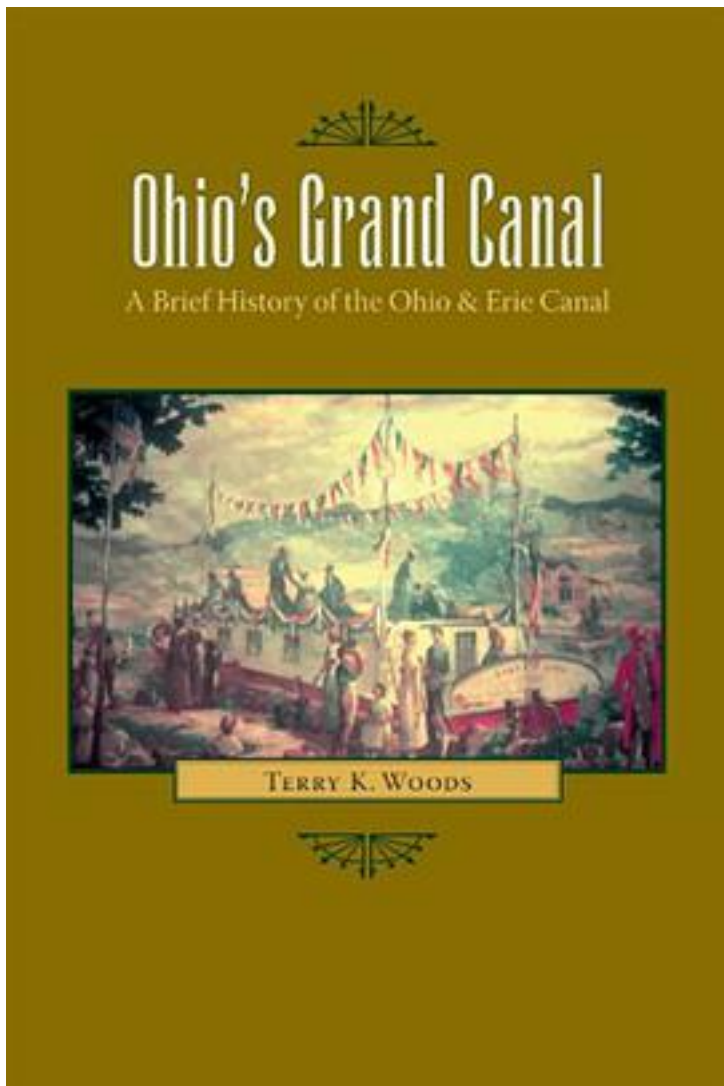


Ohio's Grand Canal



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By linking Ohio's two major bodies of water--the Ohio River and Lake Erie--Ohio's canals, built in the early nineteenth century, caused unprecedented growth and wealth for the fledgling state. The canals opened up Ohio to new markets, new settlers, agriculture, and industry, depositing large sums of money into the region and giving Ohioans a surge of confidence and optimism. Despite these impressive results, the canals struggled when other modes of transportation, such as the National Road and river steamboats, became serious competitors. The rise in popularity of railroads in the 1850s sparked the beginning of the end for the canals. Over the next decades, the canals declined steadily due to neglect, culminating with a statewide flood in 1913, which effectively rendered most of the Ohio and Erie useless. Ohio's Grand Canal concisely details the entire history of the canal system. Author Terry K. Woods chronicles the events leading up to construction, as well as public opinion of the canal system, the modifications made to traditional boat designs, the leasing of the waterways to private companies, and the canals' legal abandonment in 1929. He also includes a personal look at the 1913 flood through the eyes of a thirteen-year-old boatman who experienced it firsthand. Well written and thoroughly researched, this single-volume history of the Ohio and Erie Canal will be important to educators and to a general audience interested in Ohio history and canals.

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