock between canal and river and also the building (pink) providing accommodation for staff.**

