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HAER No. IL-40

WESTERN AVENUE,  
SANITARY AND SHIP CANAL BRIDGE  
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor  
Crossing the Sanitary and Ship Canal  
Chicago  
Cook County  
Illinois

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Martin Stupich, Photographer 1988

- IL-40-1 LONG VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM SCISSORS BRIDGE
- IL-40-2 OBLIQUE VIEW, SOUTHWEST TO NORTHEAST
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**Location:** Crossing the Sanitary and Ship Canal,  
Chicago, Cook County, Illinois

**Date of Construction:** 1940

**Present Owner:** City of Chicago

**Significance:** Built by the City of Chicago as a PWA project in 1940, the substructure was constructed by M. J. McDermott & Company and the superstructure was erected by the C. L. Strobel Construction Company of Chicago. This bridge replaced a center-pier swing bridge erected about 1900, and is one of only two vertical-lift highway bridges in the Heritage Corridor.

**Description:** A vertical lift bridge, main (lift) span measuring 160'-0" in length and approximately 90'-0" in width. All steel superstructure consists of riveted steel plate girders supported on concrete piers; concrete counterweights, and two bridge tender's houses supported by a steel frame with riveted gusset plate connections. DC electric motors power the rack and pinion gears. Steel plate girder approach spans; decorative railing and pylons exhibit Art Deco influence.

**Project Information:** The Illinois and Michigan Canal was designated a National Heritage Corridor in 1984. The following year HABS/HAER embarked on an extensive inventory and documentation project of the 100 mile-long corridor. Field work for this project was concluded in 1988. Final editing of the documentation was completed in 1992.

**Sources:**  
Nameplate on bridge.

Chicago Department of Public Works, Chicago Public Works: A History (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1973).