



HISTORIC BRIGHTON

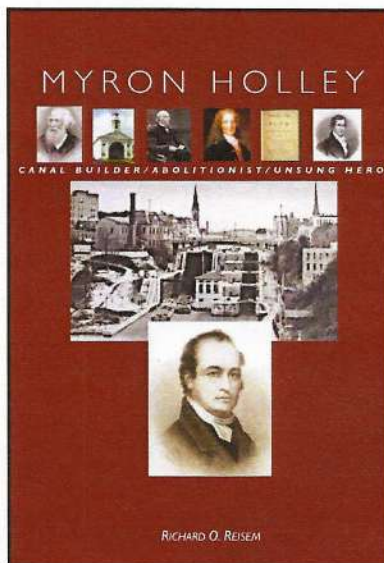
CELEBRATING OUR TOWN'S HISTORY AND
EDUCATING OUR COMMUNITY ABOUT BRIGHTON'S PAST

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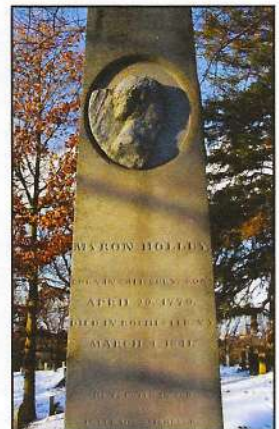
New Biography Reveals Inspiring Character and Extraordinary Achievements of Forgotten Rochesterian Myron Holley (1779-1841)



Richard O. Reisem, author



Myron Holley



Holley monument with
Portrait medallion

Copies of **Myron Holley: Canal Builder/Abolitionist/Unsung Hero** may be purchased at the Mount Hope Cemetery office, 1133 Mt. Hope Avenue and the Landmark Society, 133 South Fitzhugh Street. Proceeds from book sales will be dedicated to creating a new stone portrait medallion to replace the badly deteriorated original bas-relief of Myron Holley on his memorial obelisk in Mount Hope Cemetery.

The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery announce the publication of **Myron Holley: Canal Builder/Abolitionist/Unsung Hero**, by Richard O. Reisem. In this 228-page biography, Reisem reveals the noble heart and remarkable accomplishments of one of the cemetery's most distinguished residents.

In his newest book, Reisem tells Myron Holley's story in the context of the momentous historical events and movements that shaped his life, including the War of 1812, the building of the Erie Canal, and the struggle to abolish slavery. The author crafts a comprehensive portrait of the profound influence that this visionary man exerted, changing the course of history in New York State and indeed the nation. Among Holley's many achievements, he served as the Superintendent of Construction of the Erie Canal and founded the first Horticultural Society in Western New York, the First Unitarian Church in Rochester, and the anti-slavery Liberty Party.

Reisem's telling of Holley's remarkable life includes abundant background information about his ancestors and descendants and the historical events of his time. Excerpts from personal letters reveal the man's heart and intellect, and more than 70 illustrations enrich the story.

Richard O. Reisem
will present
**Myron Holley: Canal Builder/
Abolitionist/Unsung Hero**
at Historic Brighton's
Annual Meeting
2 p.m.
Sunday, January 25
Brighton Town Hall
2300 Elmwood Ave



Photo of Erie Canal Village and replica packet boat in Rome, NY by Andy Olenick



The Erie Canal was a prominent feature of 19th century Brighton. This painting of "The Lock in Brighton" is by George Herdle, first director of the Memorial Art Gallery

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In his introduction, author Richard Reisem comments: "Since 1980, I have been giving walking tours of Mount Hope Cemetery where Myron Holley is buried on one of the highest points in the cemetery. I made my tour goers climb that hill, all of us out-of-breath by the time we reached the Holley gravesite and tall obelisk. I would tell them about this unsung hero who single-handedly did more to establish the success of the city of Rochester and the state of New York than almost anyone else. My story about Myron Holley was a surprise to almost everyone who came on these tours. How could practically no one know about the enormous contributions of Myron Holley? This book is an attempt to change that."

Born in 1779 to a wealthy, upper class Connecticut family, Holley was highly educated, well read, and an eloquent writer and speaker. In 1803 he travelled west to settle and practice law in Canandaigua. True to the honor and decency that would inform all his life choices, Holley soon sabotaged his law career when, convinced of his client's guilt, he refused to defend an accused murderer. Thus he embarked on a path dedicated to social justice and public service, often to the detriment of his own health and his family's prosperity.

Reisem follows Holley as he is appointed Canandaigua Postmaster, then Ontario County Clerk. Against the dramatic background of the War of 1812, he describes Holley's leadership in securing aid for hundreds of displaced Niagara frontier residents.

Elected to the New York State Assembly in 1816, Holley recognized the enormous potential benefits to western New York offered by the proposed Erie Canal and became a close ally of DeWitt Clinton, advocating tirelessly and eloquently for the project in the face of strong political opposition.

Initially appointed a canal commissioner, Myron Holley subsequently accepted the huge responsibilities of trea-

surer and superintendent of canal construction. He traveled back and forth across the state, negotiating building contracts and bank loans for each section of the project, and coordinating solutions to massive engineering challenges. Reisem recounts Holley's steadfast service in dramatic terms:

For eight years, he traveled the canal route on horseback, paying the workers, sleeping in shacks or under the stars, eating with Irish diggers, nursing malaria sufferers, and even burying cholera victims when others refused to touch their bodies. He handled more than \$2.5 million in public funds, keeping his accounts by candlelight in worn ledgers stored in his saddlebags. When money was not forthcoming from the State of New York, he advanced his own funds. At the completion of the canal, an audit found a \$30,000 deficit, and his political enemies caused the seizure of all his property. Although totally absolved by an investigation, Holley died a pauper."

Canal construction was completed in 1825. Again in author Reisem's words:

The Erie Canal dramatically changed the course of American history. It created the science of engineering in the United States, which led to America's predominance in the Industrial Revolution. And it transformed the State of New York from a wilderness into the agricultural, industrial, commercial, and financial center of the country in the 19th century. It made New York the Empire State.



‘To a greater extent than any other single individual, Myron Holley enabled this monumental project [the Erie Canal] to succeed.’

Richard Reisem leading a group to the Holley Monument in Mount Hope Cemetery
Photo by Ron Richardson, Friends of Mount Hope trustee

To a greater extent than any other single individual, Myron Holley enabled this monumental project to succeed.

Americans settled, found work, purchased homes, raised families, and established schools and churches. Given Myron Holley’s enduring social conscience, he inevitably became a passionate abolitionist, using his considerable literary and oratory skills in the service of this cause. Convinced that only political action could eventually win the day, Holley was a founder of the Liberty Party in 1840. The party’s sole platform plank was the abolition of slavery. In spite of failing health, Holley worked tirelessly for this cause until his death on March 4, 1841. He was buried in Rochester’s Mount Hope Cemetery.

Members of the Liberty Party soon launched a fund raising campaign, asking but a penny per person, to place a suitable monument on Holley’s grave. On June 13, 1844 six thousand people gathered for the dedication of a granite obelisk that bears a sculpted bas-relief medallion exhibiting a profile of Myron Holley’s head. It was the largest gathering of living persons ever to occur in the cemetery.

Richard O. Reisem

Richard O. Reisem has written 15 books since retiring from Eastman Kodak’s Communications and Public Affairs. His Mount Hope Cemetery books include: *Gravestones in Mount Hope Cemetery*, *Frederick Douglass and the Underground Railroad*, *Buried Treasures in Mount Hope Cemetery*, and *Mount Hope: America’s First Municipal Victorian Cemetery*. Other cemetery books are: *Forest Lawn Cemetery: Buffalo History Preserved*, *A Field Guide to Forest Lawn Cemetery*, and *Blue Sky Mausoleum* of Frank Lloyd Wright.

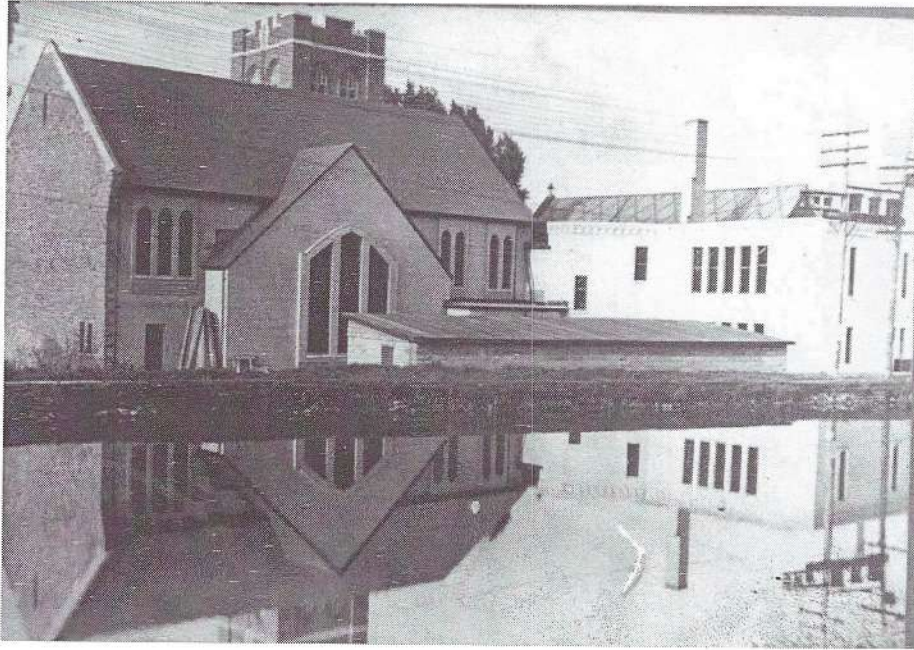
Other books include: *Historic Photos of New York State*, *Historic New York—Architectural Journeys in the Empire State*, *Erie Canal Legacy—Architectural Treasures of the Empire State*, *Classic Buffalo—A Heritage of Distinguished Architecture*, and *200 Years of Rochester Architecture and Gardens*.

He was graduated from Iowa State University with major studies in architecture and journalism—which included editor of the university newspaper, *Iowa State Daily*. His 31-year career at Eastman Kodak included speechwriter for six of the company’s CEOs.

He is an honorary trustee of the Landmark Society of Western New York, vice-president of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, and former trustee of the Rochester Historical Society. For 16 years, he served on the Rochester Preservation Board, and was chair for four years.

THE ERIE CANAL:

ITS HISTORY AND IMPORTANCE TO THE TOWN OF BRIGHTON



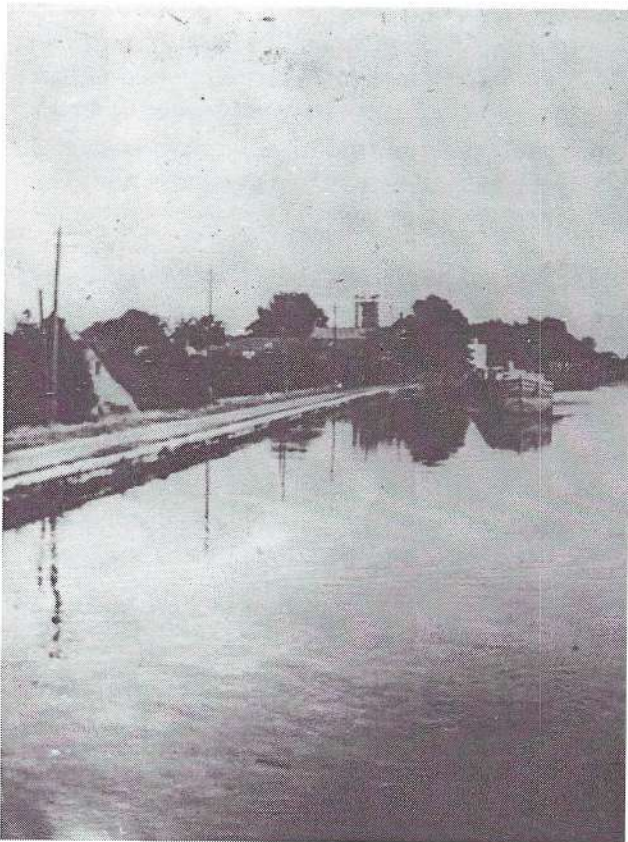
Brighton Presbyterian Church backed up to the Erie Canal



DeWitt Clinton

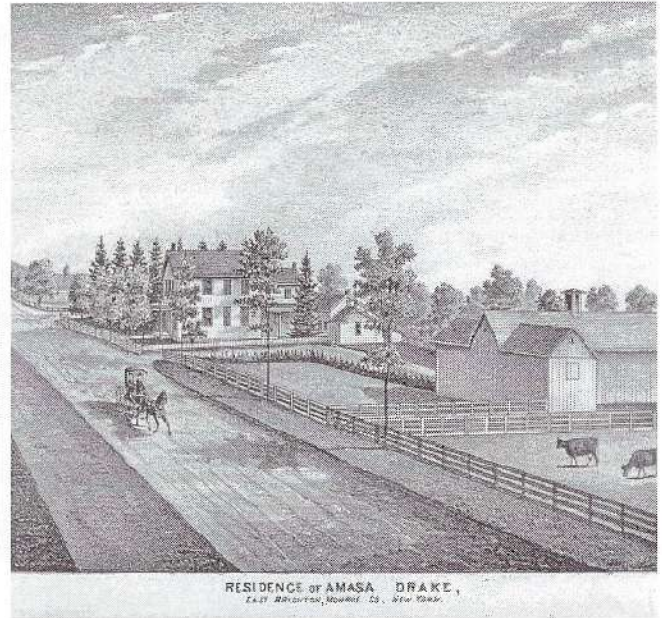
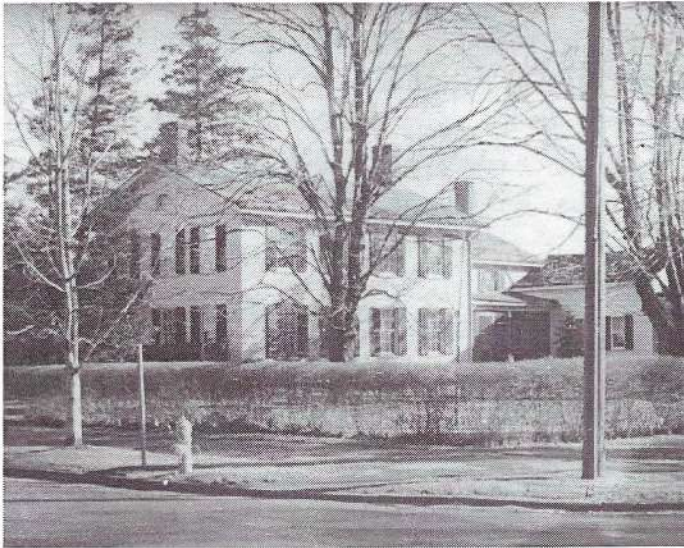
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By Mary Jo Lanphear



The dream of a canal across New York State did not begin with DeWitt Clinton in the early nineteenth century. As early as 1724 a survey was begun to determine a possible water route from Albany to Lake Ontario. After the Revolutionary War, in 1783, at the suggestion of President Washington, a more complete survey was assigned to Christopher Colles who completed the assignment for \$124. In 1791 New York Governor George Clinton ordered more surveys and in 1806 the first Canal Law was passed by the State Legislature. As a result, the State appealed to the federal government for funding but President Jefferson considered the plan a physical impossibility and its advocates a hundred years ahead of their time. With the exception of a "government lock" at each end of the canal and some WPA maintenance in the 1930s, the canal has remained a State-funded project.

Geneva businessman, Jesse Hawley, in debtors' prison in Canandaigua in 1807, wrote fourteen essays later published in the Genesee Messenger in which he advocated for the building of a state-wide canal and laid



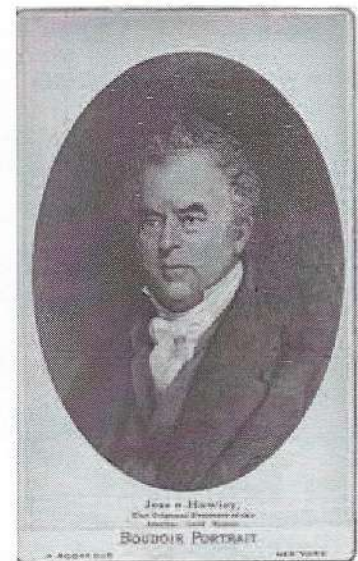
The Amasa Drake house today and in a 19th century drawing

out detailed plans for its route. He envisioned a water route from New York City to Buffalo and from Buffalo to Chicago. He said, "When completed, this would afford a course of navigation from New York, by sloop navigation to Albany, 160 miles; from Albany to Buffalo by boat navigation, 300 miles; from Buffalo to Chicago by sloop navigation, 1200 miles; making a distance of 1660 miles of inland navigation up stream, where the cargo has to be shifted but three times...The navigation of the four largest lakes in the known world, together with all their tributary streams – the agricultural products and the commerce of all the surrounding country - would pass through this canal, and even the fifth [Ontario] would become its tributary."

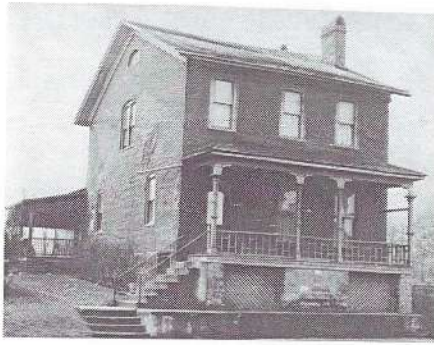
Jesse Hawley, the dreamer in 1807, was on hand to speak at the grand opening celebration in 1825.

Delayed by the War of 1812, Governor DeWitt Clinton couldn't appoint canal commissioners until 1816. A large meeting was held at Canandaigua on January 8, 1817, to urge the construction of the canal. Nathaniel Rochester attended and was appointed secretary to the citizens' committee. This group impelled the NYS Legislature to pass the bill that authorized the project and the funds to build it on April 15, 1817. Actual construction began on July 4, 1817, at Rome with the roar of artillery and a great crowd of people. Rome was selected because the area was flat and afforded the easiest site for digging. Substantial progress made in the easy sections would make it more difficult for bureaucrats to come along and say "Stop!"

In the 19th century, Winton Road looked like this. It wasn't even Winton Road then—it was North Road north of East Avenue, and South Road where Amasa Drake built his house along the Erie Canal. Drake's house (but not the barn or the cows) still stands—on Winton Road South, corner of Palmerston. The Winton designation is thanks to the Winton car which debuted in 1897.



Jesse Hawley



Brightonian William Clough Bloss became an editor, assemblyman, prohibitionist, abolitionist, and advocate of penal reform. As a young man he operated a tavern near the Erie Canal in old Brighton Village. Tak-

ing up the temperance cause, he dumped his entire stock of liquor into the canal.



Construction was done one section at a time and unconnected sections were flooded and opened as they were completed. The eastern section extended from Albany to Rome, 110 miles with eighty-four locks; the middle from Rome to the Seneca River, ninety-six miles with eighty-one locks; and the western from the Seneca River to Lake Erie, 158 miles with 21 locks.

Engineers were appointed for each division. Amasa Drake, Brighton resident whose house still stands at 474 Winton Road South, was the engineer for the first aqueduct that crossed the Genesee River.

The middle section was completed in the fall of 1819. Thus the first boat on the canal was one that traveled from Rome to Utica on October 22, 1819. By 1822 the canal was in use in the towns of Brighton and Pittsford, three years before the entire canal was finished. In 1823, by the way, when the Genesee River was spanned by the first aqueduct, Rochesterville was on the west side of the river, Brighton on the right. Later that year, the first annexation of land in Brighton was made by the village of Rochester but the union of the two villages appears to have been supported by businessmen on both sides of the River.

Because horses couldn't pull packet boats against river currents, the canal did not make use of natural waterways and was entirely hand-dug. It also used Lake Erie as its water source instead of Lake Ontario because the latter was in British control at the time the plans were made.

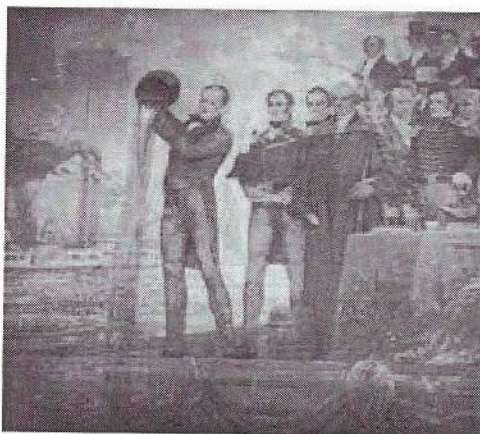
It is said that the men of NY State "built the longest canal in the world, in the least time, with the least experience, for the least money, and to the greatest public benefit." Forty feet wide and four feet deep, the canal stretched 363 miles across the State with 83 single locks. The total cost of construction was \$7,143,789. By 1835 revenues from the canal had paid off the maintenance and construction costs so the canal was showing a profit.

It was built with little or no technology, with hand and animal power. It trained a whole generation in architectural skills, in reality becoming a school of civil engineering. Laborers made \$8 – 12 a month and were, for the most part, New York State farmers (some Irish immigrants worked on the canal but, with the majority of Irish coming during the famine period in the mid-1840s, it is more likely that they participated in the enlargement of the canal between 1835 and 1862).

The grand opening celebration in October of 1825 was highlighted by Governor DeWitt Clinton's ten-day trip from Buffalo to New York City



Lock 64



The wedding of the waters: water from Lake Erie is poured into the Atlantic ocean at the 1825 opening of the Erie Canal

via the "Seneca Chief," carrying a keg of Lake Erie water which he poured into the Atlantic Ocean upon arrival. The celebratory party stopped in every town and village along the way, collecting government officials, and attending banquets and church thanksgiving services. When construction of the canal began, ninety per cent of the land along its route was undeveloped. Land sales increased dramatically during the building of the canal. Property valued at \$200 in 1810 rose to \$12,000 in 1817. Residents found prosperity in the demand for labor, teamsters, horses and oxen, animal feed, blacksmithing services, and human provisions. More important than this short-term boon was the lasting improvement in the economic position of the area.

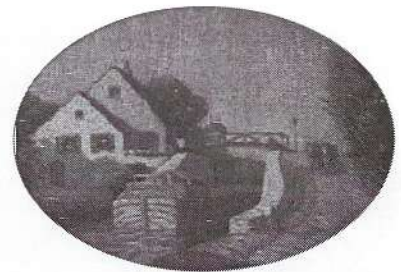
The cost of shipping freight from Buffalo to New York City dropped from \$100 to \$12.00 per ton when the canal was completed. By 1830 about 35 canal boats a day landed at Rochester docks. Two-thirds of the products shipped east were barrels of flour. The mills in Rochester along the Genesee produced 240,000 barrels of flour in 1831, not including the product of mills in nearby towns. This flour earned the premium price of thirty-seven and one-half cents a barrel at NYC.

Brighton's proximity to the canal provided easy access to markets for its agricultural products. Wheat and other grain products (in milled or distilled form), gypsum (refined into a plaster fertilizer), lumber, wool, and bricks were shipped from Brighton farmers and manufacturers. Six companies formed that built both freight and packet boats. Brighton Centre, at East Avenue and Winton Road, thrived as a stopover for canalers, providing travelers, boat crews, and horses with food and liquid refreshment. Taverns were located on all four corners of the village intersection. Repair facilities such as Thomas Caley's blacksmith shop mended boat fittings, made anchors, and shod the horses that pulled the boats. The Erie Canal was improved from 1835 to 1862, widened and deepened to accommodate larger boats. This necessitated the demolition of almost all the original structures. Lock 64, located near Brighton village, was a product of the reconstruction period and is still visible as one travels west on Interstate 490 between Winton and Culver Roads.

Canal lore abounds in local history books by Arch Merrill and others. Philip Wickes, born in 1893, wrote a regular column for the Brighton-Pittsford Post, sharing his reminiscences of earlier days. He recalled hitching rides on canal boats at the Rutgers Street lock near Monroe Avenue. At that time mules had replaced horses as the means of locomotion. He said that mule teams were harnessed three abreast. When two boats met from opposite directions, one team would stop and let their tow rope go slack and sink below the water. The opposite team would walk over the slack



When painter George Herdle heard that this building by "the lock in Brighton" was being torn down, he rushed to paint it



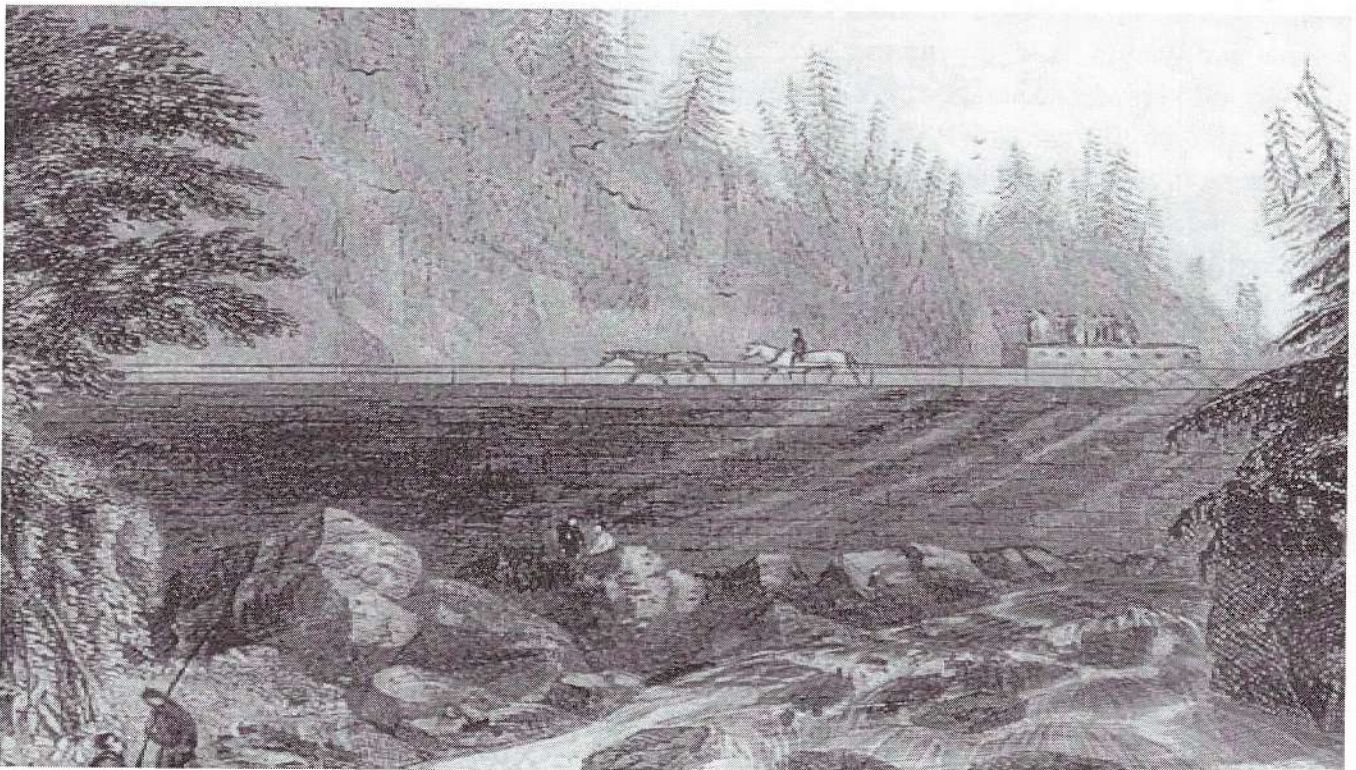
George Herdle also produced the iconic painting he called "The Canal Lock" which is used by Historic Brighton as its logo. It is not known if the lock is on the Erie Canal or in Holland where Herdle spent a year painting.

rope and their boat would follow. It was Philip Wickes who related this bit of Canal folklore: A large patch of hemp had been growing and spreading along the canal near Bushnell's Basin. One late fall day when it was withered and brown, some boys set it on fire. Shortly after that, a westbound tow boat came along pulled by a mule team. The off-mule, one accompanying but not pulling, was a legendarily evil-tempered mule named Marguerite, her flanks scarred by the many beatings she had received for her orneriness. A witness says that after she breathed in the hemp smoke, she turned around and kissed the mule driver softly on the cheek. The same pot-laden fumes also mellowed the driver so that, when pelted with stones by some boys, he tossed coins, not stones, back to them.

The New York State Barge Canal System which came into being between 1905 and 1918 is the third incarnation of the old Erie and includes the Seneca-Cayuga, Oswego, and Champlain canals. Although the reconfiguring of the Erie Canal from its original pathway through Brighton and the city of Rochester to its present site to the south resulted in increased width and depth, it did not change the name. The Erie Canal is part of the Barge Canal System, and retains its original identity within that system.

Its commercial functions usurped by trains, trucks, and planes, the canal system can now serve the state as its European counterparts do by providing recreational opportunities for residents and tourists. Although Brighton has lost its connection to the original Erie Canal, its location along the newer section enables the Town to participate in the new life envisioned for this 189-year-old engineering marvel.

Mary Jo Lanphear is the Town of Brighton Historian



As the Erie canal passed through Brighton and the Irondequoit Valley, people thought the silent passage of the packet boats looked as if they glided on treetops



From the Brighton Town Historian's Desk:

At this time of year, like most municipal historians, I collect the data from notes, calendars, and logs for the prior year and try to write a coherent annual report for the Brighton Town Supervisor and members of the Town Council. Included will be the titles of articles, programs, and reports as well as a synopsis of the many requests for information that come to the office via e-mail, post, or in person. It is the latter that often provide the most interesting information quests.

Most homeowners are interested in the history of their houses so I am often asked "What did my house used to look like?" or "Who lived in my house?" Others want to know if a particular house is haunted. A prospective homeowner was concerned about buying a house in which a murder had taken place. A woman in Roselawn found an irregular piece of wrought ironwork in her backyard (the source of that is still a question). A man who lived in a brick house on Crittenden Road found in his backyard a rose-colored rock that appeared to have fossil imprints. It's probably a large lump of brick clay that acquired some leaf and twig impressions before hardening. An Ellison Park hiker found what appeared to be two headstones in a secluded part of the park. Although very old in appearance, the carved names and dates are incomplete so the stones are probably a monument company's mistakes.

Other memorable searches included the death date for Brighton lock tender Joshua Reynolds; the history of Pinky's Store on East Henrietta Road, the location of the Knight-Wilson Meat Market near Twelve Corners, and the Judson Brothers' Fishing Rod and Nursery Label Company. A woman who works in West Brighton questioned the origin of a persistent aroma of coffee roasting. Still another query came from a person who was organizing a program on outhouses – did I know of an expert? (Yes, I do!)

And then there are queries that keep one chuckling for a few days. An e-mail from Norway requested the location of Ditchling Road in Brighton so the correspondent could contact her relatives who had moved there. There never was a Ditchling Road in the Town of Brighton, New York, but there is such a street in Brighton, England...

I love this job!

Mary Jo Lanphear

Town of Brighton Historian

A tale of two golfers on Allens Creek Road: a son and (almost) a daughter of Brighton

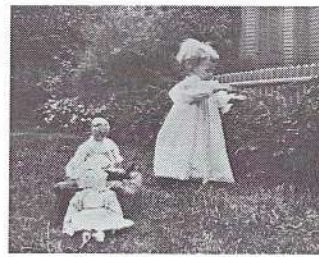
By Elizabeth Brayer

This picture of Walter Hagen playing exhibition golf at the Country Club of Rochester in 1932 while being watched by Margaret Woodbury Strong and her daughter Barbara tells a story of its own:

Four years after the game of golf was introduced into this country (1888), Walter Charles Hagen was born in Brighton. Walter, the second of five Hagen children and the only boy, became acquainted with the game he would dominate for quarter of a century when at age five (1897) he picked up a hickory-shafted golf club left at his home by a golfer. Walter caused so much havoc indoors that he was moved outside to the pasture where he herded all the cows to one spot to eat the grass into a close putting surface. Hagen would later be renowned for his impossible 30-foot putts.

That same year (1897) Margaret Woodbury was born on Lake Avenue at Ambrose Street. When she grew up and married, her house, Tuckaway Farm, would be across from the Country Club of Rochester on Allens Creek Road as it wended its way from Clover Street to East Avenue through portions

Meanwhile the young Walter had moved to CCR where he batted apples about the dusty caddie pen with a wooden-shafted mashie. He became a caddie at age seven. At 15, he broke 80 on the CCR course. He rode the coach to Buffalo to play in his first tournament, became assistant pro and soon head pro at



Margaret Woodbury:
a doll who would collect dolls



Margaret Woodbury:
equestrian

...
including
historical
dolls



Margaret Woodbury: tennis
player



Margaret Woodbury:
at age 3 a golfer at her
father's country club in
Maine



Margaret Woodbury in Japan with parents

CCR. Boredom with academic learning set in: he worked successively as piano finisher, taxidermist, and garage mechanic. And he taught Margaret Woodbury, a natural athlete in tennis, bowling, and equestrian maneuvers, to play golf: At 13 she broke 100 and at 20, she broke 80. She made her debut at the CCR at age 18 in a stunning blue gown and upswept hairdo and after marriage garnered headlines such as "Mrs. Strong Holds Course Record for Country Club of Rochester."

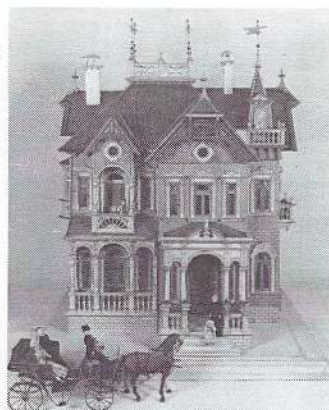
By then Margaret had spent her childhood traveling the world with her parents

In 1913, Walter Hagen entered the U. S. Open in Brookline, Massachusetts. He played semi-professional baseball in Rochester, then tried out in spring training with the Phillies. "Why not give up that sissy pastime and take up a real 'man's' game," the Philadelphia manager goaded Hagen. But Ernest Willard, publisher of the Democrat & Chronicle, countered: "Don't leave golf. You're a champ." Willard sponsored Hagen as a participant

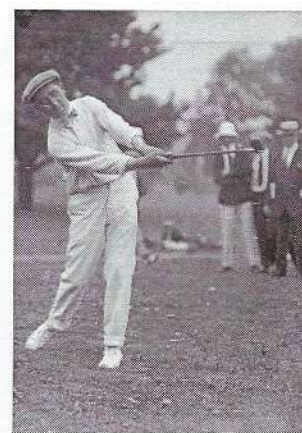


Representatives of their clubs in the W. G. A. Western New York Tournament were, front row: Mrs. F. C. Vroman, Transit Valley; Mrs. E. Y. Gemmill, Meadowbrook; Mrs. Homer Strong, Country Club. Back row: Mrs. Neal Van De Carr, Locust Hill; Mrs. H. H. Minor, Stafford; Mrs. W. H. Williamson, Oak Hill.

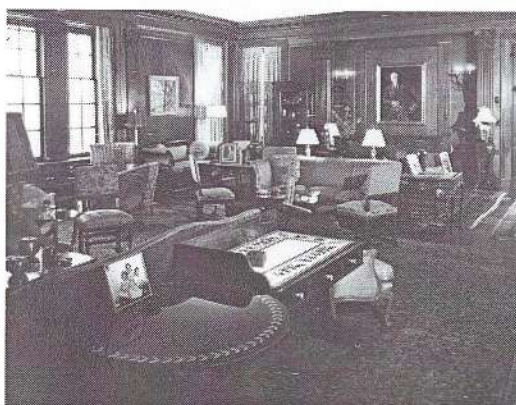
Margaret Woodbury Strong represented CCR in golf tournaments which she often won



Margaret Woodbury Strong continued to collect for her "Museum of Fascination."



Nobody had a more natural swing than Walter Hagen did.



Margaret Woodbury Strong collected sofas: there were 30 in her living room



Tuckaway Farm, 1941.

Margaret Woodbury Strong's house on Allens Creek Road was almost in Brighton

A tale of two golfers on Allens Creek Road: a son and (almost) a daughter of Brighton

in the 1914 U. S. Open in Chicago—which he won.

Hagen remained in Brighton until 1917 as CCR pro before moving on to Detroit. He was reputed to have been the first athlete to earn \$1 million and his lavish living habits earned him the sobriquet "Sir Walter."

"The Hage's" most satisfying victory was a one-sided 72-hole match with the legendary Bobby Jones—suave, sophisticated, educated, and the quintessential amateur—in 1926. Hagen held most PGA titles to date, Jones wore the British and U. S. Open crowns. (The Masters had not yet come into being.) "Everybody was saying that Jones was the greatest golfer in world and I was second," Hagen recalled. The first 36 holes were played on Jones' course in Sarasota. These were followed by 36 holes in St. Petersburg. Jones blasted all the way but Hagen, playing conservatively, went on to win. It was, Hagen crowed gleefully, "my greatest thrill in golf" and the worst shellacking ever absorbed by Jones.

It was the British Open win of 1922 that made Hagen a mil-

lionaire. In all, he garnered 60-odd tournaments, 11 national championships, and played in more than 1,500 paid professional exhibitions—but only had one hole-in-one. "Lots of holes-in-two," he liked to say. Once at a CCR exhibition he produced a left handed shot with a putter that traveled 200 yards.

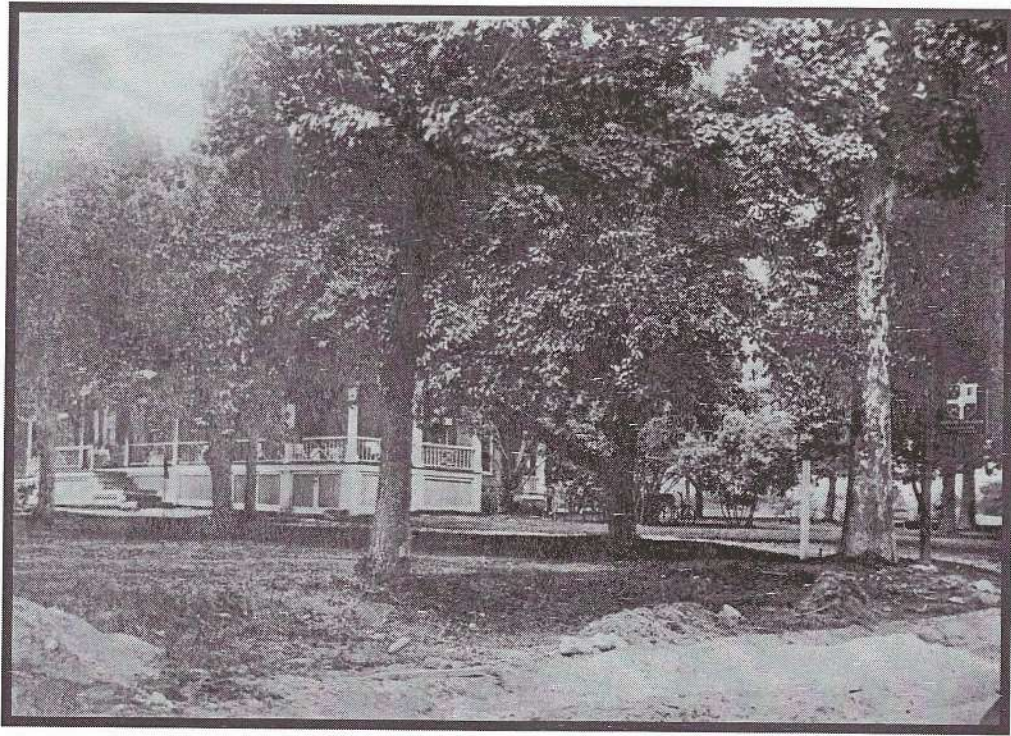


Flowers, toys, and Japan were fascinating



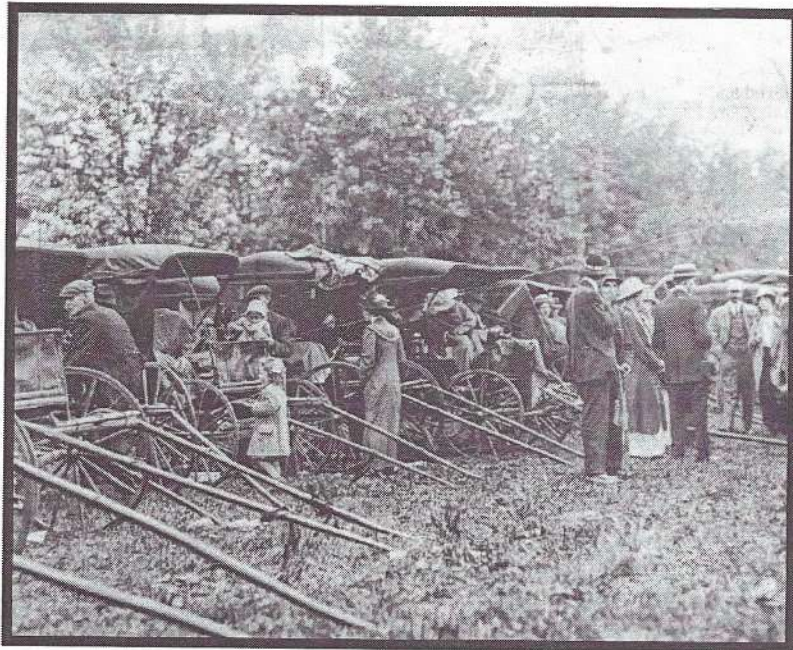
Elizabeth Brayer is the editor of this issue of the Historic Brighton news and journal

The Country Club of Rochester in 1895

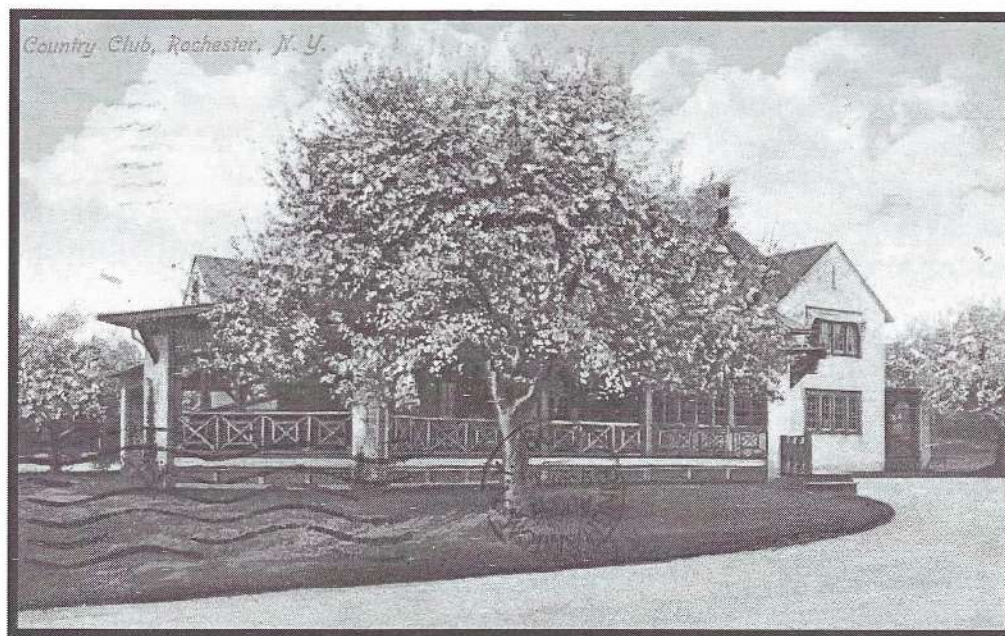


The farmhouse of Marshfield Parsons and Elisa Blossom Parsons became the first home of the Country Club of Rochester in 1895 when members of the Genesee Valley Club wanted to play golf and bought the house. It served as clubhouse for the new Country Club of Rochester until destroyed by fire in 1902.

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According to early minutes, the Country Club of Rochester purchased "horses and vehicles suitable for transacting the business of the club and to furnish a means of transportation for members to and from the electric cars at Brighton."



The Country Club of Rochester and Walter Hagen

By Mary Jo Lanphear

The land on which the Country Club of Rochester is located was first owned by Marshfield Parsons who purchased 90 acres on both sides of East Avenue when he arrived in 1835. Two years after settlement, Marshfield Parsons married Elisa Blossom, daughter of Enos Blossom, Brighton's first school commissioner. They moved into the Blossom's house near what is now the Brighton #1 Fire Hall before building a large brick house on the south side of East Avenue where they raised six children. As a native of New England, Marshfield Parsons was familiar with the construction of walls made from rocks cleared from fields and so he outlined his farm with rock fences that remain today.



Walter Hagen's house in Corbett's Glen

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Marshfield also bought land along Allen's Creek. There he operated a powder mill until a disastrous explosion in 1848 that caused the death of a worker. A year later he sold the property to William Stoneburner and it became known as Stoneburner's Glen. Stoneburner's Glen became Corbett's Glen in 1890. Marshfield Parsons also owned the Springhouse at Monroe Avenue and Clover Street. When he died of a sudden illness at the age of 52, his estate went to his widow who lived in the brick house until her death in 1880. Their son, Enos Blossom Parsons inherited the family homestead and, when the newly-formed Country Club of Rochester sought land and a clubhouse for the new sport of golf, he leased the old Parsons farm and its brick house to the club in 1895.

There was the problem of transportation to the club. The private automobile was a few years away. The interurban rail cars went only as far as the East Avenue and Winton Road intersection. And East Avenue was a dirt road. According to early minutes, the club purchased "horses and vehicles suitable for transacting the business of the club and to furnish a means of transportation for members to and from the electric cars at Brighton." The club also found it necessary to sprinkle East Avenue periodically to keep down the dust.

A fire in 1902 destroyed the Parsons house, leaving the club to solicit plans from architects Harvey Ellis and Claude Bragdon. The latter design was selected and built on leased land. It wasn't until 1909 that the club secured the sale of the Parsons farm from Bloss

Parsons. The Bragdon building stood until 1970 when it was replaced by the present building designed by Conway Todd. A few years before, Brighton architect and CCR member, Allen Macomber, did a master plan in 1957 for the pool and proshop. In 2015 the Country Club of Rochester will celebrate its 125th anniversary.

In addition to Marshfield Parsons, the Country Club of Rochester has another connection to the area we now call Corbett's Glen. Walter Hagen was born in the Glen in 1892 to William and Louisa Hagen. William Hagen worked as a blacksmith at the car shops in East Rochester. Introduced to golf at the age of three by a friend of his father, Walter Hagen laid out his own three-hole golf course in the Glen. He also practiced the sport by pitching balls short distances to newspaper targets spread out on the lawn. As a friend of the caddie master at the Country Club of Rochester, in 1900 he was able to secure a position as caddie there when he was only seven years old. Caddying earned him restricted playing privileges at the club and by his fifteenth birthday he was regularly breaking 80 on the eighteen-hole course. That same year, 1907, Walter Hagen was promoted from caddie to assistant pro. Five years later, when the professional under whom he worked took a position in Vermont, the club offered Walter the job as pro.

It's interesting to note that William and Louise Hagen did not support their only son's choice of a career, William especially disappointed that Walter did not become a skilled craftsman like himself. William did not watch his son play in a tournament until 1931, and Louise Hagen never saw him compete.

Walter Hagen won the U.S. Open twice, in 1914 and 1919, and in 1922 became the first native-born American to win the British Open. His tally of 11 professional tournament wins is third behind Jack Nicklaus (18) and Tiger Woods (14). This amazing athlete came from Corbett's Glen in Brighton! Let's think of that the next time we pass the Country Club of Rochester and Marshfield Parsons' old stone fence.

Mary Jo Lanphear is Town of Brighton Historian



From the evidence of these two drawings, the Bragdon clubhouse was enlarged at least once before its demise in 1970

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Did the Bragdon Building have to go?

By Elizabeth Brayer

Whenever old postcards are viewed or Bragdon aficionados gather, this question may come up. Those who recall the old clubhouse through the haze of memory sometimes say "those CCR members have no soul." Others who remember a November tea dance on the rickety verandah that by the 1950s was sloping precariously as the wind whistled and howled through the storm windows and doors, are glad for the cozy warmth of the new building.

Built in the era when the revival styles such as colonial revival and Tudor revival were used for most residences, public buildings often followed suit. Thus Leon Stern designed three Tuderesque fire houses for Brighton and the CCR building committee chose Bragdon's romantic design for their new clubhouse.



Bragdon's hunt room with murals by Edward Penfield still exists in the center of the Conway Todd clubhouse



Right: Claude Bragdon



Claude Bragdon's Country Club of Rochester was a thing of beauty in Brighton in all seasons of the year.

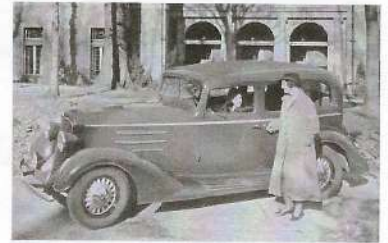


Historic Brighton's logo is based on this George Herdle painting: The Canal Lock



Another famous CCR golfer was George Eastman who joined in 1895 and resigned in 1911 out of frustration with the game

The Alvah Strong family owned Tuck-away Farm before Margaret Woodbury Strong (no relation) bought it. Here, Mrs. Alvah Strong (in the car) poses for an automobile ad



Mrs. Alvah Strong of Tuck-away Farm and Mrs. David H. Strong, President of the American Legion, advertising Mrs. Strong's New Oldsmobile Sedan

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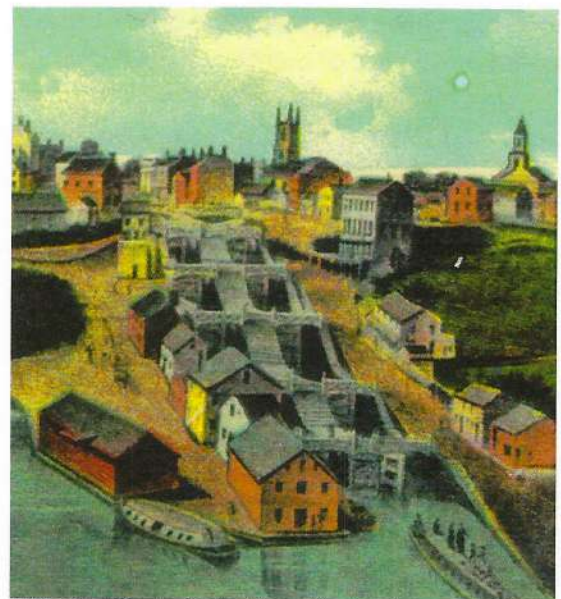
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Perhaps Myron Holley's greatest achievement was the Erie Canal locks at Lockport, NY



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