

REVISED COPY

American Canal Society Canal Index

CANAL <b>Bow Canal- Garvin's Falls</b>		STATUS <b>Abandoned</b>		ACS
STATE/PROVINCE: <b>New Hampshire</b>				HAER
COUNTIES: <b>Merrimack</b>		DATES IN USE <b>1812-55</b>		LENGTH CANAL SLACKWATER TOTAL <b>About 1700 ft.</b>
LOCATION (Endpoints of Canal) <b>About 3/4 south of Concord to Garvin's Falls on the Merrimack River (West Side)</b>		ENLARGEMENTS 1 2 3 4		LIFT LOCKS No./ SIZE <b>4-82X10</b>
TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS: <b>Concord (NH) 19-295760.4781980</b>				

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:** Bow Canal one of the most active on the Merrimack River Navigation. Built under difficult conditions due to ledge for about 1140 ft. Extra 560 ft. in gravel, depth varied 8-16 ft. in ledge cuts. Guard lock 14 ft. high, 12 ft. thick. (3) lower locks 12 ft. high, 7 ft. thick. Lowest lock was sunk in the river, 4 ft. below the lowest water-mark; then a channel was dug into the river. The wood/stone dam built across the river was 450 ft. long, 7-12 ft. high and raised the water level which supplied the canal, also flooding the rapids at Turkey Falls about one mile above. The canal, locks and dam were about 1/3 of a mile in length along the rivers west side. This dam had a perpendicular drop of 27 ft. By-passed by a guard lock and three lower locks. All locks built of granite. Canal was opened for rafts of lumber in 1812, and shortly after for barges and boats. Cost of this canal and clearing rapids at Turkey Falls was nearly \$20,000

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** At this site today is the Old Substation built in 1902, still in operation with additions. Gate control at flume adjacent. Part of present flume was the canal so we understood. From the platform at the gate house, the exit of the canal can be seen on the west side which is watered back to the Old Dam granite abutments. The same appear on the east side also, and can be seen if not too much foliage. By walking up the Boston & Maine R.R. tracks for several hundred feet following the canal, brings you to those abutments, built of heavy granite with heavy planking set into the piers over the canal. In early days of the canal there was no railroad here. Later a single track, then double-tracked. Entirely possible when double-tracked, that railroad had taken over as their right-of-way, sections of the old canal. Including many of the granite blocks from the guard gate. Perhaps others near 1902 plant.

**NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANALS PRESERVATION/RESTORATION:** N.H. Historical Society, Concord; Manchester Historic Asso. Manchester; State Library, Concord; American Canal Society, P.O. Box #842, Shepherdstown, West Virginia 25443

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY:** Reports of this area vary considerably. Such as the canal and locks listed being about 3/4 of a mile in length. This above article has been located in at least one other reference book at the Nashua Public Library. And an old photo of this canal, with the double-tracked R.R. in a (new book) at the N.H. Historical Society, Concord, N.H. Covering the Town of Bow. Maps (Old) of the Town of Bow were of no assistance in research of this site.

**UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS (CEHR, HAER, HABS, Local or Regional Historical Societies, Libraries, etc.):** Information used above; Was taken from "Travels in New England & New York" by Timothy Dwight (1823). Late President of Yale College. Photos by reporter in 1974-76. Reference material from Nashua Public Library, N.H. Historical Society Concord, N.H.

**EXISTING OR RECOMMENDED LANDMARK STATUS (CEHR, National Register, etc.):**  
Due to existing conditions present, and lack of former artifacts, places this site as follows; No recommendations suggested.

REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS <b>Alden W. Gould, 12 Shady Crest Dr. Nashua, N.H. 03060</b>	DATE <b>7/20/76</b>
RETURN TO: <b>CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, c/o P.H. STOTT, HAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549</b>	