

## Location

During the 1920s and 1930s, Stonehouse made the most of its location at the heart of local transport routes to develop into a thriving centre for small businesses and community services.

Gloucester was the lowest point for a road crossing of the River Severn from Roman times until 1966, but the steep Cotswold scarp to the east always caused difficulty on the direct route to London. The Frome valley offered one of the easier ways across the scarp between Gloucester and Bristol. The map shows how routes east and south from Gloucester came to be concentrated on the Frome valley, reached most easily through Stonehouse.

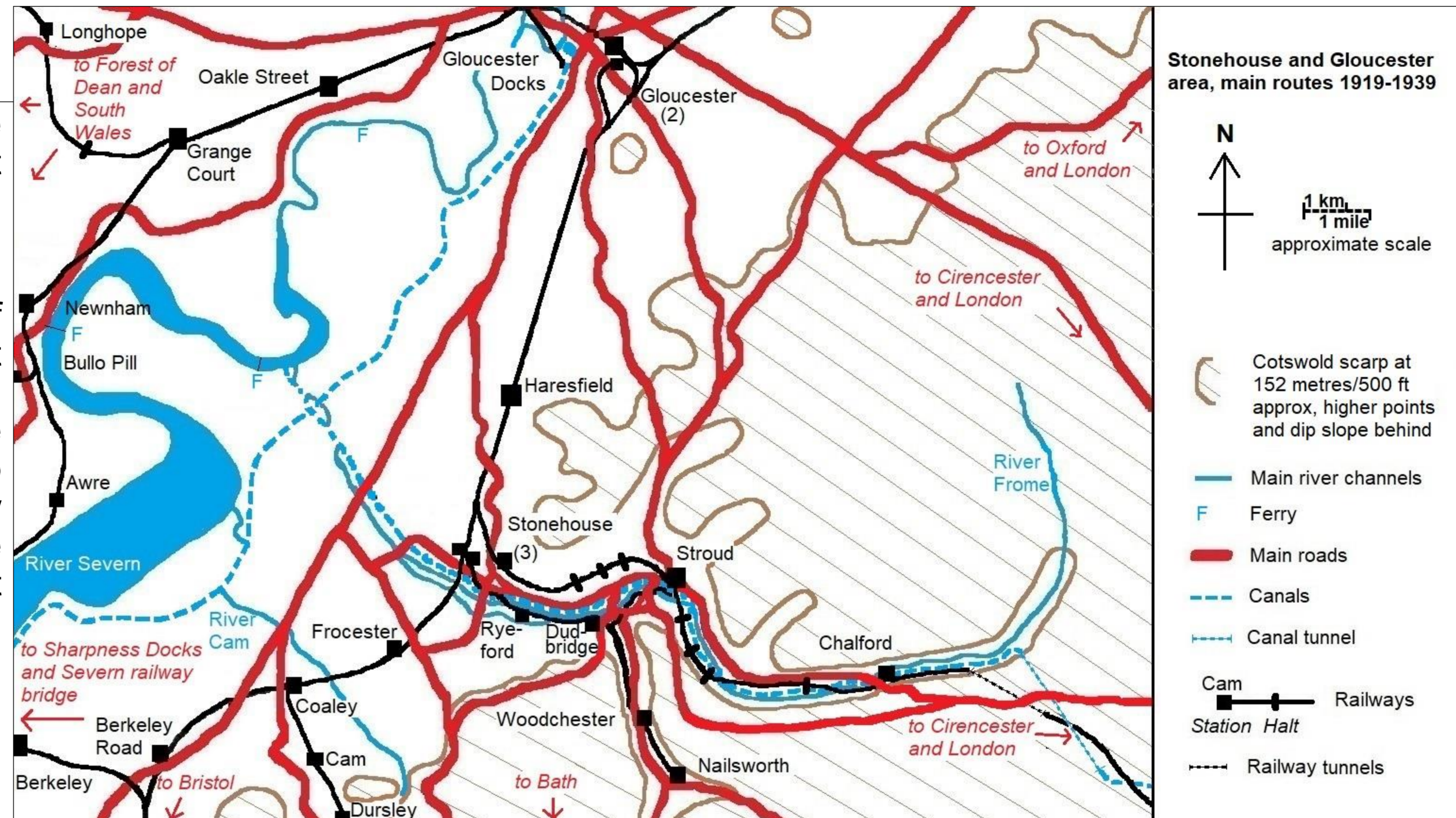


'Joey' boat 'Pioneer', owned in Gloucester, on the Stroudwater canal at Stonehouse after delivering coal, c.1920.

Woollen cloth produced in the Stroud and Dursley areas was moved along the Frome valley to Cirencester and London, and roads were improved to help this industry. They were joined by the Stroudwater, Thames and Severn, and Gloucester and Sharpness canals which, together, could move heavy goods around Gloucestershire and on to London, using the Frome valley.

The canals were challenged by the railways, which became vital to the local economy. Stonehouse had three railway stations, on the Bristol (LMS), Nailsworth branch, and London (Great Western) lines.

After recovering from war, Stonehouse grew into a well-connected trade and business centre.



Stonehouse 'Midland Railway' station, on a card posted in 1926: the line became part of the LMS in 1923.