

TENNESSEE MULTIPLE PROPERTY FORM

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Title: Historic Resources of Williamson County

Historic Name: Old Town Bridge (WM-47)

Common Name: Old Town Bridge

NATIONAL REGISTER

Classification: Structure

Owner: Henry Goodpasture, 3800 Whitland Ave., Nashville, TN 37205

Location: Over Brown's Creek twenty yards west of Old Natchez Trace Road.

<u>Contributing:</u>		<u>Non-Contributing:</u>	
Buildings	0	Buildings	0
Structures	1	Structures	0
Sites	0	Sites	0
<u>Total:</u>	1	<u>Total:</u>	0

Found in...

Description:

The Old Town Bridge site consists of two large limestone block bridge abutments on the north and south banks of Brown's Creek. Constructed in 1801, the limestone blocks were dressed and laid in a rectangular pattern approximately fifteen feet in height. The abutments were originally spanned by a frame bridge of unknown appearance which carried pedestrian and vehicular traffic on the Natchez Trace. This bridge was replaced several times in the 19th and 20th centuries following deterioration and floods. The limestone block abutments are the only remnants of the original bridge.

The bridge was used until ca. 1913 when a new road and bridge was built just east of the old route of the trace. This road has been paved and remains in use approximately twenty yards east of the Brown's Creek Bridge site. Brown Creek flows into the Big Harpeth River fifty yards east of the bridge.

Period of Significance: 1801- ca. 1820

Area of Significance: Transportation

Criterion: A

Architect/Builder: U.S. Government, Builder

Statement of Significance:

The Old Town Bridge is the only remaining historic bridge site associated with the original Natchez Trace in Williamson County. Completed in 1801 by U.S. Army soldiers, the bridge was one of several constructed in the county as part of the important Natchez Trace road system. Extending from Nashville, Tennessee to Natchez, Mississippi, the Trace played an important part in the transportation system of the region. Flatboatmen from the Midwest and Tennessee would float down the Mississippi River to New Orleans to sell their produce. A overland route was necessary to return home and the Natchez Trace

was the major route through Mississippi and Tennessee. The importance of the Trace diminished after 1820 when new road systems and steamboat traffic became the major transportation routes.

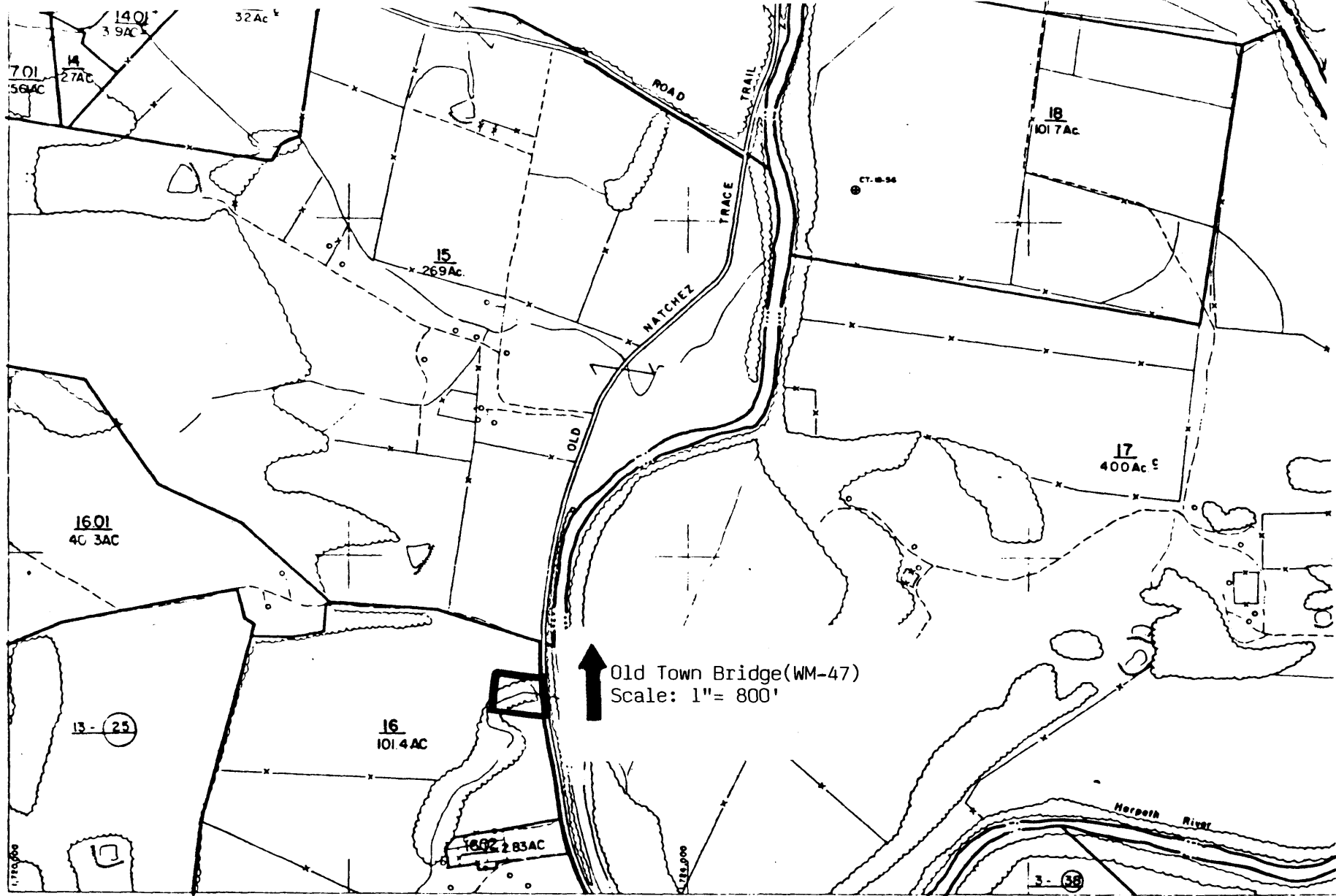
In Williamson County two different routes branched from the Natchez Trace in the southwest section of the county. The original route of the army road passed through Leiper's Fork and along the Big Harpeth River. A second route was used which ran along Backbone Ridge in the western section of the county. The importance of the Natchez Trace in Williamson County was recognized in 1975 when its ridge route was listed on the National Register. The Old Town Bridge site is the most significant historical site along the river route of the Natchez Trace.

Acreage: 1.4 acres

UTM References: Leipers Fork Quad/16/ 505750/3983300

Verbal Boundary and Justification: The boundary for the Old Town Bridge is illustrated on accompanying Williamson County tax map # 26, lot 16. The boundary is drawn to include the bridge site and approximately 25 yards of fields in each direction with the eastern boundary running along the present Natchez Trace road. The boundary is sufficient to protect the historical setting of the site.

Supplemental Bibliographical References:



↑ Old Town Bridge (WM-47)
Scale: 1" = 800'

PREPARED FOR
TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION
 BY
TENNESSEE MAPPING AND ENGINEERING SERVICE, INC.
 NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
 AND
WILLIAMS-STACKHOUSE AND ASSOCIATES
 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

5 PARCEL NUMBER
 6 PARCEL MOON
 7 INTERIOR TRACT LINE
 8 DISTRICT LINE
 20 SUB-LOT NO.
 PARCEL OUTLINE
 TOTAL ACREAGE
 SECTION CORNERS

37 (AC) PARCELS CONTROLLING MAP NO.
 FENCE
 CHURCH
 SCHOOL
 WOODY AREA
 POND

CREEK
 STATE LINE
 CO. LINE
 COMPO. LIMITS
 TRANSMISSION LINE
 ROAD
 RAILROAD
 RIDGE LINE