



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Canal enlargement

BY C.W. LATTIN

This documentary photo was taken in December 1912 where Main Street crosses the canal in Albion.

In this scene we can see that temporary bridge has been erected to cross the span.

Although blurred, a team of horses hitched to a wagon can be seen on this crossing.

The old swing bridge is no longer in place, as the site is being readied for the present lift bridge.

In the distance, a couple of derricks are in place for existing components to the new bridge.

Two Medina Sandstone business blocks on the west side of Main Street by the canal also show in the distance.

In the foreground, and stretching up through the right side of the picture, is a newly poured concrete retaining wall on the north side of the canal.

To the left of this we see two

workmen standing on a pile of rubble. All this had to be removed to clear out the channel.

In effect this shows how much wider the canal was made at the time. Here the canal was expanded 20 feet to the north.

Also, in order to make it deeper, the banks were raised higher. Lift bridges were then installed in certain areas because ramps to overhead bridges would have been extremely long and high.

This was especially true on the north approaches as the canal banks are generally higher on that side. There are, however, only 17 lift bridges on the 363 miles of the Erie Canal in New York state. Little Orleans County has seven of them with nine others, all in this western end of the state, spread between Niagara, Monroe and Wayne counties.

On March 25 the Cobblestone Society will host a dinner program about the Erie Canal beginning at 2 p.m. with the

dinner at the Gaines Congregational Church. For reservations, call (585) 589-9013.

Just the program without the dinner at 3 p.m. is \$3 for adults and \$2 for children. This is entitled "The Erie Canal in 3-D" given by David MacDonald, lockmaster in Lockport. He has combined his interest in three dimensional photography with his experience on the Erie Canal into a 3-D slideshow about an hour in length.