



New York State Archives

Canal system contract agreements and specifications B0216

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	Consisting of state contracts for canal improvements prior to the construction of the Barge Canal, included are agreements and specifications, financial statements of bonding companies, general contracts, maps, tracings, drawings, correspondence, and bid proposals. Most of the contracts deal with: lengthening of locks on the Erie and Oswego canals; attempts to enlarge the Champlain Canal; introduction of electricity to towage; second enlargement of the canals; and early stages of Barge Canal construction or the third enlargement.
Creator:	New York (State). Superintendent of Public Works
Title:	Canal system contract agreements and specifications
Quantity:	4 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1888-1904
Series:	B0216

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Arrangement

Rough chronological.

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Administrative History

There is no single legislative act encompassing the creation of these contracts. Instead, each contract was authorized by the Legislature and approved by the Governor. Each contract contains a reference to its particular legislative act. Volume one of Noble E. Whitford's *History of the Canal System of the State of New York* (Albany: Brandon Printing Co., 1906) provides a list of all canal legislation covering these contracts.

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Scope and Content Note

This series consists of typed agreements, specifications, bonds, financial statements of bonding companies, general contracts, maps, tracings, drawings, correspondence and bid proposals. The contracts deal with many different types of construction projects, but basically they relate to five major themes: the lengthening of locks on the Erie and Oswego canals; an attempt to enlarge the Champlain canal; the introduction of electricity for towage; the second enlargement of the chief canals; and the early stages of Barge Canal construction or the third enlargement.

The agreements, which are usually typed, contain the dates of agreements; names of parties involved; detailed descriptions of work to be performed; explanation of terms; signatures of contractors, as well as the division engineer, State Engineer and Surveyor, and the Superintendent of Public Works; and diagrams and prices to be paid.

The bid proposals contain a description of the project, authorizing legislation, items, quantities, price per unit, amount, total amount of bid, date of bid, and the names and address of contractors. These are actually entitled "Quantities Exhibited and Propositions Received at the Superintendent of Public Works."

The specifications contain very detailed information regarding materials to be utilized and procedures to be employed by contractors. Materials described include masonry in parapets and wings, arch masonry, coping, mortar, cement, timber, lumber, piles, iron railing and vitrified brick pavement. Procedures dealt with are bailing and draining; taking down old structures; excavation of earth and old masonry; laying masonry in freezing weather; inspection of work in progress; and final inspection. The information in the specifications varies according to the type of construction. For instance, data for the construction of a waste-weir differs from that dealing with the construction of steel highway and electric railway bridge superstructures.

The bonds provide the name of the contractor, amount bonded for, date of bond, description of contract and by whom the contract was bonded. Attached to the bond is the financial statement of the bonding institution. This statement lists assets and liabilities, the name of the company's secretary and signature, the date, and a copy of the company's by-laws.

The general contracts outline further procedures to be followed by the contractors. These include the dismissal of workmen, obstruction of roads, protection of navigation, compensation, materials furnished, preparation of monthly estimates, suspension of work, forfeiture of securities, work delays, use of liquor, preparation of final accounts, indemnity and payment. They also provide a description of the contract project, the signatures of appropriate personnel and the authorizing legislation.

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Related Information

Related Material

Series A1899, Contract documents for canal enlargement and repairs, contains additional contracts and specifications, as well as supporting fiscal records for canal projects undertaken during this period.

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Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Container list.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

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

Access Terms

- Champlain Canal (N.Y.)
- Erie Canal (N.Y.)
- New York (State)
- Canals--Design and construction--Costs
- New York State Barge Canal System (N.Y.)
- Constructing canals
- Contracts

- Canals--New York (State)
- Specifications
- Constructing
- Canals--Design and construction
- Oswego Canal (N.Y.)
- New York (State). Department of Transportation