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The financial difficulties of the state during the construction period of the Illinois and Michigan Canal required

Sanitary District was formed and began digging the Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal. This canal, finished in 1900, was the largest canal built in the 19th century. It is 12 feet deep and runs from Chicago to Lockport.

It was designed not only to pull Chicago's waste away from its drinking water and purify it by aeration, but also as a ship canal. When it was completed, it increased considerably the flow of water in the Des Plaines below Lockport, and in the Illinois. However, its use as a shipping canal was limited because it terminated in Lockport. In 1907 the Chicago Metropolitan Sanitary District did two things to increase shipping on the canal. They dug a sanitary drainage canal from the Calumet River to the Sanitary Canal that cut the old Illinois and Michigan Canal in half and ended its usefulness between Lockport and Chicago. At the same time, the sanitary district engineer, Isham Randolph, built a lock at Lockport so boats could go from the Sanitary Canal to the Des Plaines River. He also designed a power station at the same location to control the flow of water from Lake Michigan. In the same year, Mr. Randolph designed a movable dam, a "butterfly dam," at Lockport to stop any uncontrolled flow from Lake Michigan.

Locks on Lower Illinois

In the late 19th century, there was also a significant development taking place on the Illinois River. The U.S. En

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