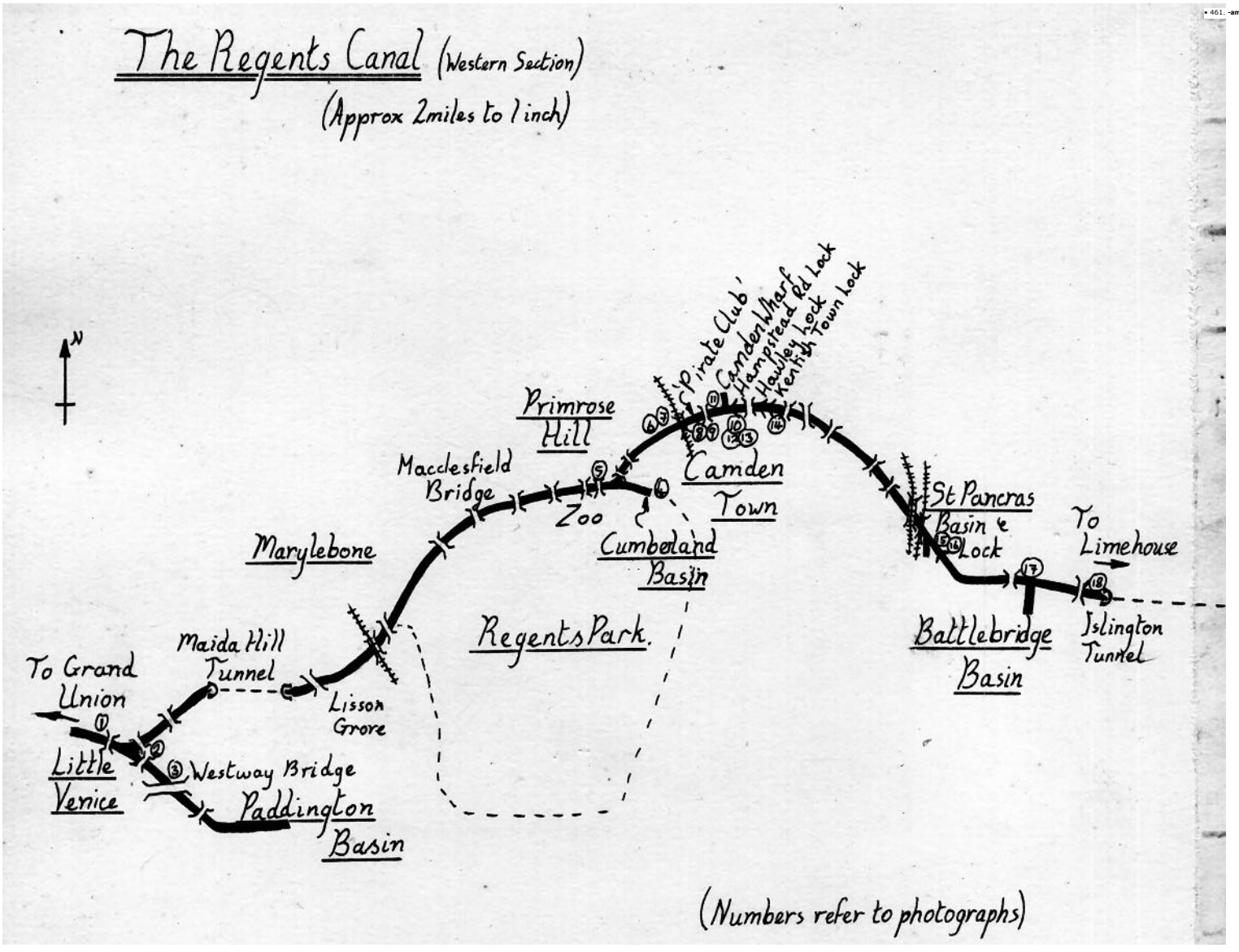
# On the Regents Canal towpath walk

## THE REGENTS CANAL TOWPATH WALK

In the late I960's, the London Boro-ugh of Camden liaised with the British Waterways Board to open a stretch of towpath to the public between Lisbon Grove and Regents Park Zoo - about a mile -.The towpath had incidentally always been accessible to the public but not legally so.The 'opening' inc -luded a prover walking, surface on the path, seats, tree planting etc.Followi ng the great success of this venture other sections have been added so that the officially walkable length now reaches to Islington.It seems likely that further lengths will be added in the future.

In addition, the area around Little Venice had always been popular with the public as roads run next to the canal iron here to Maida Vale Tunnel Thus it may be considered that the walk extends from here to Islington.

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The Regents Canal (Western Section)
(Approx 2miles to 1 inch)
N
To Grand Union
Little Venice
Maida Hill Tunnel
Lisson Grove
Westway Bridge
Paddington Basin
Marylebone
Macclesfield Bridge
Zoo
Regents Park
Primrose Hill
'Pirate Club'
Camden Wharf
Hampstead Rd Lock
Hawley Lock
Kentish Town Lock
Camden Town
Cumberland Basin
St Pancras Basin & Lock
Battlebridge Basin
To Limehouse
Islington Tunnel
(Numbers refer to photographs)



© Looking West from 'Little Venice'

LITTLE VENICE gives the appearance of being a large boating lake as compared with original function of canal basin and junction. The Padding ton arm of the Grand Junction Canal was built first - leaving the main canal at Southall and running to its terminus at Paddington. The Regents Canal came later and joined its partner 1/2 mile from its terminus befo re running through London to join the Thames at Limehouse.

PADDINGTON BASIN is used extensively for moorings but there is room for many more.



② 'Little Venice' + Brownings Island + trip boats



③ Paddington Basin off Little Venice

A few hundred yards from Paddington, we come to the short Maida Vale Tunnel which means a short detour for the walker round to the other end at Lisson Grove. The stretch through Regents Park is very green and attractive and one gets a free view of part of the zoo. At the end of this stretch the main canal turns sharp left whilst ahead is the short stub remaining of Cumberland Basin. This originally ran to near Euston Station until part was filled in for the zoo Car Park. Which things would not happen today!



④ Cumberland Basin and Regents Park



⑤ Cumberland Basin - canal takes a sharp bend

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-following the turn from Cumberland Basin, the canal passes behind a row of houses-

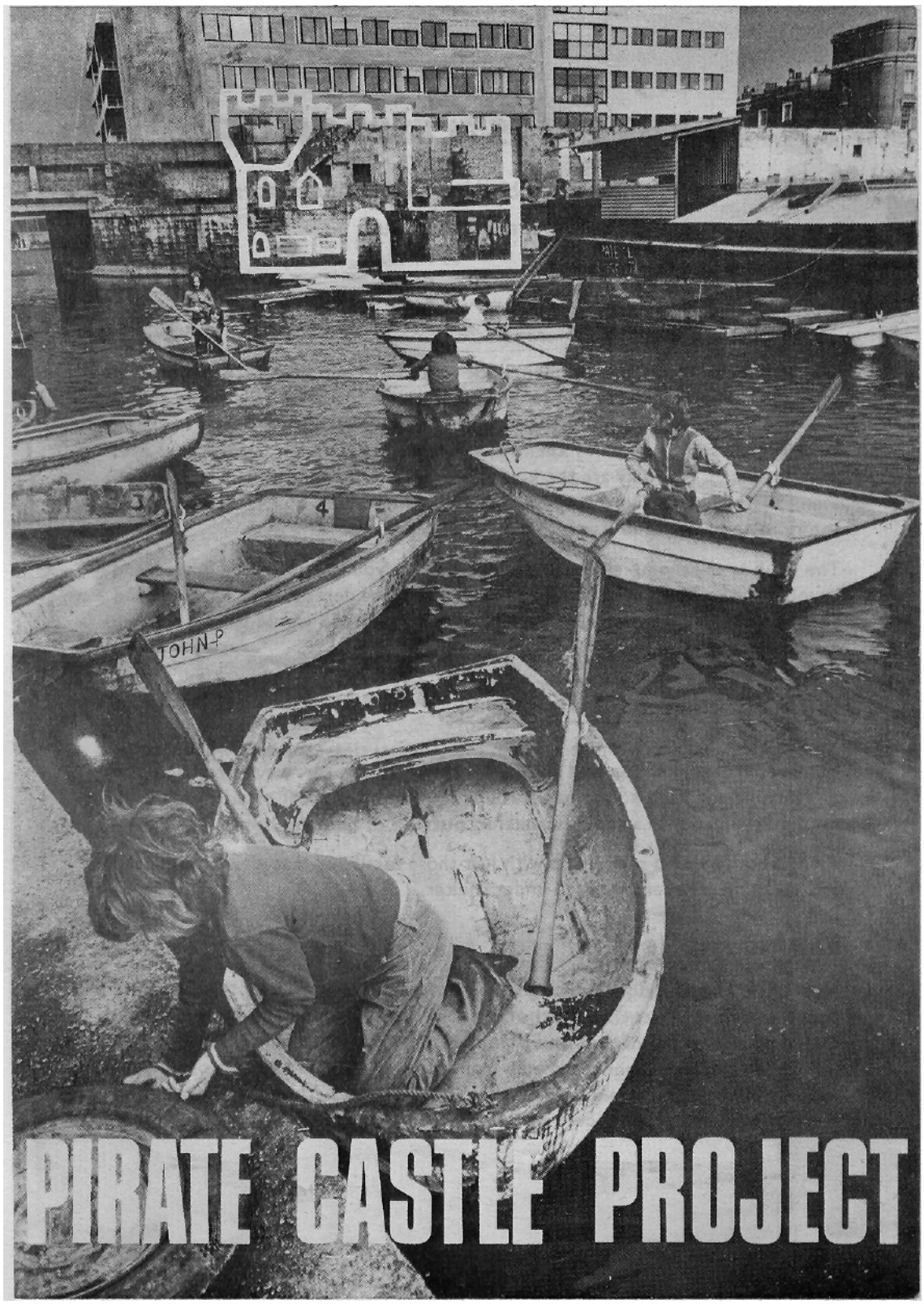


@ Punts and dinghies behind a row of town houses

Shortly comes the main railway line from Euston, immediately after which are the premises of the Pirate Club.



⑰ The railway from Euston


PIRATE CASTLE PROJECT





## THE PIRATE CLUB

The Pirate Club near Camden Lock is a club cum adventure playground for children between the ages of 8 and 14. It was started by Lord St Davids in 1966. The club has grown rapidly over the years and now has some 1500 members. 'Tests' have to be passed before the children can 'go solo' in a boat. There is one paid organiser and other volunteer helpers who help to run the club at weekends.'

The club is expanding all the time and the old covered over barge is totally inadequate as a club house except as far us shelter goes

A proper clubhouse is obviously needed - hence the Pirate Castle Project. The London Borough of Camden have promised the site and the Inner London Education Authority have promised to pay, 1/4 of the cost if the rest can be found. There is still £15000 to be found.

The club is obviously *very* popular and fulfilling a great need in this rather drab area. A similar club has been founded at City Road Basin in Islington which is growing just us rapidly.

Just before Camden Lock these are two unsightly factory blocks with a row of equally unsightly boats below in varying stages of decay.A contrast is the brilliant paintwork of the trip boat Jenny Wren.




⑩ Warehouse branches and towpath bridge



⑪ Boats floating, half sunk and sinking.

At Camden Lock proper there is an attractive row of shops converted from an old warehouse and in addition a small street market.



⑫ Camden wharf and craft shops



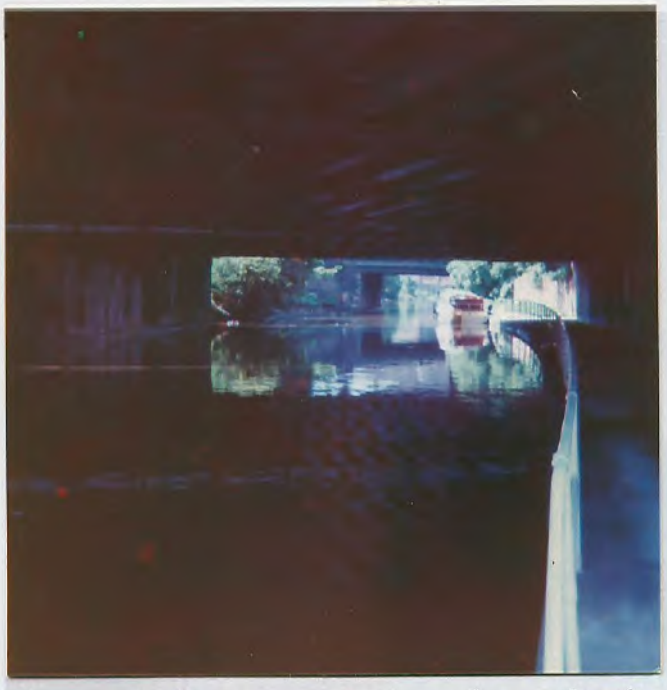
⑬ Camden locks and craft market to left

Moving down the three locks at
Hampstead Road (Hampstead Rd/Camden,
Hawley and Kentish Town), the rail-
is close by here.



⑭ Hampstead Road (alias Camden) bottom and middle locks.

Suddenly there is a great concentr-
ation of railway bridges and we
arrive at the surprisingly quiet St
Pancras Basin crammed full of boats
Immediately adjacent is St Pancras
Lock which drops us down another 8ft



⑮ Between the lines from St. Pancras



⑯ St Pancras basin and locks

Nearing the end of the walk we pass the unused Battlebridge Basin - an attractive stretch of water but an underused, wasted one



Battlebridge Basin.

Finally, a part of the walk to which the finishing touches are still being put, but a dramatic end at the portal of Islington Tunnel.

## In Conclusion :-

This 'canalside walk' is already well used by the public - particularly - the Regents Park length - and even on weekdays there were plenty of people. The scheme has obviously proved itself worthwhile - even the vandals seem to consider it rather sacred. Ah but of eourse! they belong to its youth clubs



⑲ 960 yards of Islington tunnel - the end of the walk for the public - at present!