

NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL, GUARD GATE 18
(PENDLETON)
(Erie Canal, Guard Gate 18 (Pendleton))
Access off Bear Ridge Road
Pendleton
Niagara County
New York

HAER NY-518
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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 18 (PENDLETON) Erie Canal, Guard Gate 18 (Pendleton)

HAER No. NY-518

Location: Bear Ridge Road, Pendleton, Niagara County, New York

Guard Gate 18 is located at latitude: 43.1159036, longitude: -78.7367247. The point was obtained in 2009, and there is no restriction on its release to the public.

Significance: Guard Gate 18, located on the Erie Canal, is a component of the New York State Barge Canal. It is vital to controlling the flow of water through this section of the canal.

Description: Guard Gate 18 spans the Erie Canal and is typical of the guard gates on the Barge Canal.¹ It is accessed by a gravel driveway extending from Bear Ridge Road. The guard gate consists of a two-span, riveted-steel superstructure on concrete center piers and abutments. The 55'-wide steel gates 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. There is a tall concrete bulkhead on the upstream (west) side of the guard gate, which was probably installed to protect the Lockport cut from surges in the Niagara River and Tonawanda Creek. Guard Gate 18 is in fair condition, due to rusting of the superstructure and heavy spalling on the abutments and piers.

The guard gate is somewhat unusual in that there is a control house at the site. The single-story rock-faced concrete block building sits on a concrete foundation. The hipped roof is covered with asphalt shingles. There are hinged steel window coverings and hinged steel doors. The control house is in good condition.

A spillway is located nearby off East Canal Road. The concrete spillway has four aprons and is in good condition.

History: The guard gate was built as part of Contract 64, awarded to Empire Engineering Corporation on August 6, 1908, and under the direction of R.H. Merrill, Assistant Engineer. The contract covered 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. Alteration No. 6, approved December 23, 1909, provided the substructure of the guard gate to expedite work on the contract.²

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), 254; *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), 316.

Sources:

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

Series B1762, New York State Archives, Albany, New York. "Western Division, Erie Canal, Section 10, Sta. 6090 to Sta. 6119." Approved April 22, 1925, 203.

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: Images of Current Conditions



Image 1: Guard Gate 18. Field photograph taken by HAER recording team, summer 2009.



Image 2: Control house. Field photograph taken by HAER recording team, summer 2009.