

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

received MAY 31 1988

date entered

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Old Alton Bridge

and/or common Copper Canyon Road Bridge

2. Location

street & number Copper Canyon Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Copper Canyon ☒ vicinity of

state Texas code 048 county Denton code 121

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Bridge: Denton County;
Land: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

street & number Denton County Courthouse; P.O. Box 17300

city, town Denton; Fort Worth N/A vicinity of state Texas 76201; 76102

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Denton County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Denton state Texas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Texas Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1987 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Texas Historical Commission

city, town Austin state Texas

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Old Alton Bridge is one of the oldest surviving examples of a Pratt through-truss bridge in the state. It traverses Hickory Creek, a tributary of the Trinity River in a rural, wooded setting. The bridge retains its historic integrity.

The Alton Bridge is approximately 145 feet in length and consists of a main span, running east-west, with two secondary spans. The main span, an iron six-panel Pratt through-truss, is 108 feet long. Pin connectors are used at panel points, and rivets elsewhere. Eyebars extend from the lower chord. Verticals are of single-laced construction except for the hip verticals. These are slender rectangular eyebars, as are the diagonals. A latticed guardrail runs the length of the main span. There is no evidence of a builder plate, nor decorative elements. The secondary spans, which are symmetrically arranged about the main span, are constructed of multiple I-beams. Deteriorated asphalt covers the bridge's 14-foot wide timber deck. The bridge is supported by paired masonry-filled iron caissons. Abutments are in the form of braced metal decking, which either supplements or supercedes earlier abutments.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1884

Builder/Architect King Iron & Bridge Manufacturing Company

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Pratt through-truss bridge over Hickory Creek in rural Denton County near the site of the Alton community is a good and very early surviving example of a bridge type popular in Texas and much of the United States from the mid-19th through the mid-20th centuries. Known as the Old Alton Bridge, it was built as an important transportation link between Dallas and Denton and by a particularly important manufacturer.

In 1882, the Denton County Commissioners' Court authorized the construction of eight bridges on the county's major transportation arteries. The fact that the commissioners authorized the appropriation of \$10,000 from the county's Permanent School Fund underscored the importance of safe, efficient transportation facilities. A number of referendum elections were ordered between 1880 and 1895 to determine the expenditure of public money on iron bridges. In all of these, Denton County voters consented to the appropriation of money for that purpose. Consequently some 10 iron bridges, many of them Pratt through-truss bridges, were in place in Denton County by 1910. The financing of the Old Alton Bridge was approved by the Commissioners' Court on August 20, 1884. Initial intentions had apparently been to construct the structure at another site, but the Court confirmed the Alton site in its August minutes. The September 22, 1884, Court minutes confirm the final inspection and approval of the bridge.

The bridge was on the main Denton to Dallas road over Hickory Creek, a tributary of the Elm Fork of the Trinity River. It was placed near the declining Alton community, county seat of Denton County from 1851 to 1857. It was hoped that placing a major road near Alton would breathe new life into the dying community, but to no avail. It did, however, link Denton with much larger Dallas, and was a factor in Denton's late-19th-century properties. It was also a sign of modernity and permanency.

The bridge apparently was built from a kit provided by the King Iron Bridge and Manufacturing Company of Cleveland, a major supplier of bridges to Texas and elsewhere. That company was incorporated in 1871 by Zenas King, and its name was changed in about 1893 to the King Bridge Company. Two similar Pratt through-truss bridges built from King Iron Bridge and Manufacturing Company kits in Texas are currently individually listed in the National Register. These are the Cummins Creek Bridge, near Round Top, Fayette County (N.R. 1975) and the Fort Griffin Brazos River (Clear Fork) Bridge near Fort Griffin, Shackelford County (N.R. 1979).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Denton County Commissioners' Court Minutes, 1884; Victor C. Darnell, A Directory of American Bridge-Building Companies (Washington, D.C. Society for Industrial Archaeology, 1984); Joseph E. King to Peter Flagg Maxson, 24 June 1986; Denton Chronicle, 12 May 1894.

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Denton East, Tex

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	4	6	7	6	9	0	0	3	6	6	7	0	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

A 155'x25' rectangle centered on the bridge. The property consists of the bridge and a five foot area surrounding the bridge. See map on continuation sheet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark Atkins, June Tyler & Yvonne Jenkins (revised by Peter Flagg Maxson, THC)

organization Denton County Historical Commission date March 31, 1986

street & number P.O. Box 2184 telephone 817/566-1487

city or town Denton state Texas 76201

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Curtis J. J. J.

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 18 May 1988

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Patrick W. Andrews

date 7/8/88

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

The Old Alton Bridge is significant for several reasons. While this bridge type was (and still is in some areas) a relatively common type, the Alton Bridge remains one of the earliest still functional in the north/central Texas area. It is in fair condition, has had only minor modifications over the last century and retains its design integrity. It was an important feature on a now minor, but once major, thoroughfare. Finally, it is a great source of pride to the people of Denton County. The structure is in danger of being replaced, and citizens are working toward incorporating the structure into a bridle path/pedestrian trail, taking advantage of popular Lewisville Lake nearby. National Register recognition should further a greater appreciation of this important link with 19th-century Denton County.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Denton Chronicle, May 12, 1894.

Denton County Commissioners Courts Minutes May 14, 1882; January 2, 1884; August 20, 1884; September 22, 1884.

Thomas Eisenhour to Peter Flagg Maxson, February 23, 1988, letter on file at Texas Historical Commission, Austin.

Joseph E. King to Peter Flagg Maxson, June 24, 1986, letter on file at Texas Historical Commission, Austin.

McKean, Gary 'Filed Survey of Alton Bridge', U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, October 25, 1985, on file Denton County Historical Commission, Denton.

Tyler, June to Maxson, interview by telephone, March, 1987.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

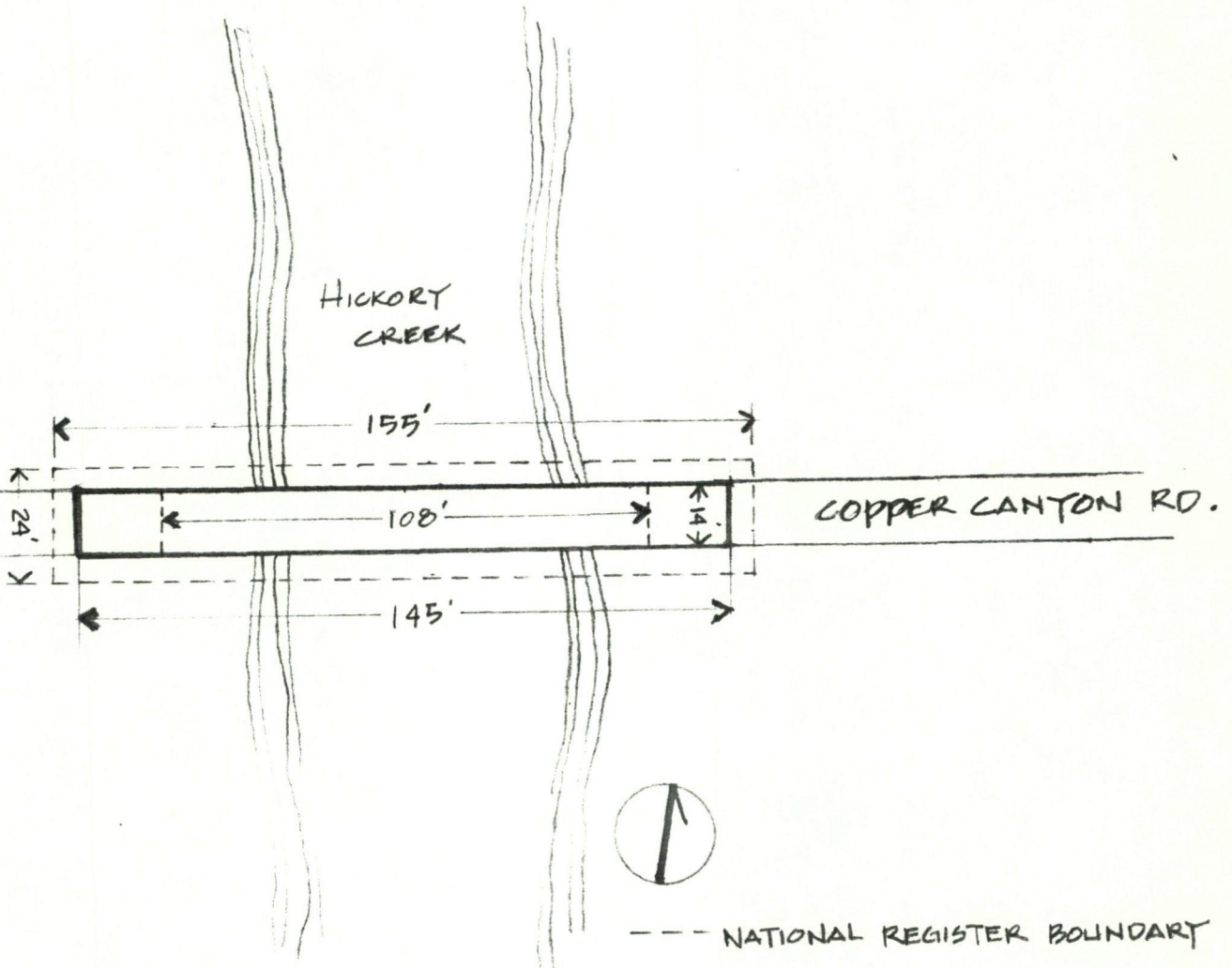
received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 1



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEETOld Alton Bridge
Denton County
TEXAS

Substantive Review

MAY 31 1988

Working No. _____

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/7/89Date Due: 6/30/88 - 7/15/88Action: ☒ ACCEPT 7-8-88☐ RETURN☐ REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☒ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decisionReviewer's comments: *The Old Alton Bridge exhibits engineering significance under criterion C as one of the oldest extant examples of a Pratt through-truss bridge in the state.*Recom./Criteria Accept - CReviewer NobleDiscipline HistorianDate 7/8/88

____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below

____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. 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

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

North elevation; camera facing south

Photo 1 of 11



Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

South elevation; camera facing north

Photo 2 of 11



Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

West elevation; camera facing east

Photo 3 of 11

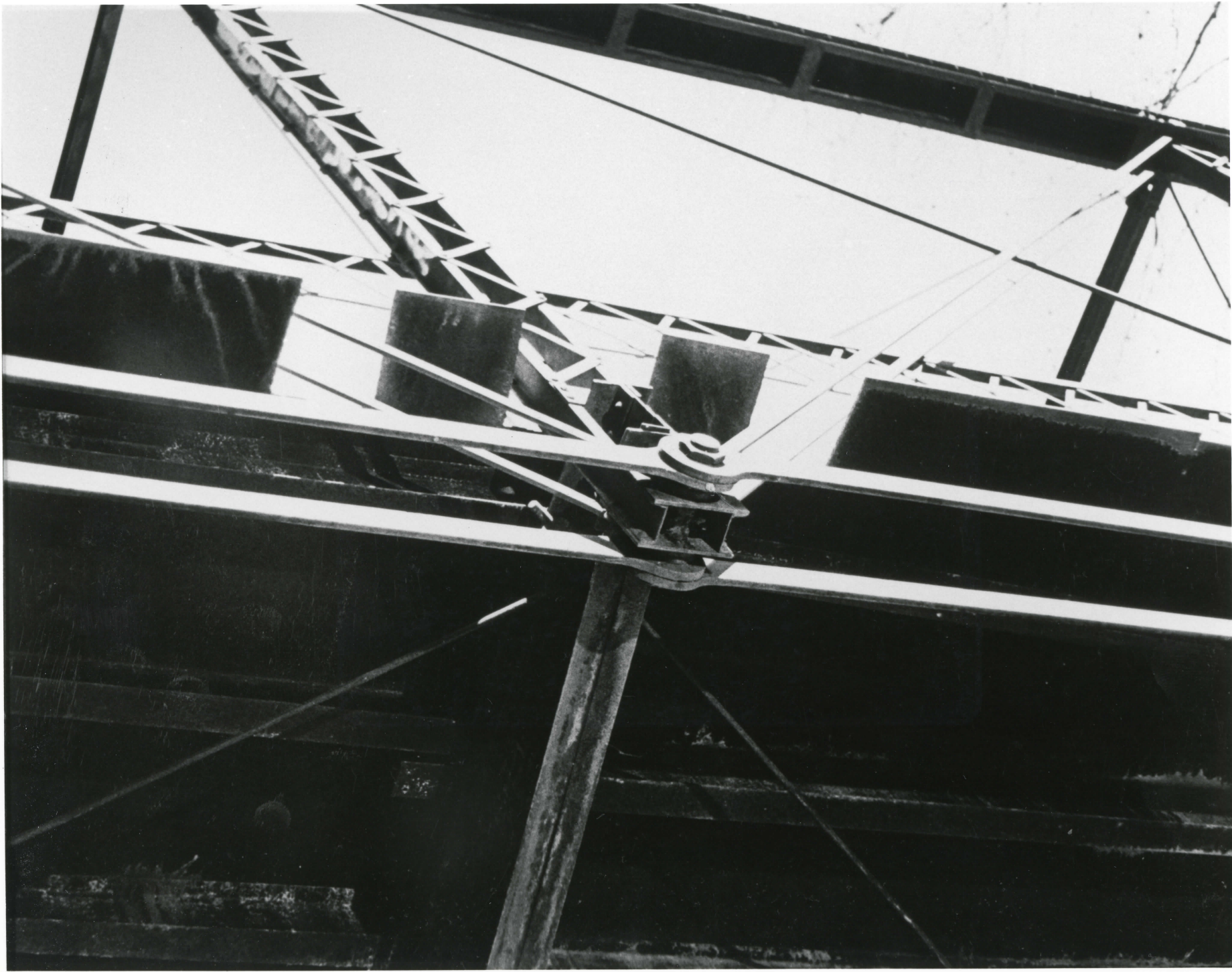


Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

East elevation; camera facing west

Photo 4 of 11



Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

Detail of south side, middle span; camera facing up

Photo 5 of 11

5
TON
LIMIT



Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

Southwest oblique; camera facing northeast

Photo 6 of 11



Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

Detail of top, east end/north side; camera
facing northeast

Photo 7 of 11

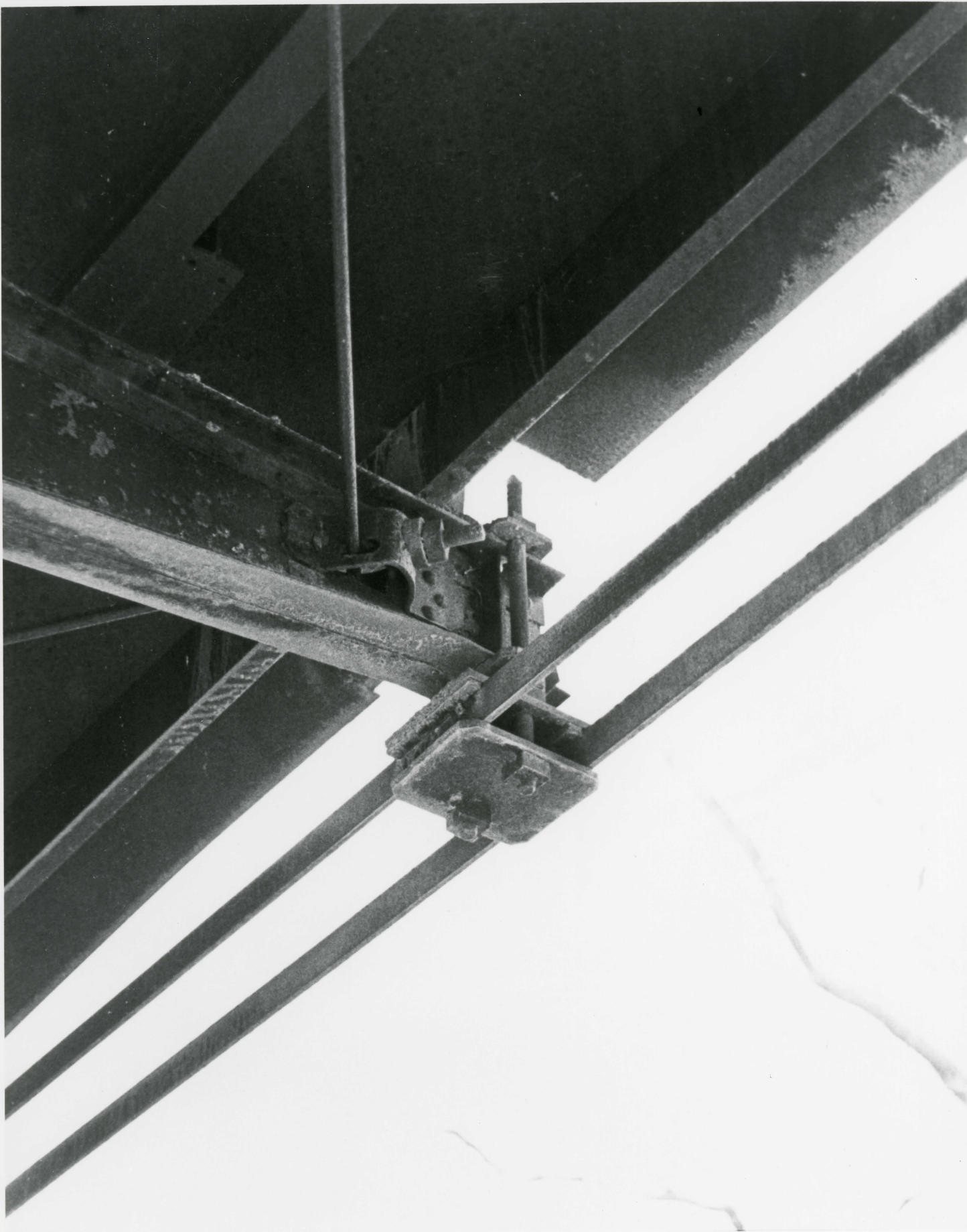


Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

Detail of west end/north side; camera
facing northeast

Photo 8 of 11



Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

Detail of midspan, south side; camera
facing southeast

Photo 9 of 11



Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

East end/south underside, northwest oblique;
camera facing east

Photo 10 of 11

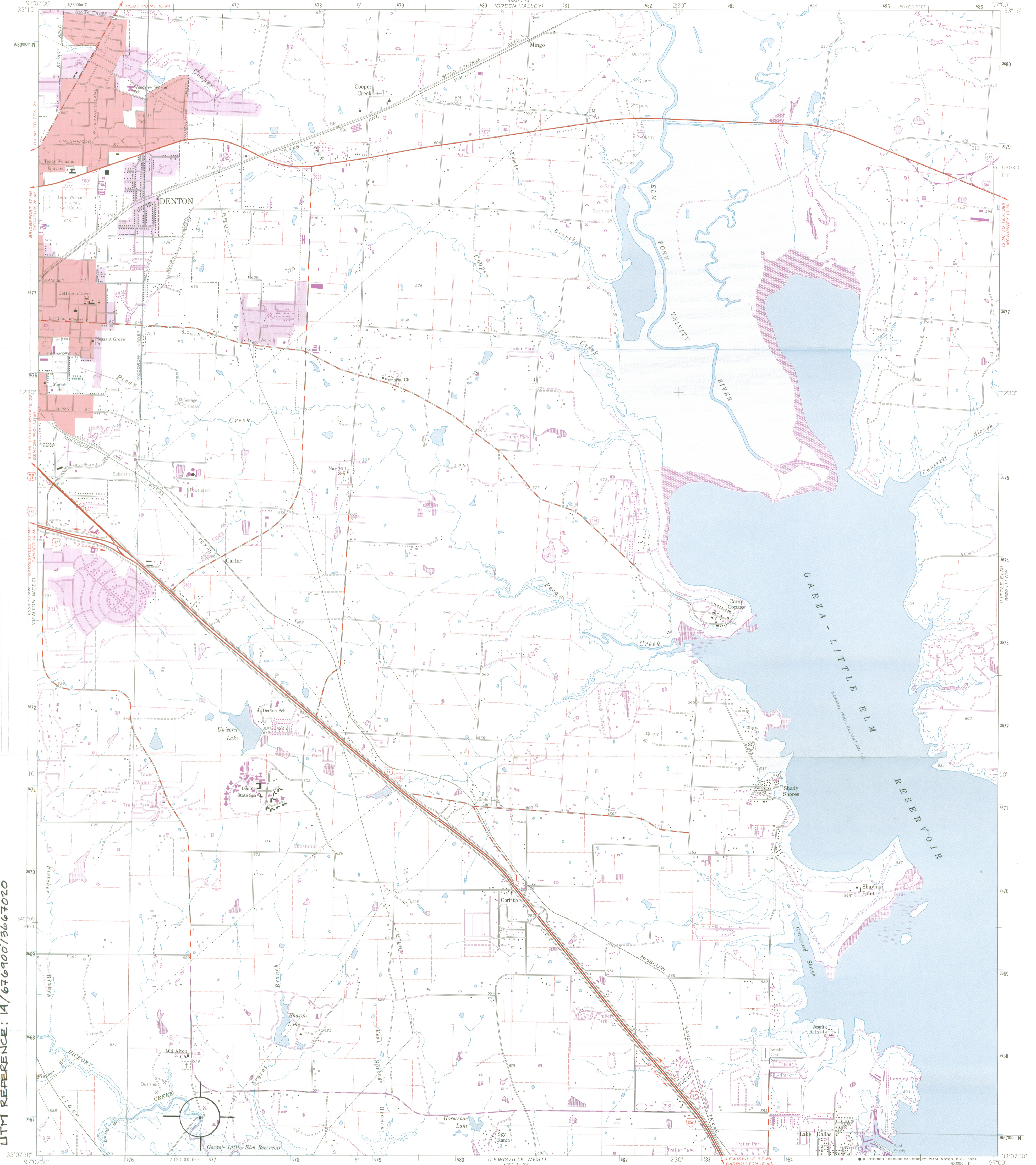


Old Alton Bridge
Copper Canyon Road
Vic. of Copper Canyon, Denton County, TX

Photo by Mark Atkins, January 1986; negative
on file at Denton Co. Historical Commission,
Denton, Texas

Northwest underside oblique; camera facing
southeast

Photo 11 of 11



OLD ALTON BRIDGE
COPPER CANTON ROAD
COPPER CANTON, DENTON CO, TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 14/676900/3667020

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods
Aerial photographs taken 1957. Field check 1960
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,
north central zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines
where generally visible on aerial photographs
This information is unchecked
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Areas covered by dashed light blue pattern are subject
to controlled inundation to 532 feet

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1968 and 1973. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

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

MAP PHOTOINSPECTED
1978
No major culture or drainage
changes observed



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

DENTON EAST, TEX.
N3307.5-W9700.7.5
1960
PHOTOREVISED 1968 AND 1973
AMS 6550 11 NE-SERIES V882



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

January 24, 1986

Operations Division
Office Operations Branch

Mr. Peter Maxam
National Register Office
Texas Historical Commission
Post Office Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Mr. Maxam:

Recent correspondence between Ms. June Tyler of the Denton County Historical Society (DCHS) and this office of the Corps of Engineers indicates a desire by the DCHS to nominate the Old Alton Bridge to the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge, erected in 1887, is located on Corps of Engineers property where it crosses the Hickory Creek area of Lake Lewisville. The Corps of Engineers has no objection to the nomination being undertaken by the Denton County Historical Society.

If you have any questions, please contact Robert Scott at (817)334-4626.

Sincerely,

Allie J. Majors, P.E.
Chief, Operation Division

~~Copies furnished:~~

Ms. June Tyler
Rural Route #2, Lot 12
Mobile Drive
Lewisville, Texas 75067

Susan Andrews
Texas Historic Commission
Post Office Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

477-1922



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

April 13, 1988

RECEIVED
APR 15 1988
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Operations Division
Office Operations Branch

Mr. Peter Maxson
Senior Architectural Historian
Texas Historical Commission
Post Office Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Mr. Maxson:

Thank you for your letter of April 6, 1988 concerning the submission of the Old Alton Bridge National Register of Historic Places nomination. Since the bridge is not technically Corp of Engineers property, we have no objection to the State Historic Preservation Officer submitting the nomination to the Keeper of the National Register.

Thank you for your interest in the Corps of Engineers cultural resources program. Please contact Mr. Robert Scott at telephone (817) 334-4626 if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

L. M. Hawkins, Jr.
Chief, Office Operations Branch

COPIES FURNISHED:

Mr. Jerry Saunders
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region VI
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202

Mr. David Curtis
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services
9A33 Fritz Lanham Building
819 Taylor
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

Mr. Rollin MacRae
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744