

CANAL Iberville Canal		STATUS Floods, shifting channels and settlement have obliterated all traces		ACS
STATE/PROVINCE: Louisiana				HAER
COUNTIES: East Baton Rouge Parish				
LOCATION (Endpoints of Canal): From the east bank of the Mississippi, 10 miles below Baton Rouge, to the confluence of the Iberville and Amite TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS: Rivers. U. S. Geo. Survey: Baton Rouge, 1:250,000		ENLARGEMENTS		LIFT LOCKS No./ SIZE
		DATES IN USE	LENGTH CANAL SLACKWATER TOTAL	
		1 1768	17	None
		2		
		3		
		4		
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE: The history of the Iberville is a complex story of British-French Colonial rivalry. Briefly, the 1763 Treaty of Paris granted the British the right to move troops and supplies, via the lower Mississippi, provided that an alternate route from Mobile through Lake Ponchartrain and the Iberville, proved "impractical." This right was vital to the English as Pontiac's War had isolated forts and posts along the upper river. Attempts to use the lower river were frustrated by French harassment at New Orleans and attacks by Indian allies of the French above the port. For this reason, Gen. Gage, C-in-C in the colonies, felt the Iberville route must be opened. The London Ministry approved and work began, 1764, with officers of the 34th Regt. in charge. On July 28, 1768, a schooner made the first through passage to the big river, there is no record of other vessels making it. New surveys, proposals to alter the route, using Bayou Manchac, and sporadic work continued until 1774. Gage, now absorbed by the political problems preceding the Revolution, tabled the matter and the project was abandoned.				
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Always termed a "canal," the project was more river, lake and coastal navigation. The Iberville River, about 17 miles long, was not a river but an old channel, cut by some ancient flood on the Mississippi, eastward to the Amite River. It was a watered slough when the water was high, a dry bed, 12' above river level, in periods of low water. It is hard to locate on today's maps but contemporary charts* indicate why early engineers were attracted to it. It seems that the British considered the stream below the juncture of the Iberville and the Amite as a continuation of the Iberville, actually it is the lower Amite. In any event, canal construction was limited to the section between the Mississippi and the Amite. Below this point, 100 ton schooners could pass freely down the river, through Lake Maurepas, thence to Lake Ponchartrain and to the coastal waters leading to Mobile, then British headquarters for the Gulf region. In part, the course of the Iberville is reflected by the southern boundary of East Baton Rouge Parish.				
NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANALS PRESERVATION/RESTORATION: None				
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: <u>The Iberville Canal Project</u> , D. S. Brown, Miss. Valley Hist. Review, March, 1946. (This monograph lists an extended bibliography of original sources.) <u>Lake Ponchartrain</u> , W. Adolphe Roberts, Indianapolis, 1946. * <u>The British Colonies in North America</u> , engraved by William Faden, 1777. (Reprinted as Map #2, in <u>An Atlas of 18th Century Maps and Charts</u> , Louis de Voursey, Jr., Naval History Division, Dept. of the Navy, Washington, 1972				
UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS (CEHR, HAER, HABS, Local or Regional Historical Societies, Libraries, etc.):				
EXISTING OR RECOMMENDED LANDMARK STATUS (CEHR, National Register, etc.):				
REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: L. W. Richardson, Rt. 2, Box 346, Gainesville, Ga.				DATE: 11/1/75
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