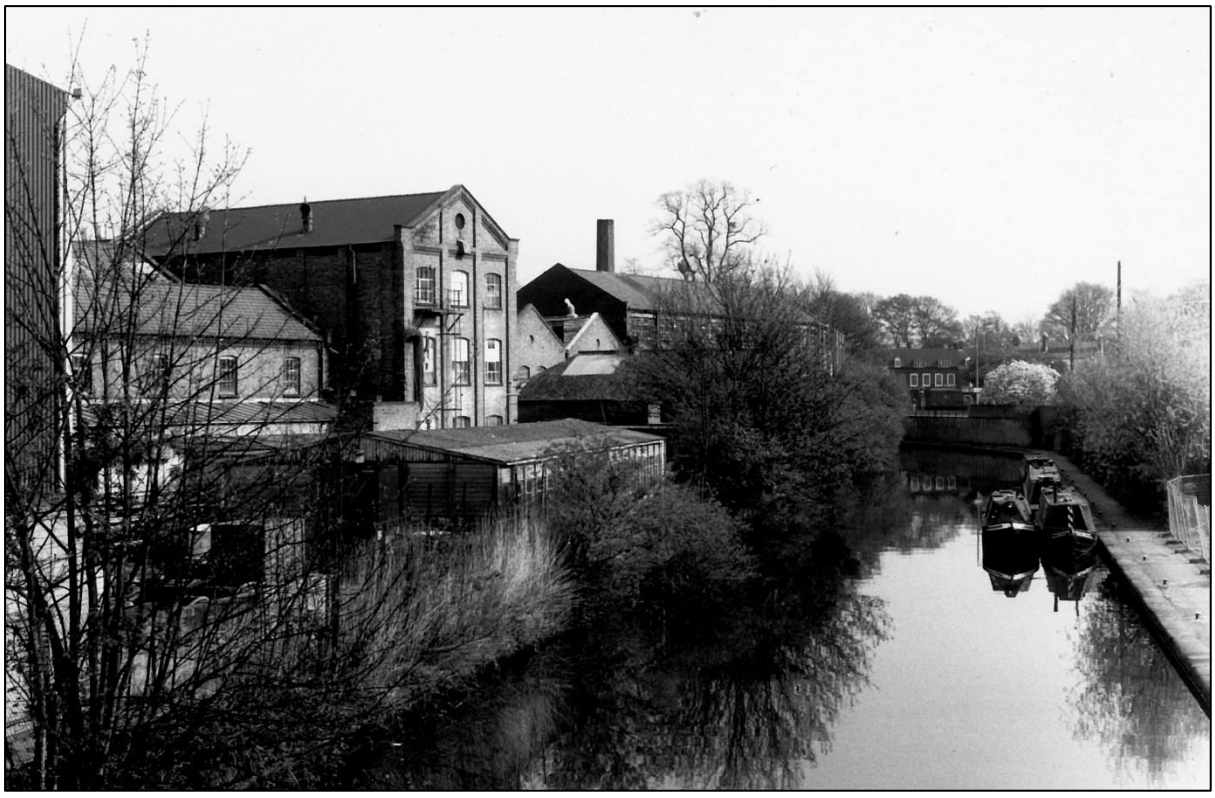
Some additional notes on 2025 West Midlands Walks

Our group had two walks, one around Worcester on the 14th September where no RCHS member attended apart from Phil Brown and myself, although came on the walk from the Worcester Civic Society. The walk ended at the Diglis Hotel, but the intention had been to look at the Quayside and Severn Bridge.

This walk passed the Worcester Porcelain works final site which has been for the most part developed for housing. A comment from the Civic Society present showed the development had not taken into account the heritage issues.



Worcester Porcelain beside the Worcester and Birmingham Canal prior to redevelopment
Heartland Press Collection 849835

The same view 5/2023

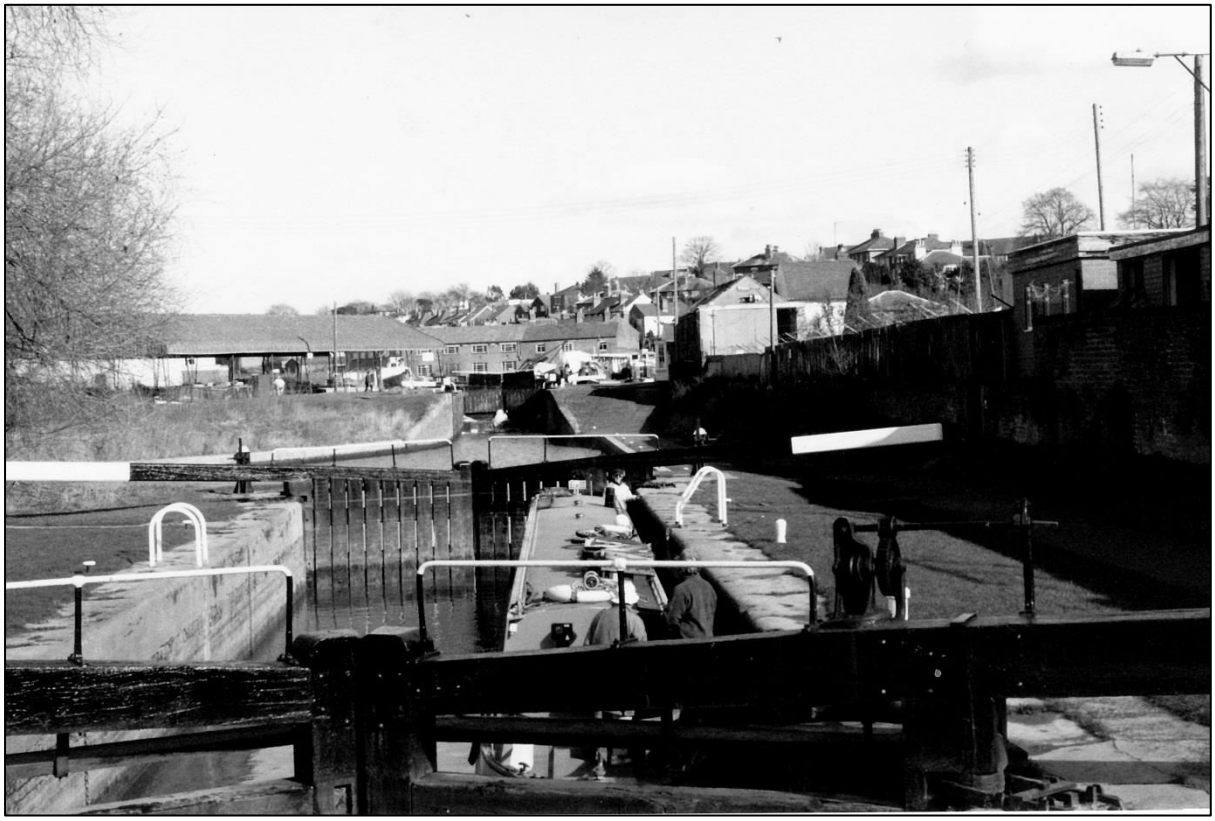
Heartland Press Collection 849838

There is now little here to see the former heritage. At Diglis the arm off the basin has changed much over the last thirty years and new properties there have replaced what remained.

Diglis Basin and site of Chemical Works

Heartland Press Collection 849912

Beside this arm there are two barge locks where the canal descended to the Severn. The engine house is seen on the right. Here water was pumped back to the Basin above. That building has now gone but there are pumps that still recirculate water.



The Barge Locks at Diglis

Heartland Press Collection 844911

The date stone at Diglis Lock which may refer to an engine house reconstruction

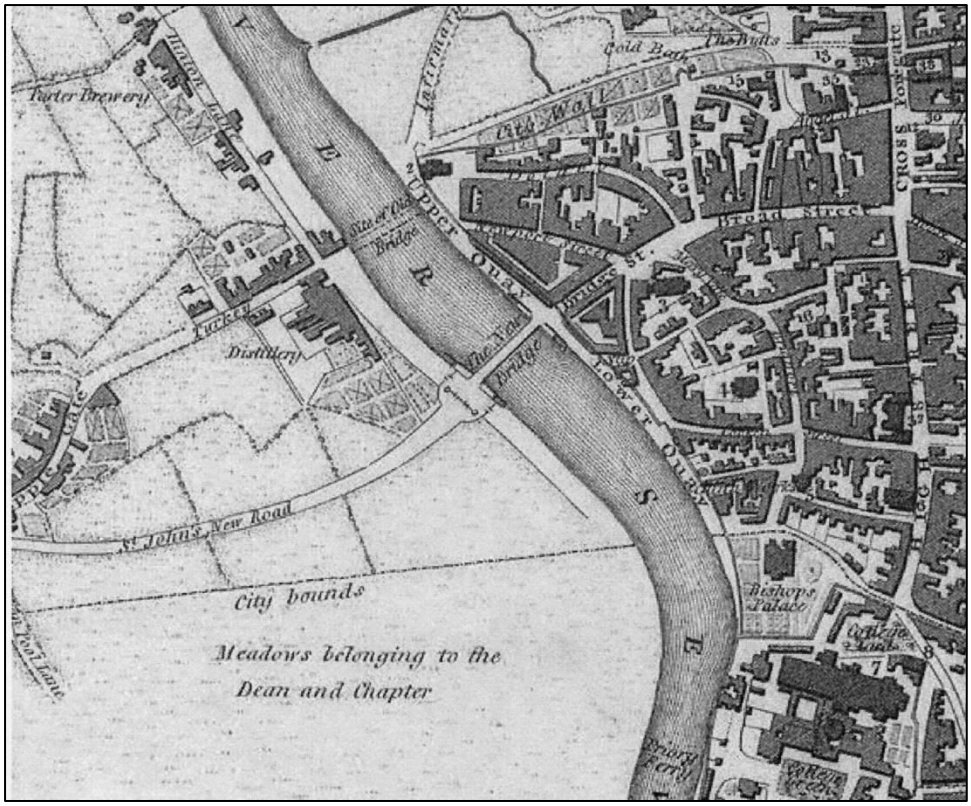
Heartland Press Collection 849930

The walk beyond the Diglis Hotel was intended to point out the site of the first Porcelain Pottery and the original Medieval Bridge that crossed the Severn. The new bridge bisected the Quay creating an upper and lower quay which later became the North and South Quay.

The Blue Plaque marking the site of the Porcelain Works 2022

Heartland Press Collection 1051036

Our walk would have taken the route behind the former quay warehouses as crossing the road at the bridge is extremely dangerous where motorists maintain a speed close to the limit there.



1812 Map of Worcester

On the 11th October our second walk was from Moor Street to Curzon Street via Digbeth and it was well attended by RCHS members.

As we turned into Bordesley Street the remains of a building on the corner led to questions as to origin of the structure. The ornate entrance is what remains.

Trade directories indicate that it belonged to Innes, Smith & Co who had a wine merchants business in High Street.

The Bordesley Street building

Heartland Press Collection 2300138

The route was altered from the tour notes plan to include a stretch of Allison Street. This diversion enabled the party to see the remains of Moor Street Goods Station B shed. Here are the brick and reinforced concrete supports for the upper goods shed.

B Shed Allison Street Side

Heartland Press Collection 500783

Allison Street is to be noted for the iron urinal under the bridge.

The iron urinal and stone setts in the road

Heartland Press Collection 500788

Turning into Meriden Street, we passed a building that was associated with the metal trade where the name “Forward” was visible and the letters A & L. These stand for Ash & Lacy whose business grew to be extensive.

The Ash & Lacy Building

Heartland Press Collection 2300129

The metro track at the end of Meriden Street was being laid in 2023

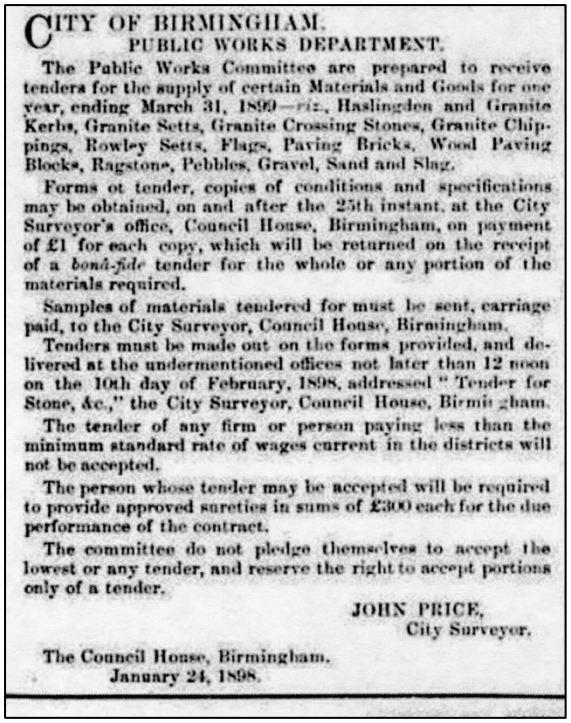
Meriden Street with the Ash & Lacy building on the left 7/2023

Heartland Press Collection 153791

From here we passed through the Digbeth Coach Station which had been reconstructed to reopen in 2009 for National Express although it had been once a Midland Red Coach Depot.

At Pickford Street comments were made about the road surface and the correct term for it. To assume the name “cobble” was considered incorrect and “sett” was thought to be more suitable and a check of street committee minutes indicate that granite setts were purchased by the corporation

The Pickford Street Road Surface October 2025



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

The Public Works Committee are prepared to receive tenders for the supply of certain Materials and Goods for one year, ending March 31, 1899—*viz.*, Haslingden and Granite Kerbs, Granite Setts, Granite Crossing Stones, Granite Chippings, Rowley Setts, Flags, Paving Bricks, Wood Paving Blocks, Ragstone, Pebbles, Gravel, Sand and Slag.

Forms of tender, copies of conditions and specifications may be obtained, on and after the 25th instant, at the City Surveyor's office, Council House, Birmingham, on payment of £1 for each copy, which will be returned on the receipt of a *bonâ-fide* tender for the whole or any portion of the materials required.

Samples of materials tendered for must be sent, carriage paid, to the City Surveyor, Council House, Birmingham.

Tenders must be made out on the forms provided, and delivered at the undermentioned offices not later than 12 noon on the 10th day of February, 1898, addressed "Tender for Stone, &c.," the City Surveyor, Council House, Birmingham.

The tender of any firm or person paying less than the minimum standard rate of wages current in the districts will not be accepted.

The person whose tender may be accepted will be required to provide approved sureties in sums of £300 each for the due performance of the contract.

The committee do not pledge themselves to accept the lowest or any tender, and reserve the right to accept portions only of a tender.

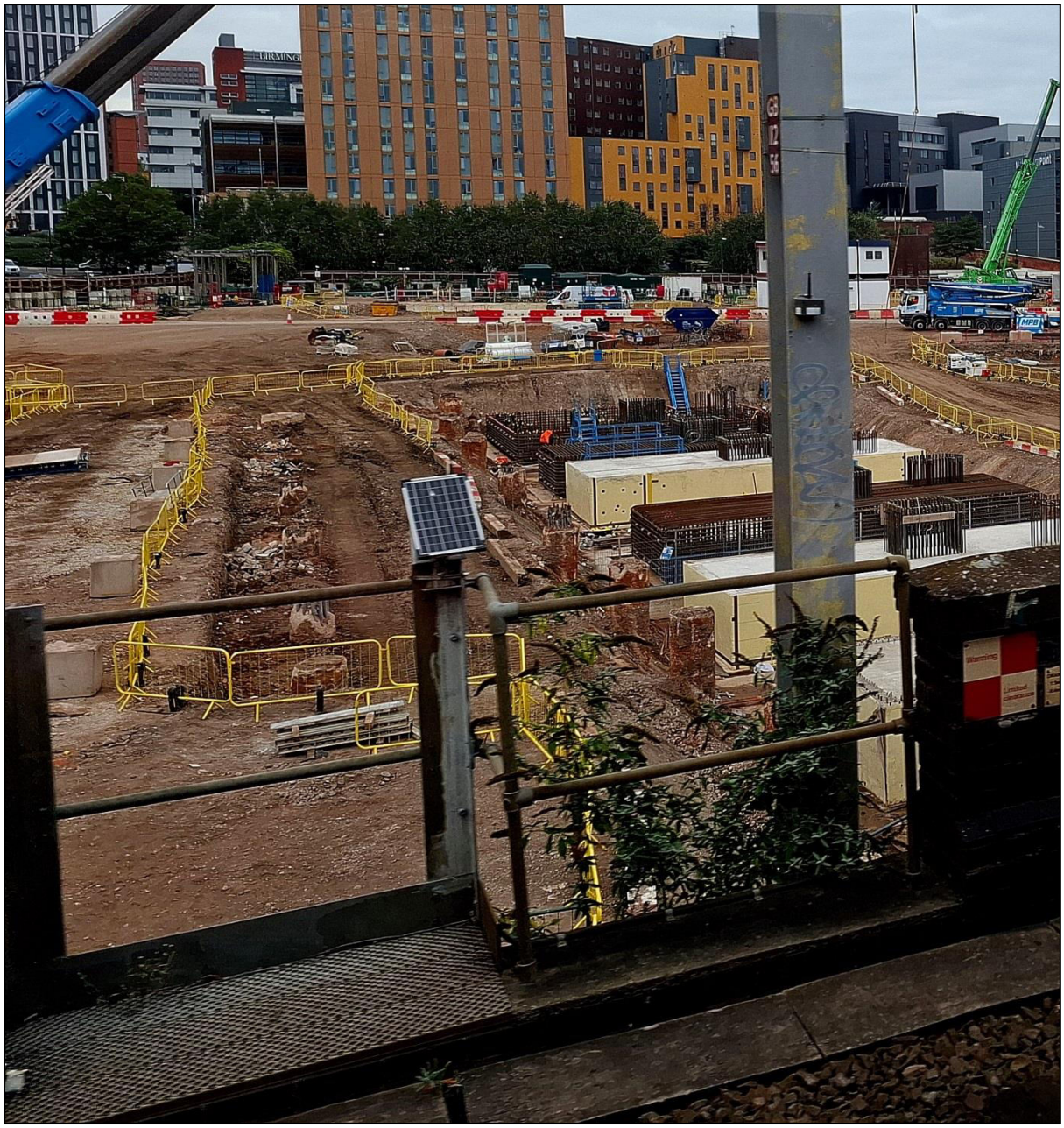
JOHN PRICE,
City Surveyor.

The Council House, Birmingham,
January 24, 1898.

Advert from the Surveyor January 28th 1898

The walk then passed onto Fazeley Street where the reconstructed railway bridge over Banbury Street where discussed and the date of that work coincided with the work on Proof House Junction conducted for Railtrack in 2000 was discussed. Details of this work has been included in the Modern Transport News Letter 69, October 2025.

Mention of the ongoing work \at Curzon Street included the present concrete foundations for the new station.at a spot where Fazeley Street (west side) existed.



Curzon Street Concrete Foundations, October 2025 near the Bridge over Fazeley Street

Heartland Press Collection 163980

Fazeley Street Bridge (1986) as seen October 2025

Heartland Press Collection 591094

The road Fazeley Street is closed off and removed on the part that went to Albert Street and the remaining traffic lights there have at least at present no purpose.

A visible product of “Gen careless” is shown as the unsightly graffiti on the structures.