

NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL, SENECA FALLS TERMINAL
(Cayuga-Seneca Canal, Seneca Falls Terminal)
Near the intersection of Waters Street and Souhan Lane
Seneca Falls
Seneca County
New York

HAER NY-523
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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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Location: Near the intersection of Waters Street and Souhan Lane, Seneca Falls, Seneca, New York

Seneca Falls Terminal is located at latitude 42.9098309, longitude -76.7974672. The point represents the midpoint of the terminal wall and was obtained in 2009. There is no restriction on its release to the public.

Significance: Seneca Falls Terminal, located on the Cayuga-Seneca Canal, is a component of the nationally significant New York State Barge Canal. It is one of several terminals constructed along the Barge Canal to provide points for freight transfer.

Description: The concrete terminal wall is located southwest of Van Cleef Lake, on the north bank of the Seneca River.¹ The section of the terminal wall near the city-operated public parking lot appears to have been recently repaired. Concrete-filled cast-iron bollards on concrete pads are located in the grassy area behind the western section of the wall. This section also has modern steel cleats and floating docks. The site features hardscaping, reproduction lighting fixtures, utility hook-ups, modern benches, and fencing. The terminal is in good condition, although it has been heavily altered.

On the opposite side of the canal is a concrete dock wall with a new concrete cap that abuts a cut stone remnant of a nineteenth-century Cayuga-Seneca Canal lock chamber. Modern reproduction lighting fixtures line the wall. The original concrete exhibits minor spalling and has some vegetation growth. The wall is generally in fair condition.

Behind the concrete dock wall is the Bayard Street cribs, which appear to be concrete, and the headwall, which is inaccessible.

History: The 1911 Terminal Act authorized the construction of terminals at specified locations along the Barge Canal. In addition, there were suggested locations for terminals, including one at Seneca Falls, “if certain conditions as to filing petitions by local officials and citizens were complied with and if thereafter certain designated canal officials upon due investigation were in favor of granting the petitions.” Ultimately, terminal funds were not used to build the Seneca Falls Terminal. Instead, it was built under the Barge Canal Act.² Contract No. D covered construction in the area of the Seneca Falls Terminal. The work included excavating a channel in the Seneca River from near Dumont’s Bridge through Waterloo for a total length of 7.52 miles. The contract was awarded to Sherman-Stalter Co. on February 24,

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

² Noble E. Whitford, *History of the Barge Canal of New York State* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1922), 197, 200.

1914. The construction of the Bayard Street crib and headwall were part of this contract too. State Engineer L.L. Hudley oversaw the work.³

Sources:

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.

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

Whitford, Noble E. *History of the Barge Canal of New York State.* Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1922.

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 the 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.

³ *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), 234.

Appendix: Image of Current Conditions



Image 1: View of terminal wall. Field photograph taken by HAER recording team, summer 2009.