

Desk Based Assessment

Symonds Yat Rapids
Symonds Yat East
Herefordshire

NGR SO 5610 1560

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1. Non Technical Summary

This desk based assessment, based on a detailed review of the available documentary records, cartographic evidence and archaeological information, has demonstrated that the study area at Symonds Yat Rapids is located within a historic landscape exhibiting evidence of human activity dating back to the Palaeolithic period.

- *Documentary sources attest to a long history of water management along this stretch of the River Wye dating back to the medieval period. The earliest reference to a weir in this location dates back to 1282, when it is said to have belonged to William de Valence, lord of Goodrich Castle.*
- *The earliest specific reference to the 'New Weir' occurs in 1589, when it was demolished by the Commissioners of Sewers to improve navigation along the Wye. The weir was rebuilt shortly afterwards and documentary sources attest to its continued existence throughout the 17th century.*
- *The New Weir was subsequently rebuilt and raised in 1684 by the owner, the Earl of Kent, to provide a supply of water for a substantial new ironworks (subsequently referred to as the New Weir Ironworks) which was founded on the site of an earlier forge on the Herefordshire bank of the Wye adjacent to the weir.*
- *The New Weir was the solitary weir on the Wye not to be demolished as a result of the Wye and Lugg Navigation Act of 1695, which required the destruction of all mill and fishing weirs along the river between Hay-on-Wye and the sea. However, the Earl of Kent was required to make alterations to the weir, installing a lock at his own expense and a house for a salaried lock-keeper to open and close the lock.*
- *In 1697, the weir was described in a survey as being 'built of loose stone with stakes and turfs behind them and a hedge on top...its length is 140 yards and between 6 and 9½ feet in height'.*
- *The New Weir and adjacent lock remained in operation until the beginning of the 19th century. However, following the closure of the New Weir Ironworks in about 1800 the weir fell into decay and by 1826 it had been demolished and the lock had been filled in.*
- *The existing island at Symonds Yat Rapids appears to have been gradually formed by natural accretion during the mid to late 19th century from the remains of the New Weir, together with slag debris deposited from the adjacent New Weir Ironworks and from fragmented bedrock which naturally occurs at shallow depths along this stretch of the river.*
- *The OS 1st edition 25 inch map of 1889 actually shows two small islands, separated by a narrow channel; however, by the mid-1920s the existing island had essentially taken shape.*

2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed by Mr A. Laird of Epduk, Consulting Engineers to the British Canoe Union, to undertake a desk-based assessment on their behalf with regard to proposed groundworks to improve the stability of the island situated 100m SW of Symonds Yat Rock (NGR SO 5610 1560) and to construct groynes on the E side of the island and the river bank immediately opposite to improve the rapids for canoeing.

A copy of this report will be sent to Epduk for onward transmission to Herefordshire Council as part of their planning application procedure and an additional copy sent to the Herefordshire Archaeology Sites and Monuments Record as part of a final site archive in due course.

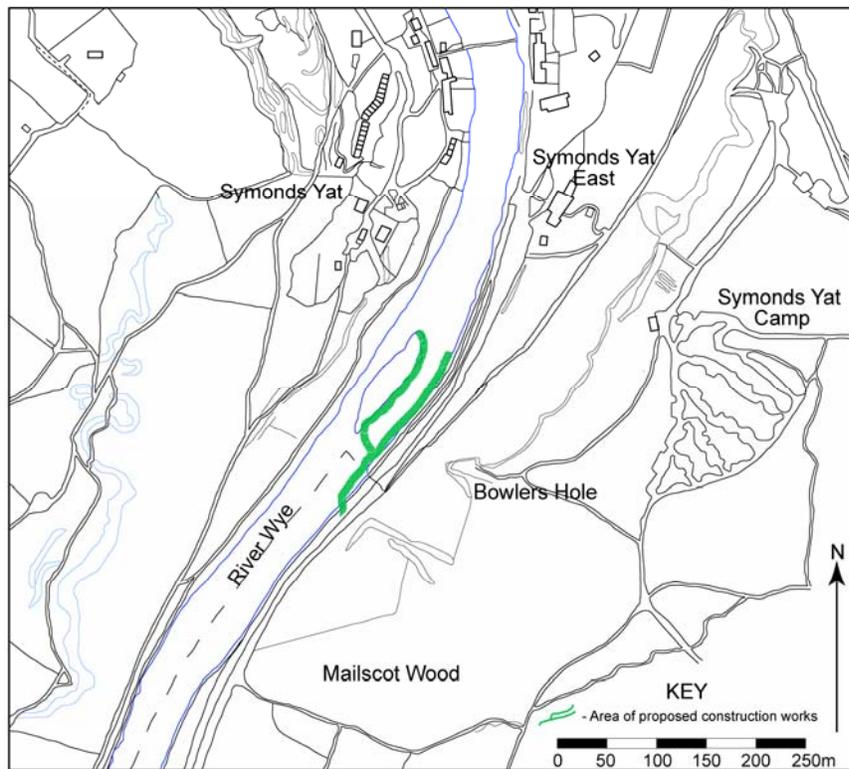


Fig. 1: Site Location Plan

2.1 Soils & Geology

In the immediate vicinity of the site at Symonds Yat Rapids, the predominant soil type comprises typical brown earths of the EARDISTON 1 series (541c), consisting of well-drained reddish coarse loamy soils over sandstone, shallow in places, especially on brows, with some reddish fine silty soils over shale and siltstone. The underlying geology is Devonian and Permo-Triassic reddish sandstone, silty shale and siltstone (SSEW, 1983).

3. Methodology

3.1 Desk-Based Assessment

3.1.1 Research Aims

The purpose of this assessment is to identify any known or potential archaeological resources within the study area and to establish their character, extent, quality and importance in a local, regional and national context.

3.1.2 Research Methods

The research carried out for this DBA consisted of the following elements:

3.1.2.1 Evaluation and study of archaeological databases

The National Monuments Record Centre at Swindon, the Herefordshire Archaeology Sites and Monuments Record and the Gloucestershire Sites and Monuments Record were consulted and lists obtained of all known archaeological sites, listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments in the study area.

3.1.2.2 Evaluation and study of cartographic and other pictorial evidence

A detailed map regression analysis of the study area was carried out, examining various historic maps of the specific study area dating back to the 18th century. These maps were obtained from the National Archives in London, the Herefordshire Record Office and the Gloucestershire Archives. Collections of 18th-19th century engravings and paintings and 19th-20th century photographs of the Symonds Yat area were consulted at the Herefordshire Record Office and the Nelson Local History Centre at Monmouth.

3.1.2.3 Evaluation and study of primary written evidence

Original medieval and post-medieval records relating to the study area were consulted at the National Archives in London, the Herefordshire Record Office and the Gloucestershire Archives.

3.1.2.4 Evaluation and study of secondary (published) sources

All published and unpublished works relating to sites and structures of archaeological and historical interest within the study area were evaluated, including relevant volumes of the *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* and the *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*.

3.1.2.5 Site Visit

A site visit was carried out on 9th January 2008 to assess the potential for extant archaeology on the site. Despite the high water levels obscuring the base of the river, a noticeable quantity of cut stone, presumably relating to the original weir, was evident in the riverbank and this is believed to be about 20m from one of the proposed

development areas. It was not possible to visit the island to assess any extant archaeology.

4. Historical and Archaeological Background

4.1 Prehistoric and Roman

The study area at Symonds Yat Rapids is located within a loop of the narrow, steep-sided and heavily wooded gorge of the Lower Wye Valley, which has been classified as a landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest. Although little evidence of prehistoric or Roman features has been found in the valley floor, this may partly be due to the heavily wooded nature of the area and also the later use of the valley bottom, which has obscured evidence of such sites.

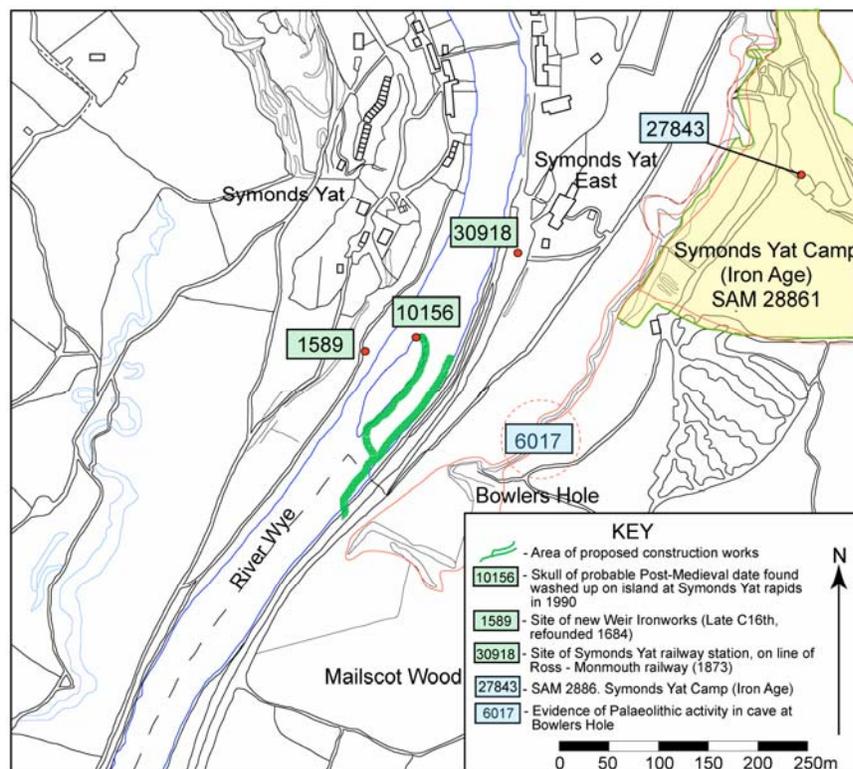


Fig. 2: Location map showing sites of archaeological and historical interest in the vicinity of the study area at Symonds Yat Rapids

However, significant evidence of early prehistoric activity has been identified in the caves incised into the sheer limestone cliffs overlooking the valley floor on both sides of the River Wye. Archaeological investigations at a cave near Bowlers Hole (Gloucs. SMR Ref. 6017; NGR SO 56140 15550) revealed several hearths, postholes and an artefactual assemblage of Middle to Late Palaeolithic date, although supposed cave paintings or engravings found within the cave were subsequently dismissed following further specialist examination as wholly natural formations. Further investigation of the cave in 1994 carried out as part of the Wye Valley Caves Project identified an



assemblage of late prehistoric pottery, flint and animal bone, together with two flint blades and a burin of late Palaeolithic date.

Evidence of later prehistoric occupation is represented by the large multivallate fort of Symonds Yat (NGR SO 5637 1569; SAM Ref. 28861), covering an area of about 6ha, situated on a steep triangular promontory site and defended on its N, W and E sides by steep cliffs up to 122m high and on its S side by a series of five banks and four ditches. Since at least the 19th century, the hillfort ramparts have been popularly associated with the Anglo-Saxon frontier earthwork of Offa's Dyke, although the nature of the defences and pottery found on site clearly indicate an Iron Age origin. Indeed, two scrapers, also found on the site, suggest that there might have been a Bronze Age precursor to the Iron Age fort. A watching brief carried out at the fort in October 2005 revealed no further evidence of prehistoric occupation (Gloucs. SMR Ref. 27843).

4.2 Medieval (5th-16th centuries)

Documentary records attest to a long history of water management in the vicinity of Symonds Yat Rapids dating back to the medieval period. A document of 1282 records the existence of a weir 'below Doward' in the parish of Whitchurch (Herefs) belonging to William de Valence, lord of Goodrich Castle, and it has been suggested that this weir may have been the structure on the remains of which New Weir was constructed SW of Symonds Yat Rock in the 1680s (Currie & Herbert, 1986).

However, archaeological and documentary evidence for medieval settlement within the immediate vicinity of the study area is limited. Throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods, the area lay within the northern tip of an extensive tract of woodland known as Mailscot or Mailscot Wood extending southwards from Symonds Yat Rock to Coalpit Hill. Mailscot formed part of the royal demesne of the Forest of Dean and consequently enjoyed extra-parochial status, which it retained until 1842, when it was transferred to the parish of English Bicknor (Gloucs).

4.3 Post-medieval (16th century to present)

During the early post-medieval period, the study area became a significant focus of industrial activity, specifically associated with ironworking, exploiting the rapidly flowing Wye as an excellent source of waterpower. By the early 17th century, seven weirs are recorded along the Wye supplying power to various mills and forges (Hadfield, 1967, 185). By the late 1580s, a forge had been established by Gilbert Talbot, 7th Earl of Shrewsbury (and lord of Goodrich Castle), on the W bank of the Wye on the site of the later New Weir Ironworks and an adjoining weir (called 'New Weir') had also been recently built, presumably to supply water for the forge, although it is likely that it replaced an earlier weir dating back to the medieval period.

The construction of so many weirs along the Wye aroused considerable opposition from barge owners and merchants from Hereford, who regarded the weirs as a significant obstacle to effective inland navigation and trade. In 1589, the Crown acted by issuing an order for the Commissioners of Sewers for the destruction of weirs along the Wye; however, this met with strenuous opposition from local landowners anxious to preserve their control over the weirs and the various fisheries, forges and mills established in association with them (Stockinger, 1996).

Documentary records show that, in 1589, New Weir was demolished by the Commissioners of Sewers and certain 'rioters', which occasioned the Earl of Shrewsbury to mount a lengthy legal suit against the Commissioners, which continued for several years afterwards (HRO Ref. 068/II/53). Surviving records also indicate that the adjacent forge was demolished at about the same time, although the weir appears subsequently to have been rebuilt and documents attest to its continued maintenance throughout the 17th century (HRO Ref. 068/II/52).

A further attempt was made by the authorities to remove the weirs along the Wye in 1661, when an Act was passed to make the River Wye navigable as far as Hereford before the end of September 1665 and for there to be weekly boats between Hereford and Bristol (Coates, 1979; Hadfield, 1967, 185; Stockinger, 1996). The project was uncompleted by the specified date and was abandoned; however, the scheme was revived in 1688 with the intention of clearing any impediment to the navigation of the Wye between Hay-on-Wye and the sea. This scheme, which subsequently came to fruition as the Wye and Lugg Navigation Act of 1695, involved the purchase and demolition of all mill and fishing weirs on the Wye (Coates, 1979).

Shortly before these plans were laid out, the Earl of Kent had rebuilt and raised the New Weir after it had been destroyed by ice in the winter of 1683-4 and had granted a lease of the weir and adjoining lands to one George White, lately of Monmouth Forge, who built a forge for the 'fining of pig iron' (Heref. SMR Ref. 1589). At the same time, a sluice or lock at the eastern end of the weir (which is mentioned as having been previously built in an account dated 1674) was filled in. An account of 1695 described how 'upon the Earl of Kent's Weir stands one of the best iron mills or forges of England, lately being rebuilt on an old foundation', consisting of 'three chaferies or Fineries', a dwelling house for a tenant, stables and warehousing, valued at more than £3000 (Coates, 1979; Stockinger, 1996, 41).

The rebuilding and raising of the weir obstructed barges and reduced salmon stocks in the river and under the Wye and Lugg Navigation Act of 1695 the weir's owner, the Earl of Kent, was required to lower the weir and to install a new lock on the Gloucestershire side of the river and to provide a rent-free house for a lock-keeper, who was to be paid an annual stipend of £10 for opening and closing the lock (Coates, 1979; Stockinger, 1996, 102-103). The New Weir was the only weir between Hay and Chepstow not to be demolished following the passing of the Wye and Lugg Navigation Act.

In accordance with the 1695 Act, any further grants of fishing rights in the river by the Earl of Kent, were to be void but in the early 18th century a dispute arose between his successor, the Duke of Kent and Benedict Hall, who owned the land on the Gloucestershire side of the Wye adjoining the weir and had previously granted a lease of fishing rights between New Weir and Dixton, together with a cottage near the weir (Currie & Herbert, 1996). This dispute was eventually resolved in 1730, when the Duke of Kent and Viscount Gage, Hall's successor, agreed to hold the fishery and the narrow strip of the river bank downstream of the weir below Mailscot jointly and the duke undertook to maintain the weir and the lock.

Throughout the 18th century, the New Weir remained one of the most dangerous places to navigate the Wye, due to the fact that the bed of the river fell some 4 feet 6 inches and in height about 500 yards, causing a very rapid current and necessitating a capstan to haul the barges against the stream (Coates, 1978). Several plans were proposed in order to improve navigation along this particular stretch of the river. In 1763, the surveyor Isaac Taylor proposed the construction of a lock at Martins Pool, some 500

yards downstream of the existing lock at New Weir, which was to be enlarged, thereby 'all that danger difficulty and expense of going up and down the stream below New Weare will be avoided' (Stockinger, 1996, 308-9). A similar proposal was advanced in 1779, with the construction of a lock downstream of the New Weir and linked to it by a canal. However, neither of these proposed schemes was implemented and the navigation of this stretch of the Wye remained a difficult and dangerous process.

The ironworks adjoining the New Weir remained in operation throughout the 18th century; the White family continued to manage the ironworks until 1753, when George White the younger granted a 14-year lease of the site to John Partridge, an ironmonger of Ross, for an annual rent of £270. Partridge combined the ironworks at New Weir with another forge at Lydbrook, both of which were supplied with pig iron from his large furnace at Bishopswood (Coates, 1979). However, following the expiry of the original lease of the Ironworks in 1798, the contract ceased and shortly afterwards the New Weir Ironworks was closed down. Following the closure of the ironworks, the adjacent weir and lock fell into decay; in 1814, the weir was damaged by frosts and by 1826 it had been demolished and the lock filled in (Coates, 1979, Currie & Webster, 1996).

5. Site Specific Analysis (including Map Regression)

The study area comprises a small island located in a shallow stretch of the River Wye situated approximately 200m SW of Symonds Yat Rock, together with a section of the riverbank opposite the island. The island was formed from the remains of a weir adjacent to the site of the New Forge Ironworks, established by the Earl of Kent in the mid 1660s on the site of an earlier forge.

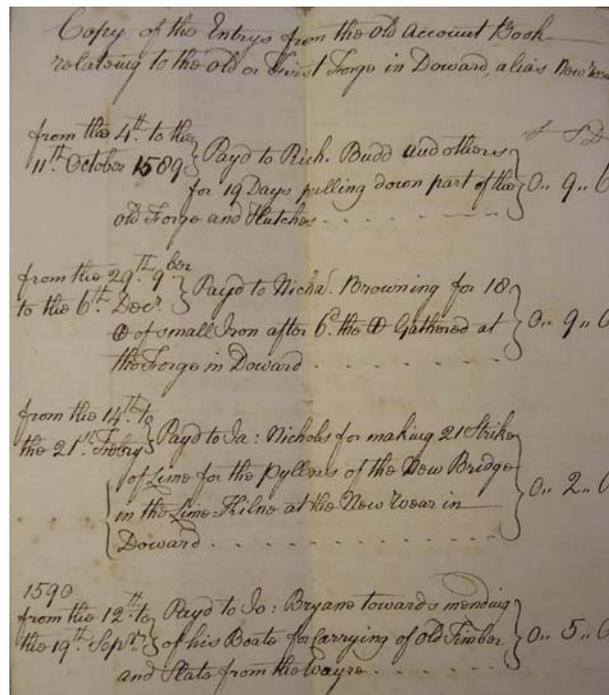


Plate 1: Extract from a book of accounts for 1589-92 relating to the New Weir and adjacent forge, referring to the 'carrying of old timber and slate from the Wayre' (HRO Ref. 068/11/53)
(Reproduced courtesy of Herefordshire Record Office)

The weir is usually assumed to have been contemporary with the foundation of the ironworks; however, documentary evidence indicates the likely existence of a weir in the same location dating back to the late 13th century, for a perambulation of the Forest of Dean in 1282 records a weir 'below Doward' which belonged to William de Valence of Goodrich Castle.

Later records confirm the existence of a weir on the same site by the late 16th century, in particular, a book of accounts for 1589-92 (**Plate 1**) relating to 'the prosecutions began and carried on against the Commissioners of Sewers and the Rioters who pulled or cut down New Wear in Doward in 1589' (HRO Ref. 068/II/53). This weir appears to have been associated with an earlier forge (described as a 'twist forge') that occupied the site of the later New Weir Ironworks. The accounts give little information as to the nature of the weir's construction, although references to 'the carrying of old timber and slate from the Wayre' suggest that it was timber-framed. A reference to the supply of lime 'for the pyllers of the New Bridge in the Lime Kilne at the New Wear' indicates the existence of a limekiln in the vicinity of the weir.

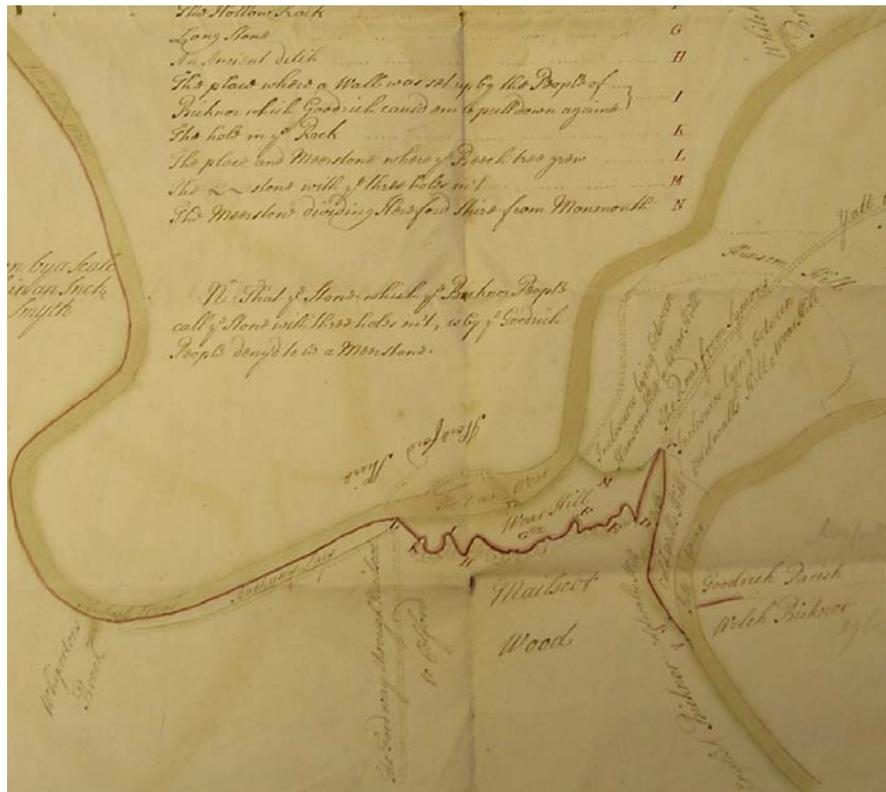


Fig 3: Plan of the New Weir and Weir Hill drawn up by George Smith – 1728 (HRO Ref. 068/IV/7)
 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Herefordshire Record Office)

A survey of the Rivers Wye and Lugg carried out in 1697, two years after the promulgation of the Wye and Lugg Navigation Act, provides an extremely detailed description of the New Weir shortly after its reconstruction by the Earl of Kent (HRO Ref. AP 21; Stockinger, 1996, 123). The weir is described as being 'built of loose stone with stakes and turfs behind them and a hedge on top. Its length is 140 yards and between 6 and 9½ feet in height. There are fish traps there and salmon to the value of £100 per

annum are taken. At the east end is a lock 13 feet wide and in reasonable repair, but the sills are 3 feet above the bottom of the river'. The survey further comments that 'there is a lately built forge at the west end of the weir which takes a lot of the water but could take less. The weir has caused a shallow of 100 yards long and 170 yards wide below the weir, but removal of the weir would enable vessels to pass'.

The earliest pictorial representation of the weir appears on a plan of the New Weir and Weir Hill (**Fig. 3**) drawn up in 1728 by a local surveyor, George Smith, which shows its location in relation to various boundary markers (referred to as merestones) and four disused weirs in the vicinity, namely Martins Weir and Bishops Weir downstream and Old Weir and Jute Weir upstream (HRO Ref. 068/IV/7). It is likely that the survey was drawn up as part of the lengthy dispute between the Earl of Kent and Benedict Hall concerning fishery rights adjoining the New Weir.

Smith's plan clearly shows the lock at the eastern end of the weir, although it does not provide much detail regarding its construction. Neither does the plan show the layout of the ironworking complex adjoining the weir, although it does show a leat branching off from the Wye immediately N of the weir and extending S parallel with the river and rejoining it just below the weir. The existence of this leat, which was presumably constructed when the New Weir Ironworks was built c.1684, is confirmed in a later watercolour view of the New Weir dated c.1783, which shows the leat being used by a trow unloading cargo at the ironworks (**Plate 2**).



Plate 2: Watercolour view by Michael Angelo Rooker dated c. 1783 looking downstream towards the New Weir showing the New Weir ironworks on the Herefordshire side of the river and associated leat
(Reproduced courtesy of the Nelson Museum and Local History Centre, Monmouth)

From the late 18th century onwards, there is a significant number of written accounts and pictorial representations of the New Weir by tourists and artists attracted by the dramatic scenery of the Wye in the vicinity of Symonds Yat. The earliest and most influential of these accounts, contained in William Gilpin's *Observations on the River Wye* (1782) describes how 'on the right side of the river, the bank forms a woody amphitheatre...its

lower skirts are adorned with a hamlet; in the midst of which, volumes of thick smoke thrown up at intervals, from an iron forge as its fires receive fresh fuel, adds double grandeur to the scene' (Gilpin, 1782, 38).

Unfortunately, few of the written descriptions provide much detailed information about the condition of the weir and lock; however, the numerous watercolour paintings and sketches of the New Weir drawn by artists during the late 18th and early 19th century supply a wealth of detail about the New Weir, the adjacent lock and its immediate surroundings. Of particular value is a view by the well-known Herefordshire artist James Wathen, dated August 1797, looking E from the ironworks across the river and showing the weir and the lock at its eastern end (**Plate 3**). A small cottage is depicted on the Gloucestershire bank of the river adjoining the lock; it is likely that this was the lock keeper's cottage that the Earl of Kent was required to build in accordance with the Wye and Lugg Navigation Act of 1695.



Plate 3: View of New Weir by James Wathen dated August 1797 showing the lock at the E end of the Weir together with the adjacent lock keeper's cottage
(Reproduced by courtesy of Herefordshire Record Office)

This same cottage is shown in an unfinished watercolour sketch of the New Weir and lock looking downstream, drawn by a local artist Thomas Tudor in about 1800 (**Plate 4**). This sketch depicts in some detail the construction of the lock. The larger, western wing of the lock appears to have been constructed of large, irregularly shaped boulders with regularly coursed masonry on the E-facing side and is shown to be partially covered by vegetation. Both Wathen and Tudor show the lock as having a single pair of swinging gates, which suggests that it was a simple 'flash lock' rather than the pound lock which became more commonly used from the 18th century onwards, although a Parliamentary Report of 1906 relating to the history of waterways in Herefordshire refers to the New Weir as having a pound lock (Stockinger, 1996, 342).



Plate 4: Unfinished watercolour sketch by Thomas Tudor showing the lock and weir – c.1800
 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Nelson Museum and Local History Centre, Monmouth)

The New Weir and adjacent lock fell into decay after the closure of the New Weir Ironworks shortly before 1800. The weir was damaged by severe frosts in the winter of 1814 and by 1826 it had been demolished and the lock filled in (Coates, 1978; Currie & Herbert, 1996). The existing island, which occupies the site of the weir, was presumably formed as a gradual accretion of debris from the demolished structure, together with the bedrock naturally occurring at shallow depths along this stretch of the river. However, it is unclear precisely when the island came into being in its present form. It is not shown on the tithe maps for English Bicknor (Gloucs) or Whitchurch (Herefs), the two parishes covering the eastern and western banks of the Wye in this particular locality, which suggests that it had not been formed by the mid 1840s.

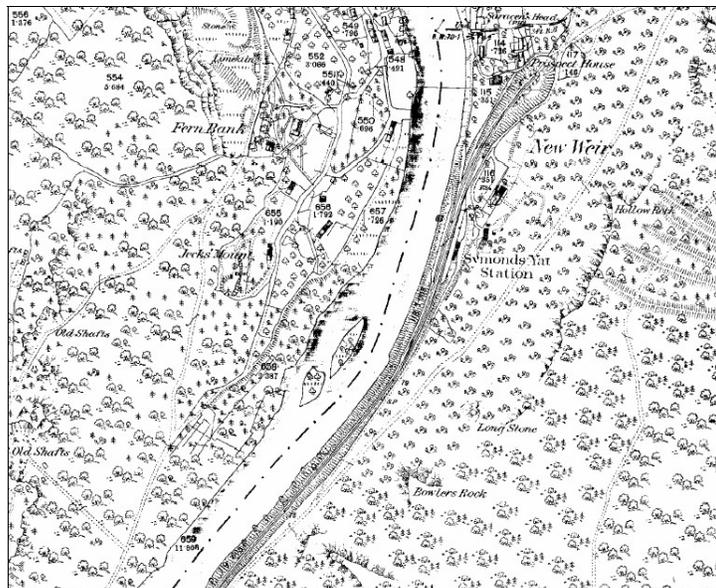


Fig. 5: Extract from OS 1st edition 25 inch map of 1889 showing the two islands at Symonds Yat Rapids
 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Herefordshire Record Office)

6. Proposed Mitigation

In view of the location and quantity of extant archaeology, it is Border Archaeology's opinion that a watching brief of the works abutting both the riverbank and the island be undertaken with the proviso that where works are obscured by water these should not fall within the remit of archaeological observation.

7. Conclusion

The study area at Symonds Yat Rapids is located within the historic landscape of the Lower Wye Valley, which exhibits evidence of human activity dating back to the Palaeolithic period, although archaeological evidence of early occupation on the valley floor has been obscured by the heavily wooded nature of the locality and later post-medieval activity.

Documentary sources dating back to the medieval period attest to a long history of water management along this stretch of the River Wye. The earliest reference to a weir in this location dates back to 1282, when it is said to have belonged to William de Valence, lord of Goodrich Castle.

By the late 16th century, the weir appears to have been built and an iron forge established alongside it on the Herefordshire bank of the River Wye, by Gilbert Talbot 7th Earl of Shrewsbury. This weir, described in documentary records as the 'New Weir', was demolished by the Commissioners of Sewers in 1589 to improve navigation along the Wye. The weir was rebuilt shortly afterwards and documentary sources indicate its continued use throughout the 17th century.

The New Weir was subsequently rebuilt and raised in 1684 by the owner, the Earl of Kent, to provide a supply of water for a substantial new ironworks (subsequently referred to as the New Weir Ironworks) which was founded on the site of the earlier forge. However, as a result of the Wye and Lugg Navigation Act of 1695, the Earl of Kent was required to lower the weir and install a lock at his own expense and a house for a salaried lock keeper to open and close the lock.

The dramatic landscape of the Wye in the vicinity of Symonds Yat became a popular attraction for artists and tourists following the publication of William Gilpin's *Observations on the River Wye* in 1773 and, consequently, there is a considerable number of pictorial representations of the New Weir which provide information about its appearance in the late 18th-early 19th century.

The New Weir, the only weir on the Wye not to be demolished as a result of the Wye and Lugg Navigation Act, and its adjacent lock remained in operation until the beginning of the 19th century. However, following the closure of the New Weir Ironworks in about 1800, the weir fell into decay and by 1826 it had been demolished and the lock filled in.

Cartographic sources show that the island at Symonds Yat Rapids was gradually formed during the mid to late 19th century, presumably from the remains of the New Weir, together with slag debris deposited from the adjacent New Weir Ironworks and from fragmented bedrock, which naturally occurs at shallow depths along this stretch of the river. The OS 1st edition 25 inch map of 1889 actually shows two small islands,



separated by a narrow channel; however, by the mid-1920s the existing island had been formed.

8. Bibliography

Primary Sources

Herefordshire Record Office

Tithe Apportionment for the Parish of Whitchurch - 1840

Goodrich Estate Records (HRO Ref. 068) including:

068/III/23: Schedule of papers concerning the New Weir dispute between the Earl of Kent and Benedict Hall - 1688

068/III/27: Schedule of records relating to the Manor of Goodrich and the New Weir – 17th c.

068/III/53: Memorandum concerning the New Weir – 1728

068/III/54: Extract from an "old book of accounts" concerning the demolition of the New Weir and the 'Old Forge'- 1589-92

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9. Cartography

(All maps were obtained from the Herefordshire Record Office unless otherwise stated)

068/IV/7 Plan of the New Weir and Weir Hill by George Smyth - 1728

Tithe Map of the Parish of Whitchurch (Heref.)- 1840

GRO Ref. PC/1812/25 Tithe Map of the Parish of English Bicknor (Gloucs.) - 1838

GRO Ref. D637/11/5/E1 Plan of Mailscot Wood – late 19th c.

OS 1st edition 25 inch map Herefordshire 54.10 - 1889

OS 2nd edition 25 inch map Herefordshire 54.10 - 1903

OS 3rd edition 25 inch map Herefordshire 54.10 - 1928

OS 1st edition 6 inch map Herefordshire 54 SW - 1888

OS 2nd edition 6 inch map Herefordshire 54 SW - 1905

OS 3rd edition 6 inch map Herefordshire 54 SW - 1930

OS 1:2500 map – 1960

OS 1:2500 map - 1980

10. Illustrative Sources

Collections of 18th-19th century engravings and paintings and 19th-20th century photographs of the Symonds Yat area were consulted at the Herefordshire Record Office and the Nelson Local History Centre at Monmouth.