

POSSUM KINGDOM STONE ARCH BRIDGE
Texas Historic Bridges Recording Project
Spanning Brazos River at State Route 16
Graford Vicinity
Palo Pinto County
Texas

HAER No. TX-62

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
1849 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
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Location: Spanning the Brazos River at State Route 16, Graford vicinity, Palo Pinto County, Texas.
UTM: 14/555040/3635505
USGS: Fortune Bend, Texas, quadrangle (1984).

Date of Construction: 1940-1942.

Designer: Texas State Highway Department.

Builder: Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Present Owner: Texas Department of Transportation.

Present Use: Vehicular bridge.

Significance: The Possum Kingdom Stone Arch Bridge is the longest and most substantial masonry arch bridge in Texas. State highway engineers chose the heavy masonry form to withstand flood waters released from the Morris Sheppard Dam one mile upstream. The bridge features fine craftsmanship and is argued to be one of the best examples of WPA road work in Texas. Many of the WPA laborers were unemployed coal miners who had acquired their stone-cutting skills underground. The bridge includes eighteen spans of locally quarried limestone varying in length from twenty-three to thirty feet. All piers are founded on bedrock; most are 3'-0" wide, although piers seven and thirteen are heavier "bracing piers," tapering to a 5'-0" width at the top. The structure's total length is 433'-4". Despite having been overtopped by floods, the bridge remains in virtually unaltered condition.
Source: T. Lindsay Baker, *Building the Lone Star State: An Illustrated Guide to Historic Sites* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986), pp. 193-195.

Historian: Estella M. Chung, August 1996. Revised September 1998.

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Project Information:

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