Empire Lock

State/Province: Louisiana

Counties: Plaquemines

Location [Endpoints of Canal]: At Empire, LA

Topographic Maps: Empire LA 15'

Historical Significance:

Fifty miles downstream from New Orleans, almost at the end of the "Great River Road" (here LA 23) are the two state-operated locks which give fishing and oyster boats direct access to the Gulf on each side. The Empire Lock (40x200', up to 12' lift, 1951) is in the town of Empire. Take the turn-off to the left just before crossing the bridge over the canal. This lock has sector gates and is a descendant of the Douillet Lock, bought by the state in 1936. UTM: 16.7400, 32335, Empire LA 15'. The canal to the Gulf is 90 miles long.

From THE AMERICAN CANAL GUIDE Part 3, pp.8-9 (1979). Both the Empire Lock and Fasterling Canals linked the Mississippi with bayous (and the Gulf) to the west; another link was the Tagliaferro (or Plaquemines or Scoll'e) Canal, 175 miles long, mentioned by Whitford, p.1471, but it has not been located.

Names & Addresses of Groups Concerned with Canal Preservation/Restoration:

Empire Lock operation: State of Louisiana Department of Public Works, P.O. Box 44155, Capitol Station, Baton Rouge LA 70804.

Bibliographical Summary:

From material supplied by Daniel V. Cress, Chief Engineer, Dept. of Public Works, and the J. Hayward Maddox, Canal Researching, 5847 Decker Road, Livonia NY 14487. See the Mississippi Book of Charts and NOS Chart 1271, Mississippi River, Venice to New Orleans.

Unpublished Records, Photos, Drawings (CLHR, HABER, MABS, Local or Regional Historical Societies, Libraries, etc.):

Need to find more information on Douillet Lock, and locate the Tagliaferro Canal.

Existing or Recommended Landmark Status (CLHR, National Register, etc.):