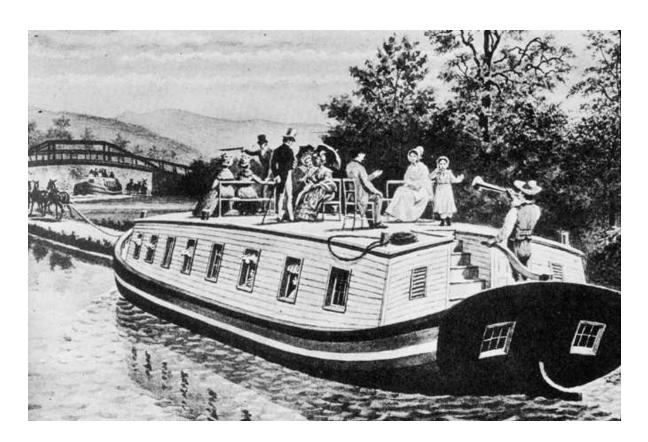
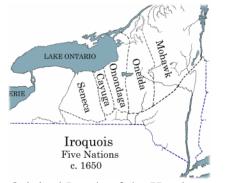
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An Erie Canal Primer For For Fourth Graders

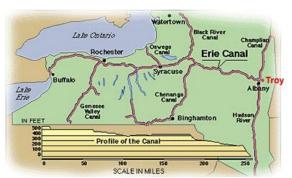


Written by Janet Conners, retired Fourth Grade Teacher

How the Haudenosaunee Lost their Lands to Make Way for the Canal



Original Lands of the Haudenosaunee



The Erie Canal route through lands lost by treaties

Because of the Appalachian Mountains, the only easy way to reach the middle of our country was to follow the Haudenosaunee trails that started at the Hudson River and went west along the Mohawk River as well as the land. Colonists wanted this route.

Four of the Haudenosaunee nations helped the British during the American Revolution, so George Washington ordered Generals Clinton and Sullivan to attack all the Haudenosaunee villages to burn the crops and longhouses. The American troops destroyed over 40 villages, forcing the men, women and children to walk to safety in British Canada so they didn't die of hunger or freeze over the winter. Unfortunately, it was one of the worst winters and many of the refugees did die because the British did not have enough resources to save them all.

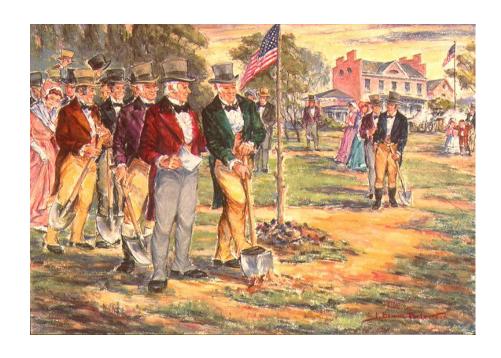
The New York government said that the Haudenosaunee had abandoned the land and therefore it now belonged to the state. To guarantee it, New York State then made many treaties, or legal agreements, with the various nations to make sure that they did not get back their land. In 1797, the Treaty of Big Tree set up the reservation system to give the Haudenosaunee small areas of land that will be theirs as long as the waters flow and the grass is green. The Haudenosaunee still live on most of these reservations today.

Now, with the Haudenosaunee off the land and not able to claim it was still theirs, New York State could start building new villages where there were once had only been Haudenosaunee villages. The surveyors could plan the route across New York that would become the Erie Canal, bringing more people, businesses, and goods to the center and western part of the state.

The Haudenosaunee land claims that are being decided in courts today are from this time, just before the Erie Canal. New York State did some of the treaties without the help of the federal government which means the treaties were not done correctly so they are illegal.

1. Why was the route along the Mohawk River important to the colonists?
2. What do you think of the Clinton-Sullivan Campaign?Explain
3. How did New York State get the land from the Haudenosaunee?

The Erie Canal or Clinton's Ditch



The original Erie Canal was started in Rome, NY on July 4, 1817. It was started here because it was the most level area of the canal which would make the digging easier. The original canal was 4 feet deep and 40 feet wide at the top. The one towpath was 10 feet wide and was on the north side of the canal. The other side of the canal was called the berm and was only wide enough for people to walk, but not mules. In constructing the canal, the workers had to build 83 locks so the canal could change elevation as the canal traveled from Albany to Buffalo. Many aqueducts, or bridges of water, needed to be built so the canal could cross rivers and swamps. The canal opened in sections until the entire length of 363 miles was completed October 26, 1825.

The Erie Canal or Clinton's Ditch

1. Where was the canal started?
Date
2. Canal measurements length depth width
towpath width
3. What is the purpose of a lock?
4. What is the purpose of an aqueduct?

The Wedding of the Waters- The Canal is Complete





When the Erie Canal was finished in 1825, a parade of boats left Buffalo to travel the whole length of the canal. In the first boat was Dewitt Clinton, his wife and many other important people. The second boat was called Noah's Ark and contained animals of New York and two Seneca boys. There were more boats with other important people.

As they traveled the canal, each new town greeted the travelers with a celebration. When the boats arrived in Albany, they were towed down the Hudson River by a new invention- the steam boat!

Upon arriving in New York's Harbor, water from Lake Erie was poured into the Atlantic Ocean. This ceremony was called the Wedding of the Waters.

After many parties in NYC, the packet boats headed back to Albany and the Erie Canal. After traveling to Buffalo, water from the Atlantic was poured into Lake Erie. The joining of the waters showed that trade goods and people from the middle of our country could travel around the world. The Erie Canal changed NY's population, economy and importance forever.

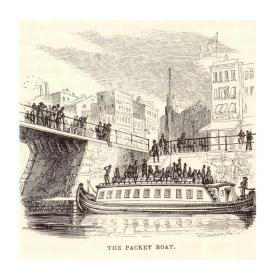
1.	What was the Wedding of the Waters?
2.	Why was the Erie Canal important?
	Do you think the Seneca boys should be on the Noah's k boat with all the wild animals of NY?
E>	xplain your answer.



Erie Canal Boats

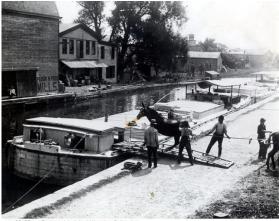
Packet Boats

- Carried 40- 100 passengers only
- Traveled faster -5 mph
- Very fancy
- Allowed people to sit on top
- Served 3 meals a day
- Sleeping areas
- Horses or mules pulled



Line Boat

- Carried mostly cargo but some passengers
- Carried lots of cargo like lumber, nails, tools, furniture, rope, leather, cannons and salt
- Traveled 4 mph
- Mules stayed on board
- Weighed 30 100 tons



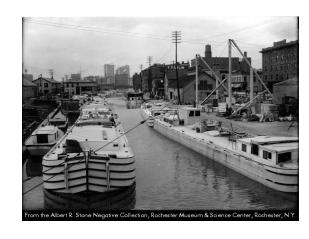
tpm00182.jpg Perinton Municipal Historian Collection

Bullhead boats or Lakers

- similar to line boats
- carried mostly grains like corn, hay, wheat, and oats as well as flour and potatoes
- had coverings to protect the grain

1. On which boat would the rich people travel?

- mules stayed on board
- traveled 2 mph



2. List plant cargos	
3 List manufactured cargos	

Canal Workers

The Erie Canal: From Lockport to Buffalo by John W. Percy

When the canal from Tonawanda to Black Rock was constructed in 1824, workers were brought in from the East. Irish immigrants had been hired in large numbers, anxious for the high wages offered in a nation short of labor. Eighty cents a day and regular whiskey rations kept the men at their task until the canal was completed.

Individual contractors agreed to dig the separate portions of the canal and they did the actual hiring of men to do the work. For a contracted price for his section of the canal, the contractor was expected to pay his labor, provide quarters to sleep up to 40 men, feed them, provide a daily ration of whiskey, and supply the necessary horses, scrapers, shovels, wheelbarrows, stump-pullers, and other equipment necessary to build that portion of the canal.

The \$.80 a day wage was nearly double the wage paid to unskilled labor in America at that time. Due to difficult times in Europe, most immigrants would have been willing to take \$.80 a week for steady work.

The men, both immigrants and Haudenosaunee, worked long hours, as much as 14 hours a day in the long days of June and July, and even the scant comfort of a hard board bunk probably felt good at night. The two-tiered bunks had no mattresses; if a worker wanted bedding, he brought his own. There was no glass or screening in the windows and, along the swampy Niagara flats, the mosquitoes and other insects were attracted to the bunkhouses in swarms. Hearty meals kept the men stoked (energized) for work during the day.

Canal Workers

1. How much did the workers make a day?	
2. What 2 groups did most of the digging?	
3. What are some tools and equipment that the contractors supplied the workers?	to
4. What was the work day like?	
5. Why do you think many Haudenosaunee and Irish worked on the canal?	i '

The Enlarged Canal and the Barge Canal

The Erie Canal was such a success that it was already too crowded when it first opened in 1825. New York State started to enlarge the canal to 7 feet deep and 70 feet wide so that larger boats carrying more cargo could travel the 350 miles from Albany to Buffalo. Tolls collected from the shipping of goods and people made New York state a rich state.

When trains were invented and tracks were in place all around New York State, more people started traveling by train instead of by the canal. Manufacturers and farmers started shipping their goods and produce by trains instead of the canal. One reason why trains became more popular is because they could be used 12 months a year and not just from April until November like the canals when they were ice free. Also, it was cheaper and quicker to put down tracks than to dig a canal so trains could go to more places in the state. Trains were also faster and more comfortable (no ducking for bridges!)

The state still wanted to keep the canal open so the barge canal system was started in the early 1900s which used more rivers and lakes than the artificial river that was dug by hand. Motorized commercial barges and pleasure boats still use the canal.

 What were the measurements of the enlarged canal? Width depth distance 					
2. What ended the importance of the canal to New York State and businesses? Why?					
3. Why did people and businessmen prefer this new way of transportation?					
4. Is the canal still used today?					
5. If the original Clinton's Ditch was started in 1817, how many years ago was it started?					
Show your work.					