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| CANAL Rivanna Navigation, Fluvanna County, Virginia | | (FOR ACS USE) | |
| STATUS Abandoned. Threatened by C of E Roundabout Dam. | | DATES OF CONSTRUCTION & CLOSURE c. 1760's, 1330's, 1350's, ab. 1903 | |
| LOCATION (ENDPOINTS OF CANAL) 33°07'N, 78°32'W - 37°44'N, 78°10'W Near Charlottesville, to the James River at Columbia | | LENGTH 1350' S CANAL 7 SLACKWATER 13 TOTAL 20 | |
| LIFT LOCKS | NBR. 1350's-9 | DIMENSIONS LOCK CHAMBER 100 x 15' OVERALL _____ | AQUEDUCTS NBR. 0 SECTION SIZE _____ |
| TUNNELS 0 | | | |
| DESCRIPTION: (Type of navigation, features of note (include USGS coordinates where useful); e.g., feeders (navigable & otherwise), locks other than above, type of locks, use of unusual material or methods of construction, present owner, present use & condition, etc.) | | | |
| <p>The first organized effort to improve the Rivanna River for navigation was begun by Thomas Jefferson in 1763. His 1795 pamphlet, "Notes on Virginia" notes that the Rivanna was then navigable for batteaux from just below Charlottesville (near Monticello) to Columbia, on the James River, Virginia's major route to the coastal markets. This early work consisted primarily of clearing fallen trees, cutting sluices through rapids, and building wing dams of piled rocks to direct water into the sluices. This was taken over in 1805 by the Rivanna Navigation Company. By the 1330's the navigation extended some 43 miles, involving about 13 wooden locks, one stone lock, and some 13 dams, all for batteaux, which were poled up and down stream, without any tow-path. The construction of the James River and Kanawha Canal up the James by 1340 spurred a similar development of the Rivanna. By 1354 the Rivanna Navigation Company had completed a lock, dam and canal system for canalboats up to the Albemarle County line, a distance of 20 miles, involving 9 stone locks, two stone arch culverts and 7 miles of canal. The engineer was John *</p> | | | |
| NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANAL'S PRESERVATION/RESTORATION: Fluvanna County Park Authority, Fork Union, Va., 23055. Mr. J.W. Siegfried, Chairman. | | | |
| REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: W. E. Trout, III 1932 Inco Robles Drive, Duarte, California 91010 | | | DATE 10 June 1973 |
| HISTORICAL SUMMARY: (Original aims of company, date of incorporation, prominent engineers, cause of closure, significant alterations to structure or route, height of traffic date, transfers of ownership, etc.) | | | |
| <p>* County. The lower 4 1/2 miles of the navigation was constructed by the JR&K Canal Co.; this was a continuous canal with two of the locks, and the two culverts mentioned above, and was known as the "Rivanna Connexion", linking the navigation with the canal at Columbia. Further extension of the canalboat navigation to Charlottesville was thwarted by the arrival there of the Virginia Central Railway in 1350. The JR&K Canal was abandoned in 1391, but the Connexion was in use until 1903.</p> <p>Today all of the locks and culverts are in perfect condition and the canals are well preserved, although the dams have gone except for foundations. The river is unspoiled. The Fluvanna County Park Authority was formed to encourage the restoration of the Rivanna Connection. The rest of the navigation should also become a park, but all but the connexion is threatened by the Roundabout Dam.</p> | | | |
| BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: (Published works relating to Canal) | | | |
| <p>"The Rivanna Navigation Company", Minnie Lee M-Gehee. Bulletin of the Fluvanna County Historical Society, Oct. 1967, 2Opp.; 60¢ ppd. from Box 132, Palmyra, Va. 22963. "The Rivanna River Navigation", W. E. Trout, unpl. ms., 1966, 14pp. + maps, JR&K Canal Library, Reynolds Metals Co., Richmond, Va. 23213.</p> | | | |
| UNPUBLISHED RECORDS. LOCATION OF PHOTOS, DRAWINGS & IMPORTANT PERIODICAL REFERENCES | | | |
| Reports of the Rivanna Navigation Company to the Virginia Board of Public Works, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va. 23219. | | | |
| NATIONAL REGISTER & HAER (HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD) STATUS: The Rivanna Connexion is being written up for the National Register. | | | |
| RETURN TO: CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, C/O P.H. STOTT, MAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NEW YORK 10549 | | | |

USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS AS NECESSARY.
TO MAKE AN INDEX CARD SUITABLE FOR FILING, CUT ALONG THE HEAVY LINES AND FOLD BACK ALONG THE DOTTED LINE.