

Erie Canal

Read the first- and third- person accounts and then answer the questions.

Diary written by a young girl in 1822.

Took boat on the canal at 8 A.M. This boat called the Oneida Chief 14 feet in width and 70 in length, was provided with a range of berths on each side of the ladies cabin which left a space about 4 feet in width and 16 or 20 inches to contain 20 ladies. There were between 40 and 50 passengers on board who were almost all obliged to remain in the cabin, as the day was extremely warm and heat here was intense and suffocating.

Not a breath of air to be felt. The canal was on a dead level for nearly 60 miles. The waters green, turbid and stagnant and the banks generally uninteresting and covered with wood. At sunset we crowded on the little deck in hopes of finding it cooler when we were attacked by swarms of mosquitoes of gigantic size, the sons of the forest, which rendered our situation doubly disagreeable. At midnight with heartfelt rejoicing, we finally bid a final adieu to the canal. Landed at Syracuse, a small village near Onondaga Lake and took lodging at Magnus Hotel, a large building and, promising it its appearance.

Article about the Erie Canal

The Erie Canal opened on October 26, 1825, providing overland water transportation between the Hudson River on the east and Lake Erie at the western end. Popularly known as "Clinton's Folly," the eight-year construction project was the vision of New York Governor DeWitt Clinton. He convinced the New York State legislature to commit seven million dollars to the construction of a 363-mile ditch, forty feet wide and four feet deep.

On October 26, Governor Clinton and his party boarded the packet boat *Seneca Chief*, with two wooden barrels of Lake Erie water, to begin the journey from Buffalo to New York City. Eight days later, Clinton ceremoniously emptied the water into the Atlantic Ocean to marry the waters as a symbol of the importance of this canal.

A tremendous success, the waterway accelerated settlement of western New York, Ohio, Indiana, and the upper Midwest including the founding of hundreds of towns such as Clinton, in DeWitt County, Illinois, and DeWitt, in Clinton County, Iowa.

1. What is one fact that you learned from the article? _____

2. What is one piece of information that you learned from the diary that showed a feeling or an opinion? _____

3. What was it like traveling on the Erie Canal? _____

4. Which account gave you information about what it was like to travel on the Erie Canal?

5. Which account did you enjoy reading more and why? _____
