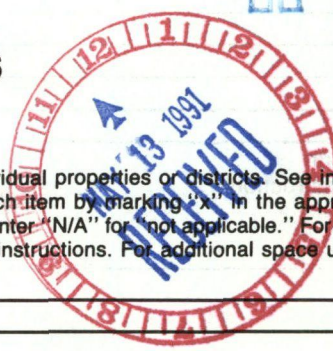


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

RECEIVED MAY 13 1991 NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Brazoria Bridge
other names/site number Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria

2. Location

street & number 0.9 miles east of State Highway 36 on State Hwy. 332
city, town Brazoria
state Texas code TX county Brazoria code 039 zip code 77422

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public-State/Federal and building/district/site/structure/object. Totals: 1 structure.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 6 May 1991

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: _____ Date: _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain): _____

Entered in the National Register. Signature of the Keeper: [Signature] Date of Action: 6/14/91

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Road-related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Road-related

7. DescriptionArchitectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Parker Through Truss Bridge

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete piers

walls N/A

roof N/A

other Steel trusses and guardrails;
concrete deck

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria is a 1,124-foot-long concrete and steel structure with concrete piers, three steel truss spans, and concrete-and-steel approaches at each end. The bridge roadway is 24 feet wide and crosses the Brazos River as State Highway 332, just east of Brazoria. The river runs from the northwest to the southeast, toward the Gulf of Mexico, and the bridge is perpendicular to the waterway.

The point where Brazoria and the river meet is but 15 miles away from the Gulf. The region is flat, with coastal soils. Both the Brazos and the San Bernard rivers provide drainage for the county.

The three bridge spans over the river bed consist of Parker through trusses, each approximately 222 feet in length. Broad tapered concrete piers between spans support the trusses. The riveted steel Parker trusses have gently arched top chords each divided by vertical struts into seven sections. At either end of each arc the top chord angles steeply down to the reinforced concrete bridge deck. Diagonal struts resist tension between vertical members that resist compression and brace each truss longitudinally; lattices of smaller struts spanning the roadway between the vertical members brace each truss laterally.

The approaches are concrete and steel girder-and-beam construction. Beginning at the north end of the bridge, there are eight steel I-beam spans, each approximately 31 feet long, followed by one 42 foot long I-beam span. Beginning at the south end of the bridge, there are four steel I-beam spans, also about 31 feet in length, followed by one 42 foot long I-beam span. A concrete pile cap on six pre-cast concrete pilings supports the approaches between each span. The approach decks are of reinforced concrete. The approaches' geometric balustrades are cast concrete vertical piers with two horizontal rails between vertical piers spaced every few feet. The balustrades continue along the main Parker truss spans as protection for the roadway.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

A builder's plate was placed on the bridge's north approach reading:

FEDERAL EMERGENCY
ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC WORKS
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
President of the United States
HAROLD L. ICKES
Administrator of Public Works
BRAZORIA BRIDGE
1939

In addition, a name tablet was placed below the builder's plate reading:

ERECTED BY
BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS
County Judge
Floyd Enlow-1938
O.K. Phillips-1939
County Commissioners
W.H. Brigance
Mrs. S.H. McLeod
E.H. Mays
C.W. Massey-1938
A.O. Evans-1939
County Auditor
F.A. Taylor
J.G. McKenzie-Cons. Eng'r.
Haile & McClendon-Assoc. Cons. Engrs.
Keliher Constr. Co.-Contractor

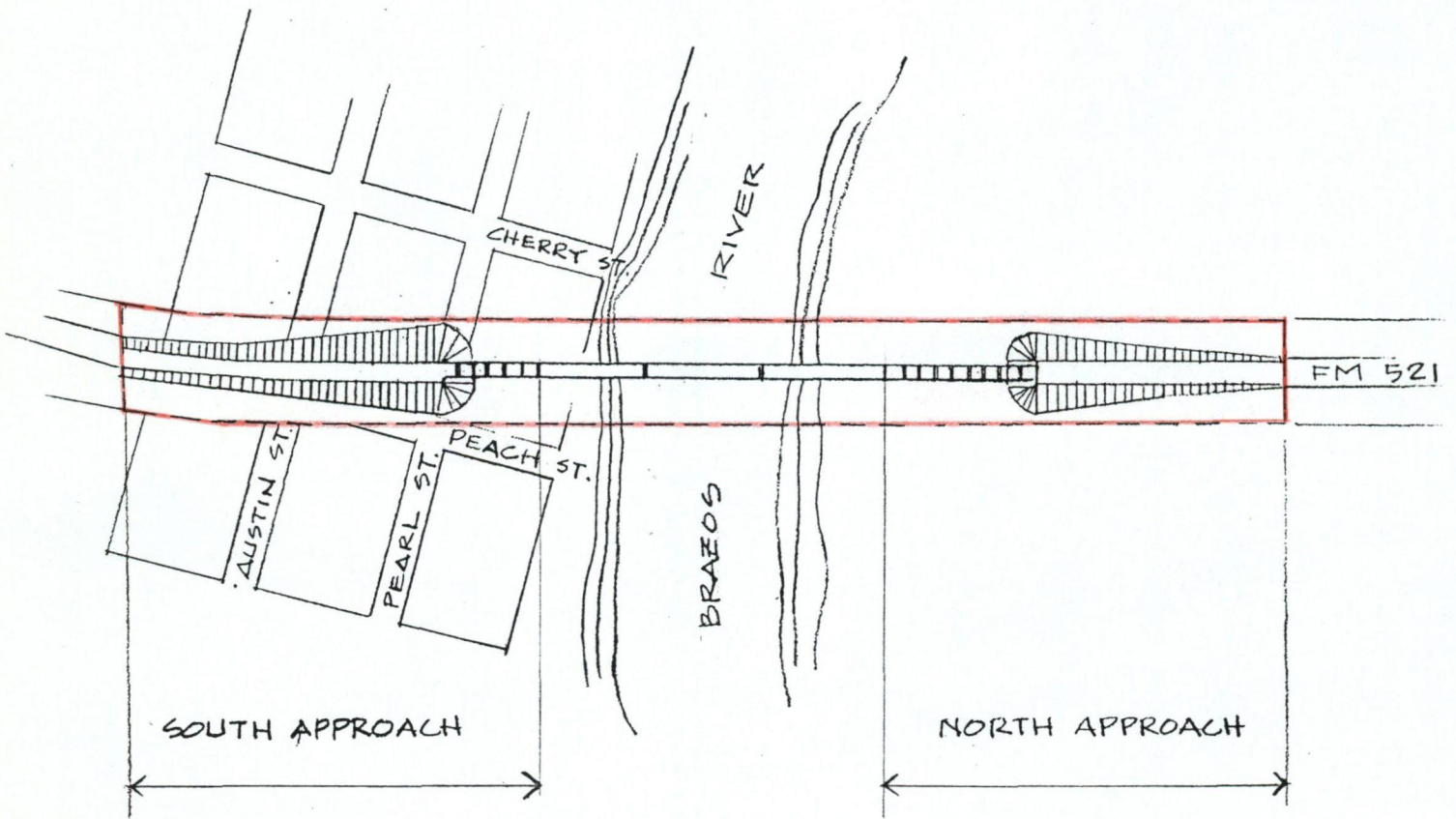
These plates were removed in 1990 and given to the Brazoria County Historical Commission. They are now housed in the Brazoria County Historical Museum in Angleton, Texas.

To date the Brazos Bridge is in good condition and remains in use.

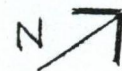
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2



- BRAZORIA BRIDGE
- BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA CO., TEXAS



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Photograph Log

Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria
0.9 mile east of State Highway 36 on State Highway 332
Brazoria, Brazoria County, Texas
Photographed by Kathy Jones
May 1990
Negative with K. Jones, Box 456, Angleton, TX 77516
Camera facing southeast
Photograph 1 of 8

Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria
0.9 mile east of State Highway 36 on State Highway 332
Brazoria, Brazoria County, Texas
Photographed by Kathy Jones
May 1990
Negative with K. Jones, Box 456, Angleton, TX 77516
Camera facing west
Photograph 2 of 8

Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria
0.9 mile east of State Highway 36 on State Highway 332
Brazoria, Brazoria County, Texas
Photographed by Kathy Jones
May 1990
Negative with K. Jones, Box 456, Angleton, TX 77516
Camera facing northwest
Photograph 3 of 8

Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria
0.9 mile east of State Highway 36 on State Highway 332
Brazoria, Brazoria County, Texas
Photographed by Kathy Jones
May 1990
Negative with K. Jones, Box 456, Angleton, TX 77516
Camera facing southwest
Photograph 4 of 8

Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria
0.9 mile east of State Highway 36 on State Highway 332
Brazoria, Brazoria County, Texas
Photographed by Kathy Jones
May 1990
Negative with K. Jones, Box 456, Angleton, TX 77516
Camera facing north
Photograph 5 of 8

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria
0.9 mile east of State Highway 36 on State Highway 332
Brazoria, Brazoria County, Texas
Photographed by Kathy Jones
May 1990
Negative with K. Jones, Box 456, Angleton, TX 77516
Camera facing north
Photograph 6 of 8

Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria
0.9 mile east of State Highway 36 on State Highway 332
Brazoria, Brazoria County, Texas
Photographed by Kathy Jones
May 1990
Negative with K. Jones, Box 456, Angleton, TX 77516
Plaque
Photograph 7 of 8

Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria
0.9 mile east of State Highway 36 on State Highway 332
Brazoria, Brazoria County, Texas
Photographer unknown
Date unknown
Negative with Angleton Public Library, Angleton, TX 77516
Camera facing northeast
Photograph 8 of 8

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Transportation
Engineering

Period of Significance
1939-1941

Significant Dates
1939

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
McKenzie, J.D.
Wickliffe, G.G.
Keliher Construction Co.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Brazos River Bridge at Brazoria, completed in 1939, is the second road bridge crossing at this location and perpetuates a historic route through Texas, critical to Brazoria County's development since 1912. The structure is also an important surviving example of the work of the Public Works Administration [PWA] during the Great Depression. The bridge meets National Register Criterion A in the area of Transportation, as a link in the historic route of commerce and communication along which Brazoria was settled and, in this century, as a link between Houston and several coastal communities. It meets Criterion C in the area of Engineering, as a major Parker through truss bridge embodying the design and construction technology of 1930s highway construction in Texas.

Brazoria grew from a colony that Stephen F. Austin established in 1828 as a port and trading center at this important crossing of the Brazos River. The river served as a chief artery of commerce and communication from the Gulf of Mexico for Austin's colony. Brazoria burned in April 1836 toward the end of the Texas Revolution. Rebuilt, the town functioned as the seat of Brazoria County from 1836 until 1897 when the seat of county government was moved to Angleton.

In 1906 the St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico Railroad (now Missouri Pacific) traversed the county and the Brazos River at Brazoria. While what became known as Old Brazoria remained at the south bank of the river, a new townsite for Brazoria was laid out in 1912 about one mile south along the railroad line. Running parallel to the railroad bridge, the first highway bridge at this crossing was also constructed in 1912. Local residents remember this bridge as a steel truss bridge with a wood deck. Construction of this first bridge provided access from eastern to western Brazoria County as well as to many coastal towns.

After World War I automobiles became an increasingly dominant form of transportation in Texas, as throughout the United States. In 1917 more than

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet 9-1.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Texas Historical Commission, Austin, TX

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	5
---	---

2	5	1	0	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	2	1	6	5	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

B

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

D

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The width of the right of way on State Highway 332, including the bridge structure and its approaches.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the entire structure as built.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amy E. Dase (research by Margurite Massey Smith)

organization Texas Historical Commission date Sept., 1990; March, 1991

street & number P.O. Box 12276 telephone 512/463-6094

city or town Austin state Texas zip code 78711

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

200,000 automobiles were in use in Texas and motor transport provided a means for the delivery of mail and the movement of agricultural goods within rural areas. Reflecting this trend, the construction of railroads in the state eventually peaked and began to decline after the 1920s.

The river crossing at Brazoria sustained the direct route between Houston (40 miles north) and several important coastal towns including Matagorda (46 miles south) and Palacios (55 miles south). The growing need for access to these communities and western Brazoria County justified a modern bridge structure to replace the earlier bridge, which was condemned (according to local sources) in the early 1930s and eventually fell into the river.

[The federal government was responsible for funding most bridges of this size during the New Deal era. Recognizing the importance of a network of farm-to-market roads as early as the 1890s with the establishment of the Bureau of Public Roads (part of the United States Department of Agriculture), federal aid to local governments for road construction began on a small scale at that time. The 1916 Federal Aid Road Act formalized this procedure focusing on the creation of major thoroughfares within the states. The Texas Highway Department was created in 1917 as required by the Act to manage the disbursement of federal funds and oversee the construction of roads by county governments. By 1921 most often county commissioners employed a county engineer to handle construction and maintenance of the road system under the management of the state highway commission. A county could apply to the state for up to 25 percent financial assistance on a project and up to 50 percent from the federal government. The Depression of the 1930s brought increased federal aid to the state highway system, and to local governments through such work relief programs as the Public Works Administration.]

The construction of the Brazoria Bridge appears to have been an unusual project in that the funding sources deviated from the typical approach. The bridge is a product of an early partnership between the federal government and the county government, without the assistance of the state. The PWA agreed to pay 45 percent of the bridge's cost. Brazoria County raised its share of the construction cost of the Brazoria Bridge, originally estimated to be about \$175,000, through the issuance of road bonds in 1938. Bids on the project were solicited and the Keliher Construction Company was selected as contractor.

The project included not only construction of the bridge, but upgrading the eight mile segment of road designated as Farm-to-Market 521 sometime between 1936 and 1938, before the state had formally established the farm-to-market system in 1941. The road connected State Highway 35, just west of Angleton, and State Highway 36, at Brazoria.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Although funding for the project was not channeled through the state highway department, State Bridge Engineer (1918-1940) George G. Wickline's design of choice heavily influenced the consulting engineer's design for the project. Largely through Wickline's influence, the Parker through bridge truss was popular across the state from the 1920s into the 1940s. J.D. McKenzie, associated with the firm of Haile & McClendon of Harris County, served as consulting engineer on the project and designed this Parker through truss bridge.

The Parker is offspring to an earlier truss design, the Pratt truss, which has vertical compression members and diagonal tension members with top and bottom chords that run parallel to each other. In truss design structural members resist forces in two primary ways--compression and tension. The Parker applies a polygonal top chord (the center of the truss is taller than the ends) to the structure. The polygonal design increased the distance between the top and bottom chords and made the truss depth greatest at the center of the span where stress was highest.

Ranging from 40 to 250 feet long, 40 Parker through truss bridges remain in Texas. The majority of these were constructed in the 1930s. Only five of these are known to be longer than the Brazoria Bridge. This bridge design was preferred because of its life expectancy and ease of construction. In addition, its efficiency allowed for a longer span with greater strength while using less steel, reducing both weight and cost.

Construction of the bridge took about a year, with problems encountered in driving the pilings for the pier foundations to a firm strata beneath the river bed. The bridge was opened in 1939.

According to the present State Department of Highways and Public Transportation, the bridge was placed on their state highway department maintenance list in 1939 and the state agency became owner of the resource. The bridge now serves State Highway 332 providing access to downtown Brazoria.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

"A Great Success Was the Opening of the Brazoria-Brazos River Bridge."
Angleton Times. 8 November 1912.

Brazoria County Commissioners' Court Minutes. Abstracted from 11 October 1937
through 29 December 1939.

Creighton, James A. A Narrative History of Brazoria County, Bicentennial
Edition. Waco: Texas Press, 1975.

Hardy, Heck, Moore. Transportation and Settlement along the Brazos River (East
Columbia and Brazoria County): 1820-1918. On file at Texas Historical
Commission, Austin, Texas.

Jackson, Donald C. Great American Bridges and Dams. Washington, D.C.:
Preservation Press, 1988.

Jimenez, Barbara. "Research on S.H. 332 Bridge in Brazoria County." On file at
Texas Historical Commission, National Register Programs, Austin, Texas.

"Kansas Bridge History to be Recognized in National Register Nomination."
Kansas Preservation. Newsletter of the Historic Preservation Department,
Kansas State Historical Society. January-February 1990, Vol. 12, No. 2.

Kelso, Sarah H. Brazoria. On file at Brazoria County Historical Museum,
Angleton, Texas, n.d.

Pool, William. A Historical Atlas of Texas. Austin: Encino Press, n.d.

Weitzman, David. Traces of the Past; A Field Guide to Industrial Archaeology.
New York: Scribner, 1980.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Brazoria Bridge

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Brazoria

DATE RECEIVED: 5/13/91 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/29/91
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/14/91 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/27/91
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 91000783

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 6/14/91 DATE

Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph
 completeness
 clarity
 applicable criteria
 justification of areas checked
 relating significance to the resource
 context
 relationship of integrity to significance
 justification of exception
 other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTMs boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



①

BRAZORIA BRIDGE

0.9 MILE EAST of STATE HIGHWAY 36 on STATE HIGHWAY 332

BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 8



²
BRAZORIA BRIDGE
0.9 MILE EAST of STATE HIGHWAY 36 on STATE HIGHWAY 332
BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 8



BRAZORIA BRIDGE

0.9 MILE EAST of STATE HIGHWAY 36 on STATE HIGHWAY 332

BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 8



16 FT 0 IN

4
BRAZORIA BRIDGE

0.9 MILE EAST of STATE HIGHWAY 36 ON STATE HIGHWAY 332

BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 4 of 8

BRAZORIA

CITY LIMIT

POP. 3,025



5

BRAZORIA BRIDGE

0.9 MILE EAST of STATE HIGHWAY 36 and STATE HIGHWAY 332

BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 5 of 8



16 FT 0 IN

⁶ BRAZORIA BRIDGE

0.9 MILE EAST of STATE HIGHWAY 36 ON STATE HIGHWAY 332

BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 6 of 8

ERECTED BY
BRAZORIA COUNTY TEXAS

COUNTY JUDGE
FLOYD ENLOW-1938
O. K. PHILLIPS - 1939

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
W. H. BRIGANCE
MRS. S. H. MCLEOD
E. H. MAYS

C. W. MASSEY-1938
A. O. EVANS - 1939

COUNTY AUDITOR
F. A. TAYLOR

J. G. MCKENZIE-CONS. ENGR.
HAILE & MCLENDON-ASSOC. CONS. ENGRS.
KELIHER CONSTR. CO.-CONTRACTOR

FEDERAL EMERGENCY
ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC WORKS

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

HAROLD L. ICKES

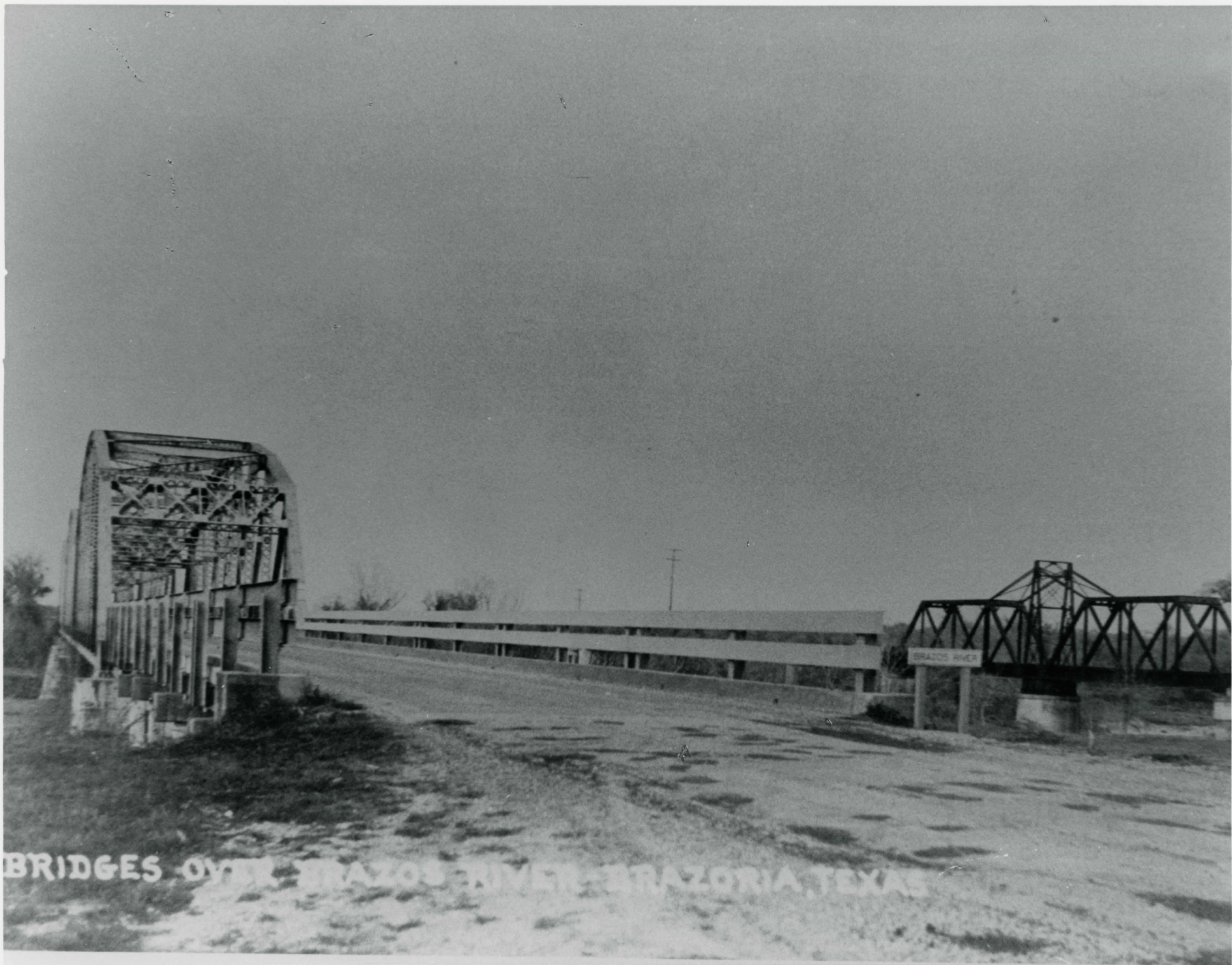
ADMINISTRATOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

BRAZORIA BRIDGE

1939

⁷
BRAZORIA BRIDGE
0.9 MILE EAST of STATE HIGHWAY 36 ON STATE HIGHWAY 332
BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 7 of 8



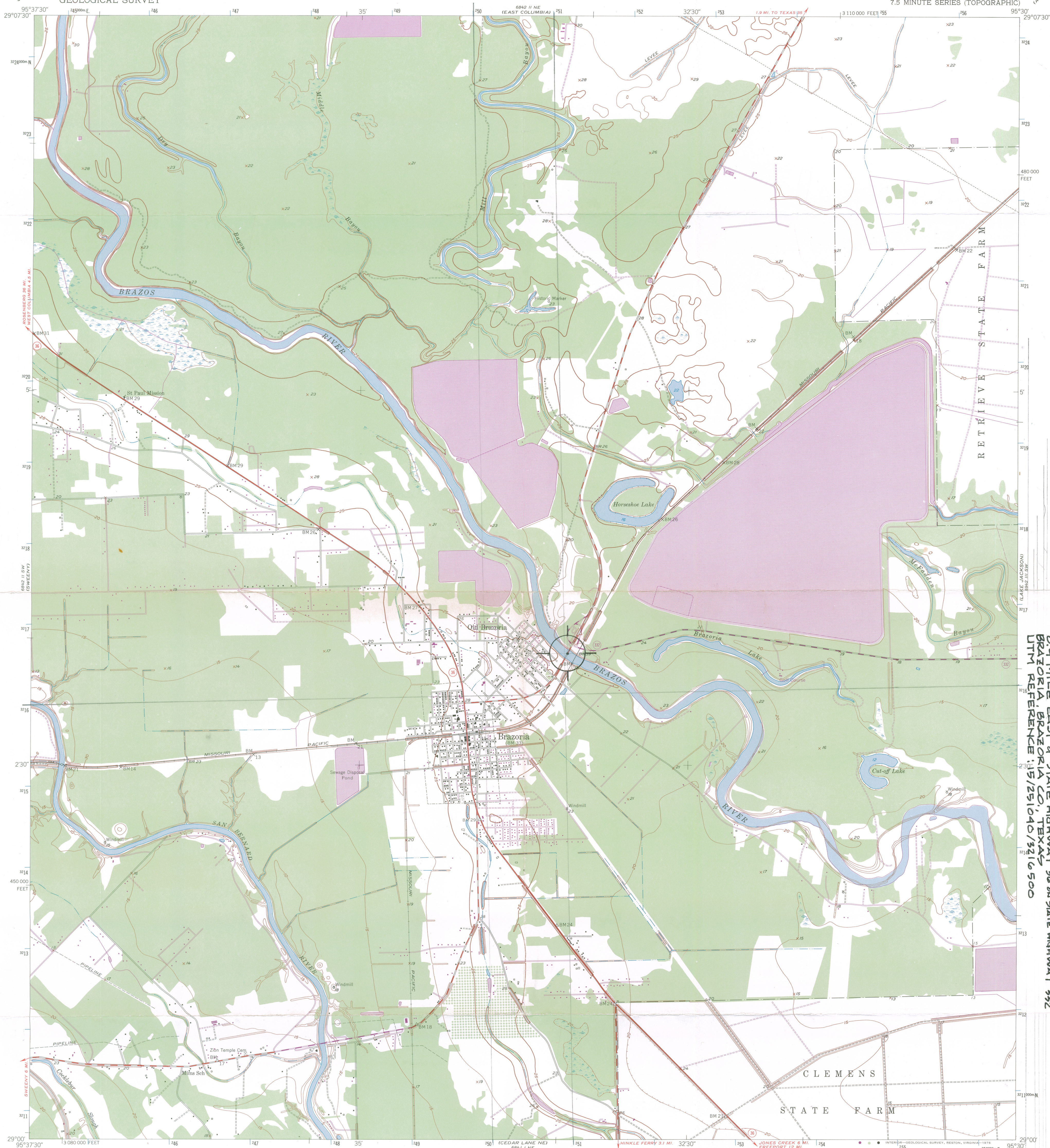
BRIDGES OVER BRAZOS RIVER BRAZORIA, TEXAS

BRAZORIA BRIDGE

0.9 MILE EAST OF STATE HIGHWAY 36 ON STATE HIGHWAY 332

BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 8 of 8



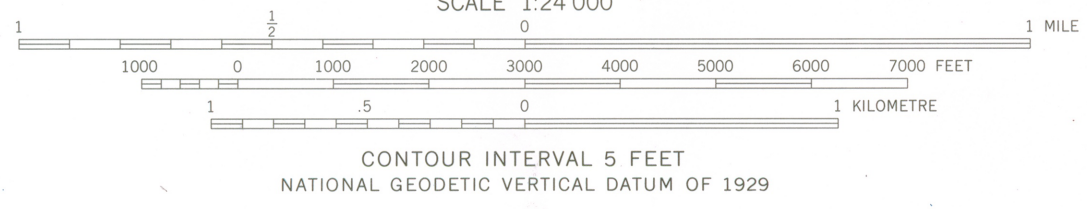
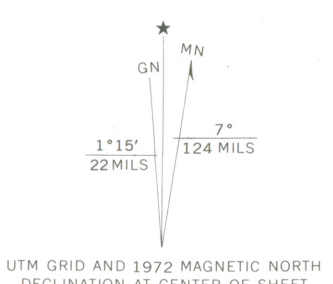
BRAZORIA BRIDGE
0.9 MILE EAST OF STATE HIGHWAY 36 ON STATE HIGHWAY 332
BRAZORIA, BRAZORIA CO., TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 15T251040/3216500

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1946-1947. Topography by plane-table surveys 1951-1952

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,
south central zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1972. This information not field checked



CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road

○ Interstate Route ○ U. S. Route ○ State Route

2995-211

BRAZORIA, TEX.
N2900-W9530/7.5

1952
PHOTOREVISED 1972
AMS 6842 II SE-SERIES V882

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST