

NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL, ITHACA TERMINAL  
(Cayuga-Seneca Canal, Ithaca Terminal)  
End of driveway off Taughannock Boulevard  
Ithaca  
Tompkins County  
New York

HAER NY-526  
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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

## HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

### NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL, ITHACA TERMINAL (Cayuga-Seneca Canal, Ithaca Terminal)

HAER No. NY-526

**Location:** End of driveway off Taughannock Boulevard, Ithaca, Tompkins County, New York

Ithaca Terminal is located at latitude 42.4463415, longitude -76.5124505. The point represents the terminal wall and was obtained in summer 2009. There is no restriction on its release to the public.

**Significance:** Ithaca Terminal, located on the Cayuga-Seneca Canal, is a component of the national 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 Ithaca Terminal is located at the southern end Cayuga Lake.<sup>1</sup> The stone terminal wall has steel cleats set in timber. The site has modern slate hardscaping and modern metal benches. The Ithaca Terminal is overall in fair condition, having undergone a number of alterations.

The dock wall is concrete and steel sheet pile. Wood docks extend from the wall and are equipped with modern utility hook-ups.

**History:** The 1911 Terminal Law included a list of places where terminals should be built, along with suggestions for possible terminal locations dependent upon 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.”<sup>2</sup> Evidently, the Ithaca site met the conditions, as a terminal was under construction there by the following year despite not being included in the original list of terminal sites.

Contract T-1, covering the construction of the terminal, was awarded in 1912 to New York State Dredging Corporation. The contractor started work in April 1913 under the supervision of State Assistant Engineer D.W. Overocker. The work involved building a 771'-long dock wall and excavating a 150' x 500' turning basin next to the improved Cayuga inlet in the city of Ithaca. The dock wall was constructed of reinforced-concrete sheet-piles that were driven side-by-side and topped by a concrete cap. It was anchored to concrete anchor piles and deadmen located 40' back from the dock face. The hydraulic dredge *Ithaca* excavated the turning basin in October 1913, and the entire contract had been completed by December 1, 1913.<sup>3</sup> The description of the

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

<sup>2</sup> Noble Whitford, *History of the Barge Canal of New York State* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, Printers, 1922), 197.

<sup>3</sup> *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), 359; *Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the*

work done as part of the contract does not reflect the terminal's current condition, and the fieldwork was not able to resolve the discrepancy.

**Sources:**

*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.

Whitford, Noble. *History of the Barge Canal of New York State.* Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, Printers, 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 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: Dock wall. Field photograph taken by HAER recording team, summer 2009.



Image 2: Terminal wall. Field photograph taken by HAER recording team, summer 2009.