

American Canal Society Canal Index

CANAL Wankinco River Canal		STATUS Abandoned for <u>transportation only</u>		ACS
STATE/PROVINCE: Massachusetts				HAER
COUNTIES: Plymouth				
LOCATION (Endpoints of Canal): Tihonet Pond & Dam south to Parker Mill Pond at lower dam (SEE BELOW)		ENLARGEMENTS		LIFT LOCKS No. / SIZE
TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS: Wareham Quad 7 1/2 No. 357100.4627400-Sq. 356790.4625200		DATES IN USE	LENGTH CANAL SLACKWATER TOTAL	
		1		
		2	SEE BELOW	
		3		
		4		
<p>HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE in Canal was excavated for the Tihonet Iron Works, one of several in the Wareham area for processing (bog iron ore) from the swamp & marshlands during the 1800's. Later became iron & steel mills up to about 1900. Iron bogs then became Cranberry Bogs (as we know them today). This canal transported finished iron products, lumber & granite south to the "Narrows" and wharves for shipping. Also north from Tihonet Dam via an intricate canal system of ponds and the river to Carver and beyond. (This route <u>not considered</u> in report due to its <u>unknown</u> & meandering course. Only the excavated canal and slack-water. Canal used only SCOWS. Dates of canal construction are sadly lacking, but the Tihonet Works were <u>started</u> in 1825, therefore, the canal presumed to have been close to that date or later. The huge Tihonet Iron & Steel Works were dismantled in 1900. Yet the Wankinco River Canal still remains, serving the dam spillway as it has always done since the early 1800's.</p>				
<p>PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: This is a short excavated canal from Tihonet Dam south to the present SR #25 bridge, for six tenths of a mile, then into Parker Mill Pond and the lower dam for 5764 ft. At the dam were <u>formerly</u> 2-stone locks that appeared to be a <u>combine</u>, if so, their combined length estimated to be about 125-130 ft. Width estimated at 12 ft. Drop in elevation estimated at 11 ft. to each lock, depending on tidewater level at lower lock. In excavated area the canal is straight. Appears to be about 30-35 ft. wide, presume 3-4 ft. deep originally. Canal is well watered at all times from Tihonet Pond. This creates a slight current and water is clear. A canoe would have no problems in navigation. Tihonet Rd. runs the length of the canal from SR #25 bridge north to the dam. Canal ends here at foot of dam at a (weye), in which canals (2) are stone walls of granite 7 ft. wide, 6 ft. deep. Their purpose unknown. <u>Being about 200 ft. long (each one) Possible discharge of water from plant.</u></p>				
<p>NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANALS PRESERVATION & RESTORATION:</p> <p>Wareham Historical Society, Wareham, Mass.</p>				
<p>BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY:</p> <p>The former intricate canal system above Tihonet Pond & Dam, using ponds & the river to Carver and beyond. Was probably located in what is known today as the Myles Standish State Forest. The Wankinco River headwaters appear to run south from here. Distance may have been as much as 10-12 miles on its meandering course, to Tihonet Pond & Dam. No history of this section has been located.</p>				
<p>UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS (CEHR, HAER, HABS, Local or Regional Historical Societies, Libraries, etc.):</p> <p>Wareham Historical Society Wareham Public Library The Courier (Newspaper) local</p>				
<p>EXISTING OR RECOMMENDED LANDMARK STATUS (CEHR, National Register, etc.):</p> <p>None</p>				
<p>REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: Alden W. Gould, 12 Shady Crest Dr. Nashua, N.H. 03060</p>				<p>DATE: 9/15/76</p>
<p>RETURN TO: CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, c/o P.H. STOTT, HAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549</p>				