

Report on the River Stort by Mr Griggs

(transcribed from BW135/15/1)

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Gentlemen

According to your instructions on the 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> of July I examined the works on the River Stort, which is 13 miles & 6 furlongs in length, and consists of:

15 locks – 11 of which are affected by mills

7 lock houses

2 cranes

25 carriage bridges including Harlow Road Bridge

11 of these bridges are attached to the locks

14 of these bridges are detached

8 of these bridges out of the 25 are Road Bridges, viz – (taken from Mr Seymour)

Roydon Station

Eastwick to Parndon at Parndon Lock

Burnt Mill

Harlow Turnpike Road

Sawbridgeworth

Spellbrook

Twyford

Hockerill Turnpike Road

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23 Horse Bridges, 2 of which are attached to the Tumbling Bays on to South Mill Lock

3 small foot bridges

6 Tumbling Bays

5 Overshots

4 Tunnels under the River (taken from Mr Seymour) viz

Below Fields Lock

Above Roydon Mill – done away with

Under the Cut above Lakes Waste Gates

Above Hunsdon Lock

Above Tednams Bury Lock

110 Horse Gates taken from Mr Seymour

I have thought it better to make my observations of each Lock & Bridge separately

(so that Sir George Duckett, Mr Giles or any other Gentleman can test my judgement price as to their state of repair)

I found the depth of water below Field's Lock to be 4' 6''; 5' 3''; 4' 9''; 4' 2''; 4' 3''

No 1 Lock called Field's Lock; depth of water on Fields Lock lower sill I found as the water was 5' 8'' But Mr Seymour says the regular depth is 5' 6''. Therefore the Cart Bridge at the tail of the Lock has a clear headroom of 5' 4''

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The cart bridge has 5 oak timbers and fir planked; the lower and upper gates were put down in 1817. The lower gates were spliced two years ago; the planking of the lower gates is very indifferent. The brickwork from the horse wants repairing. Otherwise Fields Lock is in working order; depth of water on Fields Lock upper sill 4' 6''

No 1 Tumbling Bay – from the horse and above Fields Lock – there was flowing over the gates 0'' which would leave on Fields Lock upper sill 4' 6''. This Tumbling Bay has brick sides & four gates but only two of which draw up. Put down in 1818 as dated on post and appeared in decent order

No 1 Crows Cart bridge detached was timbered in 1833. It has 5 timbers on oak planks; brick abutments which require pointing

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otherwise this bridge is in fair working order. Headway under it 5' 6''. The overshoot near Crows Bridge belongs to Roydon Mill, water flowing over it 0' 1½''.

Depth of water between Fields Lock and Roydon Brick Lock 3' 9''; 4' 0''; 3' 9''.

No 2 Lock called Roydon Brick Lock is affected by a Mill. Depth of water on the lower sill Coleman says 3' 8''; but it appears to me that the level of the Tumbling Mill gates below would run the water off lower than 3' 8'' on the lock lower sill. The two pairs of lock gates were put down in 1838. The lock has a fir apron and a cart bridge attached at the tail. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  in length of the north west side of the brickwork was put down in 1821. The brickwork on the other side is old. Otherwise this lock is in good order. Depth of water on the upper sill 5' 0''.

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No 1 Lock House at Roydon Mill Lock. Good repair dated 1830

Depth of water above Roydon Lock: 4' 1'' , 4' 6'' , 5' 0''

No 2 detached Cart Bridge over the Brick Lock Cut with 5 timbers covered with fir battens and brick abutments. A part of the brickwork is in very bad repair. This bridge is in middling order.

No 3 detached oblique Cart Bridge to Roydon Mill dated 1813. Brickwork in very bad repair; timbers middling repair; Headway 5' 3' . '

Mr Death (sic) has a tumbling bay with 2 gates above Roydon Mill from the horse.

Depth of water above Roydon Mill 3' 9''.

No 4 detached Bridge to Roydon. Brick abutments, timber covering dated 1841 – all in good repair except the wing wharfing. Headway 6' 2''

Railway Bridge - Depth of water underneath 3' 9''.

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No 5 detached Cart Bridge over the stream from Hunsdon Mill dated 1840. Brick abutment; timber covering in good repair

No 3 Lock called Lakes or Colemans Lock. A cart bridge attached to it old but in fair condition. Depth of water on the lower sill 4' 0''; headway under the bridge 5' 9''; lower gates in good repair. Brickwork under bridge in good order except stopping and pointing wanted on one side. Side timbers and lock piles indifferent. The upper gates and the brickwork around them in very bad repair. Mr Seymour is preparing new and with the exception of the lower part of this lock it is in bad condition. Depth of water on the upper sill 4' 8''.

No 2 Lock house at Lakes or Colemans Lock in good repair.

Depth of water above Lakes Lock 4' 9''; 5' 0''.

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No 2 Tumbling Bay. Above Lakes Lock is next to the Horse. Built of Oak. 3 gates all draw in towing bridge over the Bay. The Bridge timbers are indifferent and the fir covering also. One staple post very bad repair; side planking and wharfing indifferent; in place dated 1821. A part of this bay very bad repair.

No 6 detached Cart Bridge over Lakes Lock Cut has 5 Oak timbers, one very bad. The oak covering good. Brickwork on one side very bad. The other parts of the bridge are in fair condition. Headway 5' 6''

Depth of water above Lakes Lock Cart Bridge: 3' 5''; 3' 6''; 3' 9''

No 4 Lock Called Hunsdon Mill Lock affected by a mill. Has a cart bridge over the tail with 5 oak timbers oak covering. Headway under bridge 6' 0''. Brickwork below the lower gates is very shaky and indifferent.

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Depth of water on lower sill 4' 0''; ditto upper sill 3' 9''. The lower gates are worn; dated 1820. Brickwork below lower gates in middling order. The upper gates and brickwork in fair condition dated 1819. On the whole this lock with the exception of the brickwork below the lower gates may be called equal to its work.

Depth of water above Hunsdon Lock: 4' 0''; 4' 0''; 4' 0''; 3' 9''; 3' 9''; 3' 9''

No 7 detached cart bridge called Mead End Bridge with 5 oak timbers, oak covering; stands on piles and wooden abutments dated 1813. The bridge although good for its age is in but very ordinary condition. Headway 5' 4''.

No 1 detached horse bridge above Mead End with 3 timbers built of oak dated 1840. The capsill rests on 2 piles one of which is an old pile. But the bridge is in good order.

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There is an overshot below this bridge which belongs to Hunsdon Mill.

Depth of water above Mead End Bridge 4' 6''.

No 2 detached horse bridge over Parndon Mill Stream. A new bridge built of oak dated 1844. The only remark to this bridge is that one of the bearing piles is old the other of fir. This bridge is in good order.

Depth of water below Parndon Lock 3' 6''.

No 5 Lock called Parndon Lock affected by a mill; has a carriage bridge at the tail with 5 oak timbers; oak covering. One timber indifferent dated 1830. The lower gates dated 1837. The upper gates dated 1830. Depth of water on the lower sill 3' 3''. Ditto on the upper sill 4' 1''. Headway under bridge 5' 10''. This lock is in good repair.

Depth of water above Parndon Lock: 4' 3''; 3' 9''

No 8 detached cart bridge called Parndon Hall Bridge has 7 timbers oak and fir with wood abutments Headway 5' 9''. This bridge is old but in working condition.

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No 6 Lock called Burnt Mill Lock is affected by a mill. Has a road bridge attached to it with 6 oak timbers and oak covering. Greater part of the bridge new in 1843. Depth of water on the upper sill 3' 6''; ditto on lower sill 3' 7''. Headway under bridge 5' 9''. Brickwork to the lower gates in fair order. With upper and lower gates dated 1814. One upper staple post indifferent. The lower gates are very weak and the gate planking bad.

No 3 Lock house at Burnt Mill in good order

No 3 detached horse bridge close above Burnt Mill Lock built all of oak except the bearing piles which are of fir dated 1831. This bridge is in good working order. The wharfing above Burnt Mill is in good repair.

Depth of water above Burnt Mill 3' 3''; 3' 2''.

Overshot belonging to Mr Phillips with brick sides.

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No 9 detached Cart Bridge called May Mead Bridge has 5 timbers oak and fir & oak covering stands on piles wood abutments dated 1836. Headway 5' 9''. This bridge is in good repair.

No 4 detached Horse Bridge below Latton Lock built of oak & fir, granite sills. This bridge is Old.

Depth of water in Navigation: 3' 3''

No 7 Lock called Latton Lock affected by a mill. A *mere tryfling* footbridge for the Lock keeper. Brickwork below the lock gates is aged. Depth of water on the lower sill 3' 3''.

Ditto on the upper sill 3' 6''. The lower gates are weak, the planking bad. Dated 1815. Brickwork above the lower gates pretty good. The side timbering in the lock is very low. The land ties to the lock piles are weak and worn. Brickwork about

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upper gates is good. The upper gates are good dated 1840.

No 3 Tumbling Bay called Latton Bay has 3 gates to draw. Brick sides; new gates; the staple posts are middling dated 1820. There is a long trough to carry off the water. This is the most expensive bay as yet and unless well attended to might be of serious consequence by letting both Rivers into one.

No 5 detached horse or Occupation Bridge to Latton Mill. Headway 6' 0''; Old and in bad repair dated 1816.

Depth of water in Navigation 4' 3''.

No 1 Small Overshot next to the Horse above Latton Mill and kept in repair between the Mill & Sir George Duckett. It is in good repair.

Depth of water above Latton Mill 6' 0''; 5' 0''.

No 6 detached Horse Bridge below Harlow Mill. Built of wood no rails and in bad repair; dated 1819

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No 8 Lock called Harlow Brick Lock is affected by a mill. The brickwork below the lower gates is rounding next the horse (no Occupation Bridge at this lock). The brickwork next the horse in the lock is bulged and out of repair. The upper gates in good repair dated 1829. The lower gates dated 1817 are old and weak. Depth of water on the lower sill 3' 3''.

No 4 Lock house at Harlow Brick Lock in good repair.

The wharfing from Harlow Lock to the last poplar tree is in good repair. The wharfing from this tree to the Turnpike Road Bridge in middling repair. Query who is to repair Harlow Road Bridge. Harlow Shop Wharfing in good repair

No 7 detached Horse Bridge above Harlow Lock. Built of oak with 3 timbers

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It is but in middling order and the railing bad. Dated 1830.

Depth of water above Harlow Mill: 3' 0''; 3' 3''.

Overshot belonging to Mr. Barnard with brick sides & from the Horse.

No 8 detached Horse Bridge above Harlow Lock. A little bridge without rails and in middling repair. Harlow Deeps 7' 0''; 3' 0''

No 9 detached Horse Bridge at Pincey Brook, without rails dated 1813. This bridge is bad

The Wharfing in support of the railway in good repair; it is an expensive piece of work opposite Pishiobury Park.

Depth of water below Feaks Lock: 2' 9''; 2' 6''.

No 9 Lock called Feaks Lock, not affected by a Mill. A foot bridge at the tail. The lower gates dated 1836. Upper ditto dated 1832. Depth of water on lower sill 2' 9''. Ditto on upper sill 3' 3''. The side timbering is low but this lock may be called in good order.

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No 10 detached Cart Bridge called Feaks Cut Bridge with 5 timbers built of oak dated 1823 and in good working condition. Headway 5' 6''.

No 10 Detached Horse Bridge at Feaks Overshot. Built of oak with 3 timbers and wharfing at one wing wanting – dated 1838. This bridge is in good order.

No 2 overshot is old and in bad repair

No 4 Tumbling Bay called Feaks Waste Gates has 3 gates all built of oak a little of the side planking defective. Dated 1818 this bay is in middling order.

No 11 detached Horse Bridge over the stream to Feaks Waste Gates built of oak. Dated 1844. A new bridge.

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No 12 a little detached Horse Bridge is old and in middling repair

No 13 detached Horse Bridge below Sheering Lock. Built of oak no rails. This Bridge is in good working condition.

No 10 Lock called Sheering Lock is affected by a mill. Has a Road Bridge attached to it. 6 timbers oak planking; it is an old bridge. Headway 6' 0''. Depth of water on lower sill 3' 6''. Ditto on Upper Sill 2' 11''. The lower gates in fair working order dated 1833. The upper gates in good order dated

1828. Some of the brickwork below the lower gates in middling repair. However this lock is in good condition.

No 5 Lock house at Sheering Lock in middling order

Depth of water above Sheering Lock 3' 6''; 3' 3''.

Overshot built of timber belongs to Mr Barnard.

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No 14 detached Horse Bridge above Sheering Lock with 3 timbers – no rails; but in good repair.

Depth of water 3' 0''.

No 11 detached Carriage Bridge with 6 timbers; oak covering; one brick and one wood abutment.

This is a very old bridge and some part is in very bad order. Headway 6' 0''. The wharfing above to support the towing path is in indifferent order. The shop wharfing from the horse in middling order.

Depth of water 3' 0''.

No 11 Lock called Sawbridgeworth. Lock affected by a mill. Has a bridge attached with 5 oak timbers. The oak planking good; headway 6' 0''; depth of water on lower sill 3' 6''; ditto on upper sill 4' 0''. Lower gates worn and weak dated 1819. Upper gates new 1843.

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Brickwork below lower gates rubbed and broken. This lock except the lower part is in fair condition

No 1 Giggs small foot bridge. Bad repair

Railway Bridge. Headway 6' 0''

No 3 Overshot Sawbridgeworth Mill is a small one and in bad repair.

No 15 Detached horse bridge no rails in middling repair

No 4 Overshot below Tednams Bury Lock good repair

No 16 detached Horse Bridge a small one; no rails; fir bearers and in good repair.

No 17 detached Horse Bridge over Hallingbury Mills Tail Stream is old and will soon want repair

No 12 Lock called Tednams Bury Lock is affected by a Mill; has a bridge with 4 oak timbers and oak planks. Old and in middling repair. Headway 6' 3''.

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Depth of water on lower sill 4' 0''; ditto on upper sill 3' 9''. Brickwork good; the lower gates are much worn and in middling order; dated 1816. Upper gates good; dated 1839. This lock except the lower gates is in good repair.

No 18 detached Horse Bridge over Tednams Bury Mill Stream (oak). All new in 1841 except the bearing piles. Depth of water in navigation 4' 0''.

No 13 Lock called Spellbrook Lock not affected by a Mill. Has a bridge attached with 5 oak timbered oak covering and in middling repair; headway 6' 3". Depth of water on lower sill 4' 3"; ditto on upper sill 4' 8"; the upper and lower gates dated 1842; this lock is in good order.

No 6 Lock house at Spellbrook in fair order.

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No 5 Tumbling Bay at Spellbrook has 3 gates all erected of oak; dated 1841; all in good repair.

No 12 detached Carriage Bridge at Wallbury. Has 6 oak timbers; oak covering; brick abutments. Headway 5' 6"; this woodwork in middling repair; brickwork good.

Depth of water in Wallbury Cut 5' 0"; ditto above the Bridge 4' 3".

No 5 Overshot above Wallbury Bridge from the Horse appears in good repair.

No 19 detached Horse Bridge below Twyford Lock has 3 oak timbers; oak planking; no rails; this bridge is in fair condition.

No 20 detached Horse Bridge crossing Latchmore Brook has 3 fir bearing timbers and oak plank. This bridge is in indifferent repair.

Depth of water below Twyford Lock 3' 9".

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No 2 Foot bridge called Rowley Croft is in good working order.

No 14 Lock called Twyford Mills Lock is affected by a Mill; has a cart bridge attached with 6 oak timbers and oak planking. Headway 5' 9". Depth of water on the lower sill 3' 1"; ditto on the upper sill 3' 7"; the lower gates bad; dated 1812; This lock will in a short time require repairing throughout.

Depth of water above Twyford Lock: 3' 3"; 3' 6"; 3' 0"; 2' 9"; 4' 0".

Overshot & Horse Bridge above Twyford Lock belongs to the Mill.

No 15 Lock at South Mill is affected by a mill. Has a Horse Bridge at the tail which is old and in bad condition. Headway 6' 9". Depth of water on lower sill 2' 8"; ditto on upper sill 3' 4"; lower gates in middling repair, dated 1822; upper gates in good working condition, dated 1834; this lock in fair working order.

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No 3 Foot Bridge over South Mill Stream for the lock keeper put down in 1843 and in good order.

Depth of water above South Mills Lock 3' 9"; 4' 0".

No 6 Bay called South Mills Waste Gates built of oak has 3 gates to draw, dated 1828; is in good order except a trifling defect in the planking below the gates. This bay is next the horse with a towing bridge over it. Depth of water above South Mill Waste Gates 4' 0"; 3' 9"; 3' 6".

Railway Bridge. Depth of water opposite Tan Yard 3' 6''.

No 13 detached carriage bridge called Hockerill Turnpike Road Bridge has 11 oak timbers; oak planking; brick abutments. Headway 5' 0''. Some of the timbering in middling order and part of the brickwork is bad.

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The wharfings above and below are in bad repair. The whole of this bridge is but in middling condition, dated 1827.

A small overshot above Hockerill Turnpike Road Bridge belonging to South Mill.

Depth of water above Hockerill Bridge: 3' 6''; 4' 0''; 5' 0''.

The wharfings at Swan Yard Cut and above are in some parts much delapidated (sic) by time. The wharfing opposite the Y at the extent of the Hockerill Branch is falling down. The piece of sheet fir wharfing 54' in length next to the shops adjoining Hockerill Road Bridge in good repair; on the opposite side of the River the wharfing is in a bad state.

The Crane post on the Hockerill Branch is 10 years old and has a temporary brace to assist it and Mr Seymour says lifts 5 to 6 tons and appears in fair working condition. The wharfing that supports the crane is indifferent.

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The wharfings from the Y up to Mr Taylor's wharf is in various places in a bad state of repair from age. The wharfing to support Mr Taylor's Coal Shed in good repair. Round the basin the wharfing getting in a bad state of repair. The Crane on Mr Taylor's Wharf dated 1831 appears in a good state of repair and lifts 2 ton's according to Mr Seymour's statement.

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I think it will therefore appear from the detailed description of the different works on the Stort, together with the recent dates when some of the works were executed, although some of the locks are aged and their gates weak and some parts of some of the bridges are indifferent, yet I do consider the works on the line of the canal taken generally may be considered in fair working condition. The tunnels or any part underwater I cannot describe. The depths of water on the Lock sills I have given as I found them but I believe in most places they are continually varying from the working of the mills.

To the trustees of the River Lee, July 19<sup>th</sup> 1844

Your Humble Serv

J R Griggs (signed)

