



New York State Archives

**New York State Department of Public Works Maps, Drawings,
and Blueprints Related to State Waterways and Canals 10448**

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Table of Contents

Overview of the Records 3

Scope and Contents 3

Use of Records 5

Access Terms 5

Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series contains maps, profiles, tracings, sketches, plans, drawings, blueprints, and a small quantity of related charts and correspondence relating to the State's canals, feeders, and/or various waterways. Included are profiles of canals and rivers; cross sections of actual and proposed canal and railroad lines; and canal section sketches of the location of canals and drainage patterns.
Title:	Maps, drawings, and blueprints related to state waterways and canals
Quantity:	24.8 cubic feet
Quantity:	250 maps
Inclusive Date:	1851-1941
Series:	10448

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Content Note

The series is an assortment of maps, profiles, tracings, sketches, plans, drawings, blueprints, and a small amount of related charts and correspondence that are all related in some way (usually graphically) to the state's canals, feeders, and/or various waterways. Proximity to canals and/or placement of the lands, structures, and watercourses adjacent to them is the only common element apparent in these varied representations.

Most recently the records were part of the working files of the Department of Transportation's Division of Waterways. The earliest dated record in the series is 1851, which indicates that the material was initially gathered by the then newly formed (1846) office of the State Engineer and Surveyor and was subsequently continued, and perhaps organized, by its successor agency, the Department of Public Works. These agencies have historically held responsibility for mapping, planning, constructing, and maintaining the state's infrastructure and they form the organizational link to the study of the state's transportation history.

Selected types of information found in the series include: profiles of canals and rivers (profiles are also sometimes present along the top or bottom of a particular map); cross sections of actual and proposed canal and railroad lines; canal section maps (often identified with only a section number) showing centerline and survey offset lines and measurements; maps showing city, county, and town railroads and street railways in relation to canals, including

one distinctive group that highlights several railroads along the Erie Canal and also shows adjacent land for a considerable distance; construction and improvement plans for a myriad of projects such as dredging water bottoms, altering or extending railway or canal lines or routes, deepening or changing canal channels, or building related structures; operating diagrams and blueprints for proposed and existing reservoirs, dams, locks, spillways, piers, lighthouses, docks, pipelines, roads, etc.; general location maps of aqueducts, bridges, buoys, etc.; sketches of harbors, slips, basins, and terminals; maps or tracings of reservoirs, rivers, and other bodies of water; drawings of bridges crossing canals; detailed sketches of the location of canals, drainage patterns, and areas of cultivated land (sometimes quite detailed with names of property owners and showing specific crops and/or condition of land);

and representations of characteristics (elevations, water levels, catchment areas) and related structures (bridges, dams) of various creeks, rivers, lakes, and watersheds.

The maps in the series do not share a common form or any discernible order. Occasionally several related sheets are rolled together or attached in some way, but the bulk of the series consists of unique individual items representing discrete areas, projects, or other information.

Attributes vary with each map and there is a wide variety of map types. The series contains both printed and manuscript maps. Some printed maps are annotated. Information on date and scale, when present, is specific to each map. Undated material present in the series may predate 1851. Maps were produced by a variety of state, municipal, and private agencies. Some are marked as having been prepared for specific publications (e.g., Boyd's Gazetteer, 1862; Gillete's 1858 Map of Wayne County, from surveys by J.H. French). Some maps have attributions to various engineers, surveyors, public officials, and private publishers, but others have no attribution at all.

Geographic areas range from a specific locality or site to coverage at a county or state level. There is at least one map (among a small group showing the Richelieu River, Province of Quebec) that begins with the international boundary between the U.S. and Canada. Areas from all parts of the state, and many of the individual canals and railroads crossing the state, are represented.

There is an extreme range of sizes for these maps. The smallest measures 28 x 43 cm, but many have a length in the hundreds of centimeters. The largest of the maps are those showing various railroad lines in relation to the canals; they are drawn on extremely long sheets of architect's linen, one measuring 110 x 900 cm.

While there is no apparent internal arrangement to the series, some items are stamped with an alpha-numeric code of unknown designation. Stamped items do not appear to be either uniform or consecutive; nor does the code coincide with original cabinet or drawer numbers as found on the item list made when the series was transferred from the Division of Waterways Maintenance.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this material.

Access Terms

- Jamaica Bay--Peconic Bay Canal (N.Y.)
- Champlain Canal (N.Y.)
- Waterways--New York (State)
- Hudson River (N.Y. and N.J.)
- New York (State)
- Maps (documents)
- New York State Barge Canal System (N.Y.)
- Constructing canals
- Railroads--New York (State)
- Constructing railroads
- Richelieu River (Quebec)
- Black River Canal (N.Y.)
- Planning infrastructure
- Blueprints
- Cross sections
- Manuscript maps
- Mohawk River (N.Y.)
- Genesee Valley Canal (N.Y.)
- Oswego Canal (N.Y.)
- Sketch maps
- Locks (Hydraulic engineering)--New York (State)
- Shinnecock and Peconic Canal (N.Y.)
- Chenango Canal (N.Y.)
- Erie Canal (N.Y.)
- Railroad maps
- Plans (orthographic projections)
- Profiles
- Reservoirs--New York (State)
- Maintaining infrastructure
- Bridges--New York (State)
- Chemung Canal (N.Y.)
- Location maps
- Public works
- Canals--Design and construction

- French, J. H. (John Homer), 1824-1888
- New York (State). State Engineer and Surveyor
- New York (State). Department of Transportation