

American Canal Society Canal Index

CANAL Erie Canal		STATUS			ACS	
STATE/PROVINCE: New York State					IAER	
COUNTIES: Rensselaer, Albany, Saratoga, Schenectady, Montgomery, Herkimer, Oneida, Madison, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oswego, Seneca, Wayne, Monroe, Orleans, Niagara, Erie		ENLARGEMENTS	DATES IN USE	CANAL LENGTH SLACKWATER TOTAL	LIFT LOCKS No. / SIZE	
LOCATION: (Endpoints) Albany to Buffalo			1825	363	363	84 90x19
TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS:			1835-1862	350%	350%	72 110x18
			1905-1918	140 215	355	35 310x45

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE: In 1791 a private company was chartered to make the first waterway improvement in N.Y. State. This was done in five or six years. Ground was broken on July 4, 1817 near Rome, N.Y. as the beginning of the Erie Canal. On Oct. 26, 1825 the Erie Canal was completed from Albany to Buffalo at a cost of \$7,143,798.86 when the five lock double combine at Lockport was completed. Prism of the canal was 40 and 28x4 ft. Locks were built of stone. There were 13 guard locks, total rise and fall 689 ft. There was a 30 ton limit, later 75.

First enlargement was authorized May 11, 1835 and commenced Aug., 1836, completed Sep., 1862. Engineer's estimate of cost \$23,402,863.02, actual cost \$31,834,041.30. Prism of the canal was 70 and 52 1/2 or 56x7 ft. Locks were built of stone, total lockage of 654.8 ft., 3 guard locks. Total tonnage of boats 210-240. Work on the Erie Barge Canal started in 1905 and on May 15, 1918 it was opened.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: to traffic. The Erie section is 355 mi. from Troy to Buffalo, 339 mi. from Waterford to Tonawanda. Width is 75 ft. through earth sections, minimum of 94 ft. through rock cuts, and at least 200 ft. through canalized rivers and lakes. Depth is 12 ft. in artificial channels. This prism is uniform in all sections of the Barge Canal. There are 18 guard gates and 17 lift bridges. Locks built of concrete, operated electrically. No towpaths were provided, boats must have some mechanical motive power, speed must not exceed 6 mph. This applies to all sections of the Barge Canal. Canalized rivers and lakes are the Hudson, Mohawk, Seneca, Clyde, Niagara, and Oneida Lake. West of Lockport from Pendleton the flow of the Tonawanda Creek is reversed, the Niagara River is used from Tonawanda to Buffalo on Lake Erie, rising to lake level by the U.S. Government lock at Squaw Island. The Niagara River furnishes an adequate supply of water for the western part of the canal, The dams at Delta and Hinckley at

NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANALS PRESERVATION/RESTORATION:
the headwaters of the Mohawk River provide reservoirs provide water for the section between Rome and Troy. Lake Erie water feeds the canal as far east as Palmyra (cont'd)

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY:
Whitford, Noble E.-History of the Canal System of the State of New York, Vol. II, 1905, copywrt. 1906.
Finch, Roy G.-The Story of New York State Canals, 1925.
Walsh, Edward S.-The Canal System of New York State, 1923.
(cont'd) at lock 29. Canandaigua Lake outlet and Ganagua Creek unite to form the Clyde River at Lyons just east of lock 25 at Mary's Point. Through the

UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS (CEHR, IAER, HABS, Local or Regional Historical Societies, Libraries, etc.):
Seneca River come the waters of from the great natural reservoirs, Cayuga and Seneca Lakes. The section of the summit level extending from lock 21 at New London to lock 20 at Whitesboro presented the most difficult problem of water supply hence the reservoirs at Delta and Hinckley were constructed.

EXISTING OR RECOMMENDED LANDMARK STATUS (CEHR, National Register, etc.):

14571

REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: Gerald Abendschein, 2132 Harris Rd., Waterport, N.Y. **DATE:** Feb. 8/86
RETURN TO: CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, c/o T.K. Woods, 6939 Eastman Circle, Canton, Ohio 44708