

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Mass	
COUNTY: Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Choate Bridge

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION Congressional District # 6

STREET AND NUMBER:
Route 1A over the Ipswich River (South Main Street)

CITY OR TOWN:
Ipswich

STATE Massachusetts	CODE 25	COUNTY: Essex	CODE 009
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Town of Ipswich

STREET AND NUMBER:
Town Hall

CITY OR TOWN: Ipswich	STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Essex County Registry of Deeds, South District

STREET AND NUMBER:
32 Federal Street

CITY OR TOWN: Salem	STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth

DATE OF SURVEY: 1967 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Massachusetts Historical Commission, Office of the Secretary

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House

CITY OR TOWN: Boston	STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Massachusetts
COUNTY: Essex
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Choate Bridge in Ipswich spans the Ipswich River and constitutes a section of Main Street (Route 1A). Built in 1764 and widened in 1838, it is constructed entirely of rough hewn granite blocks.

The 1764 construction plans read: "the two end Abutments to be extended so far into the river as to leave about 68 feet space between them. That in the Middle of said space be erected a Butment about 20 feet long and about 8 feet wide. That from the same middle to the two end Butments and Arch be turned so as to leave about 30 feet for the Passage of Water under each Arch." After work had started on the bridge, it was agreed to add to the bridge, instead of "rails", a "wall guard not exceeding 15 inches wide at the Bottom nor less than 9 inches at the Top, and about 3 feet high." The guard wall on the western side still exists today.

Set into the south end of the western wall guard, facing the street, is the stone inscribed with the words "Choate Bridge, Built by Town and County, 1764." When the bridge was completed, the Court of General Sessions ordered it be so named in recognition of "the great Care and Assiduity of the Honorable John Choate, Esq."

The bridge, 80'6" long and 20'6" wide in 1764, was widened to 35'6" on the eastern side in 1838. On the western, 1764 side, small, evenly cut stones are used for the voussoirs of each of the two elliptical arches and in the wall guards of the bridge. The spandrels are set with rubble. The eastern, 1838 facade consists of random ashlar, each stone about twice the size of that used in the earlier construction. Each arch rests on a heavy base of random rubble.

Looking at the arches from underneath, the clear division between the two construction periods is sharply defined in the intrados, the cut stones of the earlier period again roughly half the size of the stones set later.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1764

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Choate Bridge, Ipswich, is significant in the history of American road building as an example of early stone construction. It has been cited as such to the Society of American Bridge Engineers by the Massachusetts Department of Public Works. Built in 1764, Choate Bridge is one of the oldest stone bridges in Massachusetts, if not the oldest. On that basis it has been certified a Massachusetts Historic Landmark.

Choate Bridge was built to replace an old cart bridge on the same site. The project was initiated by the Essex County Court (in March, 1764), but the Town of Ipswich agreed to share the cost of the new structure. In December, 1764, the Essex County Court voted to name the bridge in honor of Col. John Choate, who had supervised its construction. Col. Choate spent many months strengthening provincial forts during the French and Indian Wars and had acquired a reputation as an expert on building with stone. Besides being an engineer, Col Choate was also -- simultaneously -- judge of the Court of General Sessions, Chief of the Court of Common Pleas, town moderator, county treasurer and Governor's Councillor.

The eastern side of the Choate Bridge was widened in 1838. The western side and parapet, with its inscription to Col. Choate, remain unchanged.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Essex County Court, Records, April to December 1764.
 Felt, Joseph, History of Ipswich, Essex to Hamilton, Cambridge, 1834.
 Ipswich, Town of, Records, Meetings, March & April, 1764, March 1765.
 Thompson, Katherine, "Choate Bridge," in Ipswich Chronicle, February 4, 1965.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES								
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	42°	40'	46"	70°	50'	16"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Anne Wardwell, Survey Director

ORGANIZATION: Massachusetts Historical Commission, Office of the Secretary DATE: March 18, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:
State House

CITY OR TOWN: Boston STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name John F. A. Downer
 Secretary of the Commonwealth and
 Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
 Title Commission

Date March 6, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Town: IPSWICH, MASS.

CHOATE BRIDGE

U.S.G.S.: Ipswich, Mass.
1966

Scale: 1 : 24,000



1. Choate Bridge, Ipswich, western side. (Photograph: Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1971)



2. Choate Bridge, Ipswich, eastern side (Photograph: Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1971)



3. Choate Bridge, Ipswich, under arch (Photograph: Massachusetts Historical Commission, 1971)

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
SCALE:			
DATE:			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Property boundaries where required. North arrow. Latitude and longitude reference. 			

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Massachusetts	
COUNTY	
Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Choate Bridge			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Route 1-A, South Main Street, over the Ipswich River			
CITY OR TOWN: Ipswich			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Massachusetts	025	Essex	009
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Massachusetts Historical Commission			
DATE OF PHOTO: 1971			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Massachusetts Historical Commission, Archives Museum, Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston, MA 02133			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Choate Bridge, Ipswich, western side			

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
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STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
SCALE:			
DATE:			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Property boundaries where required. North arrow. Latitude and longitude reference. 			

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
Route 1-A, South Main Street, over the Ipswich River			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Ipswich			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Massachusetts	025	Essex	009
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Massachusetts Historical Commission			
DATE OF PHOTO: 1971			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Massachusetts Historical Commission, Archives Museum			
Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston, MA 02133			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
Choate Bridge, Ipswich, eastern side			

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

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FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: Choate Bridge			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Route 1-A, South Main Street over the Ipswich River			
CITY OR TOWN: Ipswich			
STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025	COUNTY: Essex	CODE 009
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE: U. S. G. S. 7 1/2' quadrangle, "Ipswich, Mass."			
SCALE: 1 : 24,000			
DATE: 1950			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Property boundaries where required. North arrow. Latitude and longitude reference. 			

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

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COUNTY Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

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COMMON: Choate Bridge			
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STATE: Massachusetts	CODE 025	COUNTY: Essex	CODE 009
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Massachusetts Historical Commission			
DATE OF PHOTO: 1971			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Massachusetts Historical Commission, Archives Museum, Office of the Secretary, State House, Boston, MA 02133			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Choate Bridge, Ipswich, under arch			