



Enfield Museum, Local Studies  
and Library Service

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## London Borough of Enfield Local History Sheets.

### River Lee and Stort Navigation a history

**1425**

Act of Parliament for improving the navigation between London and Hertford. Appointment of commissioners to deal with obstructions in the course of the river.

**1571**

Act of Parliament for improving navigation between London and Ware. The river was scoured and embanked in certain areas. By 1577 a pound lock (one of the earliest in the country) had been built at Waltham Abbey.

**1581**

Attempts to sabotage the river. The banks were cut near Green Street and there was an attempt to burn the lock at Waltham. The unrest was led by Enfield maltmen who had lost business because of malt and barley being carried by river instead of by road.

**1738**

Trustees appointed by Act of Parliament to superintend the navigation of the Lee.

**1766**

River Lee Act authorised the building of new locks and lock cuts and the construction of a new outlet to the Thames (the Limestone Cut). The work was carried out under the supervision of John Smeaton (builder of the third Eddystone Lighthouse).

**1769**

Opening of the River Stort Navigation from the Lee at Rye House to Bishop's Stortford.

**1830**

Opening of the Hertford Union Canal connecting the Lee at Hackney with the Regent's Canal, providing a useful link with the Grand Union Canal.

**1850**

Act of Parliament to authorise new lock cuts at Hoddesdon, Carthage Lock (Broxbourne), Waltham Marsh, Tottenham, Walthamstow, Hackney, Leyton and Bromley and new locks at Hunter's Gate (Bow Bridge) and Old Ford.

**1855**

River Lee Water Act authorised a new lock at Amwell Marsh and the removal of Stanstead Lock. Edmonton Lock was to be removed and Picketts Lock rebuilt.

**1869**

Lee Conservancy Board formed to take over control of the river from the former trustees.

**1909**

Closure of the Stort Navigation after the collapse of the side of a lock.

**1911**

Stort Navigation taken over by Lee Conservancy Board.

**1922/3**

Reconstruction of locks etc. between Enfield and Hertford. The width was increased from 13ft 3in to 16ft and the length increased to 90ft.

**1924**

Reopening of the Stort Navigation after dredging and reconstruction of the locks.

**1948**

Nationalisation of canals. Control of the Lee and Stort passed to the British Transport Commission. On the disbanding of the B.T.C. in 1962 the canals passed to the British Waterways Board.

