HISTORY OF

OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N.Y.

History of Oak Orchard Harbor, New York.

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Oak Orchard Harbor

Founding and growth of the community.

Section I

The harbor at Oak Orchard is on the southern shore of Lake Ontario, at the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek, which rises in western New York and flows northerly, emptying into Lake Ontario about 32 miles west from the mouth of Genesee River (Charlotte Harbor), and 45 miles east of the mouth of Niagara River.

Oak Orchard Creek is navigable from the lake to a point about two miles upstream. The waters of the creek are from 12 to 20 feet deep, except over the bar at the entrance where the depth is 6 feet. It is about 120 feet wide, in the navigable portion, in which there is little current, except during freshets. The original depth of water over the bar at the mouth of the creek, was from two to four feet.

The village of Oak Orchard now generally known as "Point Breeze" is at the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek in the township of Carleton, County of Orleans, State of New York.

In the early days, a large portion of the territory now known as New York State was owned by the State of Massachusetts and in 1791 was purchased by Robert Morris. He sold this extensive area estimated to be 3,600,000 acres to a group of Dutch financiers. The transaction became known as the "Holland Land Purchase." These financiers opened the area to colonization and had their general land office at what is now Batavia. Parcels of land were offered to settlers at reasonable terms and the territory rapidly developed.

The first settlers to arrive in the vicinity of Oak Orchard was James Walsworth, who came across the lake from Canada in 1803, in his own boat and built himself a cabin at the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek. Mr. Walsworth was the first settler on the shore of Lake Ontario between Fort Niagara and Braddock's Bay and his nearest neighbor was at Lockport.

Mr. Joseph Ellicott, the principal surveyor of the Holland Land Company and later land agent decided that eventually a village must grow up at the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek as water transport was the only means of bringing in materials to build up the undeveloped hinterland. The sand bar across the mouth of the creek was less pronounced than in later times and small schooners then on the lake could make the harbor without difficulty.

In anticipation of the development of a harbor at Oak Orchard, Mr. Ellicott drew up a plat for a town there and called it "Manilla." The supposition in those days was that most of the trade to and from the Holland Purchase would take the lake route and "Manilla" would be the commercial port and Batavia the main city. With this thought in mind, the land company started construction of a road between "Manilla" and Batavia. This was the first north and south road in Orleans County and was four rods wide.

The first grist mill was built on Oak Orchard Creek, a few miles from the harbor in 1812. The first schoolhouse was built in 1815.

Great stands of whitewood, oak, pine, hemlock, basswood, elm, beech and maple trees were located in this area. The settlers in their haste to clear their lands, burned up all this timber that they did not want for fencing in the first few years of their settlement. After sawmills were built, whitewood was sawed into boards and taken to the Erie Canal, which had been constructed at this time, and sold. The timber resources dwindled and in 1840, lumber was being imported from Canada.

Oak Orchard Creek was a spawning ground for various species of fish, including salmon and the nearby settlers depended upon them for a part of their food supply. Fish at certain times of the year were taken out of the stream in wagon loads and consequently the fish were either exterminated or driven away at an early date. Rattlesnakes abounded on the banks of Oak Orchard Creek and were caught for their oil. This was about 1820.

Oak Orchard Creek has its source in an extensive lowland area known as Oak Orchard Swamp. This swamp is 17 miles long east and west, and about 9½ miles broad at the widest part and is estimated to contain 23,000 acres. Drainage of the swamp lands is to the west and then to the north, with an average fall of 1.8 feet per mile. The watershed of Oak Orchard Creek is 88,000 acres.

The Erie Canal was started in 1817 and was completed in 1825 at a cost of $7,143,780. The completion of this canal stopped all thought of making "Manilla" the commercial port for the Holland Purchase. Products that formerly came in via Lake Ontario now came via the Erie Canal and most of the business of "Manilla" moved to Medina on the canal.

By 1836, Oak Orchard Harbor had recovered some of its trade and was again a flourishing small port. A railroad was projected between Oak Orchard Harbor and Medina, at this time and undoubtedly this had some effect upon the Federal appropriation of $5,000 made for the improvement of the port in that year. The financial panic in the years 1836-1838 put a stop to all thought of the projected railroad.

A shipyard was built about 1846 and a small industry developed. The general prosperity of the harbor continued and building materials were imported from Canada for building up the surrounding territory. In 1867, the government rebuilt the harbor which had been allowed to fall in disrepair during the years of the War of the Secession, but commerce again began to be diverted due to the change from small sailing craft to large steam vessels.

Oak Orchard became a summer resort with the decrease in the use of the harbor as a refuge and for other shipping. The local hotel had about 40 boarders every summer during the period 1870-1880. In 1876, summer cottages were beginning to appear. Commerce of the harbor was meager but the harbor was still useful as a refuge for the remaining sailing vessels.

In 1897, a report was submitted recommending further harbor improvement, but no money was appropriated and subsequently the harbor was abandoned in 1905. The transformation in navigation from sailing craft to steam vessels was practically completed at this time and Oak Orchard was of no further use to general navigation.

Since 1905, the piers have become very dilapidated and the channel has shoaled. A cottage colony of over one hundred cottages had developed adjacent to Oak Orchard Harbor, and the only commerce now at the port is that of small pleasure craft and a few fishing vessels.

References

"Landmarks of Orleans County, N. Y."
by Signor.

"Pioneer History of Orleans County, N. Y."
by Arad Thomas.

Summary of Survey Reports on Oak Orchard Harbor, N.Y.

Section II

Year	Congressional Documents: House or Senate	Number	Congress	Session	Other Authority	Recommendations
1923					R. & H. Act approved Sept.22,1922	Preliminary examination, submitted on March 22, 1923, stated that improvement was not deemed advisable at that time.
1909	House	412	61	2		Unfavorable to Federal improvement.
1905					R. & H. Act approved March 3, 1905	Harbor abandoned by Federal Government.
1903	House	208	58	2		Board recommends for abandonment
1897	House	281	54	2		Recommended plan for making available the depth heretofore obtained at the harbor entrance. It provides for the excavation of a channel 12 feet deep at low water, 150 feet wide and 430 feet long from the ends of the piers to the 12-foot curve in the lake, for dredging between the piers and near the south end of the west pier and for pier repairs. Estimated cost $10,500.
1856	Senate	16	34	1		Provides for dredging to 12 feet.
1857	Senate	42	35	1		Plan and estimate for harbor improvement.
1844	House	49	28	1		Requested $25,000 for pier extensions.
1838		90	25	2	Executive Document	Recommended that $5,000 be appropriated to continue harbor improvement.

Section II - Continued

Year	Congressional Documents: House or Senate	Congressional Documents: Number	Congressional Documents: Congress	Congressional Documents: Session	Other Authority	Recommendations
1836					Act approved July 2, 1836	Project adopted by appropriation. Project provided for the construction of two transverse breakwaters or wing dams to contract the mouth of the creek to about 200 feet and to define a channel by two parallel piers extending to the 12-foot contour in the lake. (Scouring action of the freshets on Oak Orchard Creek was supposed to maintain the entrance channel.)

Chronological Summary by years for Oak Orchard Harbor, N.Y.

Section III

Reference Number	Year	
(1)	1836	The need for a harbor of refuge on Lake Ontario between the Niagara and Genesee Rivers was brought before Congress and as the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek possessed advantages both in its position and character, $5,000 was appropriated for its improvement. The project adopted provided for the construction of two breakwaters to contract the mouth of the creek and to define a a channel by two parallel piers extending to the 12-foot contour in the lake. It was anticipated that the current in the creek during freshets would scour a channel. The west breakwater 650 feet in length was constructed.
(1)	1837	Appropriation of $5,000 made. The construction of the east breakwater and the west pier was commenced.
(1)	1838	Appropriation of $5,000 made. East breakwater, 100 feet long completed. East and west piers extended to a length of 300 feet. Current of river had no effect upon the bar.
(1)	1839	An appropriation of $25,000 was asked to extend the piers 600 feet but was not granted and work was suspended.
(1)	1842	Piers reported in good condition, but a quantity of timber and piles worth $4,250 were decaying and machinery and scows would soon be unserviceable, if not used. Recommendation made that $12,500 be appropriated to extend piers 300 feet, so that the harbor could be made available for vessels drawing 7 or 8 feet.
(1)	1844	Appropriation of $5,000 made. West pier extended to a length of 510 feet and east pier to 725 feet. Recommended that a dredge to cost $20,000 should be built for use here and at other harbors. Material in channel not being scoured by freshets.
(1)	1845	Spring freshets scoured channel so a draft of five feet could be accommodated but northeast gales soon filled it to four feet again.
(1)	1846	All river and harbor work suspended.
(1)	1848	Work resumed and recommendations for further improvements made.
(1)	1852	Appropriation of $10,500 made.
(1)	1853	West pier rebuilt and extended 290 feet. Recommendation was made for a grant of $14,500 to rebuilt the east pier and extend both east and west piers 120 feet. Dredge recommended in 1844 had been built.

Section III - Continued

Reference Number	Year	
(1)	1854	No work done.
(1)	1855	Appropriation of $40,107 asked to extend the piers to 15 feet of water.
(1)	1856	1144 feet of piers need rebuilding.
(1)	1857	Dredge had been built as previously recommended and was sent to harbor and worked in channel until funds were exhausted. Local interests contributed $1,000 so that dredge could finish. 11,000 cubic yards of material were removed and an eight foot channel obtained. Vessels at once made use of this improvement and a beacon was recommended.
(1),(2)	1866	Necessary pier extension, dredging and repairs estimated to cost $86,587.66.
(1),(3)	1867	Appropriation of $87,000 made. A survey was made and plans were drawn up for the proposed work. Project consisted in restoring the piers which were nearly destroyed, extending them to the 12-foot curve and dredging a channel between them. Channel at this time had a depth of 6 to 8 feet. Contracts let and some material delivered.
(1),(4)	1868	The contractor for labor failed to commence and his contract was cancelled.
(1),(5)	1869	Contracts were relet and work resumed. Pier repairs were started and three dredges worked in the channel. East pier repaired for 300 feet.
(1),(6)	1870	The west pier was extended to 955 feet and the east pier to 763 feet. A large amount of dredging had been done and vessels drawing seven feet at low water could enter. Appropriation of $8,000 made to continue work. Dredging in channel 40,650 cu. yds. at 29¢. Report for this year states the ruins of the old west breakwater built in 1836, to be entirely covered by the shingle of the beach.
(1),(7)	1871	The east pier was extended to 915 feet and west pier to 1135 feet. From the original line of the breakwaters the total length of the west pier was 1,283 feet and 1,219 feet for the east or about 120 feet farther then the original plan. A beacon was placed at the outer end of the west pier. $10,000 was appropriated. Dredge removed from the channel 7,656 cu. yds. of sand, mud, gravel, cobblestone, hard clay, etc., but a ledge of red sandstone was encountered upon which a depth of only 7½ feet at low water could be obtained. Ice survey made and borings developed the fact that

Reference: Number	Year	
		a ledge of sandstone extended entirely across the channel between the piers.
(1,8)	1872	Two hundred linear feet of the west pier were repaired and the outer ends of both piers were leveled up. A survey on the ice in March, 1872, with borings, indicated that the ledge of sandstone extended entirely across the channel between the piers. An appropriation of $2,500 was made. During the season of 1872, dredging removed 8,019 cu. yds. of material in the channel above the rock, a depth of 10 feet at low water being obtained except over the rock where the depth was 7½ feet. Superstructure upon 200 feet of west pier was partially renewed, and the outer ends properly leveled.
(1,9)	1873	Appropriation of $10,000 made. Rock drilling and blasting done by hand and by hired labor. Rock excavation between the piers commenced. All the rock drilling at Oak Orchard Harbor was done by hand. A description of the method follows. A raft was constructed from timbers left over from pier repairs and drilling equipment installed on it. Operations were much impeded by lake swells and many holes were lost. Finally spuds were fitted to the raft and these together with guy lines to the piers steadied the raft considerably. Drilling apparatus consisted of a 2½ inch drill, four feet long, connected by a coupling screw to a rod 14 feet in length, both of 1¼ inch iron and weighing about 80 pounds; a three inch iron pipe 12 feet long, an iron wrench to connect and disconnect the drill and rod; a sand pump of 2-inch iron pipe, 8 feet long; a spring pole 20 feet long and a rope to suspend the drill from the pole. Six three inch soil pipes and 12 drills were used. Blasting powder at 16¢ per pound was used and put into tin canisters 14 to 20 inches long and two inches in diameter. The neck of the canister was 7/8 inches in diameter and closed by a perforated cork through which the wires of the exploders passed. An electric battery was used to explode the charge. The method of drilling was to place the raft carefully in position, raise the raft on the spuds and carry guy lines to the piers. The soil pipes were placed in position through wells in the deck and driven through the overlying material to rock. The pipes were then cleaned out by sand pumps if necessary. The soil pipe was kept in a vertical position by nailing a strip across and against the pipe. The drill was put in and the upper end made fast to the spring pole. Two men operated each drill. Holes were drilled one foot below grade and after completion were cleaned out. The cartridge was then placed and tamped, the tube withdrawn and charge fired by electricity. Spacing of the holes were 5 x 5 feet.

Section III - Continued

Reference Number	Year	
(1)	1874	East pier now 915 feet in length and west pier 1135 feet long. The west pier measurement does not include about 165 feet of ruined pier at the inner end. Channel between the piers and through the sandstone from 40 to 80 feet wide and 12 feet deep at low water had been obtained.
(11)	1875	Drilling and dredging continued, channel obtained was 150 feet wide and 12 feet deep at low water, 5,912,55 cu. yds. of blasted rock, and 1,995.37 cu. yds. of stiff clay and cemented gravel being removed in the fall of 1875, and additional dredging in spring removed 4,990.45 cu. yds of red rock, 4,480.13 cu. yds. of stiff clay and cemented gravel and 2,149.12 cu. yds. of mud and sand. Building up of outer end of west pier commenced.
(12)	1876	Channel depth of 12 feet secured. West pier repaired for 180 feet. 200 cubic yards of rock blasted and removed.
(13)	1877	No work done.
(14)	1878	West pier repaired for 210 feet. Breach at shore end of east pier repaired by sinking three cribs 10 feet by 30 feet and rebuilding 100 linear feet of superstructure.
(15)	1879	Small breach made by vessel ramming head of west pier was repaired.
(16)	1880	No work done.
(17)	1881	Arrangements made for extensive pier repairs and extending them to 12 foot contour. Project modified so as to not include the breakwaters.
(18)	1882	Narrow extension to west pier made for 180 feet at right angles from shore end. West pier rebuilt for 69 feet at inner end. Outer end of east pier levelled up for 129 feet.
(19)	1883	No work done because of high water. East pier badly decayed.
(20)	1884	Superstructure on piers about 12 years old and are badly decayed.
(21)	1885	Superstructure of entire west pier rebuilt for 1,072 feet.
(22)	1886	No work was done. Breach existed at shore end of east pier.
(23)	1887	Contracts let for material for east pier repairs. East pier badly decayed. No work was done.

Reference Number	Year	
(24)	1888	Superstructure of east pier rebuilt. Both piers now in good condition.
(25)	1889	Shore protection built 91 feet in length eastward of east pier.
(26)	1890	Channel dredged to 12 feet and to a width of 100 feet. 10,229.37 cu. yds. of mud were removed. Minor pier repairs made.
(27)	1891	Survey of channel made. Preparations made for completing channel.
(28)	1892	Channel dredged to 13.5 feet at mean lake level for whole width between piers, excepting 10 feet along each pier, 3,388 cu. yds. of rock and 350 cu. yds. of mud, sand and gravel being removed.
(29,30,31)	1895	West pier settled for 130 feet at the inner end. Channel in good condition. Work suspended.
(32)	1897	Survey report dated January 26, 1897, Plan presented for making available the depth heretofore obtained at the harbor entrance and provided for the excavation of a channel 12 feet deep at low water, 150 feet wide and 430 feet long from the outer ends of the piers to the 12-foot curve in the lake. Estimate was $10,500. Report was published as (H. D. No. 281, 54th Cong. 2d session). The west pier was 1,300 feet and the east pier was 1,010 feet long. Between the piers there was a channel 150 feet wide and 1100 feet long, in which the surface of the rock was at an average depth of 11.55 feet below low water (zero of the Oswego gauge). At the ends of the piers where the excavation of rock had ceased the rock rose abruptly to its natural surface, $9\frac{3}{4}$ feet below low water. In the first 430 feet lakeward from this point the rock sloped downward to 12 feet below low water. Between the piers, in the excavated channel, a layer of 10,200 cu. yds. sand, mud, clay and gravel, having an average thickness of 20 inches, overlay the rock, reducing the average available depth of water in the channel to 9.9 feet at low water. The controlling depth was 9.3 feet at low water at the outer ends of the piers where 6 inches of sand overlay the rock.

Zero of the Oswego gauge referred to was established in 1838 with its zero at 244.21, the extreme low water plane of 1819. This record has since been exceeded in 1895, 1896.

.12 ?

Reference Number	Year	
(33)	1902	No expenditures made on harbor. Piers are badly in need of repairs. No funds available since January 1896.
(34)	1903	West pier had been built 1300 feet in length and east pier 920 feet not including an added shore protection of 90 feet. Channel 150 feet wide and 11.0 feet deep at low water between piers had been dredged. Rock excavation had ceased at end of piers where depth is 9¼ feet at low water. Piers were intact but decayed. No work was done on the harbor for several years (from 1895 to 1902) no funds being available. During the year the timber superstructure was repaired and filled with stone where needed. The channel was 9½ feet deep at low water (11½ to 12 feet, mean lake level) for a width of 75 feet between the piers. This narrow channel maintained itself at the depth mentioned without dredging for more than ten years, the last dredging having been done in 1890-1892, when the channel was reported at 13½ feet deep at mean lake level (width not reported, but believed to be 100 feet). The Board of Engineers, established by the river and harbor act of June 13, 1902, to make reports to Congress, recommended that no further work be done at the harbor.
(35)	1904	No work was done. July 29, 1903, available depth 6 feet at standard low water.
(36)	1905	Minor repairs made to the piers. Harbor abandoned by river and harbor act of March 3, 1905, repealing the provisions of all previous acts providing for work at this harbor. Unexpended funds paid into treasury, March 21, 1905. Channel at this time would accommodate draft of 8.5 feet at low water.
(37)	1910	Preliminary examination printed in H. D., No. 412, 61st Congress, 2d Session. Locality not considered worthy of further improvement.
(38)	1923	Preliminary examination report dated March 22, 1923 submitted. Improvement not deemed advisable.
	1936	The present condition of the harbor is poor. The superstructure of the cribs is in extremely poor condition and at many places it has been breached. The substructure, however, is reported to be intact and in good condition. The west pier is stated to be about 1300 feet long, including the portion in ruins

at the shore end of the pier. The east pier is reported to be 915 feet long and has a shore protection extending about 90 feet easterly from the shore end of the pier. There is approximately six feet of water over the bar between the piers at the present time. The channel was dredged 150 feet wide and 11 feet deep at present low water, between the piers in 1892. At the ends of the piers, where rock excavation stopped, the depth in 1892 was 9¼ feet at low water over the rock.

References

Reference Number	Reference
1.	1836-1874 Report of the Chief of Engineers 1874, Part 1, pages 243.
2.	1866 - Report of the Secretary of War, Part III, page 30.
3.	1867 - " " " " " " Part I, page 32.
4.	1868 - " " " " " " Part I, page 44.
5.	1869 - " " " " " " Part I, page 234.
6.	1870 - " " " Chief of Engineers, Part I, page 52.
7.	1871 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 224.
8.	1872 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 46.
9.	1873 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 47.
10.	1874 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 243.
11.	1875 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 58 and 328.
12.	1876 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 110. " II, " 579.
13.	1877 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 117. " II, " 977.
14.	1878 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 132. " II, " 1272.
15.	1879 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 175. " II, " 1727.
16.	1880 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 230. " III, " 2206.
17.	1881 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 317. " III, " 2435.
18.	1882 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 311. " III, " 2443.
19.	1883 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 319. " II, " 1941.

References (continued)

Reference Number	Reference
20.	1884 - Report of the Chief of Engineers, Part I, page 322. " III, " 2136.
21.	1885 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 347. " III, " 2270.
22.	1886 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 342. " III, " 1886.
23.	1887 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 307. III, " 2369.
24.	1888 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 281. III, " 2062.
25.	1889 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 333. " IV, " 2403.
26.	1890 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 301. " III, " 2847.
27.	1891 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 377. " V, " 2896.
28.	1892 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 356. " III, " 2537.
29.	1893 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 408. " IV, " 3117.
30.	1894 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 383. " IV, " 2451.
31.	1895 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 418. " V, " 3172.
32.	1897 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 483. " IV, " 3314.
33.	1902 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 504. " III, " 2321.
34.	1903 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 565. " III, " 2149.
35.	1904 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 618. " III, " 3326.
36.	1905 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 628. " III, " 2390.

References (cont'd)

Reference Number	References
37	1910 - Report of the Chief of Engineers, Part I, page 900.
38	1923 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 1609.
39	1924 - " " " " " " , Part I, page 1609.

Progress charts are included for the following structures:

1. West Breakwater.
2. East Breakwater.
3. West channel pier.
4. East channel pier.
5. West pier extension.
6. Shore protection, easterly of east pier.

WEST BREAKWATER

TIMBER CRIB CONSTRUCTION

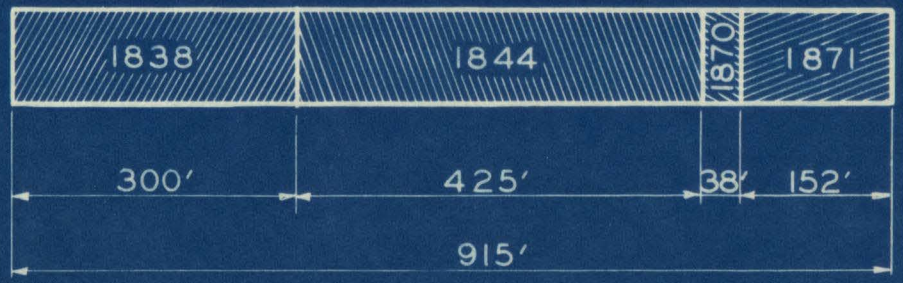
NOTE:

This breakwater was allowed to fall into disrepair and no trace remains of the structure.

CHRONOLOGICAL PROGRESS CHARTS

OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N. Y.

YEARS ARE FISCAL YEARS



EAST CHANNEL PIER

TIMBER CRIB CONSTRUCTION

NOTE:

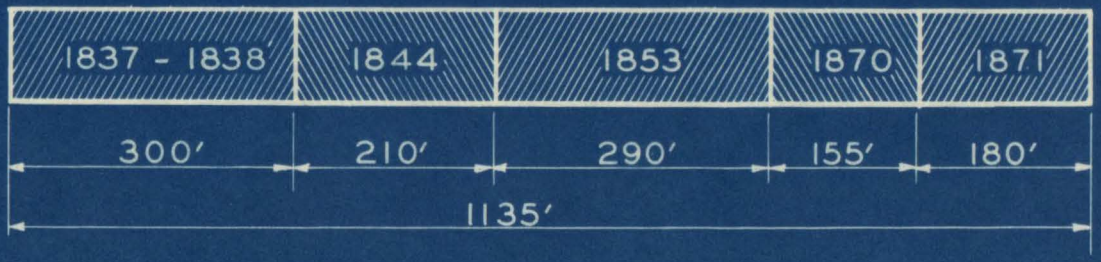
This pier was reconditioned in 1888.

Annual report of Chief of Engineers for 1902 reports this pier tobe 911 feet in length. Report of 1871 states the length to be 1219 feet, measured from the line of the original breakwater. Thus, apparently, about 304 feet of pier at the inner end has been abandoned without record.

CHRONOLOGICAL PROGRESS CHARTS

OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N. Y.

YEARS ARE FISCAL YEARS



WEST CHANNEL PIER

TIMBER CRIB CONSTRUCTION

NOTE:

This pier was rebuilt in 1885. Annual report of Chief of Engineers for 1902 reports this pier to be 1142 feet in length and report of 1871 states that measurements from the original line of breakwaters to the outer end of the pier shows the total length to be 1283 feet. In other words, about 148 feet of pier at the inner end has apparently been abandoned without record.

CHRONOLOGICAL PROGRESS CHARTS

OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N. Y.

YEARS ARE FISCAL YEARS

EAST BREAKWATER

TIMBER CRIB CONSTRUCTION

NOTE:

Built to contract the mouth of the river. No trace remains.
Started in 1837.

CHRONOLOGICAL PROGRESS CHARTS

OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N. Y.

YEARS ARE FISCAL YEARS

WEST PIER EXTENSION

ON SITE OF WEST BREAKWATER

TIMBER CRIB CONSTRUCTION

NOTE:

Built to prevent breaching at shore end of West Pier.

No remains of pier at present.

CHRONOLOGICAL PROGRESS CHARTS

OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N. Y.

YEARS ARE FISCAL YEARS

SHORE PROTECTION EASTERLY OF EAST PIER

NOTE:

Built to prevent breaching at shore end of East Pier.

CHRONOLOGICAL PROGRESS CHARTS

OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N. Y.

YEARS ARE FISCAL YEARS

Chronological summary of improvements by local interests.

Section IV

Local interests in 1857 contributed $1,000 toward the cost of completing the dredging in the entrance channel after the Federal funds were exhausted and the dredge was about to be removed.

Reference - Annual Report Chief of Engineers 1874,
Part I, pages 243, 246.
S.D. No. 42, 35th, 1st. - 1857

Section V

Following is the tabulation of the cost of all work done by the Federal Government at Oak Orchard Harbor, New York. It was found impossible to divide these costs into items of maintenance and new work as called for by the letter of instructions dated June 12, 1935.

Fiscal year	Expended during year	Amount expended to date	Appropriations during year: Amount	Appropriations during year: Date	Appropriations to date	Remarks
1836			$ 5,000.00	7/2	$ 5,000.00	
1837			5,000.00	3/3	10,000.00	
1838			5,000.00	7/7	15,000.00	
1844			5,000.00	6/11	20,000.00	
1852			10,500.00	6/30	30,500.00	
1867			87,000.00	3/2	117,500.00	
1870			8,000.00	7/11	125,500.00	
1871			10,000.00	3/3	135,500.00	
1872			2,500.00	6/10	138,000.00	
1873			10,000.00	3/3	148,000.00	
1874	$10,623.06		10,000.00	6/23	158,000.00	
1875	14,936.37		10,000.00	3/3	168,000.00	See note number one page 24.
1876	4,896.66		2,000.00	8/14	170,000.00	
1877	233.12					
1878	1,574.86		2,000.00	6/18	172,000.00	
1879	136.35		1,000.00	3/3	173,000.00	
1880	14.44		500.00	6/14	173,500.00	
1881	217.03					
1882	3,558.84		3,000.00	8/2	176,500.00	
1883		$173,500.00				
1884			5,000.00	7/5	181,500.00	
1885	7,777.53	181,277.55				See note number two page 24.
1886	127.66		12,500.00	8/5	194,000.00	
1887	735.99					
1888	1,845.63	192,632.40	6,000.00	8/11	200,000.00	See note number three page 24.
1889	1,061.43	193,693.83				See note number four page 24.
1890	5,318.51	199,260.14	5,000.00	9/19	205,000.00	See note number five page 24.
1891	254.07	199,514.21				See note number six page 24.
1892	4,963.45	204,477.66				
1893	30.00	204,507.66				
1894	30.00	204,537.66				
1895	30.00	204,567.66				
1902		204,567.66	2,250.00	6/13	207,250.00*	* Allotment.
1903	1,262.93	205,837.54				
1904	1,335.53	205,842.03				
1905	773.76	206,615.79			- 634.21*	*Returned to treasury on March 21,1905 as ordered by River and Harbor Act, approved March 3, 1905.
		$206,615.79			$206,615.79	

Section V - (continued)

Information on appropriations taken from Index to Reports, Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army, 1866-1912, page 1516.

Information on expenditures taken from Reports of Chief of Engineers for respective fiscal year in which expenditure occurred.

Note number	Notes
1.	1875 - Cost of removing material in dredging of fall of 1875: Rock $1.36 per cubic yard, measured in scows Stiff clay and cemented gravel .70 cents per cubic yard, measured in scows. Mud, sand, etc., 20 cents per cubic yard, measured in scows. Prices for work in spring of 1875: Red sandstone rock, at $1.10 per cu. yd., measured in scows. Stiff clay and cemented gravel, at $.60 per cu. yd., measured in scows. Mud and sand, at .195 cents per cu. yd., measured in scows.
2.	1885 - Cost of rebuilding superstructure of west pier $6.67 per linear foot.
3.	1888 - Cost of rebuilding superstructure of east pier; Materials $ 7,309.41 Supplies 29.84 Labor 2,807.52 Total $10,146.77
4.	1889 - Cost of 91 feet of shore protection eastward of east pier, $862.23.
5.	1890 - 10,229.37 cubic yards of mud removed, cost $5,114.69.
6.	1892 - Contract prices for dredging were $1.40 per cubic yard for rock excavation and $0.34 per cubic yard for mud, sand and gravel, measured in place.

Outline of the growth of the community.
Section VI

Oak Orchard Harbor was designed primarily as a harbor of refuge for sailing craft operating on Lake Ontario between the Niagara and Genesee Rivers and secondly for the commerce at the harbor. When the improvement to the entrance of Oak Orchard Creek commenced in 1836, the American commerce on Lake Ontario consisted largely of salt from Syracuse and railroad iron, both shipped to the western parts of the country from Oswego and of wheat shipped from the west to the large flour mills on the Oswego River. These articles of commerce were carried in small schooners about 60 feet long, 18 feet beam and carrying about 70 tons of cargo, with a draft of five feet. In 1838, a schooner was built at Oswego, about 100 feet long, 20 feet beam, capable of carrying 230 to 240 tons or about 7,000 bushels of wheat and was the largest vessel on the lake.

Oak Orchard Harbor contained ample room for a good number of ships of these small sizes and was a useful harbor of refuge and benefited general navigation on the lake.

Conditions gradually changed as steam barges drove sailing vessels both large and small from the lake. Vessels became larger and of deeper drafts and Oak Orchard Harbor continually became of lesser value as a refuge. In 1897, few sailing vessels remained and those that did were of Canadian registry. American sailing craft in the same year accounted for only 3 per cent of all the commerce out of Oswego, Charlotte, Little Sodus and Great Sodus. The remainder of the commerce that year was transported on Canadian sailing craft or steam vessels. The steam vessel at this time with a draft of 13½ feet could carry about 60,000 to 65,000 bushels of wheat or as much as nine sailing vessels of the size used in 1838.

This change from sailing vessels to steam vessels, the decreasing need for harbors of refuge as vessels became larger, the fact that Oak Orchard Harbor would not accommodate the larger vessels, together with the condition that no railroad made this port its lake terminus caused the virtual disappearance of its commerce and led to its eventual abandonment by the Federal Government in 1905.

The commerce at the port itself was always small and consisted of imports of building materials, consumed within a distance of 10 to 12 miles of the harbor, and occasional shipments of fruit and agricultural produce.

The population statistics of Oak Orchard village are very meager. In 1897, a population of less than 100 was reported and in 1930 this had dwindled to 30 persons.

The population statistics for Carleton township and Orleans county are given below:

Place	1930	1920	1910	1900	1890	1880	1870	1805	1804	1803
Carleton Township	1,699	1,832	2,259	2,388	2,374			128*	100*	76*
Orleans County	28,795	28,619	32,000	30,164	30,803	30,128	27,689			

* Estimate considering four persons per family.

References - Annual Report, Chief of Engineers, 1897, Part IV, page 3314.

-"Pioneer History of Orleans County", by Arad Thomas.

Commercial statistics of Oak Orchard Harbor.

Section VII

The harbor at Oak Orchard was always more important as a harbor of refuge than as a commercial port. The commerce has always been very meager, consisting mainly of imports of cedar posts, shingles, and lumber in limited quantities, used in the development of the adjacent tributary area. Two miles upstream from the mouth of the creek at a place called "Two Bridges", where the stream divided into two equal branches, was located a grain storehouse, which was used (before the railroad was built a mile farther south) for the shipment of the crops from the surrounding agricultural region. But no railroad made Oak Orchard its lake terminus, commerce failed to increase, and has disappeared except for a few fishing craft and pleasure boats. The following table shows the available details concerning the commerce of the harbor during the period 1874 to 1904:

Years ending	Revenue collected during fiscal year	Value of imports	Value of exports	No. of departing vessels	Tonnage outgoing vessels	No. of arriving vessels	Tonnage arriving vessels	Tonnage imports	References
June 30:									
1874	$2,077.34	$14,130.00	- -	43*	1,647				
1875	1,726.36	23,047.30	$11,910.00	22	1,925	25	2,278		
1876	500.00	140,000.00	50,000.00	51	4,300	43	4,500		
1877	1,215.18	14,050.05	51,508.55	32	1,862	31	1,772		
1878	2,673.18	13,880.00	217.00	21	1,221	27	1,789		
1879	1,598.98	7,200.00	11,100.00	10	757	13	1,036		(1)
1880	2,811.00	15,818.00	- -	10	800	14	1,152		(1)
1881	3,266.97	21,658.00	5.00	21	1,450	21	2,113		
1882	2,715.00	19,311.00	- -	19	3,647	21	3,647		
Dec. 31:									
1883	1,951.72	15,347.00	45.00	17	1,400	17	1,400		(2)
1884	2,037.86	119.18	- -	11	624	20	1,270		
1885	561.07	4,066.00	- -	3	236	4	316		
1886	1,196.06	8,431.00	29.00	5	498	5	552		
1887	1,555.16	12,331.00	- -	13	1,023	12	953		
1888	866.76	7,272.00	- -	9	552	9	578		
1889	565.29	4,696.04	- -	13*	585*				
1890	508.50	3,728.25	- -	5	250	5	250		(3)
1891	196.83	2,282.00	- -	11	899	11	899		
1892	488.73	4,440.00	- -	9	793	9	793		(4)
1893	231.20	2,373.00	- -	4	239	4	239		(5)
1894	109.58	1,038.00	- -	4	177	4	177		
1901	344.87	2,911.00	- -	3	264	3	264	340	(6)
1902	245.33	2,517.00	- -	3	257	3	257	418	(7)
1903	403.00	4,215.00	- -	6	290	6	290	445	(8)
1904	372.00	3,940.08	- -	1	147	5	351	405	(9)
1908	322.00	4,080.00	- -	3*	237				(10)

*Number of departing and arriving vessels.

Reports of Chief of Engineers for respective years 1874-1908 used for commercial statistics.

References:

(1) Lumber and grain - incoming.
Fruit - outgoing.

(2) Vessels using harbor for shelter, 50.
Exports, fruit - barrels, 2,000.
Imports, grain - bushels, 1,210.
Lumber and timber, feet, B. M. 2,483,000.
Post, poles and ties, number, 10,000.

(3) 33,000 b. ft. lumber
1,360 shingles
26½ cords cedar posts
lumber

(4) Lumber.

(5) Lumber, laths, shingles and posts.

(6)

Cedar posts	200	tons
Laths,	24	"
Shingles	116	"
	340	tons

(7)

Posts	322	tons
Shingles	96	"

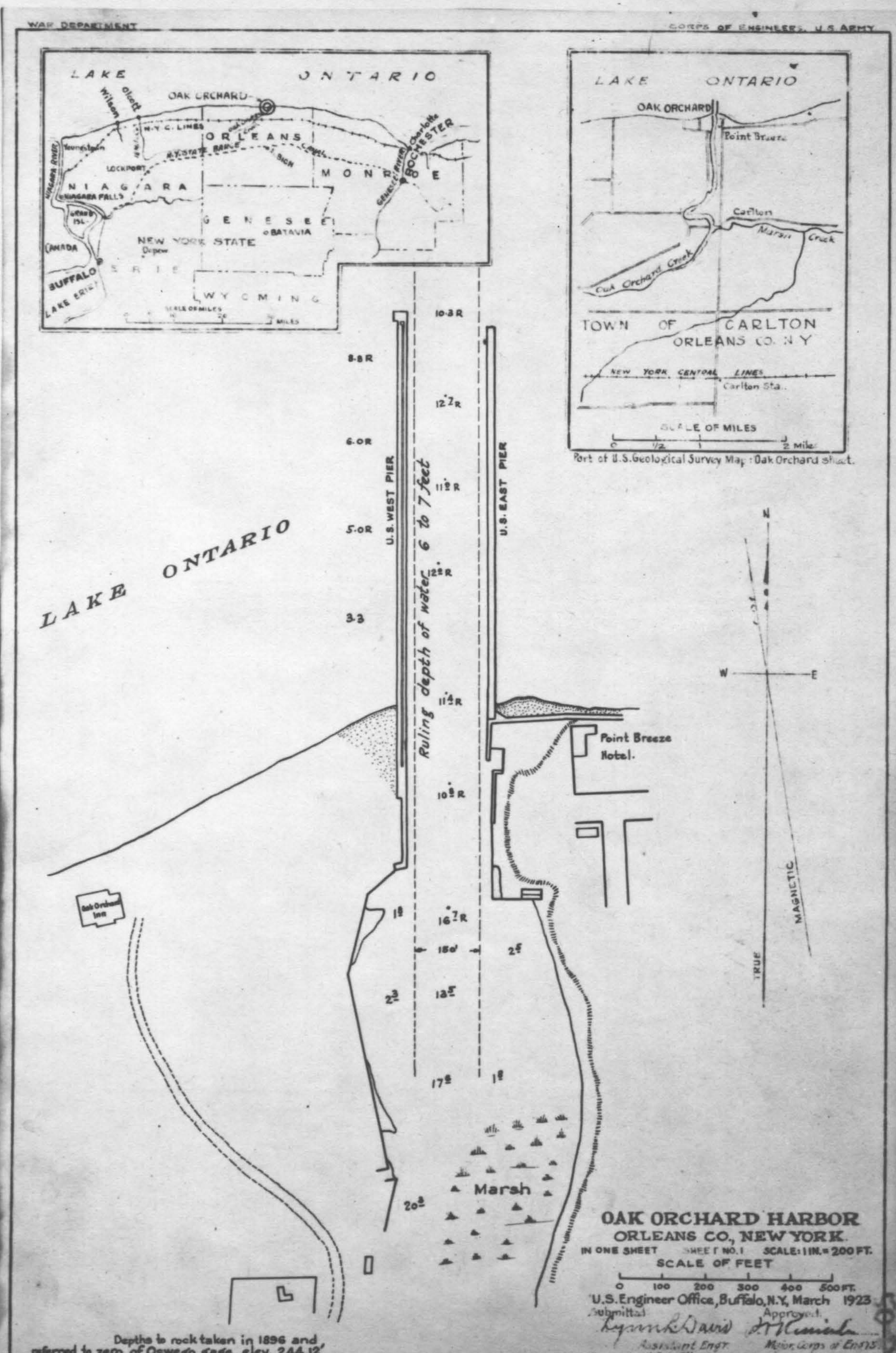
(8) Posts, shingles.

(9) Posts, 242 tons.
Lath, 14 tons.
Shingles, 149 tons.

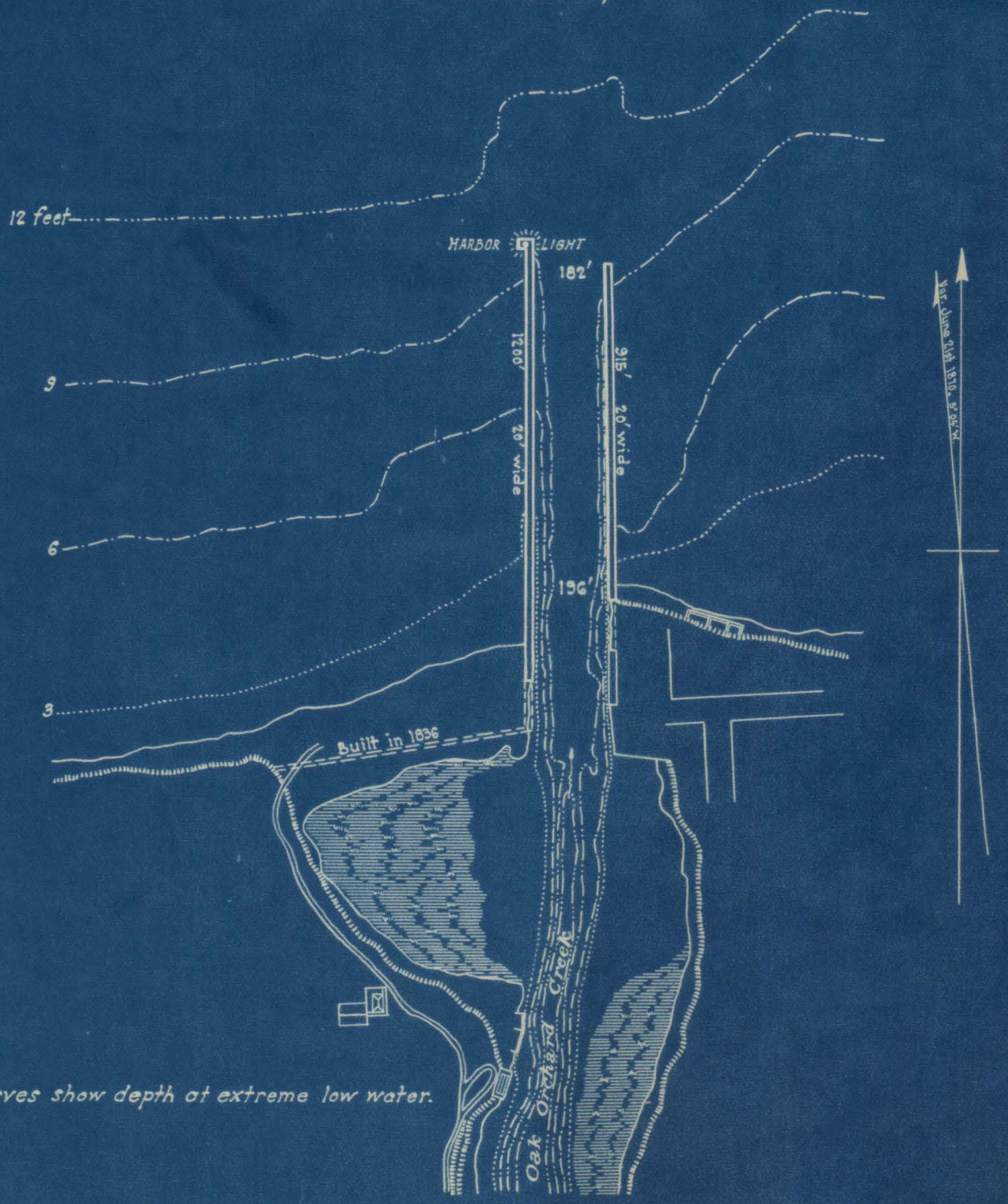
(10) Reference, H.R. Doc. No. 412, 61st. Congress, 2d session, p. 2.

Section VIII - Maps

Maps showing the condition of Oak Orchard Harbor in 1876, 1889 and 1923 follows:


WAR DEPARTMENT
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, U.S. ARMY
LAKE ONTARIO
OAK ORCHARD
N.Y.C. LINES
ORLEANS
ROCHESTER
LOCKPORT
NIAGARA
NIAGARA FALLS
MONROE
GENESEE
BATAVIA
NEW YORK STATE
CANADA
BUFFALO
ERIE
LAKE ERIE
WYOMING
SCALE OF MILES
LAKE ONTARIO
OAK ORCHARD
Point Breeze
Carlton
Marsh Creek
Oak Orchard Creek
TOWN OF CARLTON
ORLEANS CO. N.Y.
NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES
Carlton Sta.
SCALE OF MILES
Part of U.S. Geological Survey Map: Oak Orchard sheet.
LAKE ONTARIO
U.S. WEST PIER
U.S. EAST PIER
Ruling depth of water 6 to 7 feet
10.3 R
8.8 R
6.0 R
5.0 R
3.3
Point Breeze Hotel.
Oak Orchard Inn
150'
Marsh
N
W
E
TRUE
MAGNETIC
OAK ORCHARD HARBOR
ORLEANS CO., NEW YORK.
IN ONE SHEET SHEET NO. 1 SCALE: 1 IN. = 200 FT.
SCALE OF FEET
0 100 200 300 400 500 FT.
U.S. Engineer Office, Buffalo, N.Y., March 1923.
Submitted Approved
Lynn L. Davis Assistant Engr.
Major, Corps of Engrs.
Drawn by H.P.J. File No.
Depths to rock taken in 1896 and referred to zero of Oswego gage, elev. 244.12'

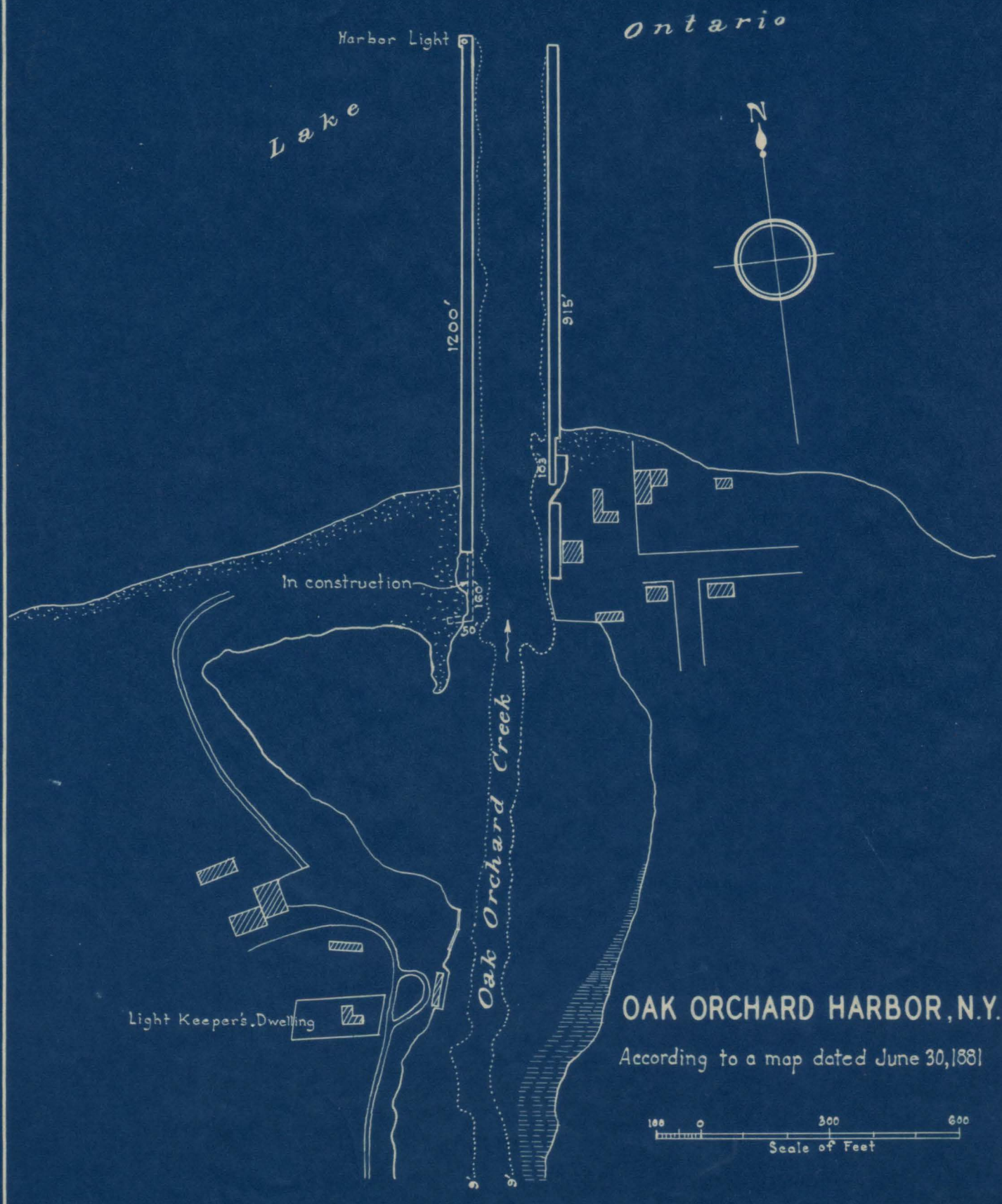
OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N. Y.



SCALE 1:5000

100 0 500 1000 1500 2000

REPRODUCED FROM MAP ACCOMPANYING REPORT OF CHIEF OF ENGINEERS FOR 1876.


Harbor Light
Lake
Ontario
N
1200'
915'
183'
In construction
160'
50'
Oak Orchard Creek
Light Keeper's Dwelling
OAK ORCHARD HARBOR, N.Y.
According to a map dated June 30, 1881
100
0
300
600
Scale of Feet