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**The Nature of Settlement:
 Post-Revolution to the Civil War
 1780-1865**

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Spring 2018

Lecture design, content and presentation GAFG 0318. Individual images and illustrations may be subject to prior copyright.

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**Settlement Sequence:
 State of New York**

- Revolutionary War ends in 1781.
- **New York colony becomes the State of New York.** Its political boundaries are firmed after negotiations with neighboring states.
- **It is the 11th state to ratify the Constitution (1788).**
- **Congress (1791) voted to separate the northeast corner of New York to create the State of Vermont** (conflict with New Hampshire).

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Changing Shape of New York

Read the NY excerpt from "How the States got their Shapes."

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Land Distribution

- ❖ **NYS government takes control of all Indian land and evicts the Iroquois** (British allies).
 - Newly created State of New York needs money.
 - Settlement prohibition dropped.
 - The state sells most of the land to developers.
 - The state keeps some land (military tracts) to give to members of the militia.
 - Land developers allowed divide the land and sell parcels to individuals.
- ❖ **Excellent farmland draws people from other states and from Europe.** Rapid settlement of interior NYS follows.

Land Purchases

By 1810 **over 60,000** people moved into western NYS.

NOTE: Until 1791 Vermont was part of the original New York colony.

What did settlement of western NYS do to the natural landscape?

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Settlement of Interior NYS

- ❖ The basic **pattern of population distribution** on the state map is imprinted.
- **Focal points (towns) are created** and they are linked by a crude **road network**.
- With the influx of farmers to virgin arable land, **New York becomes a major agricultural state** producing grains and other essential foodstuffs. **By the 1820s** is known as **"the nation's bread basket."**
 - **This is a different type of agriculture than that of the Southern States. How so?**

Sequential Settlement: Composite View

SPREAD OF SETTLEMENT Composite

Settlement was uneven and selective. Valleys first; highlands last.

Spread to all areas of the state except for areas with the harshest conditions.

Most of settlers of the first wave were from New England; also from NJ and PA.

Mohawk River served as the conduit.

European immigrants did not arrive until the early 1800s.

Sequential Settlement: I

SPREAD OF SETTLEMENT before 1775

Settlement was uneven and selective. Valleys first; highlands last.

Spread to all areas of the state except for areas with the harshest conditions.

Most of settlers of the first wave were from New England; also from NJ and PA.

Mohawk River served as the conduit.

European immigrants did not arrive until the early 1800s.

Sequential Settlement: II

SPREAD OF SETTLEMENT 1776-1789

Settlement was uneven and selective. Valleys first; highlands last.

Spread to all areas of the state except for areas with the harshest conditions.

Most of settlers of the first wave were from New England; also from NJ and PA.

Mohawk River served as the conduit.

European immigrants did not arrive until the early 1800s.

Sequential Settlement: III

SPREAD OF SETTLEMENT 1790-1799

Settlement was uneven and selective. Valleys first; highlands last.

Spread to all areas of the state except for areas with the harshest conditions.

Most of settlers of the first wave were from New England; also from NJ and PA.

Mohawk River served as the conduit.

European immigrants did not arrive until the early 1800s.

Sequential Settlement: IV

SPREAD OF SETTLEMENT 1800-1809

Settlement was uneven and selective. Valleys first; highlands last.

Spread to all areas of the state except for areas with the harshest conditions.

Most of settlers of the first wave were from New England; also from NJ and PA.

Mohawk River served as the conduit.

European immigrants did not arrive until the early 1800s.

Sequential Settlement: V

SPREAD OF SETTLEMENT After 1810

Settlement was uneven and selective. Valleys first; highlands last.

Spread to all areas of the state except for areas with the harshest conditions.

Most of settlers of the first wave were from New England; also from NJ and PA.

Mohawk River served as the conduit.

European immigrants did not arrive until the early 1800s.

Settlement Composite

SPREAD OF SETTLEMENT Composite

DATES REFER TO THE BEGINNINGS OF COLONIZATION

- Before 1775
- 1775 - 1799
- 1799 - 1800
- 1800 - 1809
- After 1810

Uplands Never Generally Colonized

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What was the lure?

Remember push-pull factors?

- ❖ Overcrowded conditions and a harsh environment in New England were **push** factors.
- ❖ **NYS pull factors** were:
 - **Good soil, climate and land.**
 - **Known resources** of lumber, waterpower and minerals, especially salt.
 - **Alternate river routes** to the interior via the Delaware, Susquehanna and Allegheny rivers.
 - **Curiosities:** there was Niagara Falls, the Finger Lakes and the Genesee River (beginnings of tourism!).

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Remember the War of 1812?

NYS was the focus of hostilities between British Canada and the United States during the War of 1812.

Battle sites included:

1. Niagara Frontier
2. Shore of Lake Ontario
3. Lake Champlain region

The War of 1812

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Period after the War of 1812

- ❖ After the War of 1812, there was a need to get to **food to market as quickly and securely.**
 - New farmland provided bountiful harvests.
 - Market towns were established along the E-W turnpikes.
 - Overland travel was slow and expensive.
- ❖ **Needed a faster, cheaper and safe way to get agricultural products from interior NYS to the Atlantic Coast without using** Lake Ontario or the St. Lawrence River. *(There was still a fear of British Canada.)*

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Land Routes in NYS

N.Y.C. - ALBANY - PITTSBURGH ROUTES 1818

SOURCE: WILLIAM GABBY (1818) pp. 148-149

Fig. 45

Seneca Harbor
Albany
New York City
Pittsburgh

TIMES AND COSTS

Mode	Days	per cent.
On Ocean	30-35	15-
Black Hawk (Overland)	35	0-75
On Seneca	35	5-
Seneca Harbor	40	0-50

overland — water

Wagons and boats were used to move food, coal, wood and other goods between the western frontier (Pittsburgh) and NYC but there was NOT an all water route.

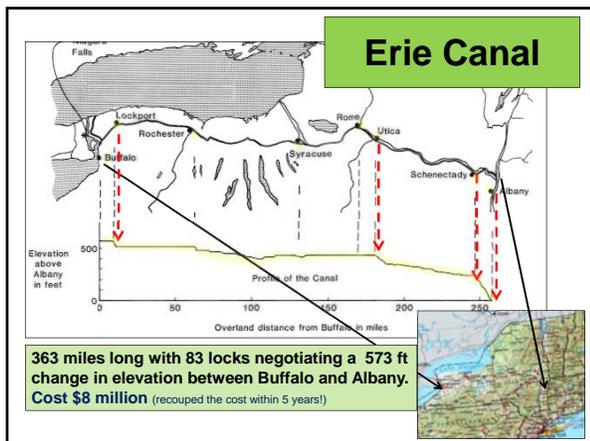
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The Erie Canal

Extra Credit Exercise 14 CANALS of NYS looks at the historic canals. <https://eriecanalway.org/> NPS site; other links in Exercise 14.

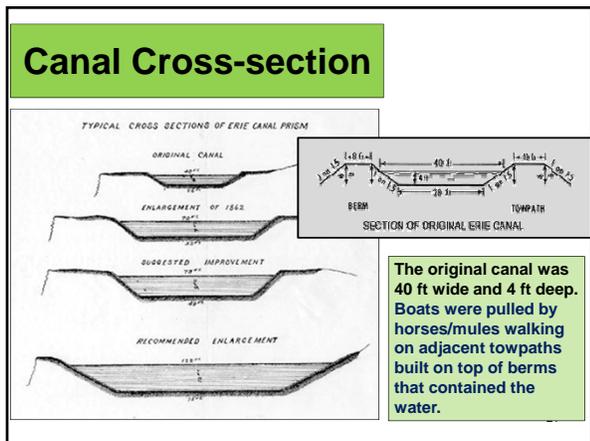
- Gov. DeWitt Clinton persuaded the NYS Legislature to fund (1816) the building of a canal to link the Hudson River with Lake Erie after Federal government refused.
- ❖ **The Erie Canal was constructed between 1817 and 1825** as a public works program.
 - First segment was from Rome to Seneca (easiest digging).
 - East and west ends required technology.
 - **PROBLEM:** No engineering schools in the US.
- Canal diggers were mainly **immigrants** hired from ships arriving in NYC.
 - ✓ Most workers settled in NYS along the section of canal they helped dig and a new set of towns were established.

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Western Terminus of the Erie Canal

- **The Erie Canal was to end at Black Rock, NY**, a town at the mouth of the Niagara River **opposite Fort Erie, Ontario**. (This was a convenient ferrying point across the river.)
- **Fear of British attack** (Black Rock was burned during War of 1812) **moved the terminus south to Buffalo Creek in present day Buffalo.**
- This proved to be a better location in the long run.



Canal Lock

❖ **A lock is an enclosed basin (with gates at either end) that is used to raise and lower water in a canal (stair-step fashion).**

- Original lock operations were gravity-flow.
- Now electric pumps speed the process.

Canal Lock Animation

The downstream lock gate is open.

<http://www.eriecanal.org/index.html>

<http://www.eriecanal.org/locks.html>

Locks at Lockport

1825 – original locks

1836-1862- enlarged locks

1880

Today

Scenes along the Canal Today

*Lock Keeper's House

<<Packet (passenger) boat replicas

Dry dock>>>

Erie Canal at Cohoes, east end of canal

Cohoes Falls
Cohoes, NY

<<Old Lock 18
near Cohoes, NY

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Sights along the Erie Canal

Mules and horses pulled the boats in the canal. They followed the towpath which was located on top of the berm.

Locks were opened and closed by hand.

The Erie Canal

- ❖ It provided an **all water link** between the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes when **opened in 1825**.
- ❖ **Cut travel time** from NYC to Buffalo from 20 days to 8 days.
- ❖ **Cut cost of freight** from \$120/ton to \$5/ton reducing the price of food and lumber.
- ❖ **Made Rochester the largest US flour milling center**. In 1820 it shipped 67,000 barrels of wheat flour; in 1826 it shipped 240,000 barrels.
- ❖ **Made New York City the largest US port**.
 - By 1840 NYC saw more tonnage than all other major US ports combined.

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The Legacy of the Erie Canal

- ❖ **Instigated a state-wide and national canal-building mania.**
- ❖ **Became the focus of economic development.**
 - Because of the favorable economic situation (farming, lumbering and transport) people poured into interior NYS.
 - Cities developed along its route (1850 census saw 75% of NYS population living within 10 mi of it).
 - Because of its success, it had to be enlarged several times to handle heavier cargo and larger barges.
- ❖ **Speeded the development of the railroads as a year-round long-haul mover of tonnage.**

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Canals of NYS in 1855

CANALS c. 1855
Fig. 46

Canalized RICHELIEU RIVER

The success of the Erie Canal began the Canal Era in the US but no other state had the combination of land-forms and water sources as did NYS.

The Delaware and Hudson Canal was the first privately built canal in the US.

The Richelieu River was canalized to connect the St. Lawrence River with Lake Champlain.

The late 1850s saw the end of the Canal Era as the rail network grows.

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Delaware & Hudson Canal System

First canal privately financed in US. Built from 1825-29.
Connected Pennsylvania coalfields with Hudson R. at Kingston, NY
 Consisted of a **108 mi long canal with 108 locks + 16 mi of gravity railroad**
 Eventually replaced by the Erie RR which brought coal directly to NYC

Delaware & Hudson Canal

ANTHACITE COAL ROUTE FROM CARBONDALE TO NEW YORK CITY
DELAWARE AND HUDSON CANAL

<http://www.nps.gov/upde/photosmultimedia/The-Delaware-and-Hudson-Canal.htm>

Importance of this Phase of Settlement

- Canal Era ends prior to Civil War as railroads take over long-haul transportation.
- ❖ End of period saw the **imprint of the basic pattern of population distribution.**
- Focal points** of higher population densities **developed.**
- Focal points became **links in the modern transportation system.**
 (Colonial turnpikes>> canals>> railroads>> paved roadways>> interstate highway system)
- ❖ **Greatly altered the natural environment.**

Altered Landscapes

Originally, stream beds and wetlands (lakes/ marshes) were used as the rights of way. Now private property was involved

Water was diverted and impounded by farmers, canal operators and towns people.

Berms that were built to contain water in the canal and create a towpath interfered with natural drainage.

Feeder canals were needed to bring water to the main canal taking water from other areas.

Trees were cut for construction material.

Vegetation was cleared for service areas and roads.

Dams were needed maintain both water level and supply.

Air photo of current Lock E-7 at Vischer Ferry.

Canals and settlements accelerated changes in the landscape.

Trees were cut down for farmland and roads as well as for construction material and fuel.

In some areas the price of wood for fuel soared because too much land was cleared for farming!

People made comments about the **"bleak and raw look to the land."**

NYS Forest Cover (percent by year)

Changes in New York's Forest Land Area

Year	Forest Cover (%)	Key Event
1600	90%	
1775	80%	
1815	62%	
1825	40%	Opening of W. N.Y.S.
1880	20%	Opening of Erie Canal
1975	50%	
1990	40%	
2000	62%	
Now	63%	