

It Begins (or Ends) at Albany

The Erie Canal



Photo from Port of Albany Series, ACHOR Inventory Control Number 1501541000

2025 marks the bicentennial of the Erie Canal's opening. On October 26, 1825, Governor DeWitt Clinton led the ceremonial opening of the canal, departing from Buffalo towards New York City. As the midpoint between these two ports, Albany held a crucial position on the canal's pathway.

In addition to being one of the greatest public works projects of its time, the canal changed the trajectory of Albany County's history. The Albany County Hall of Records holds collections which illuminate the story of the Erie Canal from the time of its construction and beyond.

ERIE CANAL **200** YEARS

LET'S GO!



Map 485: For the Incorporation of the Village of Cohoes. Original map dated 1848, Hailes copy dated 1920.

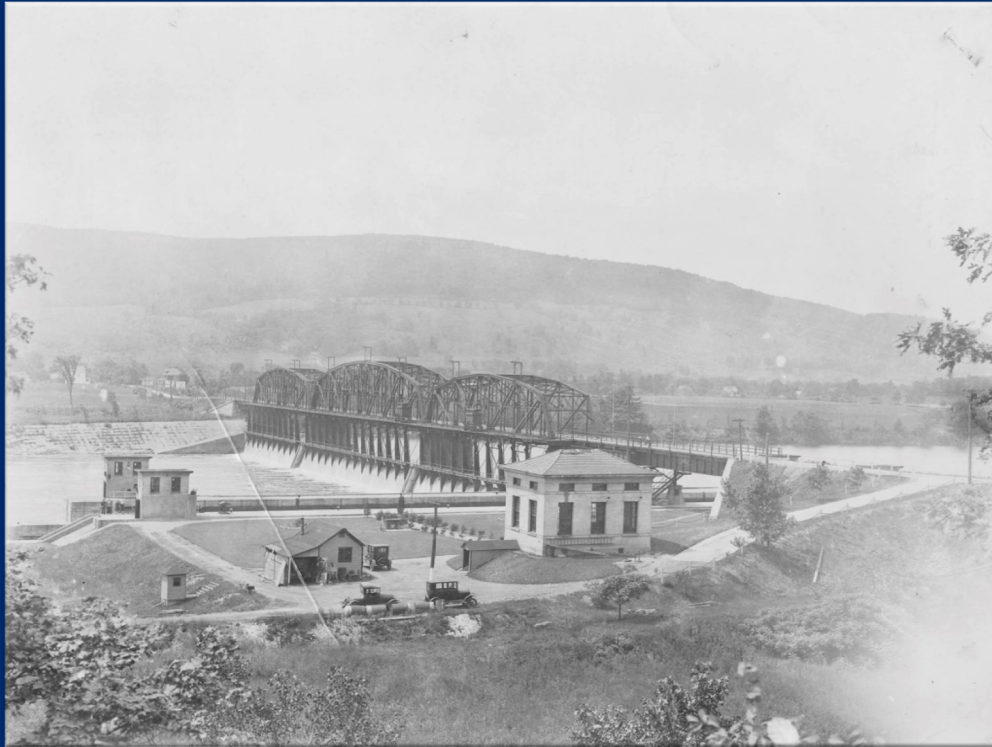
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This early map of the Village of Cohoes highlights the Erie Canal's proximity to rail and water routes. The canal played a key role in Cohoes' development as a major industrial center. The knitting mills in Cohoes could easily receive raw materials and send out finished products via the canal.



Photo from Port of Albany Series:
Aerial view of Standard oil tanker and tugboat on the New York State Barge Canal at Waterford, NY.

ACHOR Inventory Control Number
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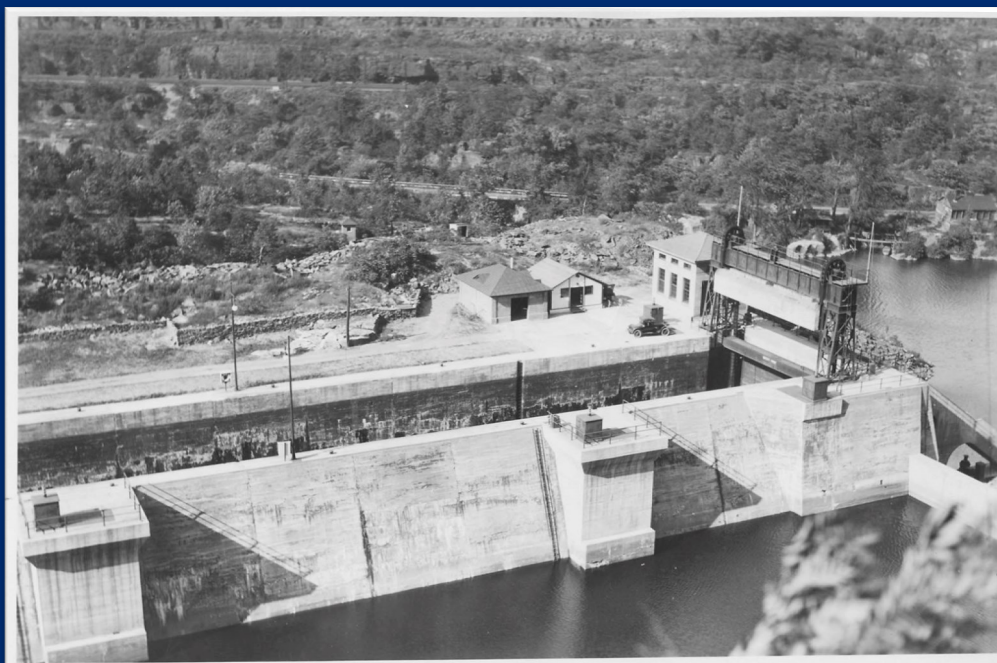


Locks serve as “water elevators” for vessels navigating the Erie Canal. The elevation of the canal climbs from sea level at the Hudson River in Albany to 571 feet at Lake Erie in Buffalo.

Above: Photo from Port of Albany Series: Panoramic view of Lock 9, Erie Canal, Rotterdam, NY.

Below: Photo from Port of Albany Series: Aerial view of Lock 17 of Erie Canal, Little Falls, NY.

ACHOR Inventory Control Number (both photos) 1501541000



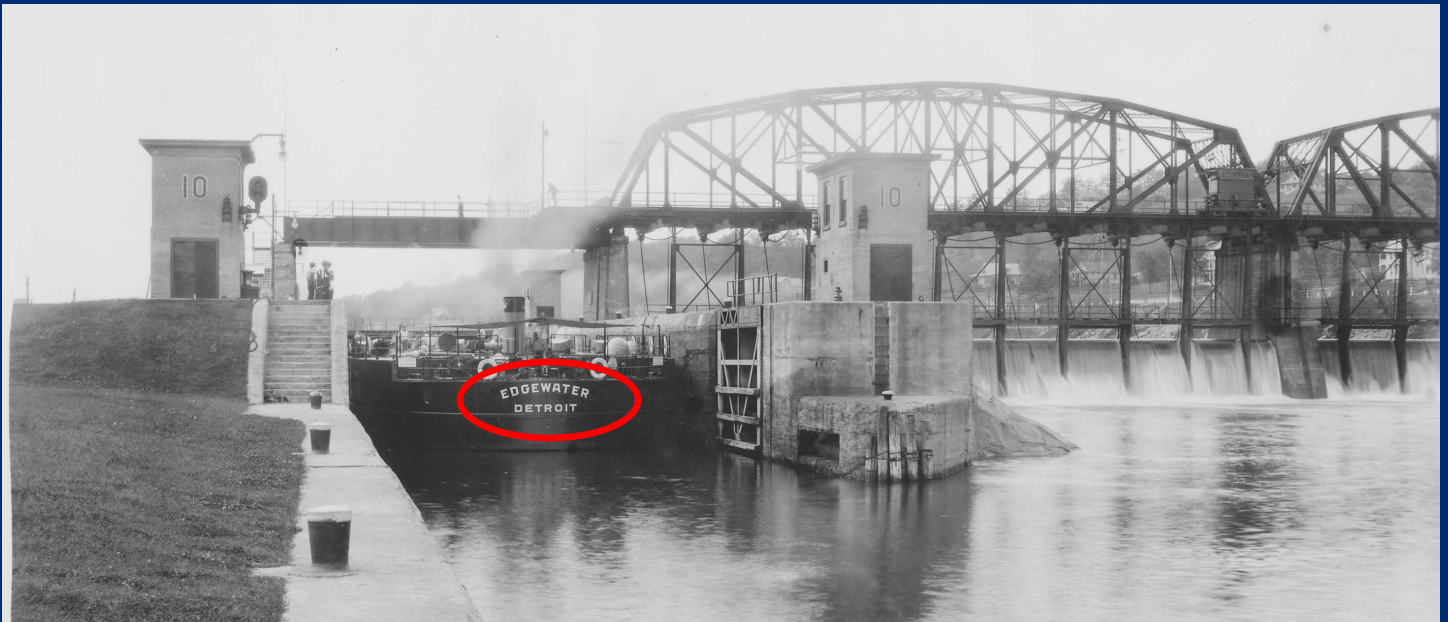


Photo from Port of Albany Series: The motor ship Edgewater passes through Lock 10 of the Erie Canal.

ACHOR Inventory Control Number 1501541000

In these photos, motor ships from Detroit, Michigan, pass through locks on the Erie Canal. The canal made all-water routes from Albany to the Great Lakes accessible for vessels such as these.

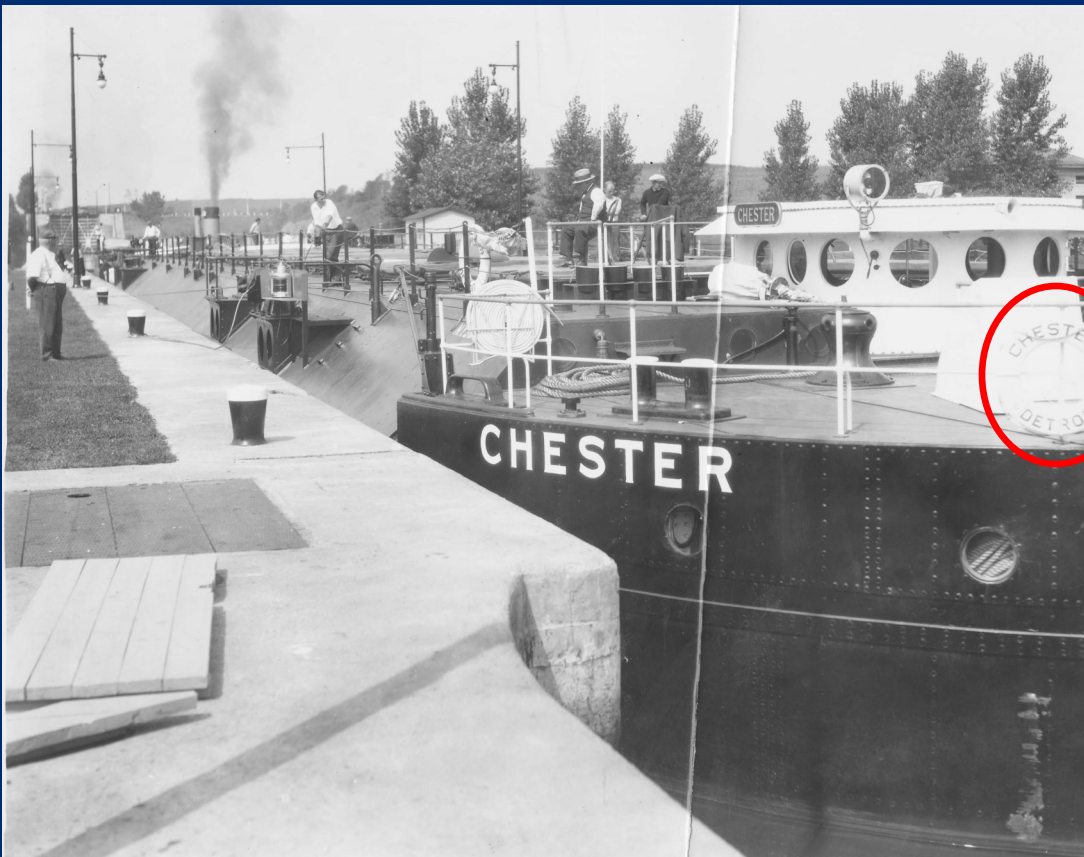
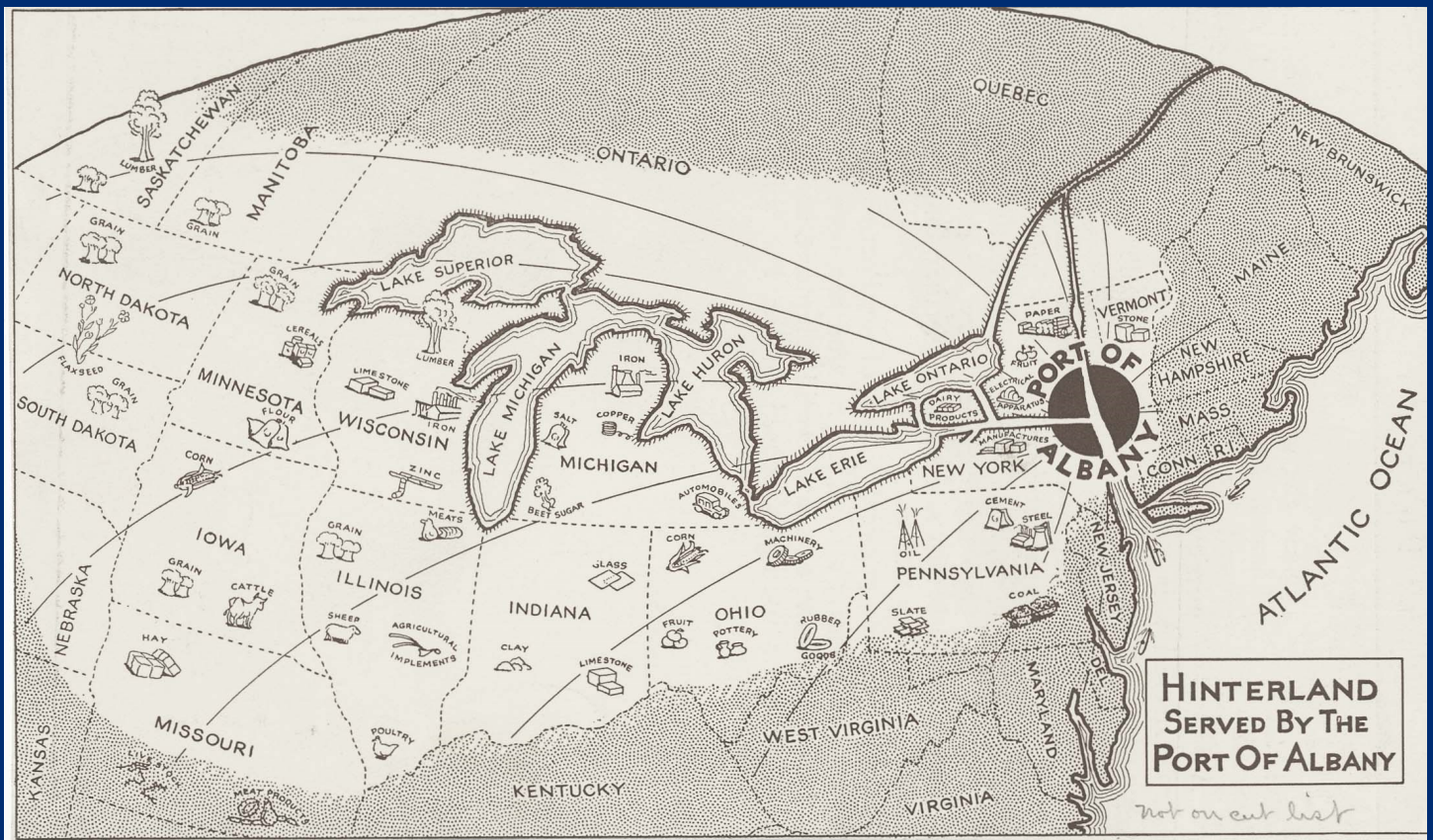


Photo from Port of Albany Series: The motor ship Chester passes through a lock on the Erie Canal.

ACHOR Inventory Control Number 1501541000



Map from Port of Albany Series: Hinterland Served by the Port of Albany, c. 1932.

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The completion of the Erie Canal helped to establish Albany as a center of shipping and transportation. The Port of Albany held a strategic location as a link between the Erie Canal and the Atlantic Ocean. This map demonstrates that the Port of Albany held a crucial role in North American commerce even a century later.

The Albany County Hall of Records protects and preserves records which document Albany County's rich history.

If you would like to make an appointment to view these collections or our other research materials, please call us at 518-436-3663 or e-mail us at achor@albanycounty.com.