



American Canals

The Bulletin of the American Canal Society

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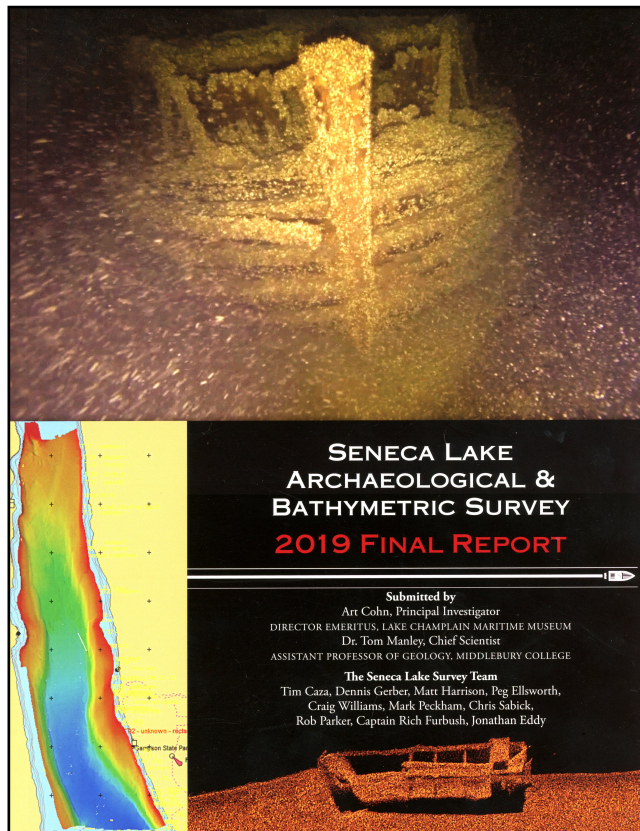
Fall 2020

Canal Boats Found in Seneca Lake

The Finger Lakes of Central New York are well known for their natural beauty and award-winning wines. They are not so well known for the role they played in the state's canal and boating history. Three of the Finger Lakes were connected to the Erie Canal by way of the Cayuga Seneca Canal, which joined with the Erie at Montezuma. From this junction, boats could travel south to Cayuga Lake and then west to Seneca Lake. Both Cayuga and Seneca Lakes are about forty-four miles long and allowed boats to reach Ithaca and Watkins Glen. In addition, the Chemung Canal allowed boats to reach the southern regions of the state and for a few brief years, provided a connection to the Pennsylvania canals and coalfields. The short Crooked Lake Canal allowed boats to travel between Keuka and Seneca Lakes. Once on Keuka Lake, boats could travel south about twenty miles to Hammondsport. Over the decades of canal transport, many boats were lost and now rest relatively intact on the lake bottom. These sunken boats could provide invaluable information about canal boat construction. Over the years, some boats have been

found and investigated. The book, *A Canalboat Primer* (1981, Erie Canal Museum), notes that the Underwater Archaeology Association of Elmira found twenty-eight canal boats in Seneca and Keuka Lakes. Line drawings of one of these boats was included in the book.

In 2018, Art Cohn, the Director Emeritus of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, led a team of researchers from that museum on a hunt for the wreck of the *Frank Bowley*, a coal boat that had sunk in November of 1869. The loss of the *Frank Bowley* had been well documented in the papers and the approximate location was fairly well known. This allowed Art and his team to quickly find the canal boat. With some extra time to spare, the team conducted additional surveys that located an additional seven boats. It was clear that more boats could be found with more time and resources, and this encouraged the team to plan a return to the lake so a more in-depth survey could be conducted.



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For Canal Calendar items and news of local, state, and regional canal societies: Contact Michael Riley at mriley20@twcnny.rr.com

The objectives of the American Canal Society are to encourage the preservation, restoration, interpretation, and use of the historical navigation canals of the Americas; to save threatened canals; and to provide an exchange of canal information. Manuscripts and other correspondence consistent with these objectives are welcome.

An annual subscription of four issues of American Canals is included with ACS membership. Regular single membership \$25; Family Membership \$35. Single copies of American Canals, \$3.

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In the summer of 2019, Art Cohn and Dr. Tom Manley, Assistant Professor of Geology at Middlebury College, led a team of investigators on an Archaeological and Bathymetric Survey of Seneca Lake. This time they had the support of the New York State Museum; the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation; the Canal Corporation; the Department of Corrections; the Canal Society of NYS; Middlebury, and Hobart and William Smith colleges; and others. The primary vessel was Middlebury College's research vessel R/V David Folger, with support from the Underwater Research Vessel Voyager. Together they were able to locate ship-wrecks and to map the lake features with a bathymetric survey.

Over the two years sixteen targets were found. These include one log raft, one lifting frame, seven original sized canal boats (one of which might be a packet boat), six Enlarged era boats, and one ship. What is notable is that if the team did find a packet boat, they might have found the only existing boat of this type. The report notes that in the cold fresh waters of the lake, these remains should be safe for years to come. However, the introduction of quagga mussels has changed the timeline for researchers. Research in Lake Champlain has shown that the mussels will consume any iron nails, bolts, or straps, which then destabilizes the boat. It is predicted that every boat will be covered and damaged no matter of the depth. As a result there isn't a lot of time left before these sunken treasures are lost forever.

Plans were made to return to the lake in 2020, but the pandemic delayed this until 2021. When the team is able to return, the goal is to complete the survey of Seneca Lake. It is hoped that the resources will be found to conduct a similar survey of Cayuga Lake.

The team released a very detailed report of the surveys and findings. This 106-page book outlines the goals, gives a very good history of boating on the canals and lakes, and provides an overview of the sixteen targets and what the team believes these to be. [I asked Art Cohn if the report would be made available as a pdf, and he reports that **The**

Seneca Lake Archaeological and Bathymetric Survey 2019 Final Report would be available on the Finger Lakes Boating Museum website. (as of this printing, I don't see it posted yet.)]

President's Message

Shortly after my term of president began, Linda and Bob Barth asked me if I would like to have a great number of Waterways World magazines from the 1980s, 90s and early 2000s. Although dated, they offer a great insight to the way things used to be. There are many times when I am watching a narrow boater cruising along a restored canal on You Tube while I am reading about the canal's demise and restoration in the magazine. I have also noticed the change in focus in the magazine as canals were restored and then articles became less about construction projects, and more about cruising and what to see on your narrow boat travels, or even what kind of boat to buy.

In a way, that has happened with the American Canal Society over the years. At first, there were not too many canal groups doing what the ACS did, so there was a big push toward preservation and advocacy. American Canals carried many great articles about new discoveries and sites that were threatened. My guess is that the founders either were, or knew many engineers as the articles are quite detailed, and they contain some of the best information you can read about some canals. These folks were able to expand the size of the group by attracting new members who had a similar interest in history, technology, and preservation.

One of the stated goals of the ACS at that time was to foster the organization and growth of local and state canal groups. As these groups grew, they began to take on advocacy and preservation duties, and their newsletters were very able replacements for American Canals. Through the years, the ACS was able to attract new members mostly through the publication of the Best of American Canals series that were on sale at many canal museums and gift shops. It was a great marketing resource for the ACS. But since the end of publication of that series, the number of members has been declining. It is a trend all organizations are facing as the membership ages and the priorities of the younger crowd have shifted.

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A Tour of The St. Lawrence River Canals

Michael Riley

In the summer 2020 issue of *American Canals*, I covered the history of the St. Lawrence River Canals. This article will provide a tour of the canal sites.

Our first stop is along the Soulanges Canal at the Pointe des Cascades and Lock 3 at the intersection of Chemin du Canal and Rue Centrale. Here you will find a nice park complete with a collection of anchors and informational signage. From here you can walk east on a canal-side trail to locks 1 and 2. Lock 1 is on the western shore of Lake St. Louis and a small lighthouse marks the entrance to the canal. To the east across sixteen miles of open and deep water was Montreal and the Lachine Canal. Boaters could have also headed north along the Ottawa River.

The Soulanges Canal replaced the Beauharnois Canal that was built between 1842-1845. The Beauharnois was the only canal built on the south side of the river. It was 11.5 miles long and had 9 locks (Locks 6-14) with a total lift of 83.5 feet. The canal is described as twisting and the entrance as being dangerous since it was located on a narrowed section of the river and at the head of a rapid. The Beauharnois Canal was replaced as it was difficult to increase the flow of water and get the needed 14-foot depth for the newer locks proposed after the 1867 Canadian Confederation. The Beauharnois was replaced by the Soulanges Canal built along the north shore and opened in 1899. After 1899 the western section of the Beauharnois Canal was kept as a power and water regulation canal. To confuse matters, the new canal dug for the Seaway was named the Beauharnois Seaway Canal.

The Soulanges was the last canal built along the river until the Seaway construction of the 1950s. The locks were 280 by 45 with 14 feet of draft and the canal was 14.6 miles long. In an issue of the *Queen's Quarterly* the author described the new Soulanges Canal as "an example of matured practice in hydraulic engineering," and "a monument of human skill." He wrote, "It has four lift-locks and a guard lock; the first three locks have the tremendous lift of 23.5 feet, the fourth a lift of 12 feet and the guard lock of 2 feet. It was decided to construct the Soulanges on the north shore of the St. Lawrence, for several reasons; partly as the curve was less, less locks were required, and also on account of the presence of quicksands on the south shore. The banks along the upper level, 11 miles in length, are built three feet higher than the high water in Lake St. Francis, so that the guard lock

can be left open if necessary. This canal was carried over three rivers, the Delisle, River Rouge and River a la Graise, where electricity is generated for both lighting the canal and operating gates, valves and bridges. The lights are closer than the ordinary city street light, being of the same power, and nowhere more than 160 yards apart, and clustered at the locks. Boats can pass up and down this canal as easily by night as by day. The dimensions of the locks are 260 feet long by 46 feet wide and the water is fifteen feet on the sills. The canal is beautifully finished with sodding, closely cut, graveled paths, and macadamized roads, and trees are planted on the north side. The bridges are graceful in design and are painted white—as in railways they are painted red, so in canals white is used."

The lock numbering on the St. Lawrence Canals can be a bit confusing. Over the years changes brought on by canal enlargements and other modifications have left the lock numbering system a bit of a mystery to the new explorer. Basically, the lock numbers run from east to west and on the first canals they did run sequentially with Lock #1 being at the eastern end of the Lachine Canal and Lock 27/28 at the western end of the Galops Canal. Here is how it works. The first canals had these locks:

- Lachine— Locks 1-5
- Beauharnois- 6-14
- Cornwall— 15-21
- Farran's Point— 22
- Rapide Plat— 23-24
- Galops-25-27/28

The official government numbering of locks begins in Montreal Harbour and ends at the locks west of Cardinal, Ontario. The first series of 28 locks was completed by 1847. To bypass the Lachine Rapids near Montreal the Lachine Canal required 5 locks. The second set or enlarged locks on the Lachine were in parallel to the first so there was no change in numbering. To bypass the Cascades, Cedars, and Split Rock rapids, the Beauharnois Canal required 9 locks which were numbered 6 to 14. When the Soulanges Canal was built to replace the Beauharnois, one of the improvements was to reduce the number of locks to five. The government referred to these locks as Soulanges Lock 1-5. So, ships passed through Locks 1 to 5, then Soulanges 1 to 5, When the ships arrived at the Cornwall Canal the next lock number was Lock 15 reflecting the original numbering system. The first Cornwall Canal had a

series of three locks close together. When the second enlarged canal was built alongside it, the engineers were able to use two locks instead of three and Lock 16 was gone. Similarly, in the Galops Canal at Iroquois, canal enlargements and improvements eliminated Lock 26. So, in the end the total number of locks was reduced to twenty-one. Now that we have got that all straight let us get back to the tour,

The Soulanges Canal heads off west for fourteen miles. Route 338/Chemin du Canal follows the north bank of the canal while the Soulanges Canal Trail follows the south bank. Cross the canal at Chemin Saint-Dominique and then head west on Chemin du Fleuve. After one mile begin looking to the right for the Ancienne centrale hydroelectrique des Cedres, the historical electric generating plant that used water from the canal to create electricity for the canal. Continue west until you reach 308A Chemin du Fleuve and Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site.

Coteau-du-Lac has a nice welcome center and museum, a fort, and the remains of the first canal in North America. The canal and lock have some creative interpretation and are well worth seeing. It is also a nice place to look out over the rapids. After the visit continue west until the Chemin du Fleuve rejoins Route 338. Route 338 is a scenic road that closely follows the river. As you head west and reach Ontario, the highway changes from 338 to Route 2 and soon you will reach Highway 401. This four-lane highway will speed you west to Cornwall; however, Route 2 remains as a more scenic option.

After passing through the Beauharnois or Soulanges Canal, boats entered Lake St. Francis, a thirty-one-mile-long widening of the river. Reaching the Long Sault rapids, the boats had to enter the Cornwall Canal, an eleven-mile-long canal with a total lift of forty-eight feet. The city of Cornwall lies at the eastern end, and Dickinson's Landing lies at the western end. An interesting point is that Lock 17 was the controlling lock for all the boats because the lock itself was slightly narrower than the listed width of 45 feet. Lock 17 was 43 feet 8 inches and that became the maximum width of all boats.

Much of the Cornwall Canal is intact; however, only two of the six locks remain intact. Locks 15, 16, and 17, which were located near the heart of the city on the eastern end of the canal, have been lost to a waterfront park. Although the locks are gone it is worth a visit to the site to see the old superintendent's residence and offices which have been repurposed as the Royal Canadian Air Force Association building at 240 Water St. West. Locks 20 and 21 have been lost under the water of the Seaway.

Lock 19 is the best of the two that remain and is the most accessible. Park at the Saunders Hydro Dam Visitor Centre on Second Street West and walk east to Lock 19. Leave some time to visit the dam's visitor center. The dam controls the outflow of Lake Ontario and creates the navigation pool that extends west to Lake Ontario. Across the river (and the international boundary) the Snell and Eisenhower Seaway Locks serve to replace the Cornwall Canal. The Moses-Saunders Dam was constructed over the western end of the Cornwall Canal and had to accommodate the Cornwall Canal during its construction. A gate can be seen in the dam that allowed traffic to continue to use the canal right up until the last day in 1958 and the flooding of the Seaway.

Continue west along the river on either Rt 2 (slow) or Rt 401 (fast). If you have the time, plan to stop at the Upper Canada Village in Morrisburg. The village was built in 1961 and recreates life in 1860s Canada. The site features several buildings from the 'lost villages,' places in the valley that were flooded during the construction of the Seaway. If you wish to stop, it is suggested that you allow yourself at least four hours to see all the attractions.

While the rapids at Cornwall and Beauharnois were considered too dangerous for most boats to pass through, there were several smaller rapids upstream of Cornwall that were navigable. The down-bound boats could save a lot of time shooting the rapids instead of using the canals and locks. Some of the more powerful boats could make their way upstream through these rapids but most boats used the canals and locks. These canals were grouped together as the Williamsburg Canals and included the Farran's Point Canal, the Rapide Plat Canal, the Iroquois Canal, and the Cardinal Canal. The Iroquois and Cardinal canals were later extended making one canal, which was called the Galops Canal, the name being taken from the Galops Rapid which the canal bypassed. The construction of the dam at Cornwall flooded the Farran's Point and Rapide Plat canals and there is nothing to see. Happily, much of the Galops Canal remains intact and this is where we will find our next sites.

If you are on Route 2 or 401, use Route 1 south to make your way through the small town of Iroquois heading toward the Iroquois lock. As you approach the river, you have two choices. You can turn left onto Boat House Road. Park near the line of boathouses. Or you can drive up to the Seaway Lock, park and take a short half-mile walk back. The goal is to visit Lock 25, which marks the eastern end of the Iroquois Canal. This canal was later extended west

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to the Cardinal Canal and both together became the Galops Canal.

Here we see the old and the new Lock 25. The old Lock 25 was 200 by 45 which was the original St. Lawrence navigation size. The new Lock 25 you see here is 800 feet long and 45 feet wide. Why? When all the locks were being lengthened to be 270 feet long, Lock 25 and Lock 22 at Farran's Point were enlarged to be "fleet locks." These triple-length locks allowed a fleet or group of three boats to lock through at one time speeding up passage times. The new Lock 25 was put into use in 1899 and the Farran's Point lock came into use in 1901. This site also gives us a somewhat dramatic example of how the construction of the Seaway changed the landscape and people's lives. As you stand at Lock 25 look at how the Boat House Road disappears under the water at the low end of the lock. This is a section of the old Route 2 which became a victim of the Seaway.

Head up to the Seaway lock. If you are lucky or if you have checked in with the seaway authority, you might be in time to see a ship pass through. The Iroquois lock and dam act as a second control when water levels in Lake Ontario are high and are used in the winter to protect the Moses-Saunders dam. If the level of the river is normal the lock gates will be open, and the ships will slowly pass through. This is much like Lock 8 on the Welland Canal.

Continue west about four miles along Route 2 to the small town of Cardinal. There are a couple sites to visit here. As you turn left on Bridge Street note the deep cut that the canal passes through. Turn left again onto Dundas Street, and left again onto Lambert Street. Park at St. Andrew's Church and walk back to the canal. The village of Cardinal sits on a small hill that juts out about a half mile into the St. Lawrence. The original canal was constructed around this knob forming a curve which was severe enough that it hampered sight distances for boat captains. In 1900 construction began on a new straighter canal route that passed directly through the hill in a deep cut. This cut would eliminate the tight curve and Lock 26 and improve the approach to Locks 27/28 which are the next stop. If you want to know where it was, Lock 26 is buried under the power generating station.

Continue west on Route 2 about one mile to Galops Canal Road and turn left. Drive to the end and park at Lock 27/28. This is an interesting lock. Lock 27 was the upstream lock which was the last step up to the Lake Ontario level. After boats left the lock there were another three and a half miles of protected canal navigation. For boats headed downstream, they would use the upper three and a half miles of canal and then exit the protected

area and enter the rapids by Lock 28. If you are not familiar with the rapids running this lock is a bit confusing.

While you are making your travel plans, include a visit to the Eisenhower Lock on the American side. The Snell and Eisenhower Locks are the only two Seaway locks built on the American side. The Eisenhower Lock has a viewing platform and small information center. If you do this first, you can drive across the river into Canada at Cornwall.

Most of these sites listed in this tour are open Victoria Day to Canadian Thanksgiving or Memorial Day to Columbus Day, however, always check ahead as some places will close after Labor Day.

Notes:

There is a fantastic amount of information about the St. Lawrence River canals.

The Queen's Quarterly, Volume XV, July 1907 to April 1908, contains a long history of the river and canal under the title of The Soulanges Canal, pages 273-285. This can be found on Google Books.

Nobel Whitford's History of the Canals of New York State, 1905, gives dates and other data in the chapter The Canals of Canada, page 430.

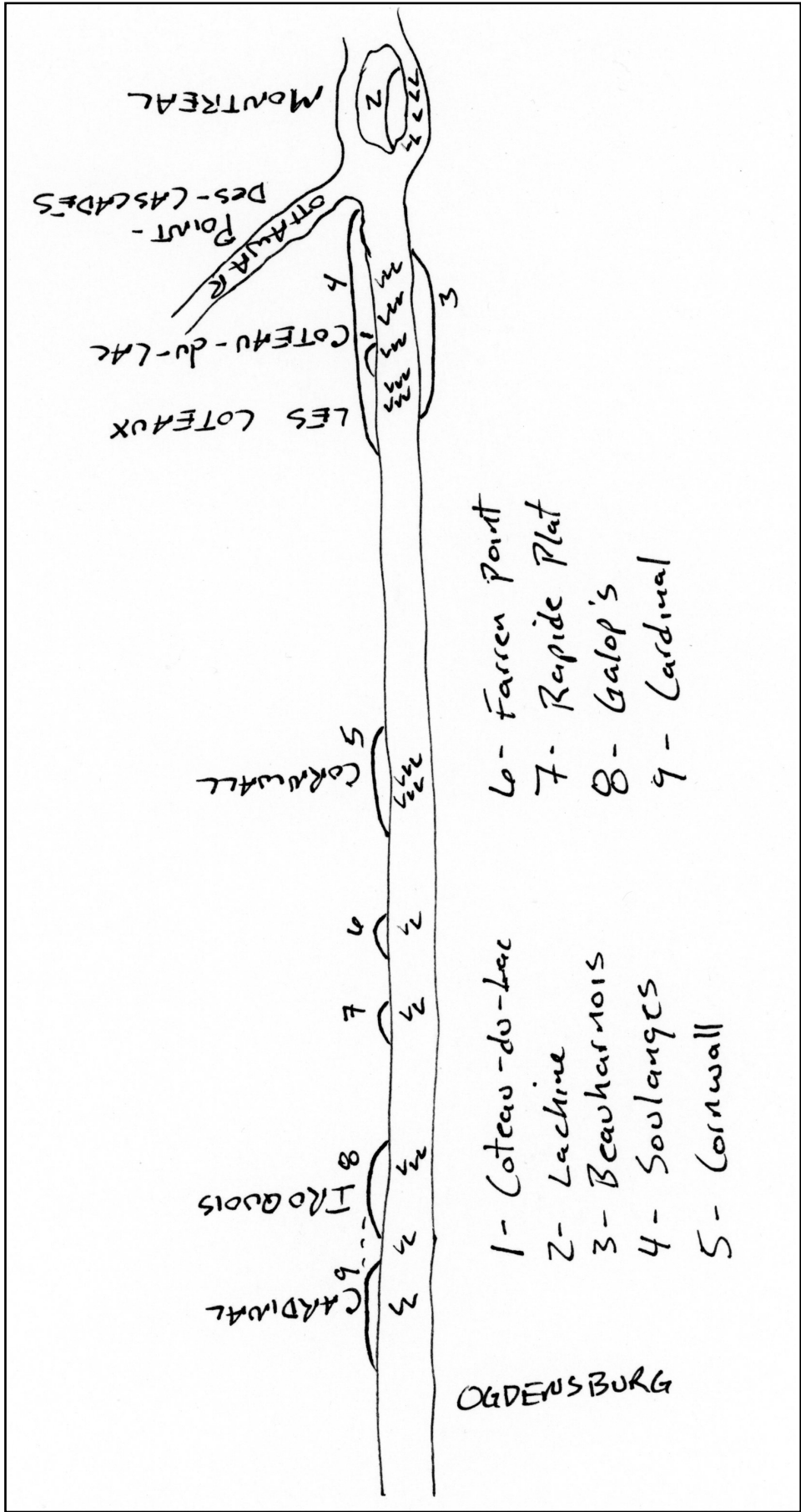
Articles can be found in the newspapers by searching sites such as Old Fulton and NYS Historic Newspapers. An interesting article titled The Canals of Canada ran in at least seven western New York newspapers in the summer of 1903 in opposition to the new Barge Canal referendum.

Running the Rapids, Vol. 2, Boats on the St. Lawrence, 1832-, can be found and downloaded as a pdf file from the Cornwall Library website.

State of New York, Messages from the Governor with notes, edited by Charles Z. Lincoln. These cover many years allowing the researcher to follow an issue from year to year. These can be downloaded from Google Books.

The Annual Report of the New York State Engineer and Surveyor for the year 1878 speaks to the Threat from Canada, page 7.

War Department, Corps of Engineers, Bulletin No. 19, Survey of the Northern and Northwestern Lakes, 1910, pages 373-383. This report presents a very detailed description of the river and canals. This is available on Google Books.



- 1- Coteau-du-lac
- 2- Lachine
- 3- Beauharnois
- 4- Soulanges
- 5- Cornwall
- 6- Farren Point
- 7- Rapide Plat
- 8- Galop's
- 9- Cardinal

Canal Tidbits and News

We received a couple of updates from the *Middlesex Canal Association*.

This from J. Jeremiah Breen- The good benefit from COVID-19 is the exercise of coping skills. After the Massachusetts governor prohibited meetings of ten or more, Treasurer Emeritus Howard Winkler offered to host directors' meetings in his Zoom room. Howard was able to get the older directors to try a Zoom meeting as he was 87. (The honor of emeritus was voted when he retired after 29 years as treasurer.) Howard first offered a practice Zoom with director Tom Dahill, 94, then proceeded to host younger directors.

The first directors' meeting in Howard's Zoom meeting room had problems. One director who is a professor had solutions like writing advice on paper and holding it up on video to another director who didn't have audio. Shared video also allowed photos to be seen by all as part of the discussion. Best of all, the professor attended when usually a physical meeting at 3:30 on Wednesday at the canal visitor center/museum had the barrier of twenty miles through traffic clogged metro Boston.

COVID-19 did increase regulations. The professor, who is also the leader of the joint Appalachian Mountain Club - Middlesex Canal Association walks along the towpath, said he would no longer volunteer to lead because of the now onerous AMC requirements. Meetup is a possible replacement.

After the governor's COVID-19 order, the Wild and Scenic Concord River Stewardship Council cancelled its planned annual Riverfest for a virtual one. For sometime the Middlesex Canal Association had wanted to make a video tour of its museum. Now a member of the council worked with the local public access TV station using a 360° camera to tour the museum, walk the Thoreau Towpath, and paddle the Concord, <<https://tinyurl.com/virtualmiddlesex>> .

The Council has granted the Association \$11,500 from the National Park Service for an observation deck and interpretive panel at the future canal visitor center. The River Stewardship Council grant supports public access to the river. The visitor center/museum is being built on the river bank where the ceremonial groundbreaking for the canal was in 1794. The shovel used for the groundbreaking is a museum exhibit and can be handled by visitors to experience how shorter Americans were two centuries ago. And strong, working a shovel with a heavy iron blade from can see to can't

see.

And this from Betty M Bigwood- The Middlesex Canal Association took ownership of an 1870s brick wool storage warehouse in 2014. The goal is to turn the building into our new museum. We had operated a museum since 2001 in a rental space when this derelict building became available. It sits on the banks of the summit pond which provided most of the water for the entire canal, overlooking the famous floating towpath and the place where the first ceremonial shovels of dirt were dug by James Sullivan and Loammi Baldwin in 1793. Raising money and going through a 2-year permitting process allowed us finally to start actual work in the fall of 2019. The roof was removed, a steel frame was erected inside and the 18-inch-thick brick walls were repaired over the summer of 2020. Our goal is to have a weathertight structure by the end of this year. Trusses will be ordered this coming week and the roof completed thereafter. We are planning a virtual Topping Off Party in early November. Follow our web site middlesexcanal.org for details. Betty M Bigwood email to-gbchwilm@verizon.net

On September 12th, Dr. David and Elizabeth Beebe were given the honor of having the Camillus Erie Canal Park that they had founded in 1972 renamed the *Dave and Liz Beebe Erie Canal Park*. The couple has worked as a team all these years to turn the original 90 acres into a 400-acre park that includes both a canal and a steam engine museum, boat rides, pavilion, and a restored aqueduct. The store/museum retains the name of Sims Store to honor the family who ran the business along the canal.

The Canal Society of New York State has recently been selected to participate in two exciting funding opportunities to enhance their mission. Last month, they were invited to participate in the William G. Pomeroy Fund for NYS History's matching grant program. For every two dollars the Canal Society raises through this dedicated fundraising campaign, the Pomeroy Fund for NYS history will contribute one dollar. These funds will be used to help keep our Old Erie Canal Heritage Park open safely during these challenging times. What is raised will go towards temporary modifications to the Park's historic buildings and Visitors Center exhibits. And the Canal Society was honored to be one of just a few organizations across the country to be awarded the Save

America's Treasures grant. This grant will provide a total of \$171,000 over three years to support cataloging of the collection, which is housed at the Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse. This is good news as a large part of David Barber's personal collection was donated to the Canal Society of NYS and is housed at the Erie Canal Museum.

The Tumble, which is the newsletter of the Indiana Canal Society, lets us know that the Metamora Canal Site is receiving \$250,000 worth of repairs and spiffing up. This was good news to the local population who have been complaining about the condition of the site. Although more money could be used, this will go a long way in improving the visitor experience. You can read the Tumble online at www.indcanal.org.

Likewise the *Canal Society of Ohio* fall newsletter carried news of the issues at Metamora which included the sad news that the *Ben Franklin III* boat ride had been shut down and may never operate again. The park has offered rides over the only covered aqueduct since 1964. The CSO also reported that the boat ride at Canal Fulton may have seen its last passengers after fifty years of operation. The *St. Helena III* was the second boat to operate at the park.

The recent *Canalway Trail Times* brings the news that one of the most difficult to close gaps in the New York State Canalway Trail has been closed. This fourteen-mile-section of trail between Camilus and Dewitt involved using the busy city streets as there was no old canal or even railroad beds to use. With the construction of pedestrian bridges and paved paths aside city streets, trail users can safely navigate through Syracuse following the route of the old canal. Parks and Trails New York publishes the Canalway Trail Times as a digital newsletter at www.canalwaytrailtimes.org

Although we had heard this news a few months back, the official announcement came through that the *Canadian Canal Society* has ceased to exist. By a vote of the remaining members, it was decided to dispose of the society's assets and dissolve. This is indeed sad news.

ACS member Frank Wassilak manages the website *19th Century U.S. Canals*. This site has links to historical maps of the routes of seventy-nine canals in Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Virginia. He would welcome leads to additional historical maps that he could add to his web

site. His E-mail address is User606258@aol.com.

We have been following the news that the *Illinois and Michigan Canal* in Ottawa (Illinois) should be rewatered by Thanksgiving. You might recall that Arnie Bandstra gave us an overview of this project in the Fall 2019 issue of *American Canals*. This is good news indeed. We have been posting updates on the ACS Facebook page.

A battle over the fate of the *Savannah River Lock and Dam* has been going on for some time now, with some along the river wishing to keep the old structure intact and the environmental groups advocating for its removal. We try to keep the canal community up to date on these actions on the ACS Facebook page. At the very least, I find it is a great way to learn about (new to me) canals and navigations. When I learn about them, I add the site to the Canal Sites Map on the website.

President's Message, continued

When I took on the role as president, I drafted a Strategic Plan for the organization. I think all organizations should go through the process of looking back at what worked and what didn't, and then looking forward to what we should be doing. I continue to believe that the ACS still has a role in the canal community, and that that role might even be expanding again as the local and state groups struggle. The dissolution of the Canadian Canal Society is such an example of where the ACS could help with their website materials, sharing information, and other advocacy.

Elsewhere in this issue I outline my goals for the Canal Index Sheets. This was another early project that had great success and then faded. The records that those folks made in the 1970s and 80s are a fantastic resource for all canal researchers. We should be building on what they left us, and it might be a project that helps us pull in new people.

I will create a page of the website for the current Strategic Plan. I would appreciate it if you could take a look and offer your comments, either good, or not so good. You can help shape the future of the ACS as we look toward our 50th anniversary.

Mike



Bill Holdsworth - C&O Canal Association

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Association is getting ready to welcome canal enthusiasts from around the world to next year's World Canals Conference August 30-September 2, 2021 in Hagerstown, MD.

The COVID-19 pandemic has cast a cloud over the preparations. Leipzig, Germany was scheduled to host the 2020 conference in September, but the impact of the pandemic forced them to reschedule for May 2022. We will monitor developments over the coming months. We are hopeful that conditions will improve and that canal lovers will be ready to gather again.

We will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Construction of the C&O Canal began in 1828 in Washington, D.C. The canal reached Cumberland in 1850. It operated until 1924. The federal government acquired the disused waterway in 1938. Legislation transformed it into a national park in 1971.

The Conference theme will be Historic Canals Today: Education, Recreation, and Tourism

Many 19th-century waterways have found a new role in the 21st century. The conference will provide an opportunity to hear the secrets of their successes.

Mornings of the four-day event will feature presentations related to the conference theme. In the afternoon, attendees will hit the road for study tours that visit canal locations and other local history sites, such as Great Falls, Paw Paw Tunnel, and Antietam Battlefield.

Hagerstown is just eight miles from the C&O Canal, making the city an ideal base for canal enthusiasts to explore the area. Conveniently located near the junction of two Interstate highways, I-81 and I-70, Hagerstown is within a day's drive of many cities in the Eastern United States.

You can learn more by visiting the conference website, <https://wcc2021.org/> or the Visit Hagerstown website, <http://www.visithagerstown.com/>.

Save the date. We would love to welcome you in 2021.

Bill Holdsworth

Chairman

2021 World Canals Conference, Hagerstown, MD

wcc2021.org

301-762-9376 (h)

240-688-5889 (m)

A Wild Ride

A Perilous Situation. - A correspondent of the Rochester Observer relates the following account of a wonderful escape from almost certain destruction.

Mr. Editor: - I had just arrived at the Falls of Niagara on Monday, of last week, when a canal boat was discovered floating down in the center probably two miles above the cataract. It was soon discovered there were three persons aboard, who gave evidence of distress and alarm. The facts, as obtained by the writer from two of the persons on board were nearly as follows:

The boat belonged to the Welland Canal, and received its freight from the Canada shore, two or three miles above the falls, and was towed up by a horse on shore. The master of the boat Capt. Coon, was sick on board, and entirely unable to take any charge of her. The management was entrusted to another man, a boy seventeen years old, and a woman of the same age.

From some deficiency in attaching the tow rope to the horse it gave way, when the boat was about three miles above the falls. They soon discovered that they were not only floating fast from the shore but rapidly downwards. They could not reach the bottom with their setting poles, and had no means of making a successful effort to reach the shore.

Consternation seized the crew, as they saw on the one hand the American shore, at the distance of two miles, and on the other the Canada shore at the distance of one mile, fast receding; and a mile and a half below they saw the rising smoke of the dreadful cataract, which they of one accord had now concluded would form their common grave.

All was excitement - nothing was done or could be done, with hopes of success; till at last the man, the only efficient hand in the management of the boat, concluded to make one exertion to save himself - plunged overboard and swam for the Canada shore, 1 mile distant, taking a diagonal course downwards, hoping to land above the falls.

After he left the boat, the boy and the young woman concluded to make one more effort, which they did by raising a sail, hoping that the almost imperceptible breeze might float them so far towards the American shore, as to land them on Goat Island. Their mast consisted of their setting pole set into the stove pipe, to which they attached blankets for sails.

They floated so far towards the American shore that they were taken from the boat by six men who ventured in

a small boat to their relief, although they were so near the falls that the water became very rough. The boat passed on the American side of Goat Island on the rocks, in the rapids, just above the falls, where it remained when the writer left on Wednesday.

The whole circumstances as related by the young man are most deeply interesting and affecting, and although too much affected when he told the story the next day, to give a connected chain of the events, yet he manifested during the transaction, a presence of mind in erecting sails, closing windows, &c.; which would have been creditable to riper years, and no doubt saved him from the destruction that awaited them below.

The boat had a horse on board, which they forced overboard during the time of their greatest peril, hoping he would reach the Canada shore; but the poor animal made his grave in the vortex below.

Oswego Palladium
Sept. 19, 1832

Thanks to Richard Palmer for transcribing this article.

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Canal Comments

This column is a recent one from Terry being dated August 26, 2020. I did some newspaper searching and found some mentions of the P and O Canal that I have included in the Historical Newspaper Archives section.

Number 215

HAPPENINGS ALONG THE P & O CANAL

There is a lot that I, as a canal-era historian, don't know about the Pennsylvania & Ohio Canal. We have access to a number of the company's annual reports to the State of Ohio, and several accounts of the canal, locally, in pertinent county histories, but to date no comprehensive history of that canal has been written.

I am not even entirely sure how many locks there were on that canal. I've seen authoritative accounts listing between 53 to 57. The official reports state there were nine feeder dams, but it is difficult to list more than eight.

Field work has been attempted by many but since railroad tracks were quickly laid over a majority of the canal line and stone structures were immediately robbed to construct those lines, accurate field work is difficult. I have probably done less field work on that eighty-three-mile-long canal than I have on the unfinished-twelve-mile Nimishillen & Sandy Canal.

Another large area where good data is missing on the history of the P & O Canal are personal anecdotes about things people had done, on and along the canal. Today I'm going to relay just a couple of the few I've been able to unearth.

"On Thursday last, May 23rd., our citizens were greeted with the arrival of a boat from Beaver Pennsylvania. The Packet ONTARIO, Captain Bronson in charge, came into town (Warren) in gallant style, amid the roar of the cannon and shouts and hearty cheers of our citizens. The boat was crowded with gentlemen from Pennsylvania and along the line, and accompanied by four excellent bands of music. On arriving at the foot of Main Street, they were greeted by the Warren Band, and a procession formed which marched through the square to the front of Towne's Tavern, where a neat and appropriate address was made to the passengers by John Crowell, Esq. Mayor of the town. The rest of the day was spent in hilarity, and on Friday the boat left for Beaver, carrying about forty citizens of Youngstown who were highly delighted with the excursion.

Arrangements had been made by Messrs. Clark & Company for running a daily line of Packets from this place to Beaver. The boats, the ONTARIO, the HURON, and the HUDSON, are fitted up in superior style to carry fifteen tons of freight and sixty passengers. They are to leave Warren Dailey at Noon and arrive at Beaver next morning".

"When the canal was completed to Akron, there was another gala day from Warren. Governor Porter of Pennsylvania came with the party from Junction, and there was hardly standing room on the Packet. The visitors landed, walked in the deep mud up to the Court House where General Simon Perkins read an address of welcome and Ohio Governor Porter, and others, replied. The party returned to the canal boat and proceeded to Akron."

"In 1840 there was built in Warren a canal boat known as the TRUMBULL. It was made as large as could go through the locks, and the Presbyterian Church promised its Sunday School scholars a cruise to Youngstown. Consequently, on July 4th, 1840, the children gathered at M. B. Taylor's warehouse and were surprised to find the banks of the canal fairly lined with the residents of the town. When all the passengers were aboard there were so many of them that there was little space to even sit or stand, let alone move.

There were so many people on Board, that the man at the tiller had difficulty seeing the bank and, every once in a while, would run into it, with the necessity of fending off and getting up momentum again. A great deal of time was consumed until they reached the river below Warren and were able to enter the much wider slackwater pool. After that the students had a delightful, though crowded time.

They finally reached Ryan's Grove near Youngstown and the crowd was able to disembark. They all had a delightful time where the pie, the cake, the ginger-bread, and lemonade were as free as air.

But they had taken a longer time getting to the park than had been planned upon and the sun was getting low in the western sky before they were all aboard and the TRUMBULL was headed for home. Surely someone planning the trip was shot-sighted as there were no lanterns aboard and the steersman had even more trouble in the failing light.

"They managed to finally reach Girard where the boat halted long enough to procure a sufficient quantity of candles for light and enough potatoes to provide the candle

holders. By the light of these numerous tallow dips, the TRUMBULL was able to slowly proceed.

But, whether it was the imagination of the crowded passengers, too much cake and lemonade, or whether the motion of the “ship” was a bad ingredient to add is not known. What is known is that nine-tenths of the gallant passengers suffered the tortures of ‘mal-de-mer’.

And it was between one and two o’clock in the morning of July 5th. before the TRUMBULL once again docked at Taylor’s warehouse in Warren. It had taken eight hours for the return trip from Ryan’s Grove!”

‘Pod’ Moore was a Captain of one of the regular freighters for many years on the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal. Pod was an imposing person: Tall, and Wide, and Thick, and in his younger days no one to mess around with. One account mentions a time when he and four other Captains were gathered at a lock waiting their turn to “Lock Through” or possibly at a tavern, just waiting, when “somebody” in the group called Pod a “Jelly Belly”. Now Pod said later that he wasn’t sure just who had said that and he didn’t want the guilty culprit to get off Scott Free, so he ‘lit’ into the group as a whole, and knocked all four unconscious. Pod, in later years it was said, “got religion”, gave up drinking and brawling, and became quite an outspoken advocate for “abstinence” along the canal.

Canal Index Sheets

If you are a member of this organization, I would imagine that you enjoy searching out and studying historic canals and their structures. So have you ever used the ACS Canal Index or Structure sheets to learn more? Do you even know what they are?

I went back into the ACS archives to find the first mention of the Canal Index. In American Canals issue number 3, dated November 1972, the leadership of the society introduced the idea of a Canal Index Committee, where canals and structures would be inventoried and recorded on 5 by 8 index cards. In the next issue, a blank form was mailed out with American Canals with the hopes that the membership would be willing to contribute to the project. The article states that “in coordinating the vast amount of work done by individuals and canal societies throughout North America, it will serve, in published form, as basis for further research (archaeological or otherwise), for restoration/preservation activities, or simply as a form of brief guide for an enthusiast on a day’s outing.” In issue 14, the committee reported that it had indexed all the submissions received so far on IBM keypunch cards and could generate a list nearly six feet in length. The next mention I could find was in issue 54, August 1985. Committee-chair Terry Woods noted that most of the Ohio and Pennsylvania canals had been surveyed and recorded, but New York and New Jersey had not many submissions at all. By February 1988 issue there was another plea for submissions, and then after that, the project appears to have faded away.

These records are all available on the ACS website as pdf files under the By States, and Other Countries drop down tabs. Although little has been done with the sheets since the late 80s, they do provide a remarkable record of what was there at the time. Over the years many of these sites have degraded or been lost.

It has been almost fifty years since the project was started and certainly there have been changes. I have long thought that it would be a nice project to add to the files and update what we have. We have a fillable-pdf form to make the recording of information a bit easier, and you can find this under the By State tab. So if you enjoy researching old canal structures, think about recording some information about them so that canal historians in the future can benefit from your efforts.

Back issues of
AmericanCanals
can be found on the
American Canal Society
website at
www.americancanals.org
or search for
American Canal Society

Historical Newspaper Archives

Internal Communication With The West

New York American (from the Philadelphia National Gazette)

April 10, 1840

The line a car communication between the far west of Ohio and Philadelphia, is now complete. Cargoes of produce have arrived in this city from Cleveland, and elsewhere, via Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal, and we may now consider that important link in the great chain as complete, and internal navigation as now secure.

Completion of the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal

Troy Daily Whig

April 15, 1840

From the Cleveland Herald

An event of greater apparent consequence to the Northwest has not transpired since the last war, than the connection of Pittsburgh and Cleveland by a navigable canal, announced by the passage of a boat over the Ravenna summit on the 3rd inst.

The Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal is the work of an incorporated company acting under a joint charter from the States of Pennsylvania and Ohio, obtained in the winter of 1827. It was undertaken by the capitalists of Philadelphia, and unlike almost every work of a company for internal improvement, has been prosecuted to a completion. The work progressed with the funds of the stockholders only, till the passage of the now called "plunder act" by the Ohio legislature, when it became entitled to almost \$400,000 under that law. We have not the statistics of this canal before us and cannot therefore give its history in detail. It leaves the Ohio River at the mouth of Big Beaver in Pennsylvania and extends up the valley of that stream to New Castle. Here it bends westward, ascending the Mahoning to Warren and Ravenna, 501 feet above Lake Erie. Thence descending the valley of the Breakneck and the Cuyahoga, it enters the Ohio Canal at Akron, 39 miles from Cleveland. Its length is about 100 miles, total of lockage something less than 500 feet.

From Beaver to Pittsburgh, 30 miles, the boats will be towed by steam, and may proceed by the Pennsylvania Canal to Johnstown, at the foot of the Portage Railroad.

Ohio and Pennsylvania Canal

The Evening Post

August 26, 1840

The opening of the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal, which forms the connecting link between the Ohio Canal at Akron and the Pennsylvania improvements, was celebrated along the line of the canal on the 3rd instant, with great demonstrations of joy.

Effects of the storm

Daily Democrat [Rochester, NY]

June 12, 1843

Cleveland, June 7

The effects of the storm on the Ohio Canal are confined to the level at this place and the Pinery level thirteen miles south. There is a bar formed about half a mile from the city, and two breaks and several slides upon the Pinery level. Mr. Hawkins, the Superintendent, thinks that bar can be removed and the breaks repaired in the course of three or four days.

On the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal the damage has been much more serious. We insert extracts from letters dated "Campbellport, June 5th."

"A terrible calamity has visited Campbellport. The water rose last night from 11 to 1 o'clock, four feet higher than was ever before known, and the Mahoning made a clear breach across our warehouse level, demolishing the banks of the canal entirely, and undermining Campbell and Miller's warehouse and destroyed some thousand dollars of property. The extent of the damage on the Canal below, is as yet unknown, but it is immense. One of our most estimable citizens was drowned two hours since in endeavoring to save property from the demolished warehouse.

"The high water has taken or washed off the towing path, for probably over a mile in length, in different places here; and below, as far as we have heard, it has done much damage. It does not seem possible to make repairs so as to pass a boat for two months."

We learn that the freshet was very destructive on the east branch of the Chagrin river. Mr. Hatfield's grist mill in Aurora was swept away, and in Bainbridge, Mr. Eggleston's mill dam, and the mill dam of Homkins, were destroyed. The valuable saw mill of Mr. Griffith, in Solon, and two bridges in the township, were demolished. The bridge over the Chagrin at Mr. Burnett's, in orange, was also swept away.

The farms along the river have sustained serious loss in fences and crops destroyed. No damage was sustained at Chagrin Falls, the freshet being confined to the east branch.

The barn of Mr. Huam Smith, in Dover, was struck with lightning during the storm Sunday night, and a horse

killed. The barn was not injured very seriously. Herald.

Internal Improvement- New York and Erie Railroad, &c.

Philadelphia, Correspondence of the Herald.

April 19, 1845

Our city members have returned from Harrisburg, and are exulting at their success in defeating the application of the New York and Erie Railroad company, by a tie vote in the Senate, from making some twenty miles of their improvement through one corner of Pike county, in this state. It is really to be regretted that our representatives cannot, or will not, see the true interest of Philadelphia. Our businessmen are, and have been, for years, continually harping about securing the lake trade, and yet our representatives are found recording their votes against a bill that would give us a part of that business. Some years ago, it was said in our Legislature, that the representatives from Philadelphia were unacquainted with the geography of their own state, and it would rather appear that our present members were not overstocked with that kind of knowledge, to judge from their votes against allowing said company from entering our territory, with a condition that we might connect our present and future improvements with it; also that they should not carry coal, thus protecting the coal interest of the Delaware and Hudson, Lehigh and Schuylkill Companies, and Philadelphia.

It is well known that Philadelphia is nearer Dunkirk by Elmira, Williams, and Pottsville Railroad, than New York, and taking grades into view, it must be equal to 150 miles nearer. In 1835, our city and county members went in with all their might and got a charter for the Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal, or what is generally known as the Cross-cut Canal, extending from Newcastle on the Ohio and Erie Canal to Massillon, on the canal that extends from Portsmouth through the State of Ohio to Cleveland.

The Philadelphians subscribed to the stock and completed the work? And what has been the effect of it? Instead of diverting the trade of the lakes to Philadelphia, it has turned the trade of the valley of the Ohio to the lakes, Canada, and New York. Goods have been carried in less time, and for less money, from the latter city, by the lakes, and this Cross-cut Canal to the Ohio River by some twenty-five cents per 100 lbs, than by our own main line to Pittsburg. The Philadelphia representation always advocated the commencement of the Ohio and Erie Canal from Beaver to the town of Erie, which cost the state over 4,000,000 dollars, and which they suspended operations on when it required

less than 300,000 dollars to complete it, and gave it to a company who have it now completed, and which is now operating against the interest of Philadelphia something in the same manner as the Cross-cut Canal, only more serious, it being ten miles nearer from Beaver to Erie than to Cleveland, and strikes the lake some thirty miles down. I give you these as specimens of Philadelphia legislation. A few days since a member of the Legislature from the county observed, that the Delaware and Hudson was too strong at Harrisburg for the New York and Erie, they had any amount of money," and I am of the opinion, as they saying is, there was more truth than poetry in the remark.

Improvements on the Baltimore and Ohio

The Philadelphia Inquirer

April 7, 1903

Double Track Work on the Pittsburg Division to be Completed Next Month

The work of constructing a new double track line between Hazleton and Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, on the Pittsburg division of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad is progressing rapidly and the entire line will be put into service by May 1, 1905.

The section from Newton Falls to Ravonna, a distance of 14.7 miles, has been finished and is now in use, the operation over it being highly satisfactory. The old line from Hazleton to Cuyahoga Falls was 57.41 miles. By the elimination of curves and taking a more direct course the new line will be nearly six miles shorter, as by it the distance between the two points will be reduced to 51.51 miles. This improvement is part of the very good work of the present management in straightening the alignment and reducing the grade of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

The present line is very circuitous and located mostly on the old Pennsylvania and Ohio Canal. The maximum grade west bound is 6 per cent, and 5.5 per cent east bound against 3 per cent both ways on the new line.

When finished it will complete a double track between Pittsburg, Pa., and Sterling Ohio, a distance of 160 miles, with the exception of the Bakerstown Tunnel (0.3 miles). From Sterling to Sullivan, a little over 21 miles, single track remains temporarily, while there is a double track from there to Chicago Junction. This work is being done under the direction of Mr. D.D. Carothers, chief engineer of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and Mr. A.M. Kinsman, engineer of construction, is directly in charge. In addition to this track improvement, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad is building a new passenger station at Youngstown, Ohio, that will be thoroughly modern and architecturally beautiful and give ample facilities for all requirements.

Historical Newspaper Archives

Hampden Federalist and Public Journal

Springfield, Mass.

June 26, 1822

New York June 19.

GRAND CANAL

We are informed by a gentleman who has just returned from a visit to Buffalo and Niagara Falls, that he traveled 160 miles in the new convenient passage boat on the Erie Canal, viz., from Little Falls to Utica, 22 miles; Utica to Montezuma, by Rome, Syracuse, and Weed's Basin, 96 miles; Crossing from Montezuma over the Seneca River and the Cayuga Marshes 6 miles, and up the river Clyde 6 1-2 miles to Blockhouse, he again takes the canal and passing the flourishing villages of Lyons and Palmyra to Hartswell's Basin, 42 miles.

On this route are already seven passage boats with good accommodations, and hundreds of other boats transporting (col. 2) immense quantities of produce to Utica; and such is the stock in this state, that there are now 100,000 barrels of flour alone on the banks of the canal, that cannot be transported for want of boats - - many of which are now building that cost from \$100 to \$400 each, and carry from 150 to 400 barrels. These boats have taken freight from Montezuma to Utica, a distance of nearly 100 miles, at the extremely low rate of 5 cents per cwt., or one dollar per ton, which is about one tenth the former rate of transporting the same distance by wagons; in this case, the owners of the goods paid the tolls, which however are very trifling.

The passage boats are drawn by three horses tandem rigged; the other boats by one or two horses, according to the size of the boat - - a boy rides the rear horse, and travels from three to four miles per hour. Passengers leaving Utica at 8 o'clock, reach Weeds Basin 87 miles the next morning at 7 o'clock, traveling all night. The charge is only 4 cents per mile, which includes board and lodging both of which are as good if not better, than the taverns on the road. This is as rapid as the stages travel, much less expensive, no risk of life or limb, and no fatigue or dust attending.

The Grand Canal is nearly finished from Schenectady to Little Falls, 56 miles - - from Montezuma to Clyde, or Block House, 13 miles, and from Hartwell's Basin to Genesee River, and from thence to Lockport, 70 miles - all of which it is said, will be filled, and boats allowed to pass, on or before the first day of October

next making 260 or 270 miles, through one of the richest and most valuable parts of the state of New-York. Numerous emigrants from the hardy and industrious northern and eastern hive are to be seen transporting themselves and their families, at little or no expense, to settle on the lands bordering on the canal. Merchants residing in Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Lexington and Louisville and in Michigan and Indiana, will soon get their goods transported for 1/4 the price they now pay, and save as much or more in the breakage and damage now unavoidable in wagons, besides the saving of half or two thirds in time; which, in fact, is extending the credit on their goods. Emigrants and their families much prefer the canal to any other route on every account - - expense, time, health and comfort &c. The amount of toll already received at the office in Utica this spring exceeds the sum paid the whole of last year, and it is supposed it will amount 50 or 60,000 dollars.

Our thanks to Richard Palmer for transcribing this article.

Canalendar

Note- The Canalendar is hopeful for a better 2021 and beyond. The best advice is to check a group's website or social media for updates.

April 16-18, 2021: Pennsylvania Canal Society, Spring Trip, Lower Division of the Lehigh Navigation, www.pacanalsociety.org, emails to PaCanals.info@gmail.com

April 23-25, 2021: Canal Society of Ohio, Spring Trip, Indian Lake Region, www.canalsocietyohio.org

May 2021: Canal Society of New York State, New York State Canal Conference, Schenectady, NY at the Mohawk Harbor Resort and Casino. <https://www.nyscanalconference.org/>

August 30-Sept 2, 2021: World Canals Conference 2021, C&O Canal, Hagerstown, MD. www.wcc2021.com

October 1-3, 2021: Pennsylvania Canal Society, Fall Trip, Pittsburgh Riverboat Tour, PaCanals.info@gmail.com

April 15-17, 2022: Pennsylvania Canal Society, Spring Trip, Upper Grand Division of the Lehigh Navigation, PaCanals.info@gmail.com

May 30 - June 3, 2022: World Canals Conference 2022, Leipzig, Germany. This is a reschedule of the 2020 event.