

# **BASWICH (ST THOMAS') LOCK HOUSE AND SURROUNDINGS 1951**

by

**David Jones**

*Britain from Above* have recently added twenty new images to their Website relating to the former Baswich Salt Works. The images were taken on 14 August 1951.

Although the focus of these aerial photographs is the Salt Works, they fortuitously included the surrounding area.

There are excellent images of:

- the approaches to the Junction along the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal,
- the Roving Bridge,
- the Overflow Weir,
- the former Basin,
- the former towing path,
- the Lock House, including garden, pigsty, outside toilet, paths, hedges, the sheep dip etc.,
- the Rivers Sow and Penk (before realignment), and
- other general features, including other bridges and watercourses, and brine pipes to the Salt Works.

These images of the Lock House give us a better understanding of the arrangement of the upper floor of the building. They also allow us to interpret the foundations of the ground floor, unearthed by recent Work Parties, with greater certainty.

However, none of the images clearly show whether the Aqueduct is still in place. I suspect it was no longer there. Also, there appears to be no sign of the Lock – it was demolished in 1935.

## **How to access these images**

To access these images, go to the *Britain from Above* Website using the following link: <http://britainfromabove.org.uk/> .

Then run a search for “Baswich”.

Next, you will need to register. Registration is free. The “Sign in / Register” tab is at the top right. Follow the instructions and register. Registration allows use of the zoom facility. Please remember that these images are copyright.

Once you have completed the registration procedure, you are ready to begin your journey back to 1951.

## The Images

Images EAW038643 to 654 show the original Salt Works (grid reference ~SJ944227) situated west of Baswich Lane and closest to the Lock House.

Use the position of the two chimneys of the Salt Works to help you find the Roving Bridge and Lock House.

Images EAW038655 to 663 relate to the newer Vacuum Salt Works (grid reference ~SJ948226) situated east of Baswich Lane. The newer works has one chimney.

Image Reference	Where to look and comment
EAW034011	n/a: English Electric Works (1930)
EAW038643	Centre: Roving Bridge and front (south side) of Lock House
EAW038644	Above centre left: Roving Bridge and front of Lock House
EAW038645	Centre: good view of Roving Bridge; also note Penk and Sow
EAW038646	Centre: excellent view of Roving Bridge and Lock House
EAW038647	Far centre left: excellent view of Roving Bridge
EAW038648	Far centre right: excellent view of Roving Bridge and House
EAW038649	Lower centre: excellent view of back of Lock House and Site
EAW038650	Lower left: excellent view of Roving Bridge & front garden
EAW038651	Far centre right: another good view of Roving Bridge
EAW038652	Lower centre left: good view of the Roving Bridge & Washhouse
EAW038653	Centre right: excellent view of Roving Bridge & former Basin; note the rails of footbridge by site of Aqueduct
EAW038654	Centre: excellent view of the Site
EAW038655	Vacuum Salt Works; Staffs & Worcs Canal on the left
EAW038656	Vacuum Salt Works; Staffs & Worcs Canal at lower left
EAW038658	Vacuum Salt Works; Staffs & Worcs Canal at the bottom
EAW038659	Vacuum Salt Works; Staffs & Worcs Canal at upper left to lower centre
EAW038660	Vacuum Salt Works; Staffs & Worcs Canal, lower centre left to right
EAW038661	Vacuum Salt Works; Staffs & Worcs Canal, upper centre left to right. Upper left - is that a boat on the river?
EAW038662	Vacuum Salt Works
EAW038663	Vacuum Salt Works

## Acknowledgement

When I last visited the *Britain from Above* Website about 18 months ago there was nothing relevant relating to the Stafford Branch Heritage Site at Baswich.

I would like to thank Elizabeth Thomson (Heritage Adviser, Canal & River Trust, West Midlands Birmingham Office) for alerting me that these new images had been uploaded recently.