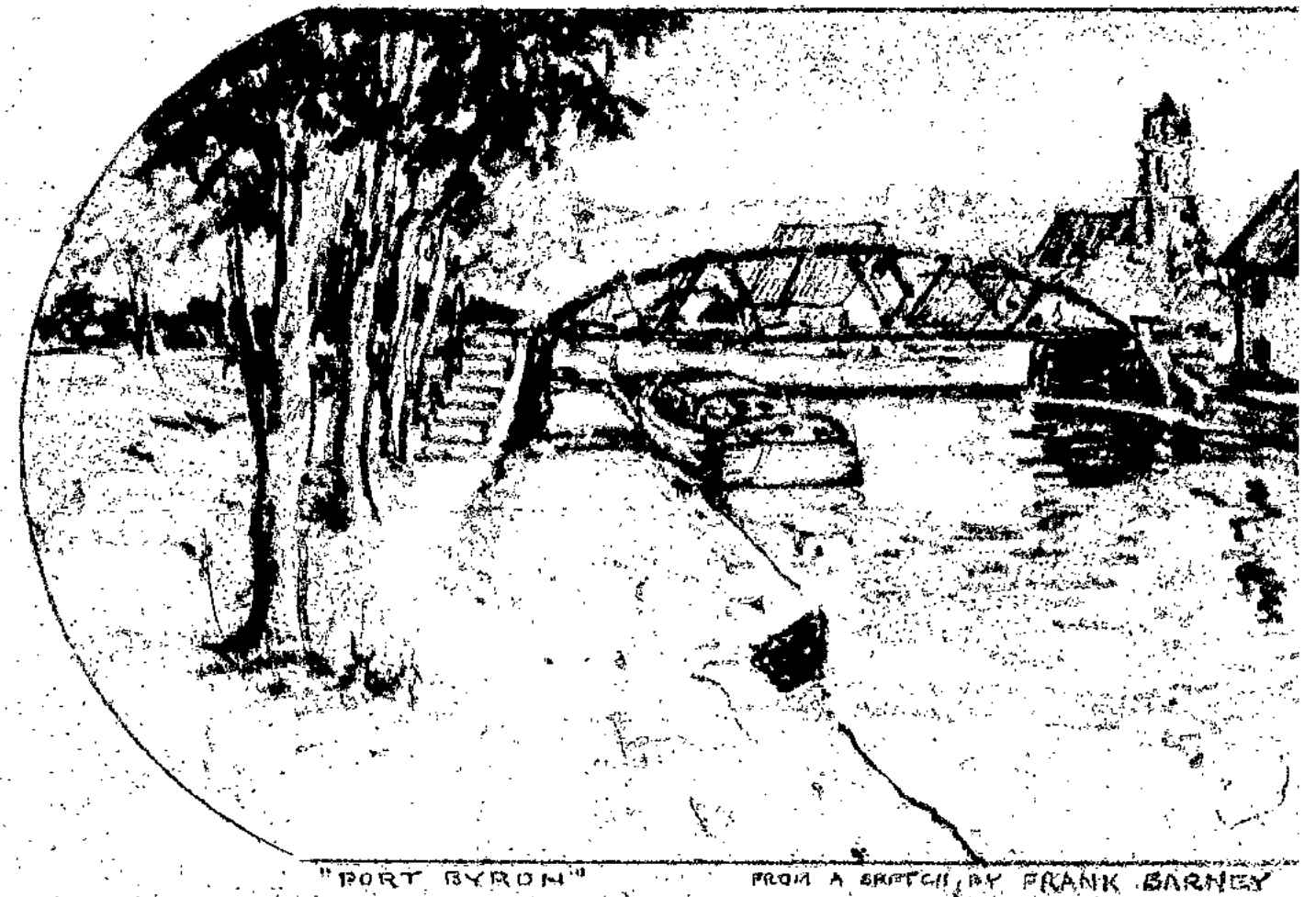
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

BULLETIN

ARCHAEOLOGY
HISTORY



"PORT BYRON" FROM A SKETCH BY FRANK BARNEY

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THE BULLETIN of the Archaeological Society of Central New York is published monthly, except July and August, covering all phases of archaeological and historical endeavor pertaining to central New York State. Regular meetings of the A.S.N.Y. are held, 8:00 P.M., at the Cayuga Museum of History and Art, Auburn, N. Y.

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The A.S.C.N.Y. is affiliated with the Division of Anthropology, Cayuga Museum of History and Art, Auburn, N. Y.

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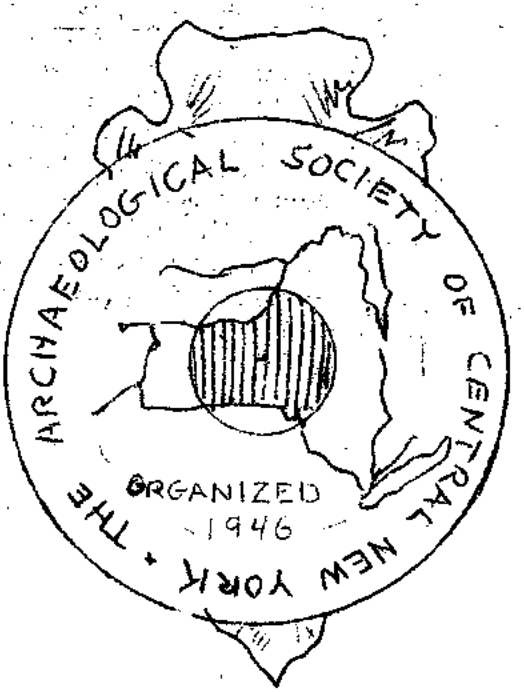


REPORT OF LAST MEETING

The December meeting, being the last of the year, is always looked upon as the president's meeting. On December 10th, Professor W. K. Long presented his three-dimensional slides in color of last summer's trip through Spain and Northern Africa. With about 100 pictures he showed not only the countryside but also the architectural, the industrial development and also the people of those two sections of the world. Touching briefly on the history of Spain and pointing out the fact that Spain at one time ruled the world, he told the history of the many invasions and the great influence of these people as they moved through the country. The most interesting influence being the Moorish was brought out by several pictures of great masterpieces of architecture and decoration left by the Arabian conquorers. A few pictures showed southern France, particularly the great military fortification at Carcassone, and the last pictures showed the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Preceding the meeting a representative from the Museum spoke briefly on the work and encouraged members of the Archaeological Society to join the Museum and help support the many interesting functions. Non-resident membership in the Cayuga Museum of History and Art is $2.00 per year.

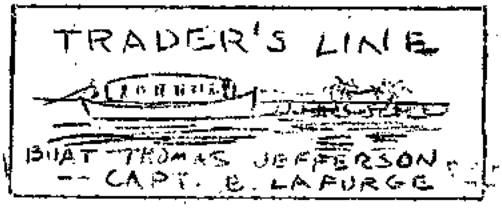
Election of officers was in the form of a write-in ballot and following this refreshments were served. The tabulation of votes resulted in the re-election of the present staff of officers for the year 1954. In addition to the officers, other members assist with the publication of the Bulletin. They with the officers form the editorial council. These are Newton Farwell, Harrison Follett, Mildred Close, George Proctor and James Ward.

THE ERIE CANAL

The actual digging began July 4, 1817 and the years between were heart-breaking and back-breaking at times with experiences that have made great stories. Unquestionably, "Clinton's Ditch" was a target for ridicule and all the more so when the wild tales of the workers experiences reached the people's ears. Reference has been made often to the mosquito infested Montazuma Swamps and to the almost impossible task of building aquaducts over streams and rivers, especially since the instruments at that time were so crude. The final day came October 25, 1825, and the gloaming packet boat, Seneca Chief, started from Buffalo for its long journey to New York City. As the journey began and the Erie water was on its way to the sea, cannoneers spaced along the ditch within hearing distance fired their guns to signal the beginning and 81 minutes later New York was aware that the forty-foot wide, four-foot deep link between the Atlantic and the western states was now a reality.

---Editorial.

YOUR TICKET

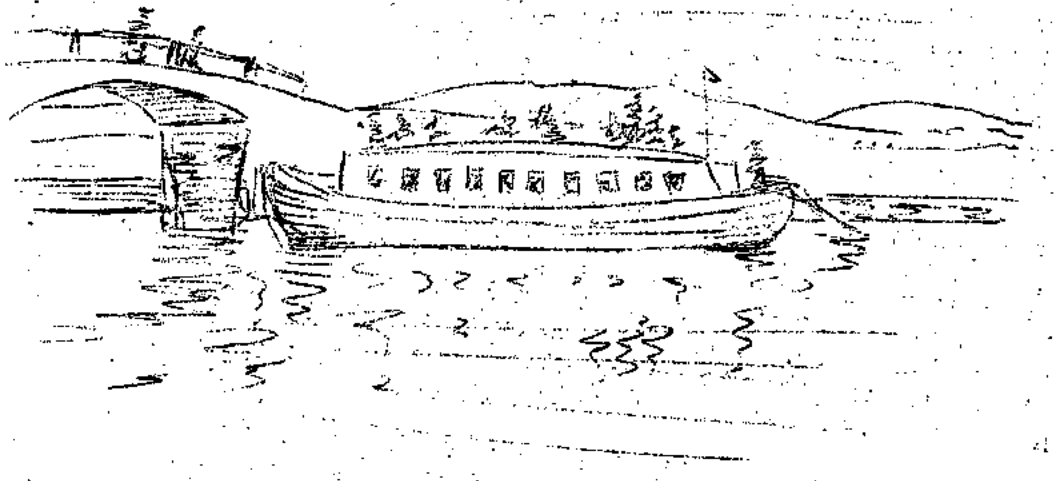


TO A TRIP ON CLINTON'S DITCH

The above sketch is the exact size of a ticket on the first packet boat used through this section of the country. Below is a line drawing similar to the line drawing on the ticket enlarged to show the boat and the horses in tandem. This ticket was used on Clinton's Ditch, or later to be known as the Erie Canal, in the first season of the establishing of the Traders' Line which was also the first year of the opening of the canal. Traders' Line grew to be a sizeable company and existed for several years.

The captain of this first packet boat was B. LaFurge, the great, great uncle of Rev. R. C. Hebblethwaite, a member of the Archaeological Society.

The name of this first packet boat was the Thomas Jefferson and this is interesting in view of the fact that Thomas Jefferson was the leader of the opposition that developed against the canal. In one of his statements quoted by several is the following, ".....talk of making a canal three hundred and fifty miles through a wilderness is a little short of madness at this day". Even President Madison sided with those against the Ditch but nothing could hold down the energetic DeWitt Clinton. His scientific mind saw the answer to a problem which had perplexed the country for years, a water way from the Atlantic to the western states was his dream and he fought for it. The early fear of the "dismemberment" of the American empire and the canal waterway as a possible preventative was still an important issue in the minds of many.



A GENEVAN AND THE ERIE CANAL

by A. GLENN ROGERS

There have been many stories advanced as to where the idea of the Erie Canal first originated, so, let's go back to the 1700's and see if we can trace the idea to its source.

There were several schemes of inland navigation agitated during the colonial period but English restrictions prevented their being carried out. After the Revolution, Washington, himself, took the lead in a new movement, but his chief activity along this line seemed more relegated to navigation problems in the south. He did take a trip into western and central New York and, after observing the abundance of natural waterways, made the following observation: "Would to God we may have wisdom to improve them!"

History records the fact that on November 3, 1784, Christopher Colles, an Irish engineer who had previously lectured on canals, circulated a petition for improved navigation on the Mohawk River. He worked hard for two years in promoting the idea, but met with no success.

Then on January 5, 1791, Governor George Clinton recommended to the legislature that inland navigation here in New York be improved. A survey was made and in 1792 two companies were incorporated---one to build lock navigation from the Hudson to Lake Ontario or Seneca Lake. This plan, however, did not call for a continuous waterway but merely for short stretches of canal with locks to bypass portages, rapids and falls. A few such bypasses were built but nothing much was done for the rest of the century.

So far it would seem that no one yet had thought of the idea of having a man-made waterway constructed between the Hudson and Lake Erie. There was considerable discussion about canals as shown by several books written a little later in the support of various claimants who were bitterly contending for the honor of originating the canal idea. A man named Jesse Hawley wrote several books on it...and we shall speak of Hawley a little later after an outline of the events which led up to the Erie Canal.

Joshua Forman of Onondaga County introduced the first Erie County legislation at Albany, some few months after President Jefferson had suggested surplus Federal funds might be used to help the states in building roads and canals. The legislature adopted Forman's resolution in 1808 and a survey was ordered between the Hudson and Lake Erie. Jefferson, however, waved it aside as impractical and said that even the thought of building a canal through the wilderness between Albany and Lake Erie was a hundred years ahead of its time.

But, backers of the canal finally decided that the state should finance the project alone and so in 1817 construction of the canal was authorized, and the first spade full of earth was turned on July 4 of that same year. The canal was completed and the first boats entered its waters at Buffalo on October 26, 26, 1825. Since then historians have been unanimous in stating that the Erie Canal did more to advance the western states and influence rates throughout the nation than any other project.

Recalling the name of Jesse Hawley mentioned a few paragraphs before, it was this man---a Geneva merchant---who can well lay claim to the fact that he was the first person to actually suggest the Erie Canal be built from Albany to Buffalo. In a note to the historian, Turner, Hawley said:

"I first conceived the idea of the overland route of the canal from Buffalo to Utica in Col. Wilhelmus Mynderse's office at Seneca Falls in 1805".

In his mercantile operations at Geneva that year, Hawley purchased wheat, had it ground at Mynderse's mills from whence it was shipped to Schenectady. On one particular occasion---the one referred to---Hawley was in Mynderse's office when the subject of better navigation came up. Hawley, stepping to a map of the state, drew his finger over the country from Utica to Lake Erie, and said: "There is the head of water". This may be regarded as the first intimation having reference to such work as the Erie Canal.

Governor Clinton, himself, one of the men who led the fight for the canal's construction and for whom it was called "Clinton's Ditch", gives credit to Hawley as being the one to have the first idea for this project. Governor Clinton described Hawley as "a gentlemen of an ingenious and reflecting turn of mind who was engaged in the mercantile business in Geneva as early as 1805".

A number of years ago there was discovered in the Surrogate's Office at Lockport, the will of Jesse Hawley, filed in 1832, in which, among other interesting things, he bequeathed to the New York Historical Society certain published letters of his own, written in 1807-08, advocating the building of a canal from Buffalo to Utica along the line since occupied by the Erie.

On this point the will reads: "In these essays I claim to be the first projector of the overland route of the grand Erie Canal from Buffalo to Utica (nearly as it now runs), as in contradistinction to the lake route, as proposed by all prior and all writing on the subject. And I now herein declare it for a truth under the solemnity of this document of my life, that the idea of tapping Lake Erie and taking its waters across the country to the Mohawk at Utica, called the overland route of the canal, was an original conception of my own mind, which occurred to me while in conversation with Wilhelmus Mynderse during the afternoon in his accounting room at Seneca Falls, early in April, 1805."

So, it would seem that the Erie Canal WAS first born in the mind of a Genevan---Jesse Hawley---and it would also appear that his claim is as good, if not better, than most.

Dr. David Ennis of Lyons, New York, eminent authority on Canal History, has promised to write an article for a later bulletin which will complete magnificently the story we undertook to tell by this special bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Central New York.

LIFE ON THE ERIE CANAL

By Elizabeth Brunner Steele

One of the few really wonderful experiences I remember on my infrequent trips along the Erie Canal on my father's boat, the "NELLIE G. SCHENCK, of UNION SPRINGS," is a sunrise, near Jordan.

Every boatman worthy of his salt was on his way each morning by five o'clock, and that meant everybody on the boat was up. I stood at the stern of the boat beside my brother George. He held the tiller that moved the rudder that guided the boat, and he was concentrating his gaze 100 feet ahead to the bow of the boat as he moved the tiller gently to and fro to keep the bow headed always in the middle of the canal. The canal stretched straight east before us. Suddenly, in the far distance a dazzling light broke at the horizon and spread, painting the sky with fire that issued from the end of the earth. As we watched, the arc of the rising sun grew larger and larger, throwing out in all directions sparkling rays in half the colors of the spectrum against an ever growing background of gold and blue sky. The earth seemed just being created while the increasing splendor of the slowly rising sun spread farther and higher over the eastern horizon. The colors that rayed from the central brilliance seemed to scintillate with the dewey freshness of the new day and in the center of the spectacle it seemed as if God Himself stood! Its glory never lessened until the sun was fully up.

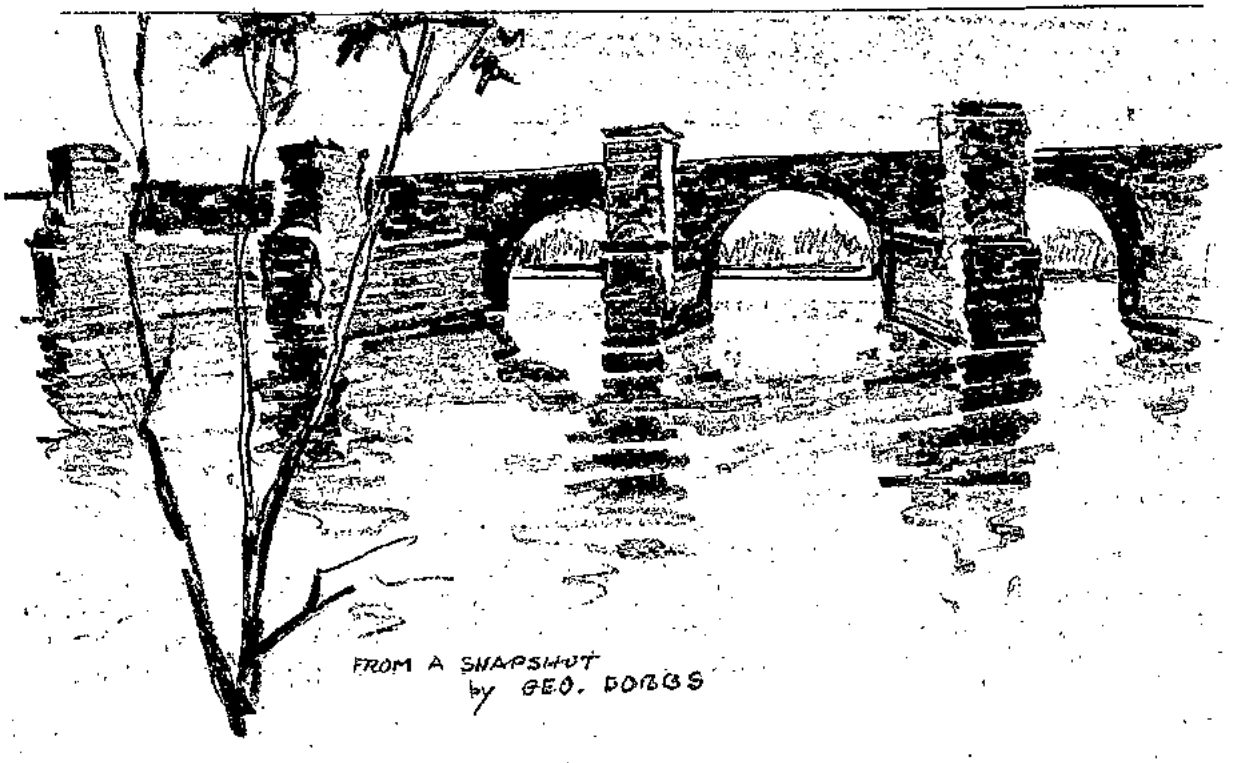
I learned that a sunrise over the Court street hill back home in Cayuga, as I had heretofore seen it, is uninspiring compared to a sunrise like this out of the end of the earth.

Traveling along the Erie Canal becomes monotonous as the hours pile up. To begin with, the route followed by the canal is level, essentially so, and laid out that way to obviate the necessity of building locks. Then, the speed is uniformly slow, conducive to sleepiness. Nothing happens--unless your towline catches a moored row boat along the towpath bank and sets it adrift, when some woman quickly emerges from a nearby shack and heaps upon your head an amazing string of invectives. You are not the guilty one, but the one who moored the small boat there, for a canal law was that no obstruction must be placed on the towpath or along the bank of the canal to impede the progress of legitimate craft. The canal traversed mainly through virgin country, but dotted at intervals with villages and cities. In Port Byron, there was, and still is, a landmark vividly in my mind--a large white church with a clock in the belfry. One could almost touch it from the deck of the boat. The building still stands, but the canal has disappeared, only a highway is on the site. In Little Falls are the imposing locks, hewn out of solid rock, surrounded by picturesque scenery, which includes the sheer walls of rock at the edge of the towpath at the base of which we youngsters were thrilled to find Little Falls "diamonds". My brother had quite a collection of these diamonds. They were of irregular shape, but nicely cut, and full of sparkle. I think they dropped out of the rocks to the ground; sometimes one could be pried out of the surrounding rock.

Locks are stone walled enclosures built in the canal along its route where the canal has to be carried over, or to, an elevation. Locks are about 100 feet long, a few feet longer than a canal boat, and less than a foot wider. Wooden gates at each end of the enclosure open to admit and release boats being locked

through. Always, when one gate is open the one at the other end must be closed because its object is to hold back the depth of water above while the boat enters the lock from the level below. A boat enters a lock through the opened gates; the clearance, by the way, of only a few inches each side of the bow as it enters the aperture calls for some close concentration by the man at the tiller, lest he bash in the bow against the formidable walls of stone ahead. As the boat eases into the lock, the man who drives the horses that pull the boat is not idle. A heavy line fastened to a cleat in the deck of the boat is thrown to him, which he coils around a heavy "snubbing post" built into the stone platform of the lock, tightening it so that the boat stops at the proper distance from the outgoing gate. The boat safely in the lock, the gates behind it are closed, paddles in the upper gates are turned, opening wide spaces in the gates through which floods of water enter and slowly fill the lock and lift the boat to the higher level. All this time the man at the snubbing line outside must maneuver it, slackening and tightening alternately to hold the boat away from the gates as it is forced forward by the madly churning water finding its level in the confines of the lock. If these snubbing lines were not used, or were broken by the strain placed on them the impetus of the water would send the vessel crashing into the forward gates, breaking whichever was of weaker construction. It could cause the sinking of a boat right in the abyss of a lock. A lock must be twice as deep as the canal, which would make it twenty feet, or more, deep. Of course, barge canal locks must be deeper, since these modern boats are larger and loaded to more than six feet depth, as were the old canal boats.

The sensation of a first-time-passenger on the deck of a 96-foot long canal boat being locked from a low to a higher level is that of being embraced in an enormously deep and dark, cold, wet and mossy walled stone grave, opened only at the top, with thundering waterfalls over the bow gates kept from submerging the boat by



FROM A SNAPSHOT
by GEO. DOBBS

the trained hands far above and out of sight that know just how tightly to snub and to relax the heavy rope to prevent the churning water from tearing out the iron cleat from the boat, that holds the rope. As the boat rises slowly out of the depths, the roar of the water entering through opened paddles in the gates lessens as the distance the water falls decreases. The damp chill gives way to a feeling of confidence as light and sunshine return to view, and the boat finally is up high in the lock, and floating on a level with the upper stretch of canal. The water has ceased its commotion and all that is needed now is the opening of the gates ahead to allow the boat to proceed on its way--the gates, be it noted, that ten minutes before separated the boat from a ten-foot wall of water now swings open in level water.

The man who invented canal locks deserves great ccedit. A "dry-dock" operates on the same principle, the boat being floated into a lock-like enclosure, gates closed and the water drained out, leaving the boat supported on hea vy elevated beams. Workmen experienced in boat building are at hand, ready to go to probing for leaks or flaws in the bottom or sides of the hull. I remember that there was a dry-dock in Port Byron--the O.B. Tanner Dry Dock; they also made boat bridges, racks for holding the drinking water barrels, deck boxes (ice boxes), and other boat accessaries.

While locks break the monotony of canal travel, they are not welcomed by the operators of boats; locks add to the hazards and they interfere with speed and make extra work. The stretch of canal between one lock and the next is called a canal level. They are sometimes short and sometimes quite long. There is one stretch of canal that my brother called "the forty mile level." I think it was between Syracuse and Utica. And at Lockport, toward Buffalo, there were six or seven locks, one right on the heels of the next. I do not know whether to write in the present or the past tense, because I do not know what conditions prevail at the present time. I speak of the end of the nineteenth century.

The Erie Canal was abandoned in 1916, and the Barge Canal began operations. Some of the waterways were discontinued, but many were not. Those having their channel through rivers and lakes, also some stretches of the Erie Canal, widened and deepened, are still in use.

The principal feature of canal travel that created monotony was its very slow movement. A boat loaded with a cargo of about 190 tons--considered a full load--moved at the rate of about two miles an hour, and was a steady and tedious p ull for a team of two or three patient, and faithful horses or mules. About three feet of a loaded canal boat's hull remained above water. A loaded boat was easier to steer than was a light boat. A "light" boat (no cargo" floated nine feet above the water's surface, and was easily caught in a wind, and sometimes blown close to the banks and damaged in scraping the sides or the bottom on jagged stones. Here, too, the experience and foresight of the pilot saved many a repair bill. A light boat moved at the rate of about four miles an hour, which was really a good jogg to be kept up throughout the day for the driver, not to mention Klondyke and Bessie, our good horses.

They deserve much credit in our business. My brother took great interest in the welfare of Klondyke and Bessie, grooming them carefully after a hard day's work, keeping their collars smooth and clean where they pressed so hard against tender shoulders, watching for and preventing "galls" with toughening applications to the susceptible areas. My greatest unhappiness was that I saw so few horses without these badges of too great a burden.

One summer night in 1895 when we were enroute from Ithaca to Utica and were tied up in the canal behind a theater in Weedsport, we were awakened by a great commotion in the stable at the bow of the boat. My father and brother arose to investigate, and found that one of the horses was suffering with colic and seemed to be beside himself with pain. My brother jumped fearlessly into the close quarters of the stable and the turmoil, and in endeavoring to set the bridge in place so as to remove the well horse without further casualty or loss of time, one of the horses trying to get out of the way of the bridge, stepped on my brother's leg, snapping both the tibia and the fibula. A local doctor was called from his slumbers, who set the bones as best he could in our cabin; and my brother spent several weeks in the nearest hospital (Auburn) to remedy a twisted leg that never completely recovered. He was fourteen years old at the time---and when I see an uncouth youngster today imitate his slight limp, I b-o-i-l!

All in all, a boatman's life on the Erie Canal from 1890 to 1916, as we experienced it, was far from an ideal existence. There were many hardships, and few compensations.

I know of at least one person who was grateful to PROGRESS when the Barge Canal with its machinery propelled vessels succeeded the Erie Canal and its tow path, dotted with plodding, weary, voiceless, and often beaten horses and mules--and she is

ELIZABETH BRUNNER STEELE.

Page 120 shows a sketch from a snapshot of one of the largest of the viaducts on the Erie. It was built along with many other viaducts in the area when the canal was enlarged and deepened. Although it is close to 100 years old, the stonework is still level and true, this despite the fact that it is built in the heart of the swamp. This viaduct is west of Montezuma Village where the canal crossed the Seneca River. There was a smaller viaduct east of the village where the canal crossed Salt Creek or Crane Brook. This viaduct was close to Route 31 and therefore familiar to many. However, it was destroyed in the building of the New York Thruway. The pictured stonework is deep in the back swamp and seldom visited. It is, however, a familiar sight to travelers on the Barge Canal. Half of the viaduct was destroyed when the Barge Canal was diverted to the bed of the Seneca River.

INTERVIEW - RICHARD HOWELL
Ludlowville, New York

By Mrs. Leland Close

Richard Howell, now 94 years of age, is the third generation of boatman of the Howell family. It began with his grandfather Edward Howell, born May 21, 1789 - 1875, and his father James F. Howell, 1818 - 1893. He began his voyages a few weeks after birth from the home where he now resides, which was their winter residence. Edward the grandfather followed the natural waterways before the old "dug canal was". The father James ran a 250 ton boat for Barney Hagin who lived south of the Lake Road. This boat was 98' long and 16' wide. Cargoes were the products of the neighboring industries - namely farm products - grain, wool, lumber and salt.

Grain was shipped loose. If more than one kind were to be shipped, a partition of rough boards was put in, to separate it. The grain was spouted from store houses constructed on the borders of the waterways. The transportation charge from Buffalo to New York was from 5¢ - 10¢ per bu. Coal transported from Ithaca to Buffalo was $1. per ton carrying charge and $1. per ton actual cost of the product.

Passengers were not carried. The family established their residence on board. Father, mother, two brothers, a sister and Richard enjoyed their quarters which consisted of a stern cabin where the cooking and dining was done. In the bow were two cabins for sleeping, back of which was the stable for two mules or horses.

The crew consisted of the "Captain", two drivers and two steermen. The wage for all inclusive of the Captain was $250. per mo. Work started according to the weather conditions, usually April to December.

Towing lines were paid for at 12 mile intervals at which stations new teams were changed for the fatigued ones. The rule was to change horses or mules every 6 hours as the journey continued night and day. Usually two horses harnessed as a team were hitched to a 1" tow rope 150 ft. long. If an extra heavy load was being hauled a third horse was added and they were hitched tandem.

The price per horse was $10. to $100. each. Mules used weighed about 1000 lbs. and showed great agility in clambering back to the path. The steed averaged about 1200 lbs. and were not quite as subtle.

Mr. Howell related one story of 3 big black horses hitched in line at Lockport. It was necessary to pass through the darkness under the bridge. A man slumbering (from inebriation) lay directly in the path. The large black lead spied the object

and shied into the waters below, taking his followers with him. Only one was rescued.

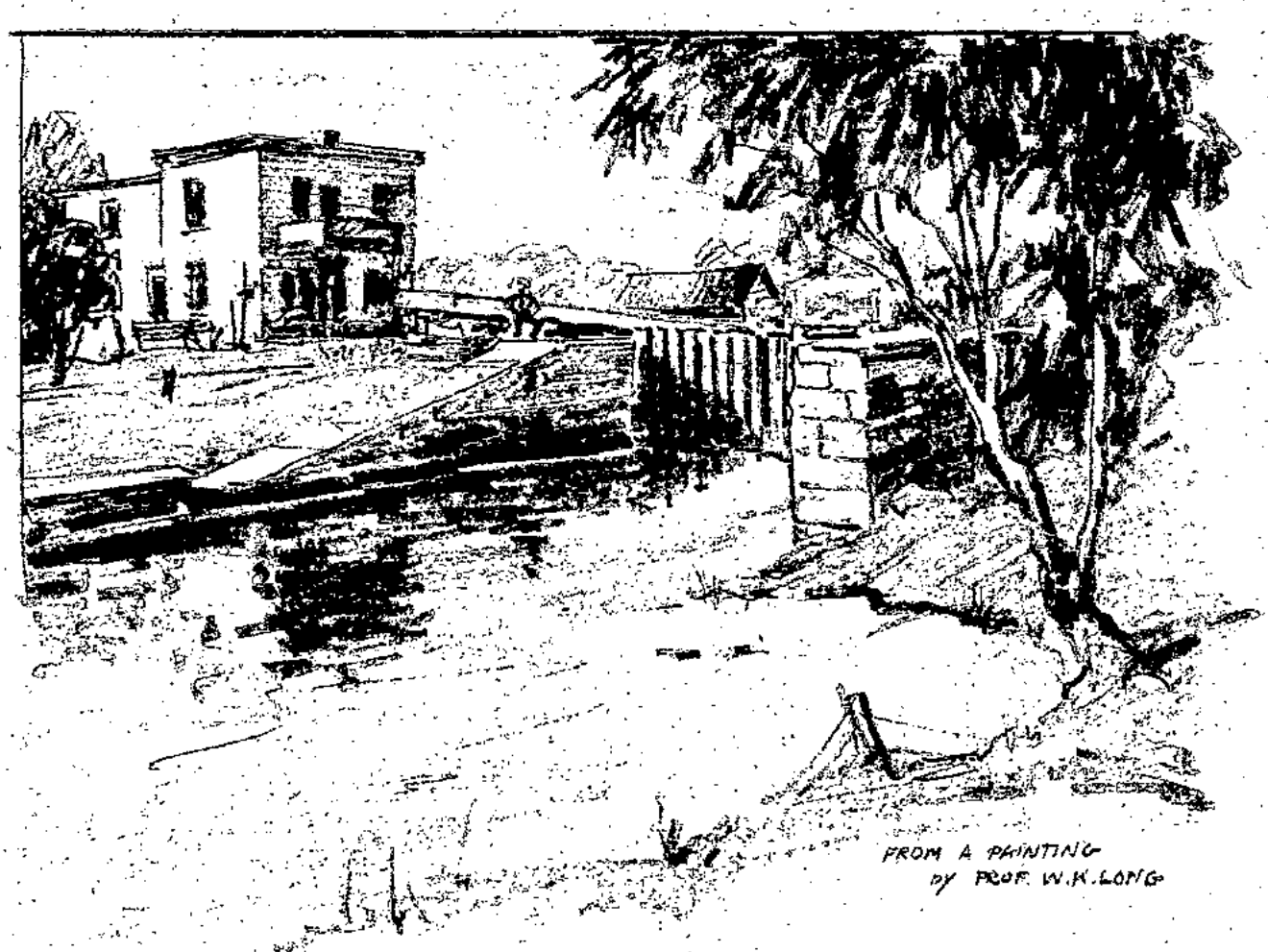
Occasionally teams raced, causing some rivalry.

The journey from Ithaca to Buffalo was 5 days and nights. Ithaca to Albany was the same. Tugs were met be a steamer and taken on to New York. The cost for this was $5.00 to $40.00.

The side wheeler towed down Cayuga Lake, leaving Ithaca early in the morning arriving in Cayuga at night, returning the next day with empties. The cost was 10¢ per ton up, but returns had a free tow. Cayuga was 7 miles from the Main Line Canal.

Mr. Howell owned the "Clayton" which he used as a tow from Ithaca to Cayuga for about 20 years. His loads consisted of salt from International and cement from Penn Dixie. There were times he needed to stay over in Cayuga a week at a time for boats. One summer he trailed 400 boats 2 and 3 at a time.

The last sidewheeler was owned in Ithaca then sold to Capt. Brown of Syracuse, which was the "Frontenac". It burned in Cayuga Lake between Aurora and Cayuga, taking 8 lives.



FROM A PAINTING BY PROF. W.K. LONG

MEMORIAL OF THE ERIE CANAL

By Vernie Yates

In the summer of 1894 our steam yacht, the Vernada, was launched at Cayuga, near the site of the old brewery, now Beacon Co. Built as a houseboat with steam power, she was our home for many summers. Both pilot and engineer had to have New York State licenses, and when I was old enough I passed both exams. (Re: name of yacht - combined my name and my mother's, Ada. Vernada)

We roamed from Buffalo to Albany as fancy dictated, while my father made sketches for future paintings. Our longest stay was in Little Falls, where the scenery and history were interesting.

During all those years we made many friends among the boatmen, and found them honest and helpful in any emergency. In the usual stories about the Erie Canal, much is mentioned about their rough, lawless ways. But from experience I can tell of their kindness to a little girl who grew up like a colt along the towpath, enjoying treats handed out while the boats were locking thro'.

Many times we left the boat unlocked while out sketching, and we never had even a pike pole or fender stolen, but might find sweet corn, fruit or cookies left on deck when we returned.

One Captain was a woman, regular Tug Boat Annie type, whose husband had lost a leg in a lock accident.

The steel fleet was the sensation of those days, and if it passed in the night I felt cheated. As it made better time than the horse or mule boats, people would bet on its time of arrival.

Lock tenders were Civil War Veterans, often lame or with one arm or one eye. Two men worked together to open and shut the heavy gates, usually by pushing them with their backs while bracing their feet on a slatted board. If not treated properly the lock tenders could make locking thro' a rough experience by letting the water in or out too fast. The most exciting times were at Lockport, as to which double header would have the right of way. Sometimes a real Donny brook took place there.

The lock groceries were well stocked with food and items needed by boatmen, and best of all, news of interest about Canal affairs. Sometimes a cow was kept in the back room, so fresh milk was produced while you wait.

It is a pleasure to recall those days and those kind people - truly "Their bark was worse than their bite."

"REMEMBERING THE ERIE CANAL DAYS"

By Rev. R. C. Hebblethwaite

The Erie Canal, inspired by the use of canals in the old world and now continued by the Barge Canal, finally led in making the whole Finger Lakes Country contributory to transportation between Buffalo and New York by substituting water travel for mud roads. Points of contact made the foundations for future villages and cities, many of them called "ports" by early canalers. More than any other project, the "Old Erie" made our section of the State what it has become, one of the garden spots of the world.

Better modes of necessary transportation finally compelled action, and "Canal Days" became great for their time as are auto and truck days for our times.

Stories are brought to us that paint a rough and rowdy class of people on the early canal, but we have no ground to place all in this class nor to look with shame on the people who were canalers. Canaling was as honorable in its days as trucking is today. The people who engaged in it as a business or an occupation were the average type on which our country was founded. The descendants of "Old Canalers" still recount with pride family adventures along and in "The Old Canal". It was against the law, they say, to drive on the towpath, and later to ride a bicycle on account of frightening the mules and horses.

It was one of the tricks of the drivers to motion on-coming riders to keep inside the towline so as not to scare the animals into the canal. When the rider attempted to pass over the rope, to jerk it suddenly off the ground and hurl the rider and his "bike" into the canal. One such incident, well known by the relater, occurred on the Jordan Level just east of the Belle Isle crossing. The rider, a fine young man, from Geddes frequently came to the Belle Isle church on Sunday evening with his lady friend and rode his bicycle home by the towpath. One night a crafty driver motioned him to keep inside the towline. As a gentleman, he complied, but as he was wheeling over the rope the driver gave it a jerk and threw him and his "bike" into the canal. It was night and with no grappling tools he finished his journey home on foot and came back the next morning to grapple. The "bike" was easily recovered, but during the night a heavily laden boat had passed over it and so caught the handle bars as to twist the frame and make extensive repairs necessary. Such accidents could not happen today, for the canal with the towpath is past history and won't long be even a memory.

Horse and buggy days had as exciting experiences as have automobile days. About one hundred years ago a former canaler on the Jordan drove his horse and buggy along the towpath one

night. The horse suddenly took fright and landed in the canal with driver and rig. Canalers were usually good swimmers. This man was able to escape from his rig and manage to secure a hold on the bridle and led the horse up the incline to the towpath and made his way home. He never tired telling how he got so wet.

There are old buildings along the canal that bear the marks of century and are still doing business. The boatmen had their favorites as people have their stores today. Good water accessible to the boats was an attraction. One such store still exists on the Jordan level and from the same shelves sells goods over the same counters to customers who come to the store in autos instead of canal boats. Instead of by the hand pump of old days, the same well furnishes water by electric system, but the system does not change the quality of the water.

"The Kate" was a steamer that plied daily for years between Weedsport and Syracuse. There are a few old people who yet recount the trips they used to take on "The Kate" for both business and pleasure rides. To hear their stories one would judge that this trip was a pleasure never to be forgotten. The writer can remember seeing passengers riding in the sun or in the shade enjoying leisure fellowship, something not possible in the modern modes of travel with their confusion and noise. The great moment of the trip was passing through the lock at Geddes. To some it was a thrill, to others an experience akin to fear, but to all an incident that is no longer available. There are many who still long for trips on such boats as "The Kate" and tandem team pulled packet boats! But they are gone forever.

To be a "Canaler" was to bear the mark of an insignificant character without a higher aim than just "To make a living". This may have been true, as it is today, of types of people, who for lack of ability, ambition or opportunity were, or are, without what is termed "drive". But "canaling" was an honorable occupation and its success demanded character and brains. The people who followed it as a livelihood would average with any occupational group. The following story can be vouched for, and has been used in public addresses and sermons to enforce arguments against the necessity of much Sunday work.

The name of the person and his relation to the Erie Canal is given by the cut of his boat, the first Packet Boat used on the Erie Canal. To travel by packet around 1830 was considered "lightning express". A high type couple at Seneca Falls were married and took their wedding trip via packet, as wonderful in that day as "by air" today. The captain on the first packet was a devout and conscientious Christian, and did not drive his horses on Sunday, feeling that they needed rest. The truth emphasized was that his horses made more miles in six days than

others made in seven.

A momento of his boating is still a family Bible used by him while conducting church services on his boat. It is still in descendants' home somewhere in the State of Michigan.

* *

Editorial Note: We think this is an excellent idea, and wish we could do something like it somewhere in this region.

STATE WILL PRESERVE
STRIP OF OLD CANAL

(Special to The New York Times)

BINGHAMTON, N. Y., Dec. 17 - Part of the old Chenango Canal that linked the Southern Tier counties and the Mohawk Valley 116 years ago until it succumbed to railroad competition in 1872, will be restored at the Chenango Valley State Park near this city.

William H. Hill of the Central New York State Parks Commission, and a member of the State G. O. P. Committee, has proposed that a replica packet boat, drawn by a mule team, be floated in the restored section of the canal to depict travel in the early and mid-nineteenth century.

Mr. Hill said that James F. Evans, director of State Parks, had approved restoration of the canal section with a set of locks.

The stretch of canal, the outline of which is clearly marked at the state park, is between a half mile and a mile in length. In its heyday the waterway carried passengers and freight between this city and Utica.

Mr. Hill believes the restoration will become a tourist attraction, in addition to having historical value.

* *

A book you will all want is the publication by A. Glenn Rogers "FORGOTTEN STORIES OF THE FINGER LAKES". It is a delightful collection of stories of this section. Originally planned for radio talks and recast to book form, they are beautifully presented thoughts we would all like to ponder on about this "garden spot", our part of the world.

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