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THE ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
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"15 Miles on the Erie Canal": Navigating the Erie Canal through a Digital Exhibit

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE
IN MUSEUM STUDIES

DEPARTMENTS OF PERFORMING ARTS AND VISUAL CULTURE AND HISTORY

BY

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Abstract

The Erie Canal is one of the engineering marvels of the world and was largely responsible for Rochester's transformation into an economic powerhouse, yet there is little representation of it in the cultural institutions throughout Rochester. In collaboration with the Office of the City Historian, I created a digital exhibit to commemorate the Erie Canal and its economic and social effects on the City of Rochester. This paper tracks the many decisions I made throughout the process of creating the exhibit and goes into detail about how best to select items, craft a narrative, and put the exhibit together in a way that will entice people and be accessible to all that are interested. Additionally, this paper explores the benefits of an online exhibit as compared to an in-person one, and it gives guidance as to what types of items should be digitized and what that digitization can do for the artifact. Additionally, I explored how an exhibit can be formed around educational standards, as this exhibit will be used in classrooms throughout the Rochester City School District. By identifying broadly applicable best-practice standards, this paper provides a road map for cultural institutions across the country looking to create a digital exhibit of their own, even with limited resources.

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Introduction

The Erie Canal is viewed by many as one of the greatest engineering feats in the history of America and the world. Built in a time period without power tools, and dug mainly by hand, the canal connected the Atlantic Ocean with the territory west of the Appalachian Mountains. This in turn allowed the country to continue its march West while keeping the communities on opposite sides of the mountain range united by trade. While the canal reaped many benefits for the rest of the country, the state of New York was its main beneficiary. New York City grew to be the largest port in the country and the state's population outside of the city boomed as the Western half of the state became a hub of commerce. Native-born Americans and immigrants alike flocked to the region for the economic opportunities it offered, and they helped to build many communities on the banks of the canal. With access to an abundance of raw materials from the West and as many manufactured goods from the East as they could ever need, industry flourished. There are many stories of how the canal affected communities throughout western New York even indirectly and the City of Rochester is no different. Much of Rochester's success throughout the years can be directly attributed to the canal, and the city would be nothing like it is today if the canal had not been routed directly through what would one day be the City of Rochester.

Incorporated as a village in 1817, Rochesterville was a small village on the outskirts of the known country. When the canal was routed through the heart of the village, it kick-started one of the first, and biggest, "booms" in a town. By 1834, the village had been chartered as the City of Rochester, and many started to call it "The Young Lion of the West." Despite the Erie Canal's importance to the region there is very little representation of its importance in the many cultural institutions throughout Rochester. To combat this, I worked with the Rochester Public

Library and the Office of the City Historian to create an online exhibit to showcase the importance of the canal to the region. I worked closely with Deputy Historian Michelle Finn to develop the exhibit which will eventually debut on the “Rochester Voices” site. “Rochester Voices” is an interactive mobile-friendly website designed to engage K-12 students, and the general public, in local, state, and national history. The idea for the exhibit came from Michelle, with the goal of the exhibit being to showcase how the canal helped to build Rochester and to show how it continues to affect Rochester to this day. To do this, I worked with local cultural institutions to find the best primary sources to showcase the canal and its significance to the area. Carefully searching through these sources and finding those best suited to tell the story of the canal in Rochester in an online exhibition is a primary focus of this project. Additionally, in order to make the exhibit as available as possible, I follow internet accessibility guidelines. Finally, I followed New York State K-12 educational standards to assist local schools with teaching the topic of the Erie Canal. The creation of this exhibit and the thought process behind my decisions in making the exhibit are the focus of this thesis.

Literature Review

History of Erie Canal and Rochester

In order to create the most successful exhibit possible, the history of the canal in Rochester must first be understood by the exhibit creators. There is a lot of literature on this, including many primary sources that tell the story of the canal as it was in its prime. Additionally, many secondary sources have been compiled, including several by the City Historian’s office, that tell the story of the canal from its completion in Rochester in 1823 to the end of the canal in downtown Rochester in 1919 and on to its continued importance in the 21st century. Articles in the *Rochester History Journal* have documented the progress of the canal

and Rochester's perceptions of it over the past 60 years. Additionally, the books Wedding of the Waters by Peter Bernstein and A Shopkeeper's Millennium by Paul E. Johnson give background on the history of the canal and the social changes that Rochester faced in the early 1800s.

Finally, the article "The Iroquois Indians and the Rise of the Empire State: Ditches, Defense, and Dispossession" by Laurence E. Hauptman gives insight on the canal's effects on the Haudenosaunee people and their way of life.

The first of these articles was published in 1949, written by the then-City Historian Blake McKelvey. In his article, McKelvey delves into the inner politics of getting the canal created and explores the science and technology that was used throughout the planning and building of the canal, as well as the impact that the canal had on the City of Rochester. One of the biggest changes to Rochester throughout the heyday of the canal was the growth and diversification of the population of Rochester. In the first two years of the canal being in the Village of Rochester, the population of Rochester more than doubled. The biggest cause of this meteoric rise in population was the migration of immigrant workers that were brought in to perform the back-breaking task of digging the canal. As McKelvey explains, much of the canal was dug by hand and with very little prior knowledge on how to build a canal. The canal existed in Rochester prior to it connecting to Lake Erie, and when the canal was fully completed Rochester became one of the first and biggest boom towns in the West. In a few decades, Rochester went from being a small village without a major industry into the flour capital of America. With the ability to bring in raw materials from the West (grains) and ship finished products out to the East (flour), Rochester was a hub of commerce, especially during the early days of the canal. As time went on, this extreme growth in the local economy started to stagnate, especially as the canal was rebuilt and expanded. Eventually in 1919 the canal was rerouted around Rochester and renamed

the Barge Canal. This canal offered fewer opportunities for the City of Rochester, but the canal had already left its mark as it made Rochester into a hub for industry.¹

Another article published in *Rochester History* in 1975 gives more information on how the canal came to be in Rochester and provides context as to how the technology and knowledge of the time affected the canal. The canal went through the heart of the City of Rochester and was only able to do so thanks to one of the greatest feats of civil engineering at the time. A massive aqueduct was built to take boats over the Genesee and was considered one of the longest stone structures ever constructed. Unfortunately, the admiration of the aqueduct was short lived as it was soon discovered that it was a major limitation on the canal. The aqueduct had only enough room for one boat to go by at a time and this led to many disputes between ship captains who believed they had the right of way. Additionally, the aqueduct forced boats to take a sharp 90-degree turn right as they were approaching the aqueduct. Coupled with the fact that the sandstone the aqueduct was made of was inferior and was rapidly deteriorating, a second aqueduct was built. This second aqueduct stands to this day, as after the canal's route through the heart of Rochester was decommissioned in 1919, the City decided against destroying the remnants of the canal as it would be a waste of all the resources that had been invested up to that point. The remnants of the canal were used to house Rochester's subway system for many years. On top of being recommissioned as a subway, the City added a second tier to the old aqueduct and built the Broad Street Bridge over top of the old aqueduct. This reuse of the canal allowed Rochester to get the most of the canal even after the canal was no longer of any economic value.²

¹ Blake McKelvey. "Rochester and the Erie Canal." 1-20

² Joseph W. Barnes, "Historic Broad Street Bridge and the Erie Canal Sesquicentennial, 1825-1975." *Rochester History* XXXVII (July 1975), 1-25. http://www.rochester.lib.ny.us/~rochhist/v37_1975/v37i3.pdf.

The third source that the *Rochester History* journal published came out in 2000, and it is simply a transcription of a diary written by a young woman as she traveled from Philadelphia all the way to Buffalo using the Erie Canal and several other means of transportation. It is a great account of what the canal was like for a passenger in the 1820s, and it also gives a great account of what Rochester and the many surrounding towns and cities were like in those days. While the woman never traveled directly to the Village of Rochesterville, she gives a short account of what she knows about the city, which basically boils down to her recognizing that Rochester was the greatest economic power west of Albany. “There is said to be more commercial business here than in any place west of Albany (exceptions, Rochester, I suppose.)” She also gives great descriptions of the other villages in the area, including Leroy, Batavia, and Avon.³

The final and most recent article published by the *Rochester History* journal covers a lot of the same ground that the first two articles did but also provides modern context of the Erie Canal. Written by Thomas X. Grasso in 2010, the article goes into what the plan is for the Erie Canal in the modern age and details what the city’s plans for the canal may be in the future. Over the past few years, there has been a lot of chatter about potentially reopening the canal in the heart of downtown. A lot of research has been done on the subject and all of it points to the canal being a major economic booster for the city. While no plan had been given the green light at the time of publication of the story, many, including Grasso, believe that rebuilding the canal can give Rochester a major economic boost and can help lead Rochester back into being the center of commerce it once was.⁴

³ Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck, ed. "Diary of a Young Girl - The Erie Canal in 1822 Part I." *Rochester History LXII* (Summer 2000). http://www.rochester.lib.ny.us/~rochhist/v62_2000/v62i3.pdf.

⁴ Thomas X Grasso. "The Erie Canal and Rochester: Past, Present, and Future." *Rochester History* 72 (Spring 2010), http://www.rochester.lib.ny.us/~rochhist/v72_2010/v72i1.pdf.

Bernstein's *Wedding of the Waters* gives an incredibly detailed account of the birth of the canal and looks behind the scenes at the politics that led to the canal eventually being approved by the State Government. The saga of DeWitt Clinton's efforts to get the canal built are covered in full detail as is the economic growth along the canal. Specifically, Bernstein shows how much of a risk it was pushing for the canal in the economic and political atmosphere of the day. The process of getting the canal to be accepted by the State government was a long and arduous one, and it makes clear why the Erie Canal was referred to as "Clinton's Ditch." Additionally, Bernstein goes into detail on how the canal both shaped and was shaped by immigration. Bernstein gives great insight on the flow of immigrants across New York State as part of the effort to improve the canal and settle the western lands.⁵

A Shopkeeper's Millennium by Paul E. Johnson focuses less on the canal itself than on the religious revival that occurred in the early 1800s as, in part, a response to changes brought by the canal. Johnson covers in great detail how the canal brought trouble to Rochesterville. He brings up several examples of the debauchery caused by the ship crews that came to town and he talks about how the temperance movement formed, partly as a result of the issues that alcohol caused in the town and partly due to the struggles between different social classes. The book gives great insight on the social atmosphere of the village in the early days of the canal and goes into detail on how religion became an incredibly important part of the lives of the middle class in Rochesterville. This religious fervor helped to fuel the Temperance Movement, which would be a strong force in the area for years to come.⁶

⁵ Peter L. Bernstein *Wedding of the Waters: The Erie Canal and the Making of a Great Nation*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2006.

⁶ Paul E. Johnson *A Shopkeepers Millenium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2004.

Finally, "The Iroquois Indians and the Rise of the Empire State: Ditches, Defense, and Dispossession" by Laurence E. Hauptman, goes in depth exploring how the canal was used as a weapon against the Haudenosaunee people. The transportation revolution came full swing in New York with the building of the Erie Canal and, later, the building of railroads across New York State. Hauptman shows how the new transportation systems brought many people to areas that had traditionally been the home of the Haudenosaunee people. He also writes about how the government used the canals as gateways to push thousands of people into the areas that had once been tribal land. The tribes were asked forcefully to move out west, and if they did not their land was just taken from them. This land became valuable for the building of the canal and made many people very rich, but the method of actually obtaining it was pretty terrible. The Haudenosaunee people were pushed out of their homes and their entire way of life was changed in an instant with the sudden influx of new arrivals to the area.⁷

The Erie Canal was an important part of the lives of many New Yorkers in the 1800s. The importance of the canal cannot be overstated, which makes it strange that there are few major exhibitions in Rochester telling this story. There is some representation of the canal in the Rochester Museum & Science Center, and there have been past exhibits put on by the Memorial Art Gallery, but it feels like there should be more. To tell the story of the canal in a way that is easy to access for all ages, I created a digital exhibit using best practices.

State of Museums in the Digital World

The age of the digital museum has come and many in the field have started to realize that digital curation will be the future of the field. Online exhibits and archives allow people to connect with museum materials in new ways. Cultural institutions have gradually been making a

⁷ Laurence M. Hauptman "The Iroquois Indians and the Rise of the Empire State: Ditches, Defense, and Dispossession." *New York History* 79, no. 4 (October 1998): 325-58. Accessed March 27, 2019. JSTOR.

shift to providing more and more online content for users, connecting with people all around the world.

Joyce Ray published an article in *Library Hi Tech* explaining how over the past twenty years the field of digital curation has grown. Originally introduced as a term in 2001, digital curation is a complicated term that covers a lot of ground. Digital curation mainly refers to the accumulation, management, and presentation of information in the online realm. Over the past fifteen years more research has been done in the field, which has allowed it to flourish and become a priority for many major organizations across the country. This has fostered the development of education programs in digital curation, including at Johns Hopkins University. Digital curation has been more popular in the field of library sciences but is rapidly gaining popularity in the museum studies field as more and more people have started to realize that it is a valid career path for those looking to get into the museum profession.⁸

Expanding on the field of digital curation and providing more knowledge on the best way to curate a digital exhibit was the goal of Anne Lindsay's "#Virtual Tourist" article. Lindsay argues that the digital presence of a cultural institution can allow for it to reach more people and can also convince online visitors to donate to and even visit the actual cultural institution. While the article mainly focuses on the ways that Cultural Heritage sites can use the internet to reach a wider audience, it gives many practical pieces of advice on creating a virtual experience for museum goers. One of the key ideas when creating a digital exhibition is to focus on a defined narrative. Without a defined narrative a digital exhibit loses much of its power and will not engage viewers as much as an exhibit with a well-defined narrative. The narrative should both define and be defined by the objects that are included in an online exhibit. More important than

⁸ Joyce Ray. "Digital Curation in Museums." *Library Hi Tech* 35, no. 1 (2017): 5-10.

building a narrative, however, is sticking to the narrative once it has been crafted. By building an online exhibit this way, institutions can make an exhibit that will excite users and incite them to do more research and to potentially donate to and visit a certain institution.⁹

A third article that explores the age of digital curation is Paul Conway's "Preservation in the Age of Google" which explains why digitization is so important. Preservation of objects is, and always will be, one of the main goals of a cultural institution, but with the rise of digitization, preservation has taken on a new meaning. Where a cultural institution may have once done everything it could to save an object that is in disrepair, institutions are increasingly turning to digitization to save and preserve collections. While this may be lamented by some as the death of classic preservation, digitization provides many advantages when preserving collections. The biggest of these advantages is the added accessibility of digitized sources, allowing more people to have access to collections. One thing that Conway does stress to any cultural institution looking into digitization is to follow best practices as much as possible. Taking the time and resources to do it right will reduce the data lost in the long run. In the end, preservation has been moving towards digitization for years and the benefits of digitization are hard to ignore.¹⁰

Selecting Sources

The selection of good sources is vital to the creation of any sort of digital museum exhibit. There are many factors that go into the selection of sources and careful thought must be put into picking sources that will both tell a great story and preserve important artifacts for future generations.

⁹ Anne Lindsay. "#VirtualTourist: Embracing Our Audience through Public History Web Experience." *The Public Historian* 35, no. 1 (February 2013): 67-86..

¹⁰ Paul Conway. "Preservation in the Age of Google: Digitization, Digital Preservation, and Dilemmas." *The Library Quarterly* 80, no. 1 (January 2010): 61-79.

The *Public Historian* published a series on New York public history in the Summer of 2011 and one of the articles included was Christine Ward's "Identifying and Saving New York's Primary Sources."¹¹ Ward makes several important arguments about how best to pick sources that should be digitized and eventually used in online exhibits and archives. One of the main points that she makes is that when selecting sources to digitize it is important to divide them into groups or subsections to best tell a complete story. Additionally, Ward gives more insight into the importance of artifacts and how the age of an artifact should be an important factor in the selection of sources. While historical records and accounts are obviously important and should be saved, it is also important not to ignore modern history. More often than not, records of modern history are ignored and not considered to be as important, but this can lead to artifacts being neglected. Modern artifacts are vital to telling a complete story and need to be made as much of a priority as older artifacts.

Another important factor when selecting artifacts for digitization and eventual use in a digital exhibit is copyright. Jean Dryden's "The Role of Copyright in Selection for Digitization" details the struggles of working with copyright and gives some solutions for how best to work with objects that an institution may not have the rights to.¹² There are many copyright laws in place that can prevent cultural institutions from digitizing desired materials. When digitizing anything for public use it is important to keep copyright in mind and to confirm that the institution in question has the legal right to reproduce and publish materials. Often the items that get digitized are older papers and still objects, as there are no copyright restrictions on them, but these sometimes do not tell the full story. The best suggestions that Dryden gives for these

¹¹ Christine W Ward. "Documenting New York: Identifying and Saving New York's Primary Sources." *The Public Historian* 33, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 99-115.

¹² Jean Dryden. "The Role of Copyright in Selection for Digitization." *The American Archivist* 77, no. 1 (2014): 64-95. doi:10.17723/aarc.77.1.3161547p1678423w.

artifacts with copyright issues are to work with the copyright holders of items and to increase the use of “fair use” in releasing digitized artifacts.

Digitizing paper-based artifacts is important and should be a focus of any institution trying to create a collection of information. Robert Bee wrote an article for *The Library Quarterly* titled “The Importance of Preserving Paper-Based Artifacts in a Digital Age” that argues that these types of resources need to be saved for future generations.¹³ Paper-based resources are some of the most at-risk documents in any collection and the information that is in them should be preserved for future generations. However, Bee also argues that while these sources should be digitized it is also important to not get rid of the original sources as some institutions have done over the past few decades. Paper-based artifacts are much more than the information that is written in them, and the connection between the physical artifact and the knowledge contained inside is crucial to fully understanding a document.

Selecting sources to use in a digital exhibition is a process that requires a lot of effort, but, when done right, it can take an exhibit to the next level. The criteria listed above for selecting sources gives a rough outline of what to look for in sources to be digitized. It also gives an idea of what types of sources are a higher priority and how to determine whether a source is a good candidate for being digitized.

Accessibility

In the creation of any website, accessibility is one of the biggest concerns for developers. The internet is meant to be a place for everybody. This holds true for online exhibitions, which should try to conform to the standards put out for other websites. Making the information in the

¹³ Robert Bee. "The Importance of Preserving Paper Based Artifacts in a Digital Age." *The Library Quarterly* 78, no. 2 (April 2008): 179-94. doi:10.1086/528888.

exhibit available to all people that are interested is one of the main jobs of a museum, and this should not stop when it comes to a digital medium.

There are several different sources on how to make websites more accessible, but there is one definitive source that should be followed over all others. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is the international standard when it comes to managing the internet and making it more available to all people. They have a set of thirteen standards that all websites should strive to meet when it comes to accessibility. To keep the digital exhibit as accessible as possible, I strove to comply with every one of these standards. There are some standards that will not apply to the exhibit but the ones that do are vital to making the exhibit as successful as possible. The different standards are broken up into four categories, striving to make websites perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust. When it comes to the perceivability of the exhibit the main standards that apply are providing text alternatives to multimedia, creating content that can be presented in different ways (including by assistive technologies), and making it easier for users to see and hear content.¹⁴

For operability W3C recommends making everything functional whether using a keyboard or not, giving enough time to understand content, avoiding content that could cause seizures or other physical reactions, and helping users navigate and find content (via a help section). In the case of making a website understandable, it is vital to make the website readable and predictable and to make sure that any mistakes that are made by a user are easily correctable. Finally, when it comes to making a digital experience robust, it is necessary to make it both forwards and backwards compatible. All these things must be kept in mind when creating the

¹⁴ W3C World Wide Web Consortium. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, Recommendation 05 June 2018 (<http://www.w3.org/TR/200X/REC-WCAG20-20081211/>, Latest version at <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>)

digital exhibit and will affect many of the decisions to be made throughout the creation of the web experience.

Methodology

K-12 Standards

Before I could start looking at any artifacts, I needed to clarify what the K-12 standards for teaching about the Erie Canal were in New York State. The history of the Erie Canal, as a part of local history and as a part of the narrative of our nation's history, is taught in the 4th, 7th, and 11th grades with some differences in what specific content is covered in each grade. There is, however, some common ground between all the grade levels. These standards are also fairly generic; they act more as guidelines than they do a list of what exact topics to cover, but that helped more than the list would have, allowing me to make general conclusions about what specific topics to cover within the wider range of topics available. Once I knew which topics I was going to be dealing with, I could adapt the topic to relate it more to Rochester and the surrounding areas.

The 4th grade standards serve as a good introduction to the Erie Canal, with learning standards that allow the students to understand what the canal did and why it was built where it was¹⁵. The first standard deals mainly with the geography of New York and why the Erie Canal was built where it was. This is significant for Rochester, as the geography of the area was well suited for a canal due to the existence of the Irondequoit Valley. Additionally, the 4th grade standards call for focus to be put on the way the canal affected the Haudenosaunee people. The effect on the native population is something that is often ignored, so that is a story I wanted to

¹⁵ "New York State Social Studies Standards for Erie Canal Simulation." NY Geographical Alliance. Accessed April 24, 2019. [http://www.nygeographicalalliance.org/sites/default/files/erie canal simulation standards.pdf](http://www.nygeographicalalliance.org/sites/default/files/erie%20canal%20simulation%20standards.pdf).

tell in the exhibit. The final standard asks for students to know that towns and cities grew on the shores of the canal and to know what kind of products were shipped on it. As Rochester was a major exporter of a wide array of products, most notably flour, this is an easy standard to match up with Rochester. Overall, the 4th grade standards focus mainly on the geographical and economic aspects of the canal which leaves much to be answered about the social and political aspects of the canal.

The 7th grade standards delve into those sociopolitical elements in some detail.¹⁶ The main theme of the 7th grade standards for teaching about the Erie Canal was that “Westward expansion provided opportunities for some groups while harming others.” The standards specifically address the effects of the canal on Irish immigrants that worked on it, businesses along the canal, and religious groups that used the canal to spread to the West. Rochester received a huge influx of Irish immigrants during the building of the Erie Canal. Many ended up settling in the region they were in after they finished work digging the canal, as happened in Rochester. Rochester also experienced an influx of religious groups, changing the social atmosphere of the city. Additionally, its industries owe most of their success to the canal. As this exhibit focuses on the history of the Erie Canal in Rochester, some other groups that can be looked at to show the benefits of the canal are the Woman Suffrage movement and the Temperance movement, as both used the canal to spread their message across the state and country. In the end, the 7th grade standards mainly focus on the canal’s effects on the social, political, and economic status of a wide array of groups, all of whom were prominent in Rochester.

¹⁶ "New York State Social Studies Standards for Erie Canal Simulation." NY Geographical Alliance.

The 11th grade standards focus on how the canal affected the history of America as a whole.¹⁷ Specifically, the technological and political aspects of the canal are covered in the 11th grade standards. This fits in well with the Rochester theme, as building the canal through the heart of what would become downtown Rochester was a major technological feat. For the canal to cross through Rochester, builders had to blast through solid rock, then build an aqueduct so it could cross the Genesee River and avoid High Falls. While there were many problems with this over time, it was mostly successful and was one of the greatest engineering feats ever attempted at that time. While the technological aspects of the canal were on full display in Rochester, the political goals of the canal did not manifest themselves in the city as much as in other places. However, there was a great deal of political maneuvering needed to convince the State to put the canal straight through the city, which was a topic under consideration when creating the exhibit

The K-12 standards do not provide a comprehensive list of what to look for in an artifact, but they provide some baselines for what kinds of topics should be covered. These baselines were expanded upon and were the foundation for the narrative that I crafted.

Narrowing the Field

With a topic that is as wide ranging as the Erie Canal it was important to narrow down the focus of the exhibit to tell a more complete story. The more focused the exhibit is, the easier it will become to find the right artifacts to tell the story. There, understandably, is a lot of material to work with when it comes to the Erie Canal, and to sort through all of that without guidance as to what kind of artifacts to use would have been a failure. As the exhibit is online, most of the objects I looked at were two dimensional. They consisted mainly of photographs, newspaper articles, and other paper resources, and the selection process was limited in a way by

¹⁷ "New York State Social Studies Standards for Erie Canal Simulation." NY Geographical Alliance.

the amount of material that was already digitized and available. While I had the option of digitizing artifacts that I would want to use, in many cases the artifacts that were already digitized proved to be enough to tell my story. All the same, there were still hundreds of photographs and pictures, thousands of newspaper articles, and a wide assortment of other media that had to be sorted through and crafted into an exhibit. To combat the exhibit becoming too disorganized I developed a list of criteria for every artifact that I looked at throughout the process. These criteria mainly consisted of their fit with K-12 standards, the “wow” factor of the piece, the resonance of the artifact, the condition of the artifact, and the date ranges of the artifacts in question. Each of these factors played a role in analyzing each artifact and allowed me to make informed and consistent decisions about which ones would be effective in an online exhibit.

The K-12 standards helped to focus the exhibit more than anything else by giving a list of topics that were of importance for the exhibit. While I did not allow these standards to limit the artifacts, they provided a good starting point. By taking artifacts that directly related to the K-12 standards, I could then flesh out what kind of artifacts would relate to the ones I had already selected, and this allowed me to start building a narrative. To find artifacts that related to the standards, I first took the standards and broke them down into their main categories: geography, technology, economic impact, and sociopolitical impact. By grouping the artifacts I was considering using by topic, I could see which stories could be told using the artifacts available and which stories were not as well fleshed out. Once they were sorted into their respective topics, they could also be grouped again, allowing me to see if certain parts of the individual topics were covered more than others. For example, the sociopolitical impact section was sorted again by the specific group that the sociopolitical impact was prevalent for (e.g. Irish immigrants,

Haudenosaunee, women, etc.). By and large, the K-12 standards were very useful for determining artifacts that could be used and allowed me to look at the other criteria to choose which artifacts to ultimately select.

When creating an online exhibit, it is important to keep in mind that the objects will lose some amount of meaning due to the medium. As such, it was important to make sure the artifacts selected had a certain “wow” factor. Looking at an artifact on a screen is a much different experience than seeing it in real life, so the artifact must be able to attract the viewer’s attention without needing a physical presence to do so. The “wow” factor can be loosely defined as the ability of an artifact to pique the interest of a viewer and make them want to learn more about it. It is much harder to do this with 2D objects than it is with a 3D artifact seen in person, but there are many artifacts that I looked at that had the ability to make me do a double take. There was no real way to quantify the “wow” factor, so I mainly used my own judgement on what seemed interesting to me. I also worked with a couple of third-party sources (my roommates) who gave me an idea of what a non-Museum Studies major thought about the artifacts in question. While the “wow” factor was not needed for an artifact, any artifact that had it became a priority for me to include in the exhibit.

The third factor that went into deciding if an artifact fit in the exhibition was the resonance of the artifacts in question. The Erie Canal has not run through the City of Rochester in 100 years and many people, especially school children, would not be able to relate the canal to what they know about the city today. As such I tried to find artifacts, specifically pictures, that showed some familiar scenes so people could relate the image to what they currently know about an area. Seeing how an area changed over time due to the influence of the canal allows for the artifact to resonate with the viewer in a greater way. This was not a major priority when

determining what artifacts to use, as the cityscape of Rochester has changed a lot in the 200 years since the canal was built. However, an artifact that showed a familiar scene in Rochester was considered to be more useful for the exhibit than one that showed a scene with no recognizable features. Another aspect of resonance that I considered throughout the process of selecting artifacts was looking for familiar names. For example, an artifact that expressed Robert Fulton's stance on the canal was given more weight than one with a name that few would recognize. Overall, resonance was something I looked for in an artifact but was not a major deciding factor in what artifacts would be included.

The condition of an artifact was another factor in deciding which artifacts to use, particularly when considering that the artifacts were going to be eventually viewed on a computer screen. Artifacts that were in excellent condition were given more consideration than those that were in not as good condition, so as to give users the best experience possible when looking at them. At the same time, any artifacts that were not digitized yet but could be used in the exhibit were given more consideration than already digitized materials that were in poor condition. All in all, the condition of an artifact was not a make or break factor, but it was definitely something I considered when choosing between artifacts.

The final factor that I looked at when trying to determine the viability of an artifact to be used in the exhibition was the date of the artifact. I wanted to tell the complete story of the Erie Canal, not just a partial history, so I tried to find artifacts from a wide range of dates to cover all of the history of the canal. This proved to be one of the more difficult parts of the process as most pictures relating to the Erie Canal came from the late 1800s and early 1900s when the technology of cameras became more widespread. As such, I found I had to rely on other types of sources when trying to tell the story of the early days of the canal. In order to keep the exhibit

from featuring exclusively text-based artifacts when it came to the early days of the canal, I made pictures, drawings, and depictions of the canal from the early days a priority to include. Balancing the timelines of artifacts was one of the harder parts of selecting artifacts, and it was not a challenge that I initially expected to come across, which is why it became a key factor to consider when looking at artifacts.

The selection process was not easy and there was no real cut and dried way for me to figure out which artifacts deserved inclusion. As such I had to create my own set of criteria to decide which artifacts were worthy of inclusion. After I found and sorted the artifacts by topic, I used the standards that I came up with to create a rating system for each artifact. I rated each artifact on each of the different factors I was looking for and put the ratings together to come up with an aggregate score for each one. All of the artifacts were put into a spreadsheet and divided up by their specific topics (Figure 1.1). This was not an overly scientific process as most of the criteria were rated based on my own personal experiences and biases, but it gave me a baseline to look at for each artifact and made my final decisions on which artifacts to use much easier. While the process of artifact selection is by no means done yet, this system for looking at artifacts has allowed me to sort through a large number of artifacts fairly quickly while also allowing me to keep the artifacts organized so that I can begin crafting the narrative for the exhibit.

Finding Artifacts: Rochester Images

Once I had set my initial criteria, I started looking for artifacts that could be used in the exhibition. As I continued through the process of finding artifacts, my criteria evolved to match the artifacts I was able to find. The Monroe County Library System has many resources available that I could use to begin my search for artifacts. To start the search, I focused on looking at

artifacts that were already in the collections of the library. The library has a huge collection of images showcasing Rochester's history as well as an extensive collection of historic newspapers that I started with in my search for artifacts.

As the exhibit is entirely based online, the majority of the artifacts that I looked at were going to be 2D. This is compounded by the fact that almost all of the library's collections are 2D in nature. While I never discounted including a 3D artifact for the exhibit, the focus for me was on 2D artifacts, specifically on photographs and other images. While text-based documents can also tell an important story, the images would provide the viewer with more of an idea of what the effects of the canal looked like. The Monroe County Library System has a database called Rochester Images that made my search for images much easier. This database includes a wide variety of images from many different collections. Some collections included in the Rochester Images database are the Rochester City Hall Photo Lab, the Rochester Municipal Archives, and the Albert R. Stone Negative Collection from the Rochester Museum & Science Center. Each of these collections and several others had images that could have been beneficial to include in the exhibit. Searching through the Rochester Images database allowed me to search all of these collections at the same time.

The Rochester Images database has more than ten thousand photographs, postcards, maps, and other visual materials to sort through, so I had to find a way to pare down the selection. The simplest way to do this was to just search for the term Erie Canal in all of the collections, which netted over 900 artifacts. Realizing that some of the results were coming from things other than actual images, I filtered the results to see only pictures. The filtered results had a more manageable 327 results. To start off, I scrolled through the results to see if there was any sort of trend throughout the photographs, and the main trend that I could see was that there were

many images from the late 1800s and early 1900s. After noting this I started going through the images one by one and applying my selection process to each one along the way. In the beginning I added every single artifact to my spreadsheet with all of the accompanying metadata, but as I continued, I realized that many of the pictures were repetitive and showed the same scene from a different perspective. After this realization I took each artifact and individually considered whether it related to any of the artifacts that were near it in the search results. If there were any similar pictures, I would decide which of them would be better for the exhibit based on the criteria I had already established. Of particular importance when comparing two similar artifacts was the visual appeal of the artifact in question. As the similar artifacts would represent similar stories, the more important factor in picking the artifacts was finding ones that the audience would find more interesting. This was one of the first issues I came across while going through the images, but it would not be the last.

On top of finding many pictures that showed the same scene from a different point of view, I also found that many of the artifacts focused on the same subject. Pretty close to one quarter of the artifacts available in the database focused on the aqueduct and the area around it. While this was the hub of the Erie Canal in Rochester and was and is a major focal point of the city, there is only so much that can be told about the aqueduct. As such, I started to keep track of all of the different subjects of the images in the database and as I moved through the results, I would replace some of the older images that I had included in the spreadsheet with later images that showed a better representation of the subject. This helped me to keep the list of artifacts under consideration to a manageable size while also allowing me to keep track of the subjects that I saw the most of in the Rochester Images database.

Despite the issues I ran into in the beginning of the process of looking through the Rochester Images database, I was still able to build a list of fifty-three artifacts to consider for the exhibit. These artifacts ranged from pictures showing the economic growth surrounding the canal, to original plans for the aqueduct, to pictures of construction crews remodeling the canal bed to adapt it for use as a subway line. Each of these unique artifacts showed a little bit of the story of the canal, but I needed to find a way to put them together so they could form a narrative for the exhibit. In order to do this, I studied the trends of the artifacts that I had selected thus far and compared them to the standards that I was building the exhibit with. Having the artifacts all in one spreadsheet allowed me to add additional sheets to the Excel spreadsheet in order to sort the artifacts by the different criteria I had filled out for each artifact. The criteria entered into the sheet directly correlated to the criteria listed in the “Narrowing the Field” section of this thesis. I could then sort the items by another value in order to further cut through the artifacts I had gathered.

Once I had the artifacts properly sorted, I noticed that some topics had many artifacts available and other topics had a real lack of artifacts, which allowed me to focus my search on the areas that were lacking. The topic that was very well covered was the technology of the canal and how it was made a reality. The aqueduct was one of the great engineering feats of the Erie Canal and the importance of this aqueduct and the technology that went into making it a reality were prevalent in the artifacts I had found. Realizing that I likely would not need any more artifacts for the technology aspect of the canal, I moved on to the economic impact of the canal. There was pretty good representation of this impact in the available images once I considered the context of the photos. I knew that I was going to want to include images that represented the economic opportunities that the canal provided to the people of Rochester, which could be seen

in the many pictures of factories along the banks of the canal, but I wanted to represent more of the specific businesses for which Rochester became known, which were not as well represented. I also wanted to show how the canal had a major economic impact for the state government in the form of tolls and taxes collected, but this was not as well represented. After looking through the artifacts that explored the economic impact of the canal, I looked for the artifacts that portrayed the social and political effects of the canal. This group of artifacts was one of the smallest and excluded some of the groups I wanted to represent. Specifically, there were not many artifacts representing the ways that religious groups used the canal, the impact of the immigrants that traveled to Rochester to help with the construction of the canal, and the ways that the canal affected the Haudenosaunee people. While there were pictures that represented the first two, there were not many of them and they often just marginally covered the topics. I was unable to find any artifacts that represented the effects on the Haudenosaunee people and that was an area that I wanted to focus on, so I knew I would have to make that a priority for the rest of my search. The least represented group of artifacts were those that covered the geography and the ways that this played into the construction of the canal, but this was something I was expecting. To combat this, I made plans to find more maps, specifically topographical and profile maps that showed more of why the canal was built where it was.

Another issue I ran into while looking through the Rochester Images database was the fact that the majority of the artifacts were focused on the later years of the canal, as it was starting to fall into disuse. The lack of photographs from earlier in the canal's life makes sense as the technology of photography did not really exist in the earliest days of the canal. There were some artistic representations of the canal and some plans of the aqueduct that could help show the earlier days of the canal, but I knew that I would need to find more material showing the

early days of the canal. As the selection of images from this time period was small, I decided that I would need to look for more text-based artifacts to represent these earlier days. Specifically, I decided that I would need to start looking through some of the extensive collection of newspapers from Rochester from this time.

Working with the artifacts available through the Rochester Images database gave me a great foundation and allowed me to begin putting together a narrative. It also gave me the ability to see what kind of artifacts I was missing that would touch upon the K-12 standards I was basing the exhibit on. From this start, I could move forward to looking for artifacts that would help tell the rest of the story.

Finding Artifacts: Other Sources and Institutions

With my base set of fifty-three artifacts I started to map out the artifacts that I would need to fill in the gaps of the exhibit and tell a full story. The topics that I still wanted to cover in the exhibit that I had not found artifacts for yet were the effects of the canal on the Haudenosaunee people, the impact of immigrants to the area from the construction of the canal, the usage of the canal by religious groups, the specific products that were shipped on the canal, and how the State was able to make money using the canal. Each of these topics was different and I knew that I would have to use different means to find artifacts to represent them.

Before I started looking for more artifacts at different institutions I decided to see if I could find any ways that these issues had been represented in other exhibitions. While I made sure to not copy the work of any of the other institutions, the ways that they approached the topics I listed gave me a better idea of what kind of artifacts I would want to find. I discovered that there had been two exhibits at the Rochester Memorial Art Gallery (MAG) that talked about the canal and that the exhibit guides for these were in the collections of the library. I got both

books out and from there I was able to find some more information on how I should proceed. One of the exhibits was an art exhibit and the other was more of a history exhibit, so I was able to see multiple ways that I could approach the topics I was missing. From the history exhibit, I was able to find a few artifacts that I could try to get from institutions in the area that would help to tell my story. I would just need to reach out to the institutions that had lent their artifacts to the MAG for the exhibits and see if they would be available to be digitized and if they would be available to use in the exhibit. I noted these artifacts and continued through the exhibit guides to see if there was any other information I could glean from them. The history exhibit did not touch on any of the social aspects of the canal that I wanted to include, but the art exhibit touched upon the effects of the canal on the Haudenosaunee people. I found that the MAG had focused on the fact that much of the land that the canal was built on was ancestral land that had been taken from Native Americans. This was the first representation of the Haudenosaunee people that I had seen throughout the process of making the exhibit, so I decided to follow their lead to a certain extent and to showcase how the lands that were used for the canal were stolen.

In order to represent this, I decided to reach out to somebody that I knew was an expert on the Haudenosaunee people, Kathryn Murano Santos, the Senior Director for Collections and Exhibits at the Rochester Museum & Science Center. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of the Friends of Ganondagan. When I reached out to her, she told me that she did not have any artifacts at RMSC that would work for what I was looking for, but she pointed me in the right direction for finding some more information on the topic. She gave me some information on how the canal was, in many cases, built on land that traditionally had been the home of the Haudenosaunee people. She also put me in contact with Michael Galban of the Ganondagan State Historic Site. After meeting with Galban, I determined that the best way to represent the

effects of the canal on the Haudenosaunee people would be to use a map showing ancestral lands of the Haudenosaunee people compared to a map of where the canal travels. Galban also asked that when I portray the Haudenosaunee people in the exhibit, I focus on the fact that land restitution is not the only goal of the people. In general, the Haudenosaunee people want to work as the keepers of the land, and they do not care about the ownership of the land as much as they care about the land being taken care of. Galban asked me not to portray the Haudenosaunee people as just victims but also to portray them as stewards of the land: people who truly care about their ancestral land. He also asked me to make sure that the map that I used in the exhibit is vetted and approved so as to avoid causing any issues with any legal fights over lands that the Haudenosaunee people are fighting to have restored. He also pointed me in the direction of Hauptman, who gave a great summary of the issues that the Haudenosaunee people faced at the hands of those who traveled across the state. I will be working with Galban further to make sure that I give an accurate representation of the Haudenosaunee people in the exhibit. At this point in time there are no artifacts to depict this in the exhibit, but that is a major priority for the rest of the project beyond the scope of this thesis.

The story of the immigrants who worked on the canal is still not quite as fleshed out as I would have hoped, but I found additional information on the topic by looking at a publication put out by the Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse. More artifacts depicting the impact of the canal on immigrants and vice versa need to be sourced through the Erie Canal Museum, and I reached out to Thomas Grasso from the New York State Erie Canal Society to find out the viability of using some of these artifacts in the exhibit. This process was not complete by the end of this thesis and is beyond the scope of the thesis

The next topic for which I was looking for more artifacts was the impact of religious groups on the canal and vice versa. I had read that the canal was used by the Mormons in their travel West but have not been able to find any artifacts that represent this. Additionally, I wanted to show how the canal helped to accelerate the religious revivals that occurred in the city throughout the 19th Century. To showcase this, I found that the *Rochester Observer*, a religious newspaper from the 1800s, had put out several articles relating to the religious revival and to the rise of the Temperance Movement. These articles relating to the Temperance Movement, in many cases, pointed to the canal as being the cause of the many issues that surrounded Rochester in the wake of industrialization.

When it came to the specific economic impacts of the canal, I realized that the general narrative of Rochester making more money was not enough, so I looked at finding artifacts that told a more complete story of the major economic impacts of the canal. Specifically, I looked at the rise of tangential industries, such as hotels, service industries, and ship building. These industries grew just as much as the major factories in the city and their stories needed to be told. By looking closer at some of the pictures I had already assembled, I realized that the stories of some of these tangential industries was right in front of my eyes. Additionally, I looked for artifacts that may not have showed up in my initial search for Erie Canal-related artifacts, such as items relating to Child's Basin. I also looked for more artifacts that could better show the specific products shipped on the canal, and I found some newspaper articles that talked about the increased shipments of flour

Case Study: Building the Exhibit

Crafting a Narrative

Once I had a large set of artifacts put together, I started taking a look at the narrative that I wanted to tell and how the artifacts I had found to that point would work with that narrative. The basis for the narrative came from the K-12 standards and from my research on the canal up to that point. I identified some aspects of the canal that I considered to be crucial to the story of the canal and its impact in Rochester. While the K-12 standards were a major influence on what I was putting together I wanted to also tell a story that would make sense holistically. I could not focus on the standards to the exclusion of the other aspects of the canal, so I used the K-12 standards as a base upon which I put together a more complete story of the canal.

The first step towards crafting the narrative was determining whether the exhibit would tell a chronological story, or if it would focus on the different aspects of its effects on Rochester thematically. The latter would be the easiest way to put together the exhibit as I already had the artifacts grouped into the different subject groups. This approach would also allow me to show how the different aspects of each subject group led to each other, like showing how the rise of immigrants, who were generally harder drinking working men, in the city led to an increase in drinking and debauchery and thus to the rise of the Temperance movement. However, this approach also limited the story by keeping apart such important aspects as why the immigrants moved to the area in the first place, and how the technological impact of the canal led to the economic growth of the city. Telling the story chronologically was the logical way to do it, as it would allow the viewer to see how each of the different aspects of the canal worked with each other to change Rochester in different time periods. Instead of building the exhibit around the K-12 standards individually, I blended them in order to tell an actual story. If I had separated the

exhibit into different subject groups, it would not have been a story as much as a dump of facts. Therefore, I made the decision to tell the story chronologically and could move forward with putting together the exhibit.

The next part of crafting the narrative was figuring out the best way to format the exhibit. The exhibit, similar to the *Suffrage and the Flower City*¹⁸ exhibit, would be broken up into subsections that would each tell a different part of the story. Knowing that the story would need to be told chronologically, I broke down the canal's history and divided it into different sections. By sorting the artifacts I had accrued to that point by the time period they came from, I was able to see how the story of the canal changed over time. Based on conversations with Michelle Finn, I realized that the least number of subsections I could use was three and the most I could use was eight. Eventually I decided that five subsections would be the right number to tell the story of the canal in its entirety.

From the beginning, I knew that I was going to need to have a section on the building of the canal and what went into making the canal what it was. Every good story has a beginning, and after a lot of deliberation I decided to start the exhibit off after the decision had been made to start work on the canal. The politics of making the canal a reality was an important part of the story but, in the end, I knew I had a limit to how long the exhibit could be. Additionally, the exhibit was supposed to be a story of the canal in Rochester, and at the time Rochester was barely settled. Starting the exhibit with the beginning of work on building the canal allowed me to focus more on the impacts of the canal on Rochester and vice versa. I also knew that I would need to find a good ending point for this section. While the canal was finished in 1825, I had to

¹⁸ "Suffrage and the Flower City." Rochester Voices. Accessed April 25, 2019.
<http://www.rochestervoices.org/historical-media/suffrage-and-the-flower-city/>.

This was the first exhibit posted to the "Rochester Voices" page that I used as a guideline for creating my digital exhibit.

decide if the enlargement of the canal in 1835 was a part of the building of the canal. In the end I decided that it would be smart to end the “Digging the Ditch” subsection with the completion of the original canal in 1825 and focus on the enlargement of the canal in the following subsection.

The first section of the exhibit gave historical and geographical context for the canal and talked about how Rochester was a destination on the canal, but I wanted to focus more on the exponential growth of Rochester during the early days of the canal. I named the second section “Boomtown, U.S.A.” and focused more on how the canal was a catalyst for the meteoric rise of Rochester, or to be more accurate, Rochesterville. The Village of Rochesterville was incorporated as the City of Rochester in 1834, and I wanted to track the changes that precipitated this change. Starting with the completion of the canal in 1825 and going up to right before the enlargement of the canal, this section focused on the growth of the village and the issues it faced in the wake of the sudden increase in population. I also wanted to focus on the rapid economic growth of the village to explain why the village grew so much in population. The economic growth of Rochesterville was unlike anything that had ever been seen, and I showed why Rochester was one of the first “boomtowns” in America. Also, by showing the rapid growth of the economy I was able to show the context of why the enlargement of the canal was a natural step in continuing to grow the economy of Western New York.

The third subsection of the exhibit was named “Heyday of the Erie Canal,” and I showed how the newly chartered City of Rochester continued to grow at an unprecedented rate. With the aqueduct serving as a focal point, the mid to late 1800s were a time of economic prosperity for the City of Rochester. Simply talking about the growth of the economy and infrastructure of Rochester was not enough; I wanted to show the viewer how much Rochester had grown in such a short period of time. Photographs of the city in the areas on the banks of the canal showed the

rapid growth of the city and its industries. I also wanted to show that it was not just the citizens of Rochester that made money from the canal, which is why I made sure to include information on how the State made money off the canal via taxes and tolls collected along the canal. Finally, I wanted to show how the canal was used outside of the growth of industry, as the canal was used for the transportation of people just as much as it was used for the transportation of goods. The idea of the canal being important to the growth of the city is pretty easy to comprehend, but I wanted to show the viewer exactly how the canal was used and how these uses directly contributed to the growth of Rochester.

The fourth section, titled “Death of the Ditch,” was an absolute necessity for the exhibit. After spending the first three sections talking about how important the canal was and how it was so vital to the growth of Western New York, I felt it was crucial to explain how it fell from grace. There were many factors that played into the decline of the canal, and I wanted to give each of those factors their due. The Erie Canal’s decline was a gradual process and the writing was on the wall well before it was remade into the Barge Canal. I started the section with the biggest issue with the canal since its inception: the inability to use it during winter. The need for a year-round transportation system was obvious, and the canal had a glaring inability to provide this from the beginning due to the harsh winters that are standard for New York State. As one of the issues that had been a concern since the beginning, this icy limitation was a good starting place for showing the decline of the canal. Throughout the rest of the section I covered the myriad reasons for moving on from the canal as the main transportation system of New York, including the issues posed to traffic in the city, the cost of maintaining the infrastructure of the canal, and the rise of railroads as a viable alternative form of transportation. I ended this section with the rerouting of the canal and the renaming of the canal to the Barge Canal. This brought

the story of the canal's relationship with the city to a nice conclusion and allowed me to take a look at the legacy of the canal after the rerouting.

One of the biggest questions I grappled with from the beginning of the creation of the exhibit was in what time period to end the story of the canal. While the canal was rerouted in 1919, the legacy that it left behind was an important part of the story. I wanted to show the viewer that, even though the canal no longer existed in the city center, it had an impact on the city that can still be felt today, and to do this I added a fifth section titled "Second Life of the Canal". Starting with the conversion of the canal bed into a subway was an obvious move, as the subway has an interesting story on its own. The subway was the first of many uses the city would find for the infrastructure of the canal. Getting the viewer to recognize the continued importance of the canal and its viability as an economic resource was an important goal for me for the project. I also wanted to show the modern day uses of the Barge Canal in the areas around the city. While the historical significance of the canal cannot be understated, I wanted viewers to know that the canal is not just a piece of ancient history; it has an impact on the everyday lives of many Rochesterians in the present. That goal made it easy for me to decide to end the exhibit with the plans for re-watering the aqueduct as a part of the "ROC the Riverway" campaign¹⁹. As one of the most recent examples of the ways that the canal can continue to affect the City of Rochester economically, socially, and politically, it was the perfect note to end the narrative of the exhibit.

Crafting the narrative of the exhibit was a long process and continued up to the moment I completed my work on the exhibit. While I planned out much of the narrative for the exhibit before I started putting the exhibit together, the narrative continued to grow all throughout the

¹⁹ City of Rochester and State of New York. "Roc the Riverway: A Vision Plan for the Future of Rochester's Genesee Riverfront." News release. Accessed April 24, 2019. <https://cityofrochester.gov/roctheriverway/>.

process. As I crafted the exhibit, I realized that some parts of the story did not make sense and I would change the narrative in order to better accommodate the stories I wanted to tell. In a couple of cases I also changed my narrative based on the artifacts that would end up in the exhibit. Some of these changes accommodated the fact that some of my artifacts could not tell the story I wanted them to tell, and some of the changes were made in order to accommodate artifacts that I felt would be compelling for viewers. There were a select few artifacts that I wanted to include in the exhibit no matter what, and I, in some cases, changed the narrative of the exhibit to better fit in with these objects. The artifacts crafted the narrative and the narrative crafted what artifacts I used in the final product, which allowed the exhibit to be multifaceted and made the narrative the best it possibly could be.

Putting the Exhibit Together

Once I had a basic narrative put together, I started the work of putting together a basic draft of the exhibit. When I started putting the exhibit together, I had no idea what platform I was going to use in the end, but I wanted to have a rough mockup of what the exhibit was going to look like in terms of what artifacts I was going to use and in what order. I had a very basic outline of what I thought the narrative should look like, along with my spreadsheet of artifacts for consideration; I just needed to put it all together. I decided that the easiest way of being able to do this was to go old school and print out an image of all of the artifacts I was planning on using. From there I started to select which artifacts I wanted to use in the final product and what order I was going to put them in.

While I had all of my artifacts listed in my spreadsheet with direct links to pages that had the images, I wanted an easier way to print them out and manage them digitally. To do this I took all of the images and copied them into a PowerPoint with one image on each slide. This killed

two birds with one stone, allowing me to print all of the artifacts at once and giving me an easy way to put the exhibit together in a digital form. Once I had the PowerPoint together with all of the artifacts, I printed it out with three slides on each page. I did it this way so that I would waste less paper and so that the individual paper artifacts would be easier to manage. I knew that if they were full page images it would be incredibly difficult to sort the artifacts and to put them together in a rough outline of the exhibit. Once I had everything printed, I cut all of the artifacts out of the sheets so that each one of the artifacts had its own paper and I started the process of sorting the artifacts.

Since I took the images directly from the spreadsheet and printed them out in the order they were on the spreadsheet, they were in a completely random order, and I knew I had to sort them before I could put the exhibit together. I sorted them a couple of times before I found the way that worked best for putting the exhibit together. At first, I sorted them by their overarching topic, which I soon realized would not work well for putting together a chronological exhibit. I then realized I would need to sort them chronologically, which was a little bit of a problem because I had not thought to include the date that the artifacts were from on the pieces of paper. I had to then take the papers and write the date on them one by one, which took up more time than if I had typed the dates onto the sheets in the first place. This was a good lesson for me, and it is something that I would recommend to any institution looking to complete a similar project. Once I had the paper depictions of the artifacts labeled with the date, I started sorting them again. I decided that I would sort them based on the year they were produced, but halfway through doing this I realized that would not work exactly right either. Some of the artifacts were from a certain time period but related better to the themes of a different section of the exhibit as I had laid it out. Additionally, some artifacts were from one time period but better depicted another. So, I

sorted the papers one last time based on where I thought they would fit with the themes of each subsection and got started with putting the artifacts in order.

Once I had the artifacts sorted into their separate sections I realized that there were some sections that had more artifacts than others, specifically the “Heyday of the Erie Canal” and the “Second Life of the Erie Canal” sections. This made sense to a certain degree, as I expected the “Heyday of the Erie Canal” to have more representation than something like the making of the canal, especially seeing as my artifacts mainly consisted of photographs and other images. Additionally, I expected the “Second Life of the Erie Canal” section to be bigger than the others as it covered a much longer period of time. At the same time, I wanted the exhibit to have approximately even subsections in terms of how many artifacts were included. Due to this constraint, a number of the artifacts that I had included in the spreadsheet ended up not making it into the final exhibit. I wanted to keep the number of artifacts in each section relatively consistent, so I was forced to remove some of the artifacts from consideration.

Starting with the “Digging the Ditch” section, I used almost all of the artifacts that I had identified as being in that category. I wanted to tell a general story of the canal being built while also focusing on how it was built in Rochesterville and what technology was needed to make it work in the Rochester area. I decided that it would be wise to start with a map of the canal, with a profile map of the height changes of the canal through the whole state so that viewers could get an idea of the scope of the original Erie Canal. I also wanted to include a map of Haudenosaunee territory in relation to the map of the canal, to fulfill the K-12 standards and to tell a part of the story of the canal that is often not covered in major publications. I also included an early portrayal of what the Rochester area looked like so that viewers would understand why the aqueduct was a necessity. Once I had covered the location of the canal and why the aqueduct was

needed in Rochester, I chose a few pictures that showcased some of the engineering feats of the canal. Showing both the practical side of the engineering, like the feeder streams that provided the canal with its water, and the more extravagant side, like the locks and the aqueduct, I tried to cover as much as I could of what it took to make the canal a reality. I ended the section with the portrayal of the first aqueduct because it showed how great of a feat it was to build it over the Genesee River, and it showed one of the few depictions of early Rochesterville, before the population boomed. The artifact selection for the first section was fairly straightforward as I ended up using all of the artifacts I had at my disposal.

The “Boomtown, U.S.A.” section posed a new challenge for me, as I had to try to differentiate between the early rise of the Village of Rochesterville and the eventual rise of the City of Rochester. I ended up swapping a couple of the artifacts that I had originally included in this section to the “Heyday of the Erie Canal” section due to the dates being wrong. Once I had moved the artifacts it was much easier, as I used almost all of the artifacts I had sorted into that section. I wanted to tell a story with the artifacts of the reasons behind Rochesterville’s meteoric rise into a bustling city. I decided to start the story by showing how the state put canal lands up for sale and then showing how the population and economy grew from that point. To depict the economy growing, I included artifacts that showed the increase of shipped products as well as the rise of auxiliary companies, such as the Rochester House Hotel and storage and forwarding companies. These auxiliary businesses allowed Rochester to become a major destination on the canal, which contributed to the rise in population. After showing why the population and economy grew, I showed the issues that arose from that sudden population boom and how people in the village reacted to the rapid changes. By most accounts, the newcomers to Rochesterville drank a lot and caused trouble among the residents. I included several newspaper articles on the

rise of general debauchery in the village, including a story of a bridge collapsing under the weight of too many people crowding together to watch a fight between two boat crews. I also included some newspaper articles that talked about the citizens of Rochesterville's reactions to this new social standard, with one article talking about the rise of Temperance Societies and another article talking about the pushback against the use of the canal on the Sabbath. All of this together painted a pretty good picture of what made Rochester a boomtown and what its residents did once they were in the middle of being a boomtown.

The next section was the most difficult section as I ended up not using about a third of the artifacts I had set aside for it. To kick off the "Heyday of the Erie Canal" I wanted to show that the improvements made to the canal helped to push even more commerce along the canal. To show this I included two depictions of the new aqueduct and talked about why it was necessary to build a new one. I also included a map that showed the expansion of the canal in what was at that point the City of Rochester. This led nicely to talking about the use of immigrants to do the hard labor of building the canal and how they then tended to settle in the areas they worked in. This continued increase in population also led to the city growing at a breakneck pace, with factories and other businesses popping up all along the banks of the canal. On top of showing the ways that the canal provided economic opportunities to the people of Rochester, I also wanted to show how New York State was making money off the canal through the use of weigh locks like the one just outside of the city proper. I then showed the uses of the canal that were not economic in nature, like being used for travel and for leisure. There were many artifacts that I had for this section that were similar in nature, which gave me a great excuse to utilize the spreadsheet. Whenever there were two similar artifacts, I would take a look at the values I had assigned the

artifacts for resonance and the “wow” factor. In the end I was able to tell a pretty complete story of the canal through Rochester during the so-called heyday of the canal.

The fourth section was similar to the first two sections, as I ended up using almost all of the artifacts that I had for the “Death of the Ditch.” This section, with almost all of the artifacts included, had the same number of artifacts as the “Heyday of the Erie Canal” section despite starting with far fewer artifacts. I knew what parts of the canal led to its eventual demise; I just had to put them in the right order to tell a story that made sense. I had already decided to start with the issue of not being able to use the canal in the winter. I had a couple of pictures that could depict it, but I knew that I wanted to include an image of ice skaters on the canal no matter what, because I thought it painted a great picture of the social climate of Rochester at the time. After that I had a little trouble deciding what order to put the artifacts in but eventually decided that the inability to use the canal in winter transitioned nicely into other ways the canal impeded travel. Moving directly into the ways that the canal impeded the flow of foot and carriage traffic in the city made for a nice transition, as it went from one travel woe to another. The natural progression from there was to talk about the mode of transportation that was able to overcome those concerns. The rise of railroads was the final nail in the Erie Canal’s coffin as people moved more and more to traveling and shipping by rail rather than boat. One of the artifacts included to show this change was an article that did a cost-benefit analysis of railroads and canals that gave a great explanation of all of the ways that railroads were better. I ended the section by depicting the digging of the Barge Canal, signaling the end of the canal’s route through the center of the city and the end of the Erie Canal.

The final section of the exhibit ended up being the longest, but this made sense due to the longer period of time it covered, and my desire to wrap up the exhibit with some sort of a

conclusion. This was the easiest section to do, as I basically went in chronological order. Starting with a bunch of depictions of the subway that was built in the old canal bed, I felt like I set the stage to show how the infrastructure of the canal was reused by governmental bodies over time. The subway segued nicely into the construction of Interstate 490 in the old canal bed. The theme of the beginning of the subsection was transportation revolutions, and it worked really well to show how the canal, which had revolutionized transportation in New York State, was then supplanted by newer transportation technologies like subways and cars. I then switched gears and showed that while the transportation revolution was underway in Rochester, the Barge Canal was still a major asset to the area. Still used for transportation of people and goods, the Barge Canal continues to be a major asset in New York State to this day. I also included a picture of a breach of the canal and showed how, despite its continued importance, the canal still required major investments in order to maintain the infrastructure of it. I finished the section by using artifacts that show the other ways that State and Local Governments are investing in the canal outside of maintenance. I ended the exhibit with an image from the “Roc the Riverway” plan that would involve re-watering the aqueduct and turning it into a hub for both the citizens of Rochester and tourists visiting the city. Where the beginning of this subsection focused on the ways that the canal was supplanted by better technology, the second half focuses on the continued importance of the canal, from a social and economic standpoint. The “Second Life of the Canal” subsection was the easiest of the subsections to put together as the artifacts fit perfectly into two separate themes that explained the way that Rochester continues to be affected by the canal to this day.

Once I had put together my artifacts for each of the subsections on paper, I immediately took the exhibit on paper and transferred it to the digital realm. I already had the PowerPoint

together with all of the artifacts in it, so all I had to do was put the slides in order and get rid of the ones I had decided not to use. This was a relatively quick process and once they were all together in a digital format, I was able to see how many artifacts I used throughout the entire exhibit. At the moment that I finished the initial exhibit I had forty-seven artifacts, but over the next few weeks I added a few more and ended up at a perfect fifty artifacts. After I had the artifacts in the right order and had determined how many artifacts I was going to be using, I went through and wrote out what my thought process had been for ordering the artifacts. Since I was using PowerPoint, I just jotted down my thought process for putting the exhibit together in the order that I had. These notes would make it much easier for me to write the exhibit labels, since I already knew what my thought process had been. Seeing as I did not start writing the exhibit labels for another five days after I put together my PowerPoint exhibit, these notes proved to be invaluable as I moved into the narration phase of the exhibit.

Writing Exhibit Text

Before writing any of the exhibit text I worked with Michelle Finn to determine what the requirements would be for the text. We determined that I should have a 150-200 word introduction to the exhibit as a whole, a 100-150 word introduction to each subsection, and a 25-50 word label for each artifact in the exhibit. Additionally, each artifact needed to have a description that included the title, date, and creator as well as having a credit line to indicate where I got each of the artifacts. Once I had an idea of the requirements for the exhibit, I could get started on writing the text for the exhibit. Since the artifacts were already in order with notes reminding me of why I put them in the order they were in, on top of having done extensive research on the Erie Canal over the past six months, it was a relatively easy process to write the exhibit text.

The biggest obstacle for writing the exhibit text was trying to keep my word count down. As several of my artifacts were already text based, I did not want to overload the viewer with words, so I tried to limit my word count as much as I could. Additionally, seeing as the exhibit will eventually be used in K-12 classrooms, I tried to limit my language so that I did not make it too complicated for the kids that would potentially be using it in the future. I did not put too much thought into this, but I did my best to not use too many words that were overly complicated. Between keeping the language to a lower level and limiting my word count, I found that I had too much information that I had accrued from all of my research, and I ended up leaving some things out simply because I did not have enough space in the exhibit to include every snippet I had picked up on the canal. I had to sort through all of the knowledge I had gained from all of my research and focus on the topics that would best suit the K-12 standards and the history of the canal in Rochester. I wanted to have a good mix of practical knowledge of the canal, interesting facts about the canal and Rochester, and information that related to the K-12 standards directly. Throughout the process of writing I kept this in the back of my mind so as to not stray off topic too much. Overall, this was not too difficult so long as I focused on the main goals of the project and did not allow myself to overwhelm the viewer with unnecessary information.

Outside of trying to keep the information on topic and limiting my word count, the writing process came pretty easily to me. Writing the exhibit labels was much easier than putting the exhibit together in the first place, and the writing process actually made it easier to order the artifacts in the exhibit. While the notes I had taken made it easy to put together the narrative, when I actually started writing the exhibit text, I realized that some of the artifacts needed to be reordered. When writing out the full descriptions I realized that some of the artifacts could be put

in a better order to make the narrative flow better. As I found these instances, I just made the changes and continued with the writing, not allowing myself to triple guess the placement of certain artifacts. Once I had the narrative going in the direction I wanted, I left all of the artifacts in the order I had originally put them in, which made the narrative come together as a more cohesive whole. Additionally, as I went through the process of writing the exhibit labels, I was able to bring more information to the narrative as a whole simply by realizing that not every aspect of the narrative had to have a visual representation. This realization allowed me to talk about subjects that I felt like I did not have enough representation for by bringing them up in the exhibit text. As long as the exhibit text related to the artifact in some way, I could write really whatever I wanted, which allowed me to talk more about some of the intangible subjects that I wanted to cover, such as immigration. Some of the subjects I wanted to cover did not really have any way of being represented visually, so by just writing about them in the exhibit text I was still able to bring attention to the importance of these subjects. Overall, the process of writing the exhibit text was probably the most helpful step in creating a cohesive narrative for the exhibit.

Finding a Platform for the Exhibit

One of the biggest obstacles facing me as I worked on putting the exhibit together was deciding on a medium in which to showcase the exhibit. The previous exhibit that the City Historian's Office had put together had been contracted by the Google Cultural Institute and it used Google's proprietary digital exhibit software. We did not have access to this software anymore, so I did some research into some alternative options for how to put together an exhibit on the "Rochester Voices" site. There are many open-source exhibit creators out there, so I had to dig into each of them and see which ones could potentially be an option. In the end I found that there were only two options that could potentially work.

There are several options for creating a web-based exhibit and there some stipulations that I needed to consider while looking through the options. I have very limited coding experience, so a user-friendly option was at the top of my list of demands. Additionally, based on the recommendations of Michelle Finn I wanted to find a tool that did not use Flash, for easier accessibility. Flash is a technology that is dying out and, for those that use Internet Explorer, would require the extra step of downloading and installing the software. To avoid these issues, I discounted any exhibit software that required flash. I also needed the exhibit to include metadata for the artifacts in question. Additionally, the ability to customize the templates that would make up the exhibit became a priority for me in order to make the exhibit stand out. Finally, though not a requirement, I looked for software that would allow for inputting sound clips. The songs of the Erie Canal were an important part of the cultural impact of the canal and I wanted to be able to include sound bites in the exhibit. While this was not something that was able to be accomplished in my thesis work, this is a major goal for the future of the project.

After researching the possibilities for online exhibits, I determined that the two best options would be to either use Omeka or to try and use the Google Cultural Institute again. Omeka is the industry standard in creating online repositories and exhibits and is used by many institutions around the world, and the Google Cultural Institute is rapidly expanding and becoming a viable method of creating exhibits. While Omeka would allow me to craft the exhibit in the way that I wanted, Michelle Finn and I decided it would be better to try and see if the Google Cultural Institute would be an option. While they had reached out to the City Historian's Office to get them to create "Suffrage and the Flower City", we figured it would be worth it to see if they would be able to host this next exhibit as well. In my research I found a way to apply to use the tools of the Google Cultural Institute that would be totally free. Additionally, I

contacted the representative from Google that had worked with the City Historian's Office on the creation of the women's suffrage exhibit. I am waiting to hear back from them now but the prospects of using their tools again look good. Unfortunately, this process will not be completed by the time this thesis will be submitted, but I want to get something set up so that when my work is completed, the data can simply be inputted into whatever tool ends up being used. That process, while tedious, will likely be one of the easiest parts of the exhibit and should set up the City Historian's Office to get the exhibit up and running without issues.

Results

The final exhibit can be seen below, broken down into its individual components with exhibit text and introductory text for all sections. The exhibit was unfortunately not able to be posted to the Rochester Voices website before the completion of this thesis, but all of the information that will eventually be included in the exhibit was completed. The following section gives a rough idea of what the final product will look like.

Rochester and the Erie Canal

Exhibit Introduction:

The Erie Canal is one of the greatest engineering feats in history and directly contributed to the rise of many towns and cities throughout the state of New York. The concept of a canal stretching across the entire state was laughed at for years, with the canal often being referred to as "Clinton's Ditch" as nothing of its nature had ever been attempted before, but the spirit and tenacity of the people of New York State brought this technological marvel to life. Rochester benefitted greatly from the creation of the canal, experiencing an unprecedented economic boom that had some calling it the "Young Lion of the West." This drastic increase in economic viability caused the population to grow exponentially. The village of Rochesterville went from





having 700 people in 1817, before the canal was built, to having over 9000 residents by 1830.


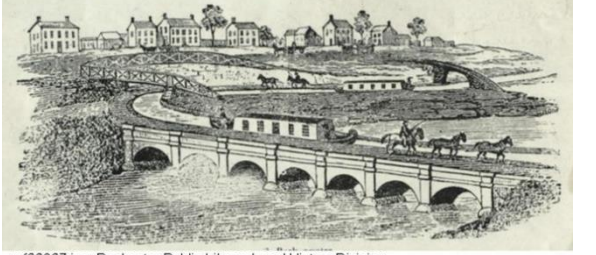
The City of Rochester, as we know it today, would not exist if it were not for the canal. This exhibit explores the history of the canal in Rochester and takes a look at the ways that the canal affected Rochester socially, politically, and economically.

Digging the Ditch (1800-1825)

After many years of debate on the path of the canal, and political maneuvering to determine who would pay for it, the canal was finally approved to begin construction in 1817. Dug almost completely by hand, with very few trained engineers working on the project, the canal took eight years to complete. Building the canal was an incredibly difficult task, with multiple roadblocks standing in the way of completion. Major changes in elevation, solid rock escarpments, and a large river stood in the way of connecting the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes, but the builders of the canal found ways around all of the issues and successfully connected the East Coast of the United States with the Great Lakes.

Artifact	Text
Map of Haudenosaunee Land in Relation to Canal (Not Yet Acquired)	This section is reserved for a map showing the territory ceded by the Haudenosaunee people, to show how the land taken from them was used as canal land.


 <p>rpf00758.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Upper Falls, Rochester, N.Y., 1800. <i>Beaujolais, Louis Charles d'Orleans.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p>Early painting of Upper Falls from 1800. The mighty Genesee River flows straight through the center of Rochester, and there was a sequence of four waterfalls through the area. These waterfalls would eventually be utilized by Rochesterians to power flour mills and other businesses along the banks of the river.</p>
 <p>lpt01292.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Erie Canal feeder, Rochester N.Y., 1903. <i>N/A.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p>Feeder stream for the Erie Canal. One of the biggest problems for building the canal was finding enough water to fill it. Streams like this were diverted from their original paths to provide the canal with water.</p>
	<p>Map of Profile of the Erie Canal, 1834. <i>Tell Poussin</i> <i>Project Gutenberg</i></p> <p>Map of the canal through New York State showing profile of canal. The Hudson River, where the canal starts, is 566 feet lower than its final destination on Lake Erie. The canal had to be raised and lowered through a system of locks in order to reach its final destination.</p>
 <p>lpt01301.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Erie Canal locks at Lockport N.Y., 1880-1910. <i>N/A.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p>The most famous example of these locks was in Lockport. Five consecutive locks raised boats up (and lowered them down) so that they could continue on their path on the Erie Canal.</p>

 <p>rpf00331.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Erie Canal locks near Monroe Avenue, Rochester N.Y, 1918. <i>N/A.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p>Though Lockport is renowned for its system of locks, Rochester had its share of elevation changes as well. There were originally two locks on the Erie Canal in the City of Rochester. This lock is near what is now Monroe Avenue.</p>
 <p>rpf00327.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Plan of the first aqueduct carrying the Erie Canal over the Genesee River at Rochester, New York, 1932. <i>Peck, Everard.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p>The Genesee River flows from south to north and needed to be crossed somehow to keep on the path of the canal. Knowing that the waterfalls along the Genesee River could be used to power businesses, led the State to building the aqueduct through Rochesterville. This original aqueduct was built of sandstone and only allowed for one-way traffic, and this would lead to issues as commerce on the canal grew.</p>

Boomtown, U.S.A. (1825-1840)

After the canal was completed, Rochester started changing rapidly. The canal brought commerce to the city and with it came a huge influx of people. The Village of Rochesterville incorporated itself as the City of Rochester in 1834 and continued to grow throughout the rest of the 19th century. With all of the new money and people, there were some drastic social changes in the city, such as the increase of recreational industries. However, the increase of people and recreational businesses such as saloons led to the rise of crime and drunken debauchery, and, to

combat this, the advent of a religious revival in the city. The drastic changes to the city made Rochester one of the first major boomtowns in America.

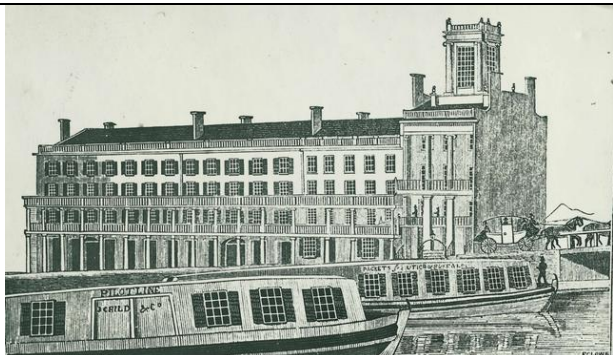
Artifact	Text
	<p>Broadside, canal lands for sale, 1823. <i>N/A.</i> <i>1823.</i></p> <p>Flyer promoting the sale of canal lands. To promote the growth of industry on the canal, the state put massive tracts of land up for sale. Much of this land was traditionally Haudenosaunee land but it was gobbled up by investors. The cheap land and the opportunity for lucrative trade made the canal a hotspot for those looking to better their financial situations.</p>
<p>Representation of Population Growth (Not Yet Found)</p>	<p>This spot is reserved for an artifact that helps to show the increase of population in Rochester. Rochester's population boomed at a commensurate rate as the economy as more people settled here looking for new opportunities west of the Appalachian Mountains.</p>

CANAL COMMERCE.
 The amount of toll received at the Collector's office in this place during the season of navigation just closed, is, as we learn from Judge Bowman, the Collector, *ninety-eight thousand four hundred and thirty-three dollars and fifty nine cents*—being \$2,418 89 more than the receipts during the navigable season of 1828. The business on the Canal was very light until harvest. The abundance of the crops infused new life into operations, and the tolls after that period, for property cleared from this place east and west, was greater than in any similar period of any former year. The operations in flour—the great staple of this region—are worthy of special note. The quantity shipped at Rochester and all the other places west of it for the Eastern markets, amounted to 188,204 barrels. Of this amount, Rochester furnished all except 27,343 barrels. So that, at an average of \$3 per barrel, the quantity of flour shipped at Rochester for the east amounted to about \$815,000. The section of canal west of, and including Rochester, appears to have sent this year only 404 bbls. of whiskey, to the east. The quantity of whiskey which last year passed Utica from the west amounted in value to about one-third of all the flour.—*R. Daily Advertiser.*

Canal Commerce, 1830.

Rochester Observer.
Rochester Public Library Local History Division.

Newspaper Article on the shipment of flour from Rochester. Rochester's biggest export in the early days of the canal was flour. Powered by the Genesee River, flour mills popped up all over the city, making Rochester the "Flour City."

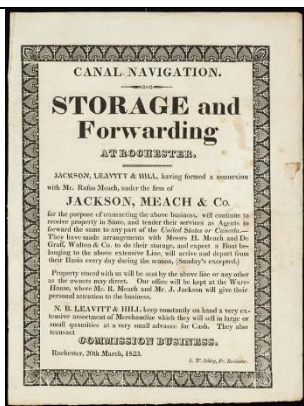


rpf00263.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Rochester House hotel on the Erie Canal, Rochester N.Y, 1838.

N/A.
Rochester Public Library Local History Division.

Drawing of the Rochester House Hotel on the corner of Exchange and Spring Streets. Major exporters were not the only businesses that grew because of the canal. Hotels, saloons, and other service-related businesses boomed during this time period to accommodate the large number of travelers on the canal.



RP00077.jpg Rochester Public Library, Division of Local History

Broadside, canal navigation, 1823.

N/A.
Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Flyer advertising the services of a storage company. Other auxiliary businesses such as storage, ship building, and barrel making grew during this time period as well. The need for storage of excess goods is also a good indication of how much the city started producing in such a short period of time.



Communicated, 1828

Rochester Telegraph.
Rochester Public Library Local History Division.


Article condemning the actions of criminals and drunks. The influx of people and the rise of service industries throughout the city also increased the amount of alcohol consumed in the city. Most of the people that partook in these actions were new to the city and many were vilified for their actions.

<p>LUDICROUS SPECTACLE! A battle-royal between two recruits, lately enlisted, occurred on Monday on the foot-bridge on the west side of the Canal bridge in Exchange-street. A crowd of course collected—whether to enjoy the pugilistic exhibition or to part the combatants, is immaterial to our narration. Suffice it to say, that while the row was at its height—while blow upon blow fell like hail upon the sconces of either combatant—and all eyes were fixed upon the heroes of the scene—the flooring of the foot-bridge gave way beneath the pressure, and precipitated the crowd <i>sans ceremonie</i> into the canal beneath! About fifty persons, of all ages and sizes, of all colours and characters, lay floundering in the muddy waters of the "big ditch"—the courage of the combatants was cooled in the ablution—and the ludicrous appearance of the motley crew, crawling out of the canal, wet and dirty, presented a spectacle worthy the pencil of a Hogarth.</p>	<p>Ludicrous Spectacle, 1829 <i>Rochester Daily Advertiser.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i> Article about a fight near the banks of the canal. It was not just residents that caused trouble; often times boat crews passing through the city would cause trouble as well. Not everybody disagreed with this, however, as evidenced by the number of people that cheered this fight on!</p>
<p>At a meeting holden in this town, on the 16th of October last, called by the committee which was appointed by the Monroe County Temperance Society, for this town, it was unanimously Resolved, that a Temperance Society was established on this plan, by the name of the Henrietta Temperance Association, auxiliary to the Monroe County Temperance Society. Said meeting unanimously adopted the resolutions and constitution of the Monroe County Society, with such alterations as were thought expedient for the local situation of the place. The annual meeting of said Society was holden, pursuant to an adjournment, on the third Wednesday of December inst., at the Baptist meeting-house in this village, where an appropriate address was delivered to a respectable audience, by D. B. Crane, principal of the Monroe High School. The following resolutions were then unanimously adopted: <i>Resolved</i>, That every individual of community is obligated to support and to advance, according to his ability, the object of this society. <i>Resolved</i>, That the increased support given to the object of this Society in this neighborhood and town, within the last year, is an adequate cause for very great encouragement to the friends of Temperance, to persevere in the course which they have commenced. The Temperance Association in this town consists of sixty-eight members, thirty-seven males and thirty-one females.</p>	<p>Temperance, 1830 <i>Rochester Observer.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i> Article talking about the founding of the Temperance Society of Henrietta. Alcohol was often blamed for the debauchery of those involved with the canal, and several religious groups sought to stop alcohol from being served in the city.</p>
<p>THE SABBATH. From the Convention Discourse. OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.—Permit me to notice for that purpose a large and respectable Convention of ministers and laymen of different denominations, and from various parts of the country, assembled in the North Conference room in this city, on the 15th inst. to consider, in substance to present the present position of the Sabbath, in our State, and of the Union, and how best to improve it, in this city, in our State, and in the Union. After a full expression of the views and feelings of the Convention, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted and ordered to be published: From the responsibility of the Convention, and the fact that a large part of the members were delegates from the churches, it is resolved that the resolutions give their sanction to the plan submitted to the meeting, and the course in which they relate. And it is respectfully requested that the friends of the Sabbath, with others of a similar character, adopted in various sections of our country, will be three a partying this field toward an institution established by divine authority, required either by the locality, historical, and moral constitution of man, and most immediately connected with his moral happiness and peace of mind. A part of the resolutions, it shall be necessary to refer to, and it is hoped that the friends of the Sabbath, in this city, in our State, and in the Union, will make their efforts to show us, in our State, and in the Union, practical measures suggested by the Convention. Whereas it is the duty of all men to observe the Sabbath, according to the Divine command; and whereas, such an observance is essential to the attainment of religion and moral purity, in the community: 1. <i>Resolved</i>, That in the opinion of this Convention, all persons, who regard the observance of the Sabbath as the ground of religious and moral purity, should be encouraged to give their own, unobscured and unobscured</p>	<p>The Sabbath, 1828. <i>Rochester Observer.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i> Article on the movement to shut down businesses on the Sabbath. Many religious groups viewed the use of the canal on the Sabbath as sacrilegious, and there was a major push to shut down the canal on the holy day. With the mounting pressure of the religious groups in the area several companies that used the canal stopped service to honor the Sabbath.</p>

The Heyday of the Canal (1830-1870)

As traffic on the canal increased, the state government realized that the canal would need to be improved to reach its true potential. Over the course of about 30 years the canal was enlarged, and improvements were made all along the canal. When these improvements were completed,

the canal was thirty feet wider and three feet deeper, and a new and improved aqueduct was built in Rochester. With the improvements, businesses were able to ship more cargo at a lower cost. The canal became a bigger part of everyday life and the towns and cities along its banks continued to grow. The canal also started to be used for travel and leisure in addition to commerce and immigration. This was the heyday of the canal, furthering Rochester's development into an economic powerhouse.

Artifact	Text
 <p>THURSDAY MORN. APRIL 21, 1842. THE NEW AQUEDUCT—FIRST BOAT THROUGH! Yesterday morning, at an early hour, a large number of persons congregated on the New Aqueduct, to witness the first boat through this noble structure.— There were three boats ready for the push, when the barrier should be removed, to contest the honor of a first passage. The "Northumberland,"—a large river boat, belonging to Gen. Beach—so large that it could not get through the old Aqueduct,—with flags flying, and music playing, started first; but the "Oneco" made a push ahead, amid great cheering, but the victory was not won, for by some means, that we did not perceive, a line leading to the bridge, was got on board the "Northumberland," by which she was warped ahead of her competitors, making the first passage through the New Aqueduct.</p>	<p>The New Aqueduct – First Boat Through!, 1842. <i>Rochester Republican</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i> Article talking about the new aqueduct that was built through the heart of the city. The old aqueduct was made out of sandstone and had started to erode already so a new aqueduct was planned. This aqueduct was fifty-three feet wider than the original aqueduct and still stands today.</p>



Rochester Public Library Local History Division rpl00326

Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester, N.Y., 1855.

N/A

Rochester Public Library Local History Division.

Depiction of what the new aqueduct looked like. The new aqueduct was built of limestone, a more durable material than the original sandstone. The biggest issue was that boats going into the old aqueduct would have to make a tight 90 degree turn. While this was still the case for the new aqueduct the turn was not quite as difficult to make due to the aqueduct being wider. The wider aqueduct also allowed for two-way traffic on the canal which had been an issue with the original aqueduct.

Map of enlargement of canal through Rochester
(Not yet digitized)

This map has yet to be digitized, but it will be included in the final exhibit. Map showing the enlargement of the canal going through the City of Rochester. This map shows how much bigger the canal got, and how much needed to be done to make it happen. This map also shows how the State had to buy property from people in order to make the improvements.




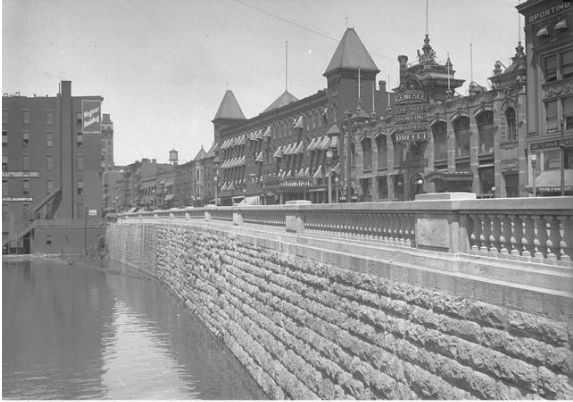
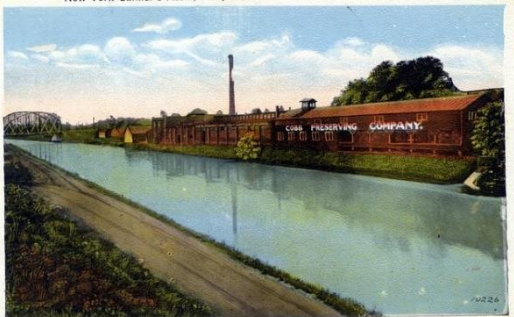
bhm00076.jpg Brighton Municipal Historian Collection



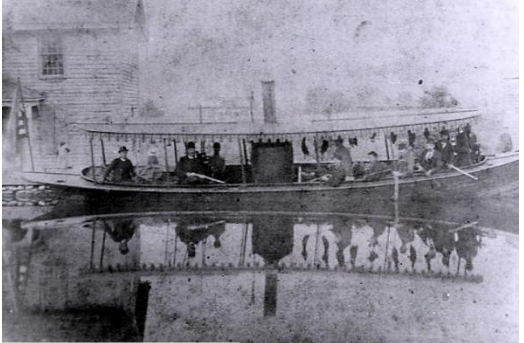
Erie Canal construction in Brighton Village, 1890.

N/A

Brighton Municipal Historian

Photo of men working on the enlargement of the canal in Brighton. When the canal was expanded it still had to be hand dug, though there was no shortage of laborers to do the work. Many immigrants, specifically from Italy, Ireland, and Germany, came to the area in this time period and they could very easily find work digging the canal.





<p>Representation of immigrant workers (Not yet found)</p>	<p>This section will include an artifact that relates to the use of immigrant workers to build the canal. Many immigrant workers were used in the building of the canal, especially during the enlargement of the canal. It worked out for both the state and the immigrants as the state was able to get the canal built and the immigrants found jobs that did not require specialized skills. Many of these immigrants ended up settling in the areas they were working in.</p>
 <p>rp00409.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y, 1891. N/A <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i> Photo of the turn going into the new aqueduct. This view of Rochester from the late 1800s shows how businesses grew along the canal. Factories, office buildings, and other businesses opened right on its banks, providing convenient access.</p>
 <p>e0000468.jpg Rochester Municipal Archives</p>	<p>Erie Canal along South Avenue, Rochester, N.Y, 1914. N/A <i>Rochester Municipal Archives</i> Photo of the canal through the city. It was not just the area immediately surrounding the aqueduct that attracted business, as all along the canal businesses grew. Recreational businesses were just as likely to sprout up in these places, such as the bowling alley seen in this picture</p>
 <p>New York Canner's Assn., Fairport, N. Y. tpm00369.jpg Perinton Municipal Historian Collection</p>	<p>Erie Canal scene, Fairport N.Y, 1910 N/A <i>Perinton Municipal Historian</i> Postcard depicting a canning factory on the Erie Canal. With the cheap land available on the banks of the canal and the easy access to shipping to both the East and the West, many businesses grew outside of the city as well.</p>

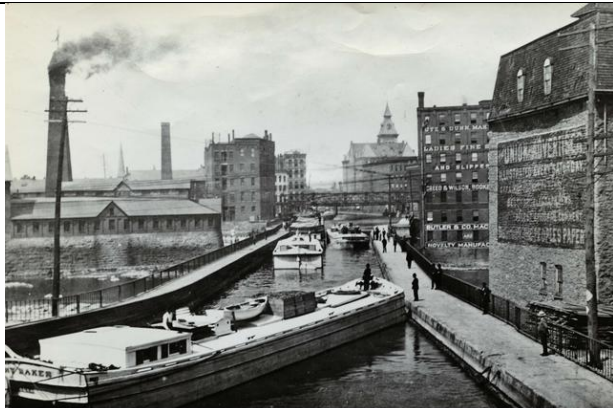
 <p>rsg00041.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Weighlock on Erie Canal, Rochester, N.Y., 1875. <i>N/A</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division</i></p> <p>Photo of a weigh lock on the Erie Canal in Rochester. With the increased shipment of goods, it was not just local businesses that made money. The State charged tolls based on the weight of the goods shipped, weighing cargo boats in locks such as this.</p>
 <p>rpf01872.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Erie Canal excursion boat, 1890. <i>N/A</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division</i></p> <p>Photo of a packet boat leaving with many people on board. In addition to its use for business and commerce, the Erie Canal was used extensively for transporting people across the state. Packet boats like the one seen here were pulled along the canal by teams of horses and mules.</p>
 <p>tpm00276 Perinton Municipal Historian Collection</p>	<p>DeLand family boat on the Erie Canal 1875-1900. <i>N/A</i> <i>Perinton Municipal Historian</i></p> <p>Photograph of men on a leisure boat on the canal. Many people also used the canal for leisure. In the mid-19th century, this practice was mainly reserved for the rich and powerful, who had the time and money to take advantage of the canal in this way.</p>

Death of the Ditch (1870-1918)

By the late 1800s the Erie Canal had served its purpose of making New York State one of the biggest economic powerhouses in the country. Despite the major success of the canal, its use started to taper off in the late 1800s and early 1900s. There were many factors that played into this decline, such as improvements in other transportation methods, such as railroads, and the natural drawbacks of using canals for transport in general. Some of these drawbacks include the freezing of the waters and the constant need for expensive upkeep. The decline of the canal was a

sad fact of life, but Rochester and the rest of the state of New York had to continue to improve to keep its place as one of the most powerful states in the nation.

Artifact	Text
 <p data-bbox="204 793 600 827">rpf01800.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p data-bbox="836 386 1429 457">Erie Canal in winter, Rochester, N.Y. 1899-1919.</p> <p data-bbox="836 457 1429 562"><i>N/A.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p data-bbox="836 562 1429 827">Photo of the canal through the city in winter. One of the biggest drawbacks of the canal was the inability to use it during the winter and early spring. With the canal frozen or filled with snow, travel along it became impossible, shutting down a lot of trade for the winter months.</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1136 406 1169">lpm02181.jpg Perinton Municipal Historian Collection</p>	<p data-bbox="836 833 1429 905">Packet boat bottleneck on Erie Canal, Fultonville N.Y, 1900.</p> <p data-bbox="836 905 1429 976"><i>Gayer, Albert.</i> <i>Perinton Municipal Historian.</i></p> <p data-bbox="836 976 1429 1169">Photo of packet boats dry docked in the dry canal bed. During the winter months, parts of the canal were drained and the boats that would normally be plying the waters were dry docked.</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1499 487 1512">rpf00785.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p data-bbox="836 1176 1429 1247">Ice skating on the Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y, 1900.</p> <p data-bbox="836 1247 1429 1352"><i>N/A.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p data-bbox="836 1352 1429 1512">Photograph of ice skaters on the aqueduct. Despite the loss of revenue, the frozen canal was a popular site for wintertime leisure activities such as ice skating!</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1841 479 1854">rpf01743.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p data-bbox="836 1518 1429 1589">Erie Canal Aqueduct during 1865 flood, Rochester N.Y., 1865.</p> <p data-bbox="836 1589 1429 1694"><i>N/A.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p data-bbox="836 1694 1429 1854">Picture of the canal during the Flood of 1865. The flood left the canal open for use, but caused damage to its infrastructure, which cost the State a lot of money to repair</p>



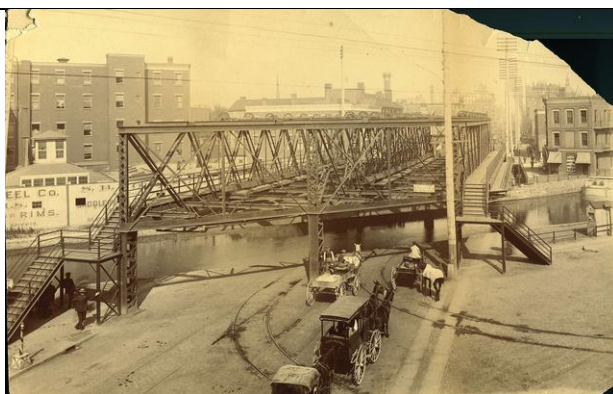
rp00036.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester, N.Y, 1897-1899.

N/A

Rochester Public Library Local History Division.

Photo of the turn going into the aqueduct. Though the second aqueduct addressed many of the problems caused by the original structure's severe 90-degree bend, boats still had to navigate a tight turn to continue on their way. This also made it impossible for any bigger boats to go through the aqueduct, which limited how much commerce could grow on the canal.



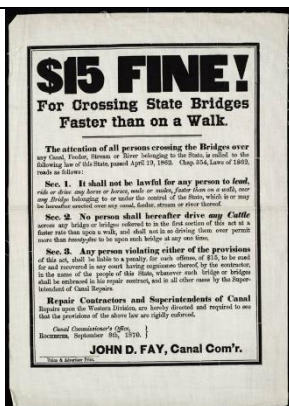
rp000992.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division

West Avenue lift bridge over the canal, Rochester N.Y, 1888-1890.

N/A

Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Photo of a raised footbridge on the canal in Rochester. Boats were not the only vehicles that encountered problems navigating the canal. The canal's path straight through the city caused difficulties for horses, carriages, and eventually cars.



©2018-19 Rochester Public Library, Division of Local History

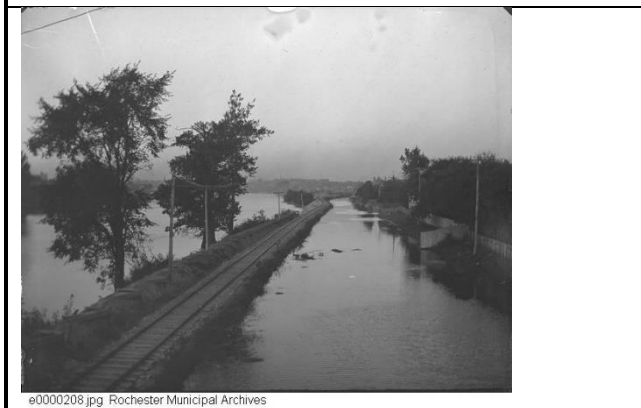
Broadside, Rochester Canal Commissioner's office, 1870.

N/A

Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Flyer advertising a new law on crossing a bridge too fast. On top of bisecting traffic through the city, canal bridges also slowed traffic down. People found to be going too fast over bridges would be hit with a hefty \$15 fine.

	<p>On, it is with the least the thought of a horse, and the... 6 - 12000 lb. 12 - 24000 lb. 18 - 36000 lb. 24 - 48000 lb. 30 - 60000 lb. 36 - 72000 lb. 42 - 84000 lb. 48 - 96000 lb. 54 - 108000 lb. 60 - 120000 lb. 66 - 132000 lb. 72 - 144000 lb. 78 - 156000 lb. 84 - 168000 lb. 90 - 180000 lb. 96 - 192000 lb. 102 - 204000 lb. 108 - 216000 lb. 114 - 228000 lb. 120 - 240000 lb. 126 - 252000 lb. 132 - 264000 lb. 138 - 276000 lb. 144 - 288000 lb. 150 - 300000 lb. 156 - 312000 lb. 162 - 324000 lb. 168 - 336000 lb. 174 - 348000 lb. 180 - 360000 lb. 186 - 372000 lb. 192 - 384000 lb. 198 - 396000 lb. 204 - 408000 lb. 210 - 420000 lb. 216 - 432000 lb. 222 - 444000 lb. 228 - 456000 lb. 234 - 468000 lb. 240 - 480000 lb. 246 - 492000 lb. 252 - 504000 lb. 258 - 516000 lb. 264 - 528000 lb. 270 - 540000 lb. 276 - 552000 lb. 282 - 564000 lb. 288 - 576000 lb. 294 - 588000 lb. 300 - 600000 lb. 306 - 612000 lb. 312 - 624000 lb. 318 - 636000 lb. 324 - 648000 lb. 330 - 660000 lb. 336 - 672000 lb. 342 - 684000 lb. 348 - 696000 lb. 354 - 708000 lb. 360 - 720000 lb. 366 - 732000 lb. 372 - 744000 lb. 378 - 756000 lb. 384 - 768000 lb. 390 - 780000 lb. 396 - 792000 lb. 402 - 804000 lb. 408 - 816000 lb. 414 - 828000 lb. 420 - 840000 lb. 426 - 852000 lb. 432 - 864000 lb. 438 - 876000 lb. 444 - 888000 lb. 450 - 900000 lb. 456 - 912000 lb. 462 - 924000 lb. 468 - 936000 lb. 474 - 948000 lb. 480 - 960000 lb. 486 - 972000 lb. 492 - 984000 lb. 498 - 996000 lb. 504 - 1008000 lb. 510 - 1020000 lb. 516 - 1032000 lb. 522 - 1044000 lb. 528 - 1056000 lb. 534 - 1068000 lb. 540 - 1080000 lb. 546 - 1092000 lb. 552 - 1104000 lb. 558 - 1116000 lb. 564 - 1128000 lb. 570 - 1140000 lb. 576 - 1152000 lb. 582 - 1164000 lb. 588 - 1176000 lb. 594 - 1188000 lb. 600 - 1200000 lb. 606 - 1212000 lb. 612 - 1224000 lb. 618 - 1236000 lb. 624 - 1248000 lb. 630 - 1260000 lb. 636 - 1272000 lb. 642 - 1284000 lb. 648 - 1296000 lb. 654 - 1308000 lb. 660 - 1320000 lb. 666 - 1332000 lb. 672 - 1344000 lb. 678 - 1356000 lb. 684 - 1368000 lb. 690 - 1380000 lb. 696 - 1392000 lb. 702 - 1404000 lb. 708 - 1416000 lb. 714 - 1428000 lb. 720 - 1440000 lb. 726 - 1452000 lb. 732 - 1464000 lb. 738 - 1476000 lb. 744 - 1488000 lb. 750 - 1500000 lb. 756 - 1512000 lb. 762 - 1524000 lb. 768 - 1536000 lb. 774 - 1548000 lb. 780 - 1560000 lb. 786 - 1572000 lb. 792 - 1584000 lb. 798 - 1596000 lb. 804 - 1608000 lb. 810 - 1620000 lb. 816 - 1632000 lb. 822 - 1644000 lb. 828 - 1656000 lb. 834 - 1668000 lb. 840 - 1680000 lb. 846 - 1692000 lb. 852 - 1704000 lb. 858 - 1716000 lb. 864 - 1728000 lb. 870 - 1740000 lb. 876 - 1752000 lb. 882 - 1764000 lb. 888 - 1776000 lb. 894 - 1788000 lb. 900 - 1800000 lb. 906 - 1812000 lb. 912 - 1824000 lb. 918 - 1836000 lb. 924 - 1848000 lb. 930 - 1860000 lb. 936 - 1872000 lb. 942 - 1884000 lb. 948 - 1896000 lb. 954 - 1908000 lb. 960 - 1920000 lb. 966 - 1932000 lb. 972 - 1944000 lb. 978 - 1956000 lb. 984 - 1968000 lb. 990 - 1980000 lb. 996 - 1992000 lb. 1000 - 2000000 lb.</p>	<p>On Railroads, 1825. <i>Livingston Register</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i> Article explaining the benefits of railroads over canals. The biggest catalyst for the decline of the canal was the rise of the railroad. Trains could travel throughout the year, were faster, and were cheaper when it came to shipping high quantities of goods.</p>
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0000208.jpg Rochester Municipal Archives

Train tracks between Genesee River & canal feeder, Rochester, N.Y, 1892.
N/A.
Rochester Municipal Archives.
 Photo showing railroads traveling next to a canal feeder. As railroads became more prevalent, canals fell to the wayside. Oftentimes mimicking the exact path of the canal, railroads took goods and people in the same direction as the canal more cheaply and faster.




ghs00004.jpg Greece Town Historian Collection

Erie Canal rerouting, South Greece, N.Y., 1908.
N/A.
Greece Municipal Historian.
 Photograph of the construction of the Barge Canal. Eventually all of the negatives started to pile up against the Erie Canal and the State reimagined it into the Barge Canal. The Barge Canal no longer went through the center of the city, instead going around the city. The new Barge Canal was dug using power machinery and before long the long-standing relationship between Rochester and the Erie Canal reached its end.

Second Life of the Canal (1918-Present Day)

After the canal was rerouted around downtown Rochester, the City had the opportunity and the infrastructure to make improvements to its transportation network. Using the existing canal bed, the City of Rochester built a subway system and roadway, providing more transportation options to local residents. Eventually, the subway was phased out and parts of the original canal bed became the home for Interstate 490. Some sections of the subway still exist and these sections

are used by graffiti artists from around the world. Over the past fifty years there have been many plans put forth as to what to do with the rest of the unused sections of the canal's infrastructure. Some of these plans recommend rewatering the canal and putting it into use again, while other plans recommend reworking the infrastructure to create new recreational and shopping opportunities. Even though the canal no longer is a part of the everyday life of the average Rochesterian, it continues to affect the city to this day and is still a central part of Rochester's identity.

Artifact	Text
 <p data-bbox="203 1459 487 1480">tpr00198.jpg Perinton Municipal Historian Collection</p>	<p data-bbox="836 1117 1331 1186">Construction scene, New York State Barge Canal, 1905-1918.</p> <p data-bbox="836 1186 893 1218"><i>N/A.</i></p> <p data-bbox="836 1228 1226 1260"><i>Perinton Municipal Historian.</i></p> <p data-bbox="836 1270 1412 1480">Photo of subway tracks being built in the old canal bed outside of the city. Realizing the need for public transportation and utilizing the now empty ditch that was once the canal, the City of Rochester built a 10-mile-long subway track.</p>



rpf00372.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Rochester Subway construction along Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y, 1923.

N/A

Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Photograph of construction of the subway in the old aqueduct. The aqueduct was the hub of the canal when it went through Rochester and to tear it down would have been to destroy that history. The subway was built in the old aqueduct giving it the unique double arch look that it has today.



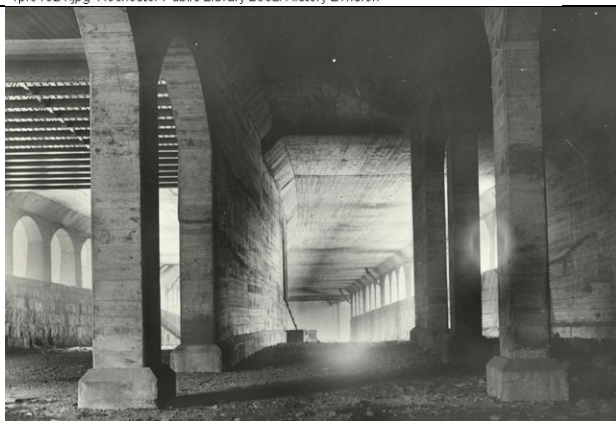
rpf01621.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Construction, Broad Street Bridge, Rochester N.Y, 1922-1924

N/A.

Rochester Public Library Local History Division.

Photograph of construction of the Broad Street Bridge over the subway tracks. The subway was not the only transportation system that was improved, as the Broad Street Bridge, and the street itself, were built to accommodate foot and automotive traffic through the city.



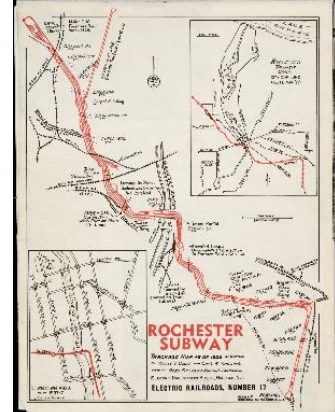
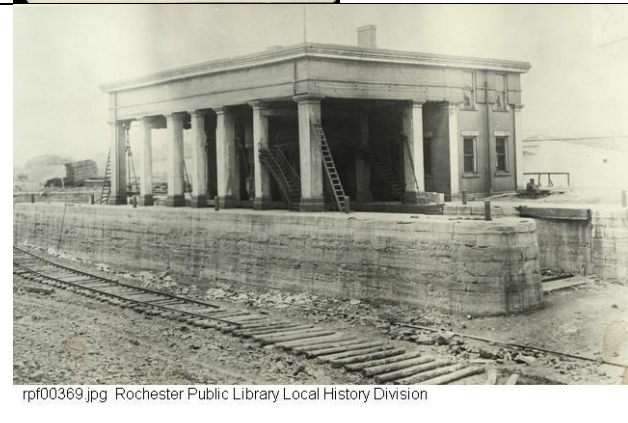

rpf00370.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Interior view of subway in Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y, 1920-1929.

N/A.

Rochester Public Library Local History Division.

Photograph of the inside of the newly built subway tracks inside the old aqueduct. The subway was encapsulated by the Broad Street Bridge above and the aqueduct below and continued on throughout the rest of the city. This section of the subway was crucial as it would allow for the trains to cross the Genesee River

	<p>Rochester Subway Map, 1928. <i>N/A</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p>Map of the Rochester Subway through the city. The subway, for the most part, followed the tracks of the Erie Canal exactly. Eventually offshoots would appear along the subway to give access to other parts of the city, but the main line went along the path of the canal.</p>
 <p>rpf00369.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division</p>	<p>Subway construction near old Erie Canal Weighlock, Rochester N.Y, 1922. <i>N/A.</i> <i>Rochester Public Library Local History Division.</i></p> <p>Photograph of an abandoned weigh lock along the path of the subway. Not all of the infrastructure of the canal could be used with the new subway system and buildings like this were a stark reminder of the canal's former presence.</p>
<p>Image Depicting Subway Graffiti Art</p>	<p>This section is reserved for a depiction of the graffiti art that has become a mainstay of the subway bed beneath Rochester. Artists come from all around the world to use the Rochester subway for graffiti. The Rochester subway is one of the only abandoned subway tracks in the world and this attracts artists from all over as it is a very large canvas to put their art on.</p>
 <p>m0000115.jpg Rochester Municipal Archives</p>	<p>Construction of Interstate 490, Rochester N.Y, 1956. <i>N/A</i> <i>Rochester Municipal Archives</i></p> <p>Construction of Interstate 490 in the old bed of the canal. The subway was a great advancement for Rochester, but it was underutilized, and cars were quickly becoming the most common means of transportation. Highways were built all around the city and Interstate 490 was built in parts of the old canal bed.</p>



tpm00103.jpg Perinton Municipal Historian Collection

Barges stuck in mud, Erie Canal, Perinton N.Y, 1961.

D'annunzio, Alb.

Perinton Municipal Historian.

Photograph of boats using the Barge Canal to transport goods. Though the Erie Canal no longer was the easiest mode of transporting goods, the new Barge Canal was still utilized by companies looking to ship goods. The new ships plying the canal used motors instead of the old method of having horses and mules pull the boats from the shores.

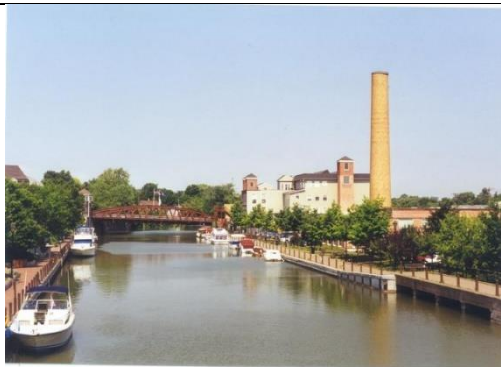


VoteTilla Participants, 2017.

N/A

Rochester Public Library Local History Division.

Photograph of participants in the "VoteTilla" celebration disembarking from boats on the Barge Canal. In 2017, the canal was used as a part of the celebration of 100 years of women's suffrage in New York. Five boats traveled along the canal from Seneca Falls to Rochester to celebrate. The canal played a role in the movement for women's suffrage by facilitating the spread of people and, with them, ideas.



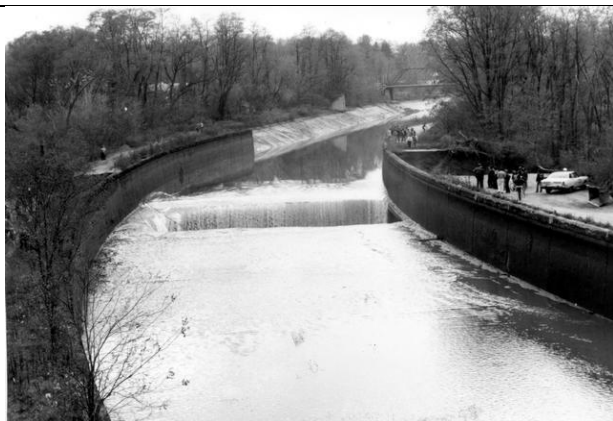
tpm00194.jpg Perinton Municipal Historian Collection

Erie Canal in Fairport N.Y, 1999.

N/A.

Perinton Municipal Historian.

Photograph of the canal through modern day Fairport. Though the canal is not utilized as much as it was in its heyday, it is still a focal point of many landscapes throughout New York. The canal has become a site of recreation and tourism, continuing to affect New York's economy to this day.



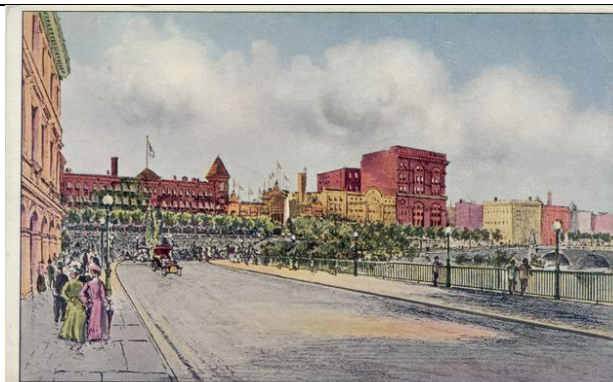
tpr00196.jpg Perinton Municipal Historian Collection

Canal break at Bushnell's Basin N.Y, 1974.

N/A

Perinton Municipal Historian

Photograph of a break in the canal near Perinton. Despite its many uses to this day, the canal continues to cost the state money to maintain. The infrastructure of the canal remains a constant concern and the state and the cities along the canal are constantly looking for ways to improve and utilize the canal for economic growth so as to support it better.



BOULEVARD ON AQUEDUCT FOR ROCHESTER, N.Y.

rpc0406a.jpg Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Canals - Erie - Aqueduct – Proposals, 1915-1930

N/A

Rochester Public Library Local History Division

Depiction of plan for building a public boulevard along the old aqueduct. Plans for how to further develop the former canal route have been a focus of local and state governments for 100 years. Those in power recognize the potential economic viability of the canal to this day and are always thinking of ways to utilize the canal.



10 | Downtown

ROC the Riverway Concept Image, 2018.

N/A

City of Rochester

Depiction of reimagined use of aqueduct as a part of the “ROC the Riverway” campaign. Currently the city is endorsing the “ROC the Riverway” campaign. With plans to re-water the aqueduct and make it a hotspot for recreation in the city, the “ROC the Riverway” campaign would make the aqueduct a hub for recreation and leisure in the city. While this plan only recognizes one layer of the Canal’s rich history it is a testament to how significant the canal was and how it can still have significance in our everyday lives.

This is the rough draft of the completed exhibit and is missing a few of the artifacts that I would want to include in the final exhibit. This mostly complete exhibit should give insight into what the final product of creating an exhibit like this should look like. This also allowed me to see the exhibit together on single pages instead of being on individual pages of a PowerPoint. Seeing everything together on the page allowed me to see the progression of images and text and to see if there should be any more changes. During the process of transferring this over to a Word document, I ended up changing the order of two of the artifacts as it made more sense and transitioned better. Simply changing the view of the exhibit led me to refine my narrative and the exhibit even more than it had been to that point.

Conclusions

The process of putting this exhibit together involved many hours of searching for artifacts and many more hours of research. This process has been very rewarding, and it has taught me that it is very possible for other institutions to follow the same path and create a digital exhibit of their own. This project can serve as a roadmap for institutions that want to engage their audience through an online medium. Even institutions without the collections and resources of the Rochester Public Library can use this project as a set of general guidelines to create their own exhibits. Engaging a digital audience is critical for cultural institutions in the 21st century, and this roadmap can lead institutions through the sometimes-messy process of creating a digital exhibit of their own. There are a few major conclusions that can be taken from both the successes and failures of this project.

The first conclusion that can be drawn from this project is that in order to create a digital exhibit, there must be digitized items. I was lucky in having a database as extensive as the Rochester Images collection at my disposal. I only had to digitize a couple of artifacts myself,

and this was a huge advantage for my project. Some institutions do not have the resources to create or even maintain databases like Rochester Images, and they must look to other avenues to digitize collections to use in online exhibits. The Rochester Public Library and the City Historian's Office have a lot of resources and can afford to digitize their collections and keep them stored safely. The subject of digitization and the proper practices for safely storing digitized files fall outside the scope of this thesis to a certain degree, and that is one of its major limitations. Any organization looking to use this project as a roadmap for creating a digital exhibit of their own will need to have collections that are already digitized or must work to digitize the artifacts that they would like to include in an exhibit. However, for institutions that do not have the resources to digitize all of their collections, they can use the creation of a digital exhibit as an occasion to digitize parts of their collection in order to include them in a digital exhibit. Additionally, any institution that is not able to digitize all of the materials they want to use in a digital exhibit from the beginning can use stand ins until they can get an item properly digitized. Even a picture taken with a phone can substitute for a properly scanned document when it comes to crafting a narrative and putting the exhibit together. It is really only when the digital exhibit is being finalized that there is a definite need to digitize properly. The issue of digitized materials is a major conclusion to pull from this thesis and must be considered when an institution is thinking about creating a digital exhibit.

Another major conclusion that can be drawn from one of the failures of this project is that before putting together a digital exhibit, institutions should figure out what platform they are going to use. The biggest failure of this project has been that the project will not be on the website by the conclusion of my work on it. I did not think of the digital platform until fairly late in the process of creating the exhibit and this led to the exhibit not being uploaded to the website

by the time I finished work on it. If an institution is looking to follow this paper as a roadmap for creating an exhibit, they should do the absolute opposite of what I did when it came to the platform. They should look into what platform they are going to use before putting the exhibit together to avoid any complications with having a completed exhibit without a place to put it. Whether the platform comes from one of the bigger entities in the game, like Omeka or the Google Cultural Institute, or from some other source, platform identification should be one of the first steps in the exhibit. Also, if institutions are looking for ways to have online exhibits created but do not want to use one of the bigger applications, other solutions can sometimes be found. An example might be to take on a computer student from a nearby college as an intern and have them create some other way of disseminating the information from a digital exhibit. In either case, this is one of, if not the most important part of creating a digital exhibit and should be a focus for other institutions looking to follow this roadmap for creating a digital exhibit.

Not all of the conclusions from this thesis are pulled from shortcomings of the project, as any type of institution can follow the steps provided by this thesis to create their own digital exhibit as long as the previous two criteria are met. The tools that I used throughout this process are easily accessible and can be used by people of all skill levels. Excel can seem scary with all of the things it can do but for those that just want to keep data organized, it can be an extremely helpful tool. Additionally, there are many tutorials on YouTube and all over the internet so even those with no experience with the program can use it to their advantage in the process of creating an exhibit. Knowing how to sort lists by single variables is a key skill to have when using Excel for this purpose, and there is a lot of information online on the topic. Excel is the most complicated program I used throughout the process of creating the exhibit, as PowerPoint is a fairly simple program to use. Copying and pasting or uploading files from a repository to

individual slides and filling out the notes section below is all I used PowerPoint for, and it was extremely useful in putting the final exhibit together. Additionally, printing all of the slides out from a PowerPoint is really simple for those who want to try to put together their own paper version of an exhibit. Throughout the process of creating this exhibit I did my best to do it using simple programs and actions in order to offer a path for other institutions to follow without needing any advanced tools or software.

Another conclusion that can be taken from this exhibit is that a compelling story can be told in an online exhibit, even if all of the artifacts that are used are 2-D. While 3-D items bring more of a “wow” factor to an exhibit, 2-D items can get the job done as well. Every item that I used in my exhibit was 2-D and the majority of them were black and white, yet I was able to put together a narrative that was at least slightly compelling through careful planning of where to use artifacts and by searching for the diamonds in the rough. Some of my artifacts were, to put it plainly, boring, but there were enough “wow” factor items to make the exhibit compelling to some degree. Even if there are not many “wow” factor items in an institution’s collections, they can make up for it by crafting a compelling narrative and by including interesting anecdotes in exhibit text. This will require extensive research on the topic in question, but that should be done for any exhibit regardless of the format. This conclusion should give cultural institutions with collections similar to the Rochester Public Library encouragement towards creating a digital exhibit of their own. Paper collections can be just as interesting as 3-D collections so long as proper care is taken towards crafting a narrative that can compel an audience.

The final conclusion that can be drawn from this project is how an exhibit can be crafted around educational standards. The exhibit was designed with the idea that it would be used in K-12 classrooms to teach about the Erie Canal. New York State’s standards for the Erie Canal give

an outline of the topics that students should learn when looking at the Erie Canal. As I have mentioned, these standards were critical in my thought process when creating the exhibit and helped to guide the narrative of the exhibit. While the exhibit could have been created without the use of the K-12 standards, the standards gave it a sense of purpose and has more utility. Institutions looking to create a digital exhibit should consider the use of standards such as these as they can be very useful for schools and they can help to give an exhibit a whole new meaning. Working with local schools can also be beneficial for institutions as it will ensure that the exhibit and all of the hard work that was put into it do not go to waste, as it will allow schools to teach subjects to their students in a more exciting and appealing way.

Overall, this project shows that it is not impossible to create a digital exhibit and that any institution can do it as long as they have the ability to digitize items first or to access already digitized materials. The practices I followed throughout this exhibit should be used as a template for how to create a digital history exhibit, and institutions would do well to get ahead of obsolescence and move into the digital age while they still have a chance.

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Appendices

Figure 1.1. Spreadsheet that I put my initial batch of artifacts into. URL and Rating columns are not included.

Photo DB Number	Title	Topic 1	Topic 2	Artist	K-12 Standards	"Wow" Factor	Resonance	Condition	Date
Rpf00326	Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester, N.Y	Tech	EI	N/A	Tech	Yes	Yes	Excellent	1855
Tpm00369	Erie Canal scene, Fairport N.Y PC	EI	SPI	N/A	Towns	No	No	Excellent	1910
E0000010	Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y	Tech	SPI	N/A	Tech	No	Meh	Excellent	1892
Brm00075	Erie Canal construction in Brighton Village, N.Y	SPI	Tech	N/A	Imm	Meh	No	Excellent	1890?
E0000008	Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y	Tech	SPI	N/A	Tech	Meh	Meh	Excellent	1892
E0000009	Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y	Tech	SPI	N/A	Tech	Meh	Meh	Excellent	1892
Tpm00194	Erie Canal in Fairport N.Y	SPI	EI	N/A	?	Meh	Yes	Excellent	1999
Brm00076	Erie Canal construction in Brighton Village, N.Y	SPI	Tech	N/A	Imm	Meh	No	Good	1890?
M0000096	Erie Canal aqueduct, Rochester N.Y	Tech	SPI	N/A	Tech	Yes	Yes	Excellent	1920s
Rpf01295	Erie Canal feeder, Rochester N.Y	Geo	Tech	N/A	Geo	No	No	Excellent	1903
Rpf01294	Erie Canal feeder, Rochester N.	Geo	Tech	N/A	Geo	No	No	Good	1903
Rpf00409	Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y	Tech	EI	N/A	Tech	Yes	Yes	Excellent	1891
Rpf00036	Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester, N.Y	Tech	SPI	N/A	Tech	Meh	Meh	Excellent	1897-1899
E0000468	Erie Canal along South Avenue, Rochester, N.Y	SPI	Tech	N/A	Tech	Yes	Meh	Excellent	1914
E0000467	Erie Canal along South Avenue, Rochester, N.Y	Tech	SPI	N/A	Tech	Yes	Meh	Excellent	1914
Rpf00104	Erie Canal near Exchange Street, Rochester, N.Y	EI	SPI	N/A	EI	Meh	Meh	Good	1885-1900
Rpf00935	Erie Canal near South Avenue, Rochester, N.Y	Tech	SPI	N/A	Tech	No	Meh	Excellent	1894-1899
Rpf00105	Erie Canal Eastern Widewaters Area, Rochester, N.Y	Geo	SPI	N/A	Geo	No	No	Good	1880-1914
Rpf01743	Erie Canal Aqueduct during 1865 flood	Tech	Geo	N/A	Geo	Yes	Yes	Ok	1865
Rpf01800	Erie Canal in winter, Rochester, N.Y	SPI	Tech	N/A	RG	Yes	Meh	Ok	1899-1915
Rpf01303	Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y	Tech	EI	N/A	Tech	Meh	Yes	Good	1906
Rpf01317	Erie Canal at South Avenue, Rochester N.Y	Tech	SPI	N/A	Towns	Meh	Meh	Good	1897-1906
Rpf01872	Erie Canal excursion boat	Tech	SPI	N/A	Tech	Yes	No	Good	1890
Rpf01901	Erie Canal locks at Lockport N.Y	Tech	Geo	N/A	Tech	Yes	No	Good	1880-1910
Rpf00331	Erie Canal locks near Monroe Avenue, Rochester N.Y	Tech	Geo	N/A	Tech	Meh	Yes	Excellent	1918
Rpf00679	Erie Canal locks at Monroe Avenue, Rochester N.Y	Tech	Geo	N/A	Tech	Yes	Meh	Excellent	1918
Ghs00004	Erie Canal rerouting, South Greece, N.Y.	Tech	EI	N/A	Tech	Yes	Meh	Ok	1908
Rpf00834	Men on Canal Boat on Erie Canal	SPI	Tech	N/A	Tech	Meh	No	Good	1870-1900
Tpm00276	DeLand family boat on the Erie Canal	SPI	Tech	N/A	SPI	Meh	No	Ok	1875-1900
Tpm00181	Packet boat bottleneck on Erie Canal, Fultonville N.Y	SPI	Tech	Albert Gayer	Towns	Yes	No	Excellent	1900
Tpm00103	Barges stuck in mud, Erie Canal, Perinton N.Y	Tech	Geo	annunzio, A	Tech	Yes	No	Excellent	p. 1961
Rpc0406a	Canals - Erie - Aqueduct - Proposals	SPI	EI	N/A	Towns	Meh	Meh	Excellent	1915-1930
Rpf00372	Rochester Subway construction along Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester	EI	Tech	N/A	Tech	Yes	Yes	Excellent	1923
Rpf00370	Interior view of subway in Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y	EI	Tech	N/A	Tech	Yes	Meh	Excellent	1920-1925
Rpf00263	Rochester House hotel on the Erie Canal	EI	SPI	N/A	Towns	Meh	No	Excellent	1838
Rpf00369	Subway construction near old Erie Canal weighlock, Rochester N.Y	EI	Tech	N/A	Tech	Yes	No	Good	1922
Rpf01103	Ice skaters on Erie Canal at Exchange Street, Rochester N.Y	SPI	Geo	N/A	SPI	Yes	Meh	Good	1874-1883
Rpf00785	Ice skating on the Erie Canal Aqueduct, Rochester N.Y	SPI	Geo	N/A	SPI	Yes	Meh	Good	1900
Rpf00327	Plan of the first aqueduct carrying the Erie Canal over the Genesee	Tech	Geo	Peck, Everard	Tech	Yes	No	Excellent	1791-1854
Tpm001897	Canal break at Bushnell's Basin N.Y	Tech	EI	Hemmer, Doi	Tech	Meh	Meh	Excellent	1974
Tpm00188	Construction scene, New York State Barge Canal	Tech	EI	N/A	Tech	Meh	No	Good	1905-1918
Rpf03047	Broadside, canal navigation	EI	SPI	N/A	EI	No	No	Excellent	1823
E0000208	Train tracks between Genesee River & canal feeder, Rochester, N.Y	Tech	Geo	N/A	Tech	Meh	No	Good	1892
Rpf02823	Broadside, canal lands for sale	EI	Geo	N/A	EI	No	No	Excellent	1823
Rpf03045	Broadside, Rochester Canal Commissioner's office	EI	SPI	N/A	EI	No	No	Excellent	1870
rpf02086	Timetable - Genesee Valley Canal packet boat	SPI	Tech	N/A	Towns	Yes	Meh	Ok	1844
Rsg00041	Weighlock on Erie Canal, Rochester	EI	Tech	acon & Carna	EI	Yes	No	Poor	1875
Rpf00992	West Avenue lift bridge over the canal, Rochester N.Y	Tech	Geo	N/A	Tech	Yes	Meh	Good	1888-1890
Rpf00005	Rochester, N.Y. from the west, 1853	Geo	SPI	N/A	Towns	Yes	Yes	Excellent	1853
M0000115	Construction of Interstate 490, Rochester N.Y	SPI	Tech	N/A	Tech	Yes	Yes	Excellent	1956
Rpf01621	Construction, Broad Street Bridge, Rochester N.Y	EI	Tech	N/A	Tech	Meh	Yes	Excellent	1922-1924
Rpf02821	Broadside, Genesee Valley Packet line	EI	SPI	N/A	EI	No	No	Ok	1849
Rpf01753	Rochester in 1868	SPI	EI	son, William	Towns	Yes	Yes	Good	1868