

NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL, GUARD GATE 16
(MIDDLEPORT)
(Erie Canal, Guard Gate 16 (Middleport))
Approximately 2.0 miles west of Fruit Avenue
Ridgeway
Orleans County
New York

HAER NY-500
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

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NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL, GUARD GATE 16 (MIDDLEPORT) Erie Canal, Guard Gate 16 (Middleport)

HAER No. NY-500

Location: Approximately 2.0 miles west of Fruit Avenue, Ridgeway, Orleans County, New York

Guard Gate 16 is located at latitude: 43.2188433, longitude: -78.4483126. The point was obtained in 2009, and there is no restriction on its release to the public.

Significance: Guard Gate 16, located on the Erie Canal, is a component of the nationally significant New York State Barge Canal. It is vital to controlling the flow of water through this section of the canal.

Description: Guard Gate 16 at Middleport spans the Erie Canal and is typical of the guard gates on the Barge Canal.¹ The guard gate consists of a two-span, riveted-steel superstructure on concrete center piers and abutments. The 55'-wide steel gates are offset and are frame with steel skin plates on the upstream side. The guard gate operates with cables and steel and reinforced-concrete counterweights running over sheaves on steel lattice towers. A modern steel mechanical cabinet sits on top of each gate. Guard Gate 16 is in good condition, although the superstructure is slightly rusted.

History: The guard gate was built as part of two contracts: Contract 64 and Contract 75. Contract 64, awarded to Empire Engineer Corporation on August 6, 1908, was for the improvement of the Erie Canal from a point 600' west of Prospect Avenue Bridge to a point 100' east of the Gasport bridge, a total distance of 9.91 miles. United Construction Company of Albany, New York, completed Contract 75, which was for three guard gate superstructures, including that of Guard Gate 16. The guard gate had been completed by 1913. W.S. Cooper Company of Cleveland, Ohio, under the direction of A.S. Milinowski, State Assistant Engineer, completed the installation of the hand brakes under Contract 106 in spring 1915.²

Guard Gate 16 was rehabilitated in 1978 under Contract M78-3 (D95901).³

¹ Description of current conditions is based on a site visit made by the HAER recording team in summer 2009.

² *Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1912, Vol. 1* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1913), 253-54; *Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1913, Vol. 1* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1914), 311; *Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1914, Vol. 1* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1915), 310; *Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1915, Vol. 1* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1916), 285.

³ Maintenance Contracts 1978.

Sources:

Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1912, Vol. 1. Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1913.

Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1913, Vol. 1. Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1914.

Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1914, Vol. 1. Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1915.

Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1915, Vol. 1. Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1916.

Hay, Duncan. "New York State Barge Canal." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2014.

Maintenance Contracts 1978.

Series B1762, New York State Archives, Albany, New York. "Western Division, Erie Canal, Section 10, Sta. 5155 to Sta. 5189." Approved December 3, 1924, 174.

Historians: Laura S. Black and Jami Babb, summer 2009

Project Information: The Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) is a long-range program that documents and interprets historically significant engineering sites and structures throughout the United States. HAER is part of Heritage Documentation Programs (Richard O'Connor, Manager), a division of the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior. The New York State Barge Canal Survey was undertaken in summer 2009 in cooperation with the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor (ERIE), Beth Sciumeca, Executive Director. Justine Christianson, HAER Historian, and Duncan Hay, ERIE, served as project leaders. The staff of the New York State Canal Corporation provided access to the sites. Craig Williams of the New York State Museum provided research materials and assistance. The HAER field team consisted of Jami Babb and Laura Black.

Appendix: Image of Current Conditions



Image: Guard Gate 16. Field photograph taken by HAER recording team, summer 2009.