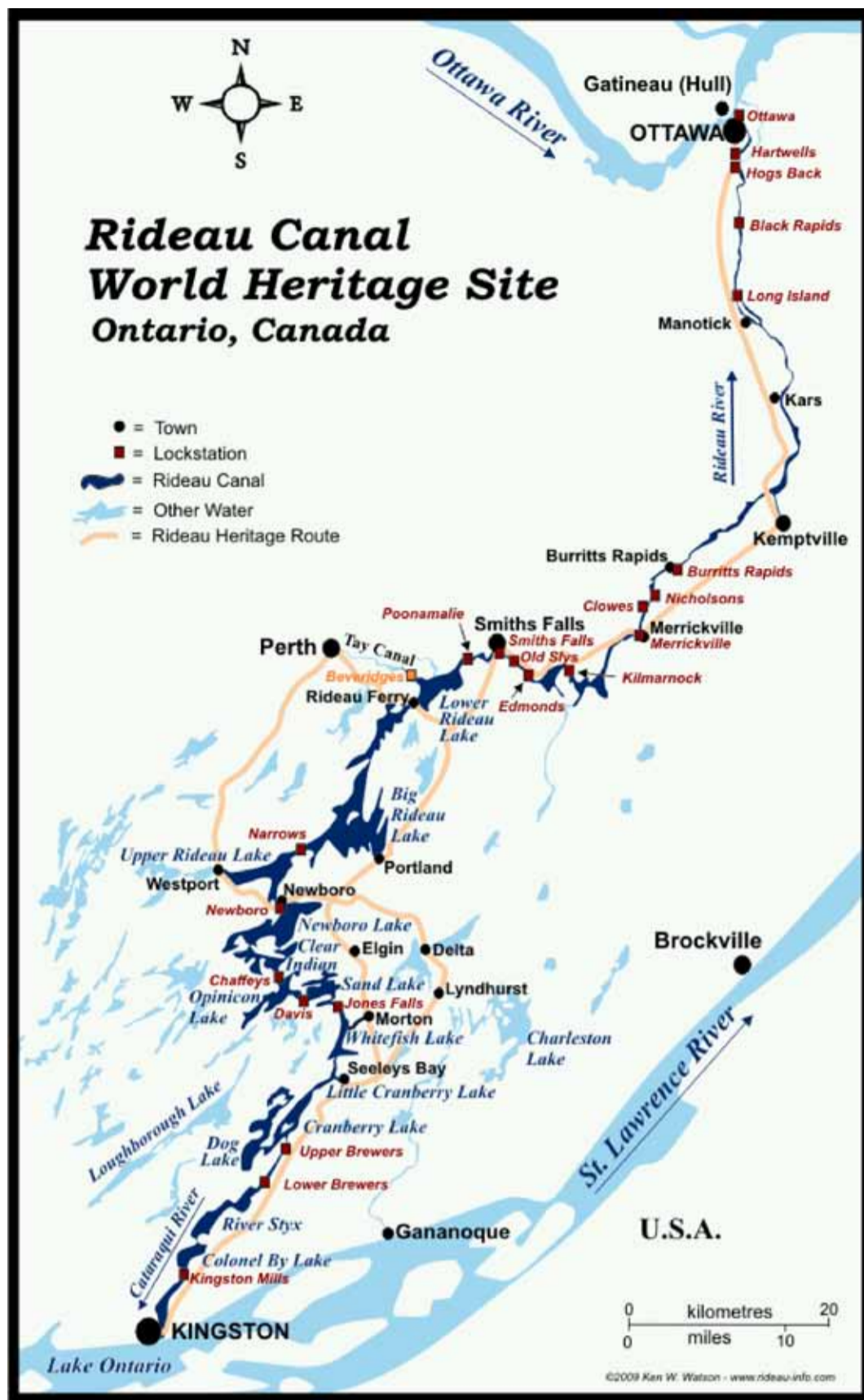


CANADA'S RIDEAU CANAL



Built to create a defensible and reliable transport link between Lake Ontario and Ottawa in the British colony of Upper Canada, the Rideau Canal is made up of canalised sections of the Rideau and Catarqui Rivers, rather than newly excavated channels. Water raised by dams to flood the rivers, made previously difficult waterways readily navigable by large steamships.

This so-called 'slackwater' system was built by Lieutenant Colonel John By of the Royal Engineers Corp who had been appointed by the British Government in 1826 to supervise the construction of a connection between Lake Ontario and the Upper Canada colony. John By's solution avoided the need for extensive excavations of new channels and called for series of dams which backed up river water to a navigable depth and created a chain of 50 locks. He opted for fewer locks with large rises rather than more shallow locks. Lock rises are up to 4.6 metres. He also built the locks large enough to accommodate the new steamboats. The locks were up to 37.8m long and 9.1 metre wide and this, combined with the high lifts, necessitating the lock walls, gates etc being substantial structures to hold back the force of the water.



The eight-rise locks in the centre of Ottawa are probably the canal's most impressive sight.



The king truss swing bridge and the lock at Nicholson's give a good idea of the type of engineering to be found on the waterway.



In Ottawa, the canal passes close to Canada's Parliament Buildings.



The channel and lock between the Upper and Lower Rideau Lakes.



Edmonds lock and weir is fairly typical of the canal, which is based around natural rivers. For much of its route, the countryside is rural and provides leisure opportunities of all sorts.



The hydro-electric station at Jones Falls.



The museum at Fort Henry is a reminder that the canal was built to defend Britain's Canadian colonies from invasion by those based in the new American states to the south.



A typical pleasure boat at Merrickville.

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1221>
<http://www.rideau-info.com/canal/>

WORLD HERITAGE WATERWAY SITES