

CANADIAN RIVER WAGON BRIDGE
Texas Historic Bridges Recording Project
Spanning Canadian River West of U.S. Route 60
Canadian
Hemphill County
Texas

HAER No. TX-41

HAER
TEX
106-CANA
1-

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

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Location: Spanning Canadian River west of U.S. Route 60, Canadian, Hemphill County, Texas.
UTM: 14/376280/3977150
USGS: Canadian East, Texas, quadrangle (1972).

Date of Construction: 1915-1916.

Designer: Canton Bridge Company, Canton, Ohio (Kansas City branch).

Builder: Canton Bridge Company, Canton, Ohio (Kansas City branch).

Present Owner: Hemphill County.

Present Use: Carries natural gas pipeline.

Significance: This 3,255'-0"-long structure is the longest pin-connected bridge in Texas, and was the state's longest metal truss bridge prior to the completion of the Rainbow Bridge connecting Orange and Port Arthur in 1938. Two previous bridges at this site built in 1888 and 1889 were washed away by floods, and after some delays, voters finally approved a 1915 initiative to build a more permanent crossing of the river. The structure completed in 1916 included seventeen 155'-0" long and 27'-0" high pin-connected Parker through trusses for a 2,635'-0" total length. The 16'-0" roadway rested atop concrete piers with steel footings driven 65'-0" into the riverbed. When high water widened the river in 1923, the county paid the Austin Bridge Company of Dallas to provide four additional Parker through trusses with the same dimensions and the same substructure. This increased the bridge's length by 620'-0". By the 1950s, the 16'-0" roadway had become too narrow to safely carry passing traffic. In 1953, a new \$1 million concrete and steel structure, built with state highway funds by the Austin Bridge Company of Dallas, bypassed the original bridge. Today, the Canadian River

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Wagon Bridge carries a natural gas pipeline for the High Plains Natural Gas Company.

Source: T. Lindsay Baker, *Building the Lone Star State: An Illustrated Guide to Historic Sites* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986), pp. 29-31.

Historian:

J. Philip Gruen, August 1996.

Project Information:

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