

length. Only when the tunnel was covered, and opened to traffic, could the concrete be poured on the lower lock.

The estimated cost of the Beauharnois project, over fifty million dollars, makes this the most expensive mile of the entire St. Lawrence Seaway.

From Lake St. Louis, beneath two bridges, an overland canal takes ships, around Lachine Rapids, into Côte Ste. Catherine Lock. Protected from the currents of Lachine by cofferdams, powerful construction equipment pushed the ship channel deep into the dry land of Caughnawaga Indian Reserve and beyond for eight miles to the Côte Ste. Catherine Lock.

Honoré Mercier Bridge is one of the four structures linking the Island City of Montreal with the South Shore of the St. Lawrence River. New approaches took shape to sweep traffic a hundred and twenty feet above the ship canal. In the centre, over the channel, a falsework structure was prepared to support the main span during installation. Riggers manoeuvred the wooden beams and girders high above the channel floor. South of the channel, great concrete pylons were erected to receive their separate ramps to carry traffic along highways east and west.

The South Shore below Montreal was basking quietly, in sleepy historic villages like Côte Ste. Catherine, when the first Seaway blasts exploded in the summer of '54. For several years they watched as power shovels tore a channel between them and the river beyond. Items began to appear in the newspapers: A bridge to the Island. A new park. New highways and railway lines. And as the lock began to take shape at their doorstep, a two million dollar harbour was announced for the peaceful village of Côte Ste. Catherine.

High above the lock-floor, fenders

were installed, to prevent ships from bumping the gates when moving into the lock. As the lock provides a 30-foot lift, the gates are heavy enough to hold back a 30-foot head of water.

From Côte Ste. Catherine Lock, ships pass seven miles down stream to St. Lambert Lock, where they drop a final 15 feet. The ships then sail under Victoria Bridge and through the last thousand yards of dyking, where they leave the Seaway and enter Montreal Harbour or follow the St. Lawrence down to the Ocean, a thousand miles away.

Rather than dredge the river below Côte Ste. Catherine Lock, contractors saved both money and time by building a dyke in the river along the channel edge, pumping out the water, and excavating the dried land with power shovels and trucks.

By filling in the area between the channel and the present shoreline, some three hundred acres of parkland were created between Jacques Cartier and Victoria Bridges. Upstream from Victoria Bridge lies the Seaway's seventh and final lock. A tall batching plant provided the 800,000 tons of fresh concrete required by this lock alone.

At the downstream end, the last span of the Victoria Bridge had to be replaced by a lift bridge to provide clearance for ships using the lock directly underneath. Working on one lane at a time, the engineers removed the old rigid sections, and replaced them with steel platforms that can be quickly raised and lowered by towers at either end. Highway traffic using the bridge is not interrupted when the lift section is raised: traffic lights divert traffic to a second lift bridge at the other end of the lock.

Spanning Montreal Harbour in two sections, Jacques Cartier Bridge is over two miles long. Built in 1929, it now carries seventeen million cars per year. To