

In 1818, a company was formed and obtained from Parliament a charter empowering it to construct a canal to avoid the Chambly Rapids, and to otherwise improve the navigation of the Richelieu river.

The Company caused surveys to be made, and published a report on the best plan to be adopted in the construction of the canal.

Nothing further was done until the year 1823, when a sum of money was appropriated by the Legislature for the construction of the canal, and provision was made for the appointment of commissioners to undertake the work after the completion of the Lachine canal.

The services of Peter Fleming, C.E., were secured to prepare plans and estimates of the work. Mr. Fleming reported that a sum of \$216,668.00 would be required to complete the task. Sir James Kempt, who was then Administrator of the Province, wrote the Commissioners that the estimate was too low, and that he had referred the matter to an officer of the Royal Engineers.

The latter reported that the work would cost the sum of \$386,980. Mr. Fleming persisted in his estimates, and the Commissioners obtained a confirmation of his views from Messieurs Hanlon and Hopkins, and presented a report to Parliament in December, 1830, in which they expressed the opinion that three civil engineers who had gone over the works were better able to judge of the probable cost than the most distinguished Royal Engineer who had never seen that section of the country.

Parliament approved of the report and voted the supplies requested, but the veto of Sir James Kempt annulled the proceeding.

After the Union of the Canadas, Lord Sydenham, the Governor, deeming that the material development of the country required active encouragement, recommended that Parliament should at once apply the proceeds of a loan which had been guaranteed by the Imperial Parliament, to the immediate construction of the Chambly Canal, and of other works. This was in 1841, and work was energetically begun after the appropriation had been made by the Legislature, and two years later, the Chambly Canal was completed.

The work had however been done in a most unsatisfactory manner, and it had to be renewed in 1858.

The system was further enlarged in 1875 and 1881.

The construction consists of a single lock at St. Ours, 32 miles below Chambly and of the Canal proper.

The Canal is built on the west side of the River, and extends from the town of St. John to the beginning of the lakes referred to in the account of Champlain's visit to the spot in 1609.