

NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL, INGERSOLL STREET LIFT
BRIDGE

(Erie Canal, Ingersoll Street Lift Bridge)

Ingersoll Street

Albion

Orleans County

New York

HAER NY-487

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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

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NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL, INGERSOLL STREET LIFT BRIDGE (Erie Canal, Ingersoll Street Lift Bridge)

HAER No. NY-487

Location: Ingersoll Street, Albion, Orleans County, New York

Ingersoll Street Lift Bridge is located at latitude: 43.2484099, longitude: -78.1905301. The point represents the control tower and was obtained in 2009. There is no restriction on its release to the public.

Significance: Ingersoll Street Lift Bridge, located on the Erie Canal, is a component of the nationally significant New York State Barge Canal. It is one of sixteen such bridges constructed between Fairport and Lockport.

Description: The sixteen vertical-lift bridges on the Erie Canal are Warren pony trusses raised by an electrically-driven system of cables, counterweights, and sheaves. As described in the New York State Barge Canal National Register nomination, “the moveable truss is supported by vertical lifting frames at either end. When the bridge is ‘down’ the lifting frames retract into the pits” located behind the bridge abutments. “The bridge is raised by cables that run from fixed anchor points at the top of the pits, down around sheaves at the bottom of the lifting frame, back up to sheaves at the top of the pit, and down to cast concrete counterweights. When the counterweights sink into the pits...the cables pull the lifting frames upward by the sheaves at their lower corners.” Each bridge has a control tower, with the motors and gearing generally located in the pit nearest to the tower.¹

The vertical-lift bridge carries Ingersoll Street over the Erie Canal.² The steel Warren pony truss is 135' long and 18.6' between curbs. The main deck is open-grate and lined with a modern steel guard rail inside the truss, while the pedestrian walkways have steel slats and are lined with steel lattice. Access stairways on either end of the west side of the bridge are steel with cross-hatch treads and steel lattice railings. The machinery pits are covered with cross-hatch plates. The bridge is in good condition.

The control tower is a two-story frame building on a concrete foundation that sits on the south bank of the canal and on the west side of the bridge. It is clad in fiber-cement siding. The tower has an asphalt-shingled hipped roof. There are two-over-two-light and three-over-three-light wood windows and pane-and-panel doors. The historic warning bell is extant. The operator's tower is in good condition.

History: I.M. Ludington's Sons, Inc. of Rochester, New York, constructed the lift bridge as part of Contract 62. The work included enlarging the Erie Canal from Orleans County to 0.16

¹ Duncan Hay, “New York State Barge Canal,” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2014, Section 7, Pages 21-22.

² Description of current conditions is based on a site visit made by the HAER recording team in 2009.

mile east of Eagle Harbor Bridge (a total distance of 14.15 miles) and building any bridges, culverts, and waste weirs deemed necessary. The steel work had been installed by 1913, and the bridge opened to traffic the following year.³

Sources:

Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1911, Vol. 1. Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1912.

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.

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. 4421 to Sta. 4450." Approved December 3, 1924, 150.

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.

³ *Annual Report of the State Engineer and Surveyor of the State of New York for the Fiscal Year ended in September 30, 1911, Vol. 1* (Albany: J.B. Lyon Company, 1912), 250; *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), 250-51; *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), 313.

Appendix: Images of Current Conditions



Image 1: Ingersoll Street Lift Bridge with control tower at right. Field photograph taken by HAER recording team, summer 2009.



Image 2: Control tower; note the historic bell and stairway. Field photograph taken by HAER recording team, summer 2009.