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Turn left into Kenilworth Gardens into Warwick Crescent. Turn left into Spa Road back towards town. On the right hand side of the road is Rope Walk, which marks the site of Maggs Factory for making mats, ropes and twine. It was founded in 1803 by Charles Maggs, a Methodist, who also found the United Dairies.

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**The Limes, formerly Brunswick House.**



This is dated 1795, the year of the ill-fated marriage of the future George IV to Caroline Brunswick. (Now flats.) It was the home of Dr William Keir in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

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End of Trail One.

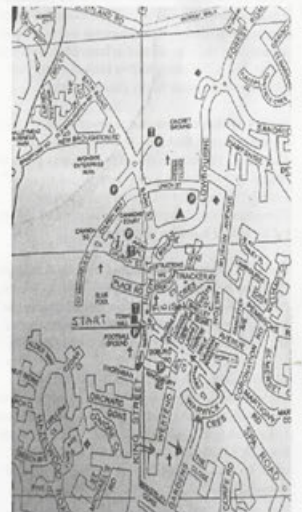
Original Trail researched by Isobel Ide for Melksham Town Trust.

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Melksham Tourist Information Centre

# MELKSHAM TOWN TRAIL No 1



**Melksham** was founded beside the Avon, where the river was shallow enough to be forded. Melksham Hundred extended to over 8,400 acres and included eight Mills, Water Meadows and Woodland.

Adjacent to Melksham was Blackmore and Chippenham Forest, a Royal Hunting Forest much favoured by the Normal Kings.

Melksham became a centre of weaving. The white broadcloth that was manufactured was exported through London to France, Spain and even Russia. It started as a cottage industry with the weavers working in their own homes, but gradually as the processes were mechanised, the industry was concentrated in large Mills beside the Avon. The last working Mill in Melksham was the Matravens Mill which finally closed in 1888.

In 1814 Melksham attempted to found a Spa to challenge the supremacy of Bath, but the enterprise was never successful. However, it left a few handsome Regency Houses in Spa Road as a memento. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, a Canal was built from Semington to Chippenham and Calne which ran through Melksham, but by 1914 it had been abandoned.

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#### The Market Place

The Friday Market charter was originally granted to Melksham in 1219 by Henry III, also to hold a fair at Michaelmas, the 29<sup>th</sup> September. In 1250 this was changed to a Tuesday Market, and a three day fair on the vigil, feast and morrow of Michaelmas. In 1491 the Prioress and Nuns of Amesbury who held the Manor of Melksham obtained the right to hold an additional fair on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of July.

The Fairs continued until 1888. It was the custom to devote the first day to the sale of cattle, sheep and horses,

and the second day to merry making. Travelling showmen exhibited models such as that of Niagara Falls, constructed of 800 weight of coloured glass, and the fair was attended by the 'Baker's Show' of strolling players.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Market was held on alternate Tuesdays with Trowbridge and it finally lapsed in 1939.

The Melksham Market Company was formed in 1847 and acquired from the owners of Place House an orchard adjacent to the Market Place where they erected the Cheese Market House.

At the same time, the Wilts, Somerset and Weymouth were building an extension on the Railway from Chippenham to Westbury.

In the centre of the Market Place was a communal well, the money for which was raised by public subscription, this can be seen in early photos and was demolished in 1945.

The Market Place was also the site of an early lock-up and the stocks which are still in the possession of the Town Council but are currently stored in The Rachel Fowler Centre.



The Town Hall is ashlar faced of three bays with a one bay pediment, it was designed by D Jones of Bradford-on-Avon.

The ground floor was originally open to the elements. The elongated windows are typical of the Italianate fashion of the 1840's.

It has a symmetrical front divided vertically by four pilasters with a central rail round arched opening with 6 panelled beaded door and fanlight.

Behind the Town Hall is a building that was originally a cheese store, later it was used as a drill hall and it is now The Assembly Hall, and used for events.

The Urban District Council acquired the Town Hall in 1914 for £1,600.

The small building attached to the Town Hall by an archway has at various times been a Police Station and the headquarters of the fire Brigade but is currently a café run by The Rotary called The Art House.

#### Proceed down King Street

On the right hand side is No 6, at present a china shop, The Samovar. It is early 18<sup>th</sup> Century and was originally the White Hart Hotel and specialised in theatrical clientele.

In 1851, the visitors included a theatrical manager, two pianists and three choral singers. Unfortunately, this led to its Licence being withdrawn in 1896 owing to it being run as a house of ill repute.

The next door house, No 8, has a 19<sup>th</sup> Century shop front with a cornice of acanthus brackets.

No 10 is known as Quaker Cottage and the date 1705 can be seen over the door.

There had been Quakers in Melksham since 1699. The Quaker Meeting House being built in 1734. Quakerism gradually declined, in 1950 the Melksham Meeting was discontinued and the building is now Offices.

Continue down the road and on the opposite of the road, No 39 is a handsome late 18<sup>th</sup> Century house with an ashlar frontage and mansard roof.

On the right hand side of the road, No 42, this is probably the site of the forge belonging to the Abbess of Amesbury, the house having a ceiling of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

The forge is marked by the straight wooden beam in the wall. This was the last working forge in Melksham, closing in 1939.

Almost opposite No 42, abutting onto the road is the turnpike cottage (No59). Melksham was turnpike about 1750; the money raised from the turnpike was used for the upkeep of the roads. As well as this turnpike there was one adjoining the Rachel Fowler Centre, another at Shaw, Lowbourne, Atworth and Burrell Lane.

They were still in place as late as 1865 when Thomas Watson, a baker of Melksham was summoned by Henry Heritage, the toll collector of passing the King Street Gate with a load of stones. The defendant indignantly contended that as the stone was for mending his own property he was exempt from the toll. He was informed by the bench that the exemption was only for stone used in public work and was ordered to pay the toll with costs. The turnpike was finally abolished in 1867.

Further along King Street, now known as Semington Road, are two very fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century farmhouses, firstly the Conigre Farm Hotel. This marks the site of the warren belonging to Amesbury Abbey.

Conigre is Norman-French for rabbit.

Rabbits were introduced into this country by the Normans. They were considered very rare and exotic and were eaten only by the very rich. The farmhouse has an interesting projecting bread oven that is visible from the road.



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Go to the end of Union Street, turn left into Lowbourne and walk to the pedestrian crossing a few yards away.

This is the end of the Southern route. From here you can proceed to **Central route A** or alternatively carry on walking along Lowbourne to return to **King George V Park**.

### C. Northern route (Green) 0.7 Miles

Follow the direction of the **LWW** sign at the end of the gardens at Murray Walk (see third paragraph from the end of the **Central route A** directions).

The original towpath follows the line of the old canal situated in the gardens of the houses on the right-hand side.

After about 125 metres the path opens up onto an open area where the canal has been completely filled in and grassed over. Cross the open area heading in the same direction and then over the end of Bowman's Court onto the short tarmac path going north. The path peters out and the way ahead is a high grassy mound which is on the exact line of the old canal. The builders of the housing estate obviously used the canal as a dump for excess soil. Proceed along the top of the mound, following the line of the gardens of the houses. Alternatively, the parallel tarmac footpath of Awdry Avenue can be used.

In 100 metres cross Loxley Close and continue in the same direction for about 50 metres. On reaching the southern arm of Methuen Avenue (which is actually a crescent) cross over and follow the earth footpath north between the gardens in the same direction as the **LWW** sign.

After about 80 metres the path emerges onto Methuen Avenue – northern arm. Cross the road and the small grassy area at the entrance to the children's play area. Here can be seen the next **LWW** sign pointing north along the footpath.

Follow the direction of the sign for about 100 metres to arrive at a steel kissing gate. This is the farthest point of this detailed walking route.

Looking out across the open field can be seen an electricity pylon. This was placed alongside the remains of the old Forest lock on the **Wilts & Berks Canal**. The lock cottage was demolished in 1961.

To continue with the rest of the walk – retrace your steps back to Murray walk and then head west towards the River Avon as detailed in **Central route A**.



Melksham Wharf c1900



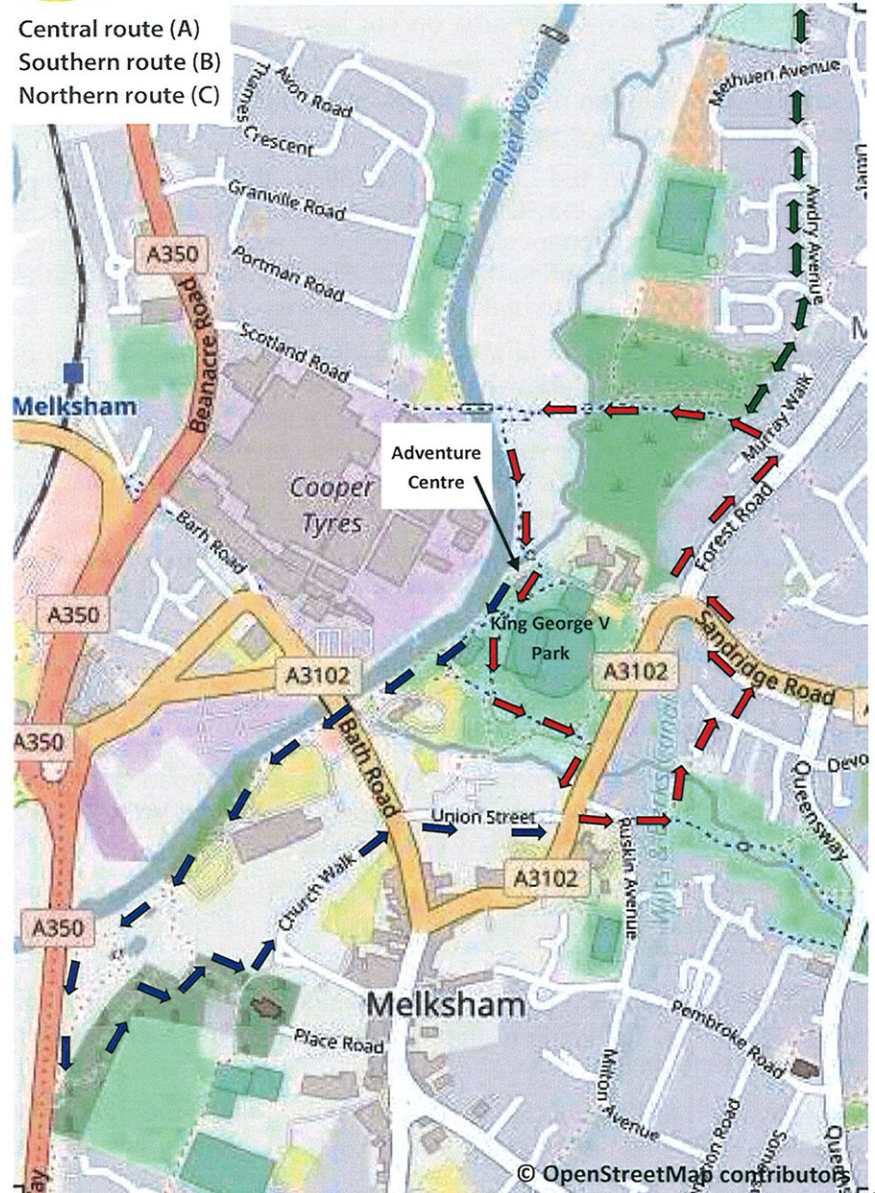
Church Street c1910



Forest Lock c1900



## WALKING MELKSHAM'S LOST WATERWAY



It's time to put our canal at the heart of everyday life...



## A. Central route (Red) 1.1 Miles

The walk starts from **King George V Park** at the **Adventure Centre** beside the River Avon.

Head south via the tarmac path forking left towards the tall poplar trees. Continue on past the children's play area on our right, towards the exit onto Lowbourne.

At the exit onto Lowbourne turn right and follow the footpath to the pedestrian crossing and cross the road when safe to do so.

Enter Ruskin Avenue next to the crossing and follow the path to the next corner. (Observe the Lost Waterway (**LWW**) sign on the opposite corner). Cross over and follow the sign direction for about 70 metres. You are now on the line of the old **Wilts & Berks Canal** and to the north is Clackers Brook. To cross this brook the regency navigators had to build a culvert and embankment.

Turn left along the gravel footpath in a northerly direction and the way drops down with the embankment up above you on the left. If you wish you can at the lowest point drop down further to the bank of Clackers Brook and looking west towards **King George V Park** you can see the old culvert that was built by the navigators 200 years ago. An easier viewing route is by returning back to the top of the path and then descending to the right of the oak tree .

Returning to the path continue north and near the end of the embankment bear right into and then across to the far corner of a car parking area. Follow the footpath of Hampshire Place to the top.

Turn right for a short distance and then cross the road and follow the **LWW** sign into the path between the houses to come out onto the service road parallel to the main A3102 Sandridge Road.

Turn left for a short distance and then at the end of the service road cross over the main road with great care and continue towards **King George V Park** to the corner with the mini-roundabout joined by Forest Road.

Cross over Forest Road and you will see the next **LWW** sign on the lamp-post and just across the path you will see the very distinct brick outline of the bridge across the old **Wilts & Berks Canal**.

Turn right and follow the path along Forest Road for about 300 metres until you see the **LWW** sign on the right side of the road pointing to the route forward along Murray Walk to the left.

Follow Murray Walk to the rear of the gardens of the houses on the right there you will see the **LWW** sign pointing north. This is the start point for the Northern route [See **Northern route C**].

Continue west along the wide tarmac path towards the River Avon. Along the way the path crosses the bridge over a small tributary stream of the main river.

On the left-hand-side, just before the river, take the small path down to the edge of the River Avon.

Follow the river bank path south back to **King George V Park**.

## B. Southern route (Blue) 1.2 Miles

The walk starts from **King George V Park** at the **Adventure Centre** beside the River Avon.

Walk south along the edge of the River Avon to the Bath Road footpath. Turn right, walk a short way and cross the road by the pedestrian crossing.

Turn right and very soon turn left along the footpath keeping by the river and along the northern edge of Sainsbury's supermarket car park until you reach the gate to Conigre Mead nature reserve.

Passing through the gateway follow the fork right and very shortly there is a viewing platform. From here is a close view of the River Avon.

Leaving the viewing platform follow the river along the grassy footpath to another viewpoint close to Western Way Challeymead bridge. The planned **Melksham link** canal will enter the river just at the other side of the bridge.

Continue along the grassy footpath for a short way and then come back onto the gravel footpath and turn right heading south. See if you can spot any of the creatures illustrated on the information boards.

The nature reserve narrows considerably at the southern end. Pass through the gateway and very shortly turn left through another gateway into the cemetery. This is very large. Follow the path north alongside the hedge for a short way then turn right in the direction of the parish church of St Michael and All Angels, which can be seen on the skyline.

The path winds about but when level with the next gateway to the nature reserve on the left, turn right and take the pathway in the direction of St Michael's parish church, leaving the outer cemetery and passing into the inner one.

Exit the cemetery onto the driveway of St Michael's Court (also known as "School Lane") alongside the church. Turn left and follow the driveway, passing The Rectory on the left, into Canon Square, where you will see the war memorial which is the site of the annual remembrance day service.

Keep to the left and exit the square into Church Walk, which has some of the oldest buildings in Melksham, some dating back to the 15th century.

Follow Church Walk into the busy Bank Street. Turn left and walk via the high pavement to the pedestrian crossing. Cross the road and turn right. Walk a short distance towards the town centre and then turn left into Union Street opposite Church Walk.

The Wilts & Berks Canal was built between 1795 and 1810 linking the Kennet & Avon Canal (originally the Western Canal) at Semington near Melksham to Abingdon on the Thames in Berkshire. Branches connected Chippenham, Calne, Longcot and Wantage to the main line and freight included coal, corn, stone, iron, timber, lime and chalk. The North Wilts branch from Swindon to the Thames & Severn Canal at Latton (near Cricklade) was completed in 1819. When the Wilts & Berks was built Melksham had a population of just over 5,000 and the village of Swindon a mere 1,000.

The canal was finally abandoned by Act of Parliament in 1914. Some building has taken place on the line of the canal but much of it still exists in the form of lock and bridge remains, embankments, towpaths, hedgerows and ditches.

In canalside towns and villages many roads and building names mark this era and there is strong support for restoring this significant piece of our transport heritage.

## The Walk

### Towpath to Melksham Wharf

Begin your walk at the Southern end of Melksham at the West End Inn, (Hungry Horse), Semington Road. Opposite the West End Inn (once West End Farm) is Waverley Gardens and you will find a footpath halfway along the north side of the road (1) – this was the canal toting path. Just to the South is the site of West End Farm bridge, and Drinkwater House, home to John Lewington, canal carrier and boatman.

The canal itself was on the right-hand side of the towpath and is now incorporated into the gardens of the houses in Kenilworth Gardens. The red brick wall on your left is built from a similar type of clay brick that was used on the canal. The bricks were baked in purpose - built kilns along the route of the canal and were larger than normal bricks to avoid tax and to speed up building - 700 W & B bricks were equivalent to 1000 statute bricks.

Follow the path until you reach the electricity substation on your left (2). The houses on this side were built during the canal's lifetime and can be seen in old photographs of Melksham Wharf. The towpath ahead comes to a dead end at the site of the wharf – so take the path to the right and turn left into Kenilworth Gardens. Follow the road around Warwick Crescent and turn left at the junction with the busy Spa Road. (3).

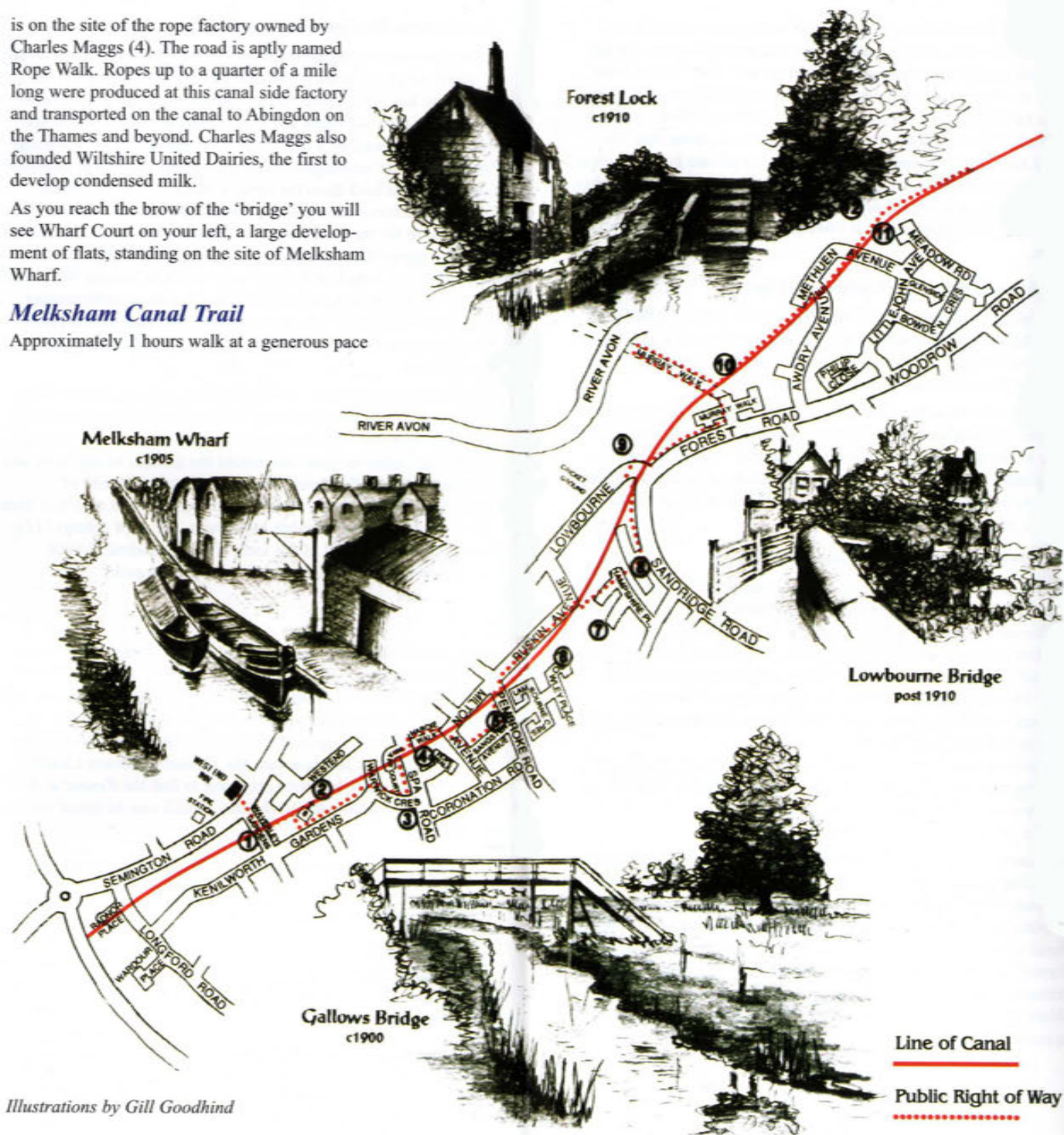
Looking ahead you will see a hump in the road – this is the site of Spa Road bridge (lowered in 1924) which carried the main Devizes to Melksham road over the canal. As you approach the 'bridge' you will see a housing development to your right which

is on the site of the rope factory owned by Charles Maggs (4). The road is aptly named Rope Walk. Ropes up to a quarter of a mile long were produced at this canal side factory and transported on the canal to Abingdon on the Thames and beyond. Charles Maggs also founded Wiltshire United Dairies, the first to develop condensed milk.

As you reach the brow of the 'bridge' you will see Wharf Court on your left, a large development of flats, standing on the site of Melksham Wharf.

### Melksham Canal Trail

Approximately 1 hours walk at a generous pace



Illustrations by Gill Goodhind

This wharf was once a busy canalside settlement where, before the railway and a decent road system had emerged, grain for the Melksham mills was brought in, together with coal for the town from the Somerset coalfields. Unfortunately all signs of the canal have been destroyed, including the wharf house, which stood next to the bridge. Carefully cross the road and look down onto the canal line, now the garden of 'Withleigh' (a private house) built in 1927 on the site of a smithy which served the canal. Here you can see the steps, which lead down to the canal towing path. The footpath here was closed in about 1948 and diverted to create Hardie Walk.

#### Melksham Wharf to Gallows Bridge

Almost opposite the entrance to Wharf Court is Hardie Walk – take this path to Milton Avenue. Turn right here and then left into Sangster Avenue – the canal is now on your left in the back gardens of the houses along this road.

At Pembroke Road turn left and just past the small electric substation building look back into the gardens on the left, you will be able to see the tree/hedgerow which was the towpath hedge. Originally the hedge was planted as hawthorn, a strong and cheap method of fencing. It was roughly around this spot that Gallows Bridge footbridge stood (5).

#### Gallows Bridge to Lowbourne Bridge

Turn right into Ruskin Avenue and walk northwards past the residential home Brookside on your right – built directly on the line of the canal (6). Just before you reach the army cadet centre take the footpath to your right but stop before you come to the end of the tall wire fence on your left – here a few trees mark the old line. The land enclosed within the fence is part of the large embankment that took the canal 110 ft above Clackers Brook (7). It was around this point that the '2 miles to Semington' milestone would have stood. As you follow the path around to the left you will cross the brook below at the base of the embankment. The face of its box ashlar culvert has survived well.

The canal continues northwards in the form of gardens however, so you must detour to the right following the concrete path between the flats in Hampshire Place and take the narrow path leading to Sandridge Road (8). Turn left here and at the junction with Forest Road you will see the bridge parapet ahead of you. This parapet formed the north wall of Lowbourne Road bridge (9) and now remains as the most significant structure to survive in Melksham. Work was carried out by the Canal Trust to repair the parapet and approach wall in 1995.

#### Lowbourne Bridge to Forest Lock

Again the canal along here has been lost to gardens, however the towpath hedge remains. To retrace the line walk along Forest Road and left into Murray Walk – the canal is straight ahead of you where the road meets the field. It was at this point that the canal was spanned by a lift bridge (10), operated in a drawbridge fashion. Recent investigations have revealed that a high level trestle bridge was built from the canal at this point to the former Spencers factory (now housing) at Beanacre Road to provide a direct route for the workers at the engineering works. The bridge ran high above the flood plain on iron supports and the earth embankments, which still stand today. Back at Murray Walk road rejoin the narrow towpath which runs high on an embankment from the fields to the left. This short stretch takes you to Awdry Avenue where the entire embankment has been filled in and grassed over.

Follow the embankment past Bowmans Court and Loxley Close and straight over the minor road leading to Methuen Avenue and along the path through the houses. Cross another minor road and follow the hedge on your left behind the garages to the field, and the end of this trail. About 150 metres ahead is the site of Melksham Forest Lock (11) which raised the canal nine feet from the three mile pound through Melksham. The lock cottage (12), which stood to the left of the lock, was demolished in 1961. Access to the cottage was only via the towing path.

*The aim of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust is to restore the canal to a navigable state from the 'Jubilee Junction' with The Thames near Abingdon to the Kennet & Avon near Melksham via the Vale of the White Horse and Swindon. A major branch will also be restored along the proposed Cricklade Country Way north from Swindon to a new junction with the Thames & Severn Canal at Eysey. A new route has been proposed to link the Kennet & Avon Canal at Semington with Melksham; details can be found on the website.*

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*Reg. in England & Wales: No. 2267719  
Reg. Charity: No. 299595*

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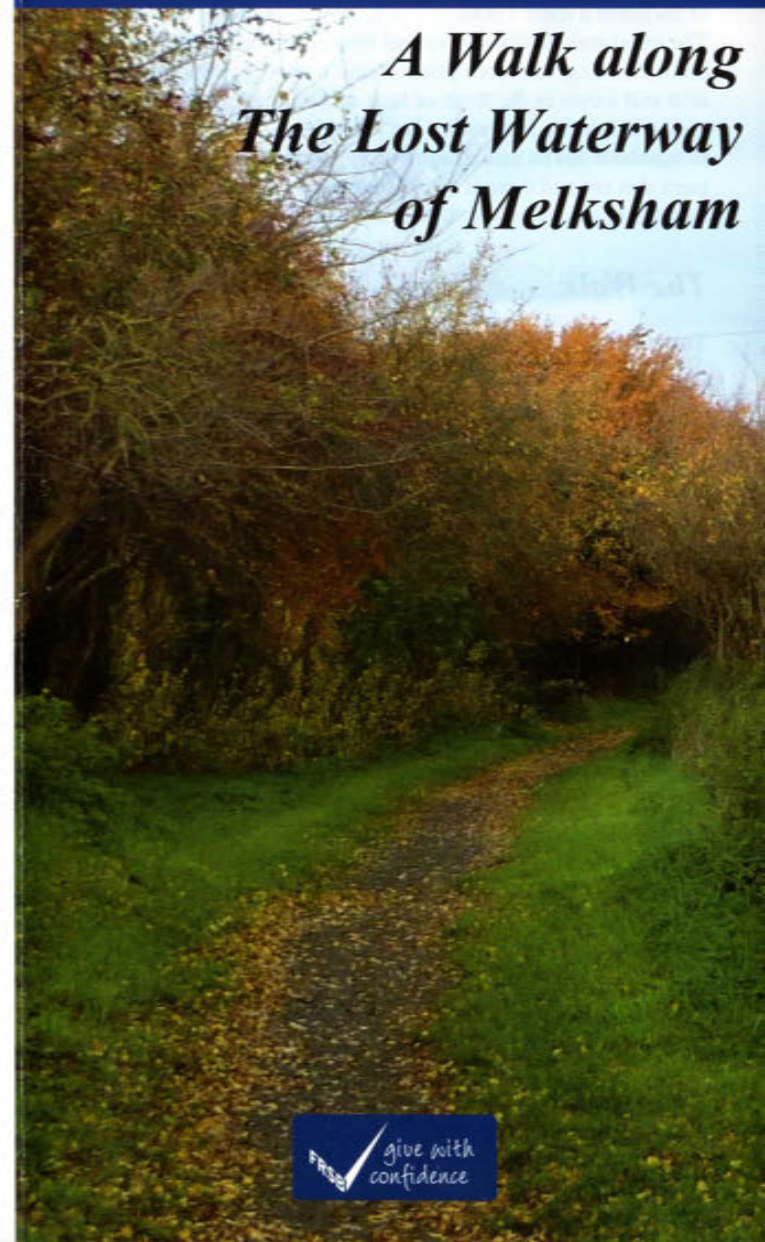
*Produced with the support of Melksham Town Council.*



# The Wilts & Berks Canal

& wildlife corridor

## A Walk along The Lost Waterway of Melksham





# MELKSHAM IS GREAT

MELKSHAM IS GREAT is a project by artist Verity-Jane Keefe for and about the town of Melksham. A series of sculptures have been made and installed, on a route developed from ancient pathways, connecting the historic town centre, with the new development to the east and back round again. Made at Novacast Foundry in Melksham, a gem within the town, continuing a long established tradition of metal casting.

The works have been developed following a four year period, looking closely, researching and talking to residents, revealing the everyday brilliance of Melksham. The sculptures are in celebration of the industry's and local phenomena that have defined and shaped the town, and made it great. Follow the route or keep your eyes peeled as you're going about your everyday travels. Melksham is Great.

-  WALKING ROUTE
-  ROAD
-  FOOTPATH
-  GREEN SPACE
-  WATERWAY
-  BUILDING
-  BUILDING OF INTEREST
-  CHURCH
-  PUB
-  SCHOOL
-  LIBRARY
-  TOWN HALL
-  TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE
-  LISTED BUILDING



## FEATHERS

Melksham was once full of feathers. The Sawells feather purifying factory, processed feathers in the town centre from 1892 - 1960's.

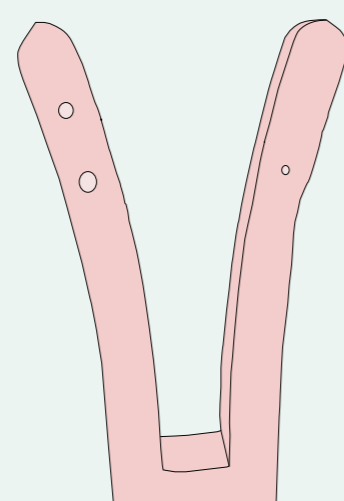
The feathers are installed on the side of the public toilet block on Church Street and on the kerb, floating to the ground as if being delivered on wagons from the station to the works.



## WALKING

A monument to walking - a huge part of everyday life in Melksham. The concrete marker used to mark an historic right of way, which was re-routed for a new development.

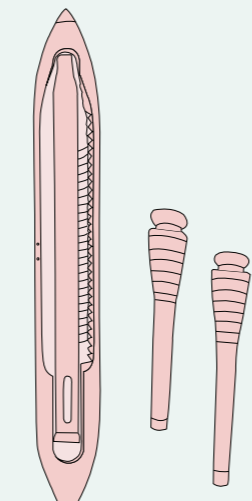
A cast copy of the original, installed on the grass verge off Snowberry Lane, just after Heather Avenue. Clean your boots and get walking.



## WEAVING

Melksham was a busy weaving town from the mid 14th century through to 1888. From weaving and spinning to riots with yarn thrown into the Avon! A very important era of social history and workers rights within the town.

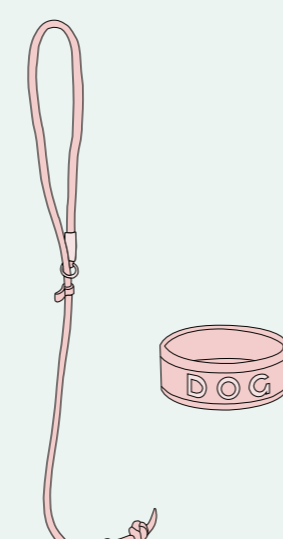
A weavers shuttle and bobbins can be found on the old cattle bridge within the new development. Sit and soak up the view whilst listening to Clackers Brook bubbling underneath.



## ROPE & DOGS

For the dogs of Melksham, and the history of rope making. Rope was made in Melksham from 1803 to the 1960's. A functional, necessary and useful industry, producing rope, twine, coir matting, and later tarpaulins.

A cast rope dog lead and bowl are located by the narnian gap on Snarleton Lane, that crosses to the development. Pause and let your dog drink from the bowl if it's been raining!



## MILK

Melksham, literally translates as the Milk Village - "meolc", Old English for milk, and "ham", a village.

A long history of dairy farming, the milk bottles of Melksham were once a very familiar site. An original Melksham milk bottle has been cast, and installed as a pair left against a wall on Goldfinch Road. Look out for the local cats who survey the area.



## HOUSING

Regeneration, housing and expansion: housing has become an industry in it's own right in Melksham. You can trace the rings of regeneration from the town centre out to the east.

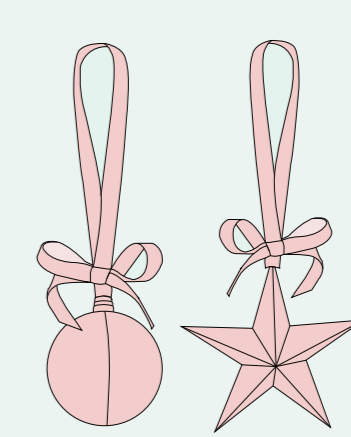
A model showhome marks the eastern boundary of the town in 2017 and can be found on the grass verge of Snowberry Lane, just beyond Snarleton Lane.



## CHRISTMAS

Christmas is big news in Melksham, and very much something to be celebrated. From local resident Mr Christmas, the brilliant Town Centre displays to the local favourites at Longford Road, lighting up the town for December.

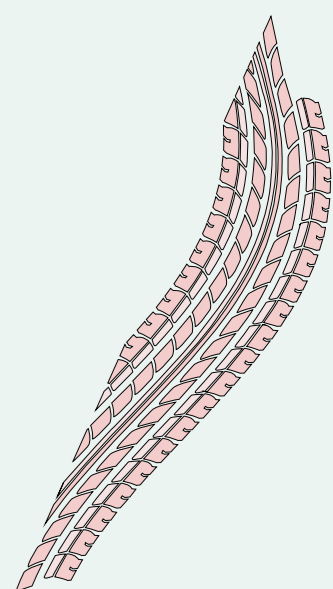
Two Christmas decorations have been cast and installed on lamp posts on Forest Road, festive cheer all year.



## TYRES, RUBBER

From the Avon India Rubber Company, to Avon Tyres to Cooper Avon Tyres. Tyres and rubber have put Melksham on the industrial map. Tyres, gas masks and the first ever tennis ball - all made in Melksham.

A cast car skid, using Avon Tyres is installed within sight of the factory chimneys, on Millenium Riverside Walk, near the junction with Murray Walk.



**4** Melksham House,  
27 Market Place (Grade II)

Melksham House was the home of George Blathwayt at the beginning of the War. He and his wife moved to Somerset in 1916. The House was then given over to the British Red Cross and became Melksham Hospital No.2 in November 1916. It housed 32 soldiers in 6 wards. After the War it was bought by the Avon India Rubber Works as their Sports and Social Club.



**5** New Hall, Market Place

Built in 1877, New Hall was used as a reading room and accommodation for lectures and meetings. In March 1916 it became the location of the regular Military Tribunals which examined the cases of those men who were objecting to being conscripted.



**6** Second Cottage Hospital,  
between 24 – 22 Bank Street

The Cottage Hospital was opened in 1895 and agreed to accept up to 50 wounded soldiers at the outset of the War. In 1938, a new hospital was built on Spa Road. The Cottage Hospital was used under the war time powers of the Wiltshire County Council and re-opened as a maternity hospital; many women came from London to have their babies in Melksham because it was safer. After WWII, it was used as an educational centre until it was taken over by the Labour Club in 1964.



**7** Liberal Club, 26 Bank Street

The Club opened in 1903 and from November 1914, like the Conservative Club across the road became part of Melksham No.1 Red Cross Hospital.



**8** Avon India Rubber Co Ltd,  
Bath Road

The Avon Rubber Co moved to Melksham in 1890. During the First World War, so important was the output of the factory, that the Ministry of Munitions took over production from November 1915. Avon India Rubber produced a whole range of rubber goods for the Ministry of War including tyres, lifesaving apparatus, hosing and tubing.



**9** Spencer & Co Ltd, Beanacre Road

Spencer and Co was founded by Charles Spencer in 1884 and moved to the Beanacre site in 1903. The present Foundry Close is a reminder that this was once the site of the Spencer Foundry. In 1914 there were 750 employees. Spencer & Co received contracts from the Ministry of Munitions to produce 9.2 and 18 pounder high explosive shells. They employed a large number of women and even had to open new facilities to accommodate them.



**10** B Sawtell & Sons Ltd,  
Old Broughton Road

In 1850, Benjamin Sawtell founded a business in Challymead filling palliasses with straw for the army during the Crimean War. With his sons, he opened B. Sawtell & Sons, commencing a business cleaning feathers used for bedding at their factory in Old Broughton Road in 1892. During WW1, the company returned to their support of the war effort by supplying purified feathers for military bedding.



**11** Wilts United Dairies Ltd,  
New Broughton Road

Wilts United Dairies was founded by the son of the rope manufacturer Charles Maggs. In 1888 the factory moved into a former dye works by the Town Bridge on New Broughton Road. They merged with a number of dairies including the North Wilts Dairy Co of Devizes. By August 1912 Wilts. United Dairies ran several wholesale depots in London for liquid milk and one for 'fancy provisions'. Condensed milk was made at Melksham.



**12** Conservative Club (Constitutional  
Club), 17 Bank Street (Grade II)

This 19<sup>th</sup> century building became a ward for the Melksham No.1 Red Cross Hospital in November 1914 accommodating around 30 convalescing troops.



**Acknowledgements**

The Melksham Remembers Project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Melksham Town Council and Wiltshire Council Melksham Community Area Board.



# Melksham

in the

## First World War

1914 - 1918

Melksham Remembers



# Walking Trail



During 2018, as part of the First World War Centenary Commemorations, volunteers took part in a project to find out what was happening in Melksham during the First World War. This walking trail is a result of their researches and highlights some of the buildings that played a role in Melksham life during that time.

You can take the locations in any order, but they are numbered, starting and finishing at Church Street Car Park, and perhaps enjoying some refreshments in one of the many cafés and pubs in the town centre either on route or at the end.



Find out more on the Melksham Remembers website [www.melkshamremembers.org.uk](http://www.melkshamremembers.org.uk). Follow our future activity on the Facebook page [MelkshamRemembers](https://www.facebook.com/MelkshamRemembers).

You can also explore the shops of Melksham during the First World War with your smartphone. Please use this QR code to find out more about the shops and buildings in Melksham town centre on your smart phone.



### 1 Melksham War Memorial, Church (Grade II)

The War Memorial was unveiled on 23 August 1919 by Lord Methuen. The memorial cost £350 and the Vicar of St Michael, Canon Edwin Wyld whose son, Captain George Wyld was killed in December 1914, raised subscriptions of £200 from the family members of those remembered on the memorial and paid the remaining £150 himself.



### 2 Church of St Michael, Church Walk (Grade II\*)

This Grade II\* listed church dates back to the Norman period with extensive alterations in the late medieval period and in 1845 by Thomas Wyatt. The Churchyard contains a number of WW1 Commonwealth War Grave Commission graves.



### 3 Town Hall, Market Place (Grade II)

This building was built in 1847, as a Cheese Market. After the failure of the Melksham Market Company in 1898 the property was sold to Charles Awdry. It was purchased by the Melksham Urban District Council in 1914.



KEY	
1	Melksham War Memorial
2	Church of St Michael
3	Town Hall
4	Melksham House
5	New Hall
6	Cottage Hospital
7	Liberal Club
8	Avon India Rubber Co Ltd
9	Spencer and Co Ltd
10	Sawtell & Sons Ltd
11	Wilts United Dairies
12	Conservative Club
P	Church Street Car Park