

American Canal Society Canal Index

CANAL <b>New York &amp; Sharon Canal</b>		STATUS <b>SURVEYED ONLY</b>			ACS HAER	
STATE/PROVINCE: <b>New York, Connecticut</b>		ENLARGEMENTS 1 2 3 4	DATES IN USE ----		LIFT LOCKS No./ SIZE: <b>51 70x12</b>	
COUNTIES: <b>Litchfield, Dutchess, Putnam &amp; Westchester</b>			CANAL <b>66</b>	LENGTH SLACKMATER		TOTAL <b>66</b>
LOCATION (Endpoints of Canal): <b>Webatuck Creek in Sharon, CT to mouth of the Croton on the Hudson River</b>						
TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS: <b>1:250,000 : ALBANY</b>						

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:** As one of the many canal proposals in the wake of the Erie, its designs would have been influenced heavily by Erie designs, with rough stone locks with cut quins and coping. George W. Young, the engineer who carried out the 1825 survey for the NY Canal Commissioners, was an associate of Jervis, and himself began his career with the Erie project

At least two surveys made of the proposed routes; the one which survives is Young's, reported in the NY State Assembly Journal Feb 23, 1826. The line he examined for the most part is that now followed by the Harlem Division of the former New York Central Railroad, making use of the Ten Mile, Swamp and Croton rivers. An alternate route from a point in Putnam would have taken the canal south through Westchester directly to the Harlem River, making use of two tunnels -- which perhaps is a gauge of the chances of success of the whole project (Sharon-Harlem River, 92 miles).

The canal was first proposed around 1800, and then again in 1821 when it was proposed to eventually add an extension to Great Barrington (Mass) to join the Housatonic River.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** The company was incorporated in New York in 1823. Eleven furnaces and several forges in the Sharon area would have sent large quantities of iron to NYC, and shipped in Lehigh coal. A preliminary survey was made, \$60,000 contributed, and lost when the broker in New York City failed. The project was revived again in 1825 and the NY Canal Commissioners directed State Engineer, George W. Young to make a survey. Judge Cyrus Swan of Sharon and Jonathan Ward of Eastchester (NY) were among the canal's ardent backers.

The chief legacy of the Sharon Canal plan was the NYC water supply system: the canal was originally suggested as both a means of transportation and a supply of "pure and wholesome water" for NYC. It was the canal company's activity which directed the NY aqueduct commissioners attention to the Croton. The Canal Company failed, but NYC completed its first supply project from the Croton River in 1846.

NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANALS PRESERVATION/RESTORATION:

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY:**

NY State Assembly Journal 1826, 49:662-4  
 C.R. Harte, "Connecticut's Canals," CT Society of Civil Engineers, 1938  
 Newton Reed, Early History of Amenia (NY)  
 Noble E. Whitford, History of the Canal System of NYS (good reference list)

UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS (CEHR, HAER, HABS, Local or Regional Historical Societies, Libraries, etc.):

letters of J.B. Jervis from G.W. Young (7/17/'25; 12/17/'25; et al.)  
 Jervis Library, Rome, NY

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

REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: **P.H. Stott, Haines Rd., Mt Kisco, NY 10549**

DATE: **6/23/73**

RETURN TO: **CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, c/o P.H. STOTT, HAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549**