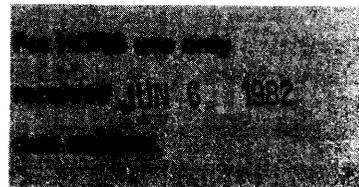


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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

RECEIVED

historic Gianella Bridge

JUN 30 1981

and/or common Sacramento River Bridge at Hamilton City

OHP

2. Location

street & number State Highway 32 across the Sacramento River

n/a not for publication

city, town Hamilton City

X vicinity of

congressional district

1

state California

code 06

county Glenn/Butte

code 021/007

3. Classification

Category

district
 building(s)
 structure
 site
 object

Ownership

public
 private
 both
Public Acquisition
 in process
 being considered
 n/a

Status

occupied
 unoccupied
 work in progress
Accessible
 yes: restricted
 yes: unrestricted
 no

Present Use

agriculture
 commercial
 educational
 entertainment
 government
 industrial
 military
 museum
 park
 private residence
 religious
 scientific
 transportation
 other:

4. Owner of Property

name California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS)

street & number 1120 N Street

city, town Sacramento

n/a vicinity of

state California 95814

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. CALTRANS Office of Structures Maintenance

street & number 1120 N Street, Room 3303

city, town Sacramento

state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

CALTRANS/Office of Historic Preservation Survey of Pre-1935 State Highway
title Bridges, 1978-80

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978-80

federal state county local

depository for survey records CALTRANS Headquarters Environmental Planning/
California Office of Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 2390

city, town

Sacramento

state California

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Gianella Bridge is composed of two steel through Pratt truss approach spans, each 133' in length, and one steel through Pratt truss center swing span, 311 feet in length. The bridge rests on mass concrete piers and wing abutments. The structure carries two traffic lanes between steel railings, crossing the Sacramento River with no skew.

As built, the bridge was timber-decked. This was removed in 1937 and was replaced with laminated decking with asphalt surface. In 1954, the timber stringers and laminated deck were replaced by steel stringers and an open steel grate-type deck. The swing span was originally electrically powered. By 1938, the small number of required openings of the bridge led to disconnection of the electrical machinery, and provision for manual operation, an operation which required eight men to open and close the bridge. In 1972 an agreement was reached with the Coast Guard that the bridge need not be maintained for opening, but that it would have to be restorable to that condition within six months of written notification by the Coast Guard. Accordingly, the bridge has not been opened since that time.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1908-1911 **Builder/Architect** Cotton Brothers & Co., Contractors/
John B. Leonard, C.E.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Gianella Bridge is the oldest swing span movable bridge on the State highway system. Its erection is historically noteworthy, marking a rare instance of cooperation between two counties which were intense rivals. It is the work of a master: John B. Leonard was perhaps the state's leading bridge engineer in the first quarter of the 20th century. The Gianella is Leonard's only known steel bridge, his specialty being reinforced concrete bridges. Location of the bridge was influenced by Vincenzo Gianella, a civic and agricultural leader of Butte County. Completion of the bridge furthered development of the sugar beet industry in the northern Sacramento Valley in and around Hamilton City.

In early 1907 both Glenn and Butte Counties desired to bridge the Sacramento River, but disagreed intensely over the location of the crossing. Butte County favored a crossing a few miles downstream from Hamilton City, in order to better serve the city of Chico. Glenn County desired the crossing at Hamilton City to favor that town's business, most specifically the Alta California Sugar Beet Company. Spurring the desire for a bridge was a current boom in sugar beet farming. The dispute continued until Vincenzo Gianella, owner of 6,500 acres of farmland in Butte County and a director of the Butte County National Bank of Chico, gave his support to the Glenn County proposal for a bridge at Hamilton City. Gianella, who devoted extensive amounts of his acreage to sugar beets and wanted the crossing close to the refinery at Hamilton City, pressured the Butte County Supervisors into accepting what had come to be called the Gianella Site.

Previously, Butte County had contracted with John B. Leonard to provide the design for a reinforced concrete bridge, choosing Leonard's design from among seven proposals, including four for steel bridges, two for reinforced concrete, and one for a stone masonry bridge. By March 1908 the two counties had decided against the reinforced concrete design as too costly, choosing the apparent economy of lower initial cost for a steel bridge. This sent Leonard back to his drawing board and to his early training in steel engineering.

Construction began in June 1908, with the first major shipment of materials arriving June 25 on the steamer DOVER. By December 1908, one month from the specified completion date, Cotton Brothers--the contractors from Oakland--were still waiting delivery of the steel for the swing span. Then nature intervened. The winter of 1908-09 was extremely wet, with Northern California rivers running at record levels. At the bridge site, bottom scour tilted the center pier out of position and washed out its protective timbers. Cotton Brothers refused to accept responsibility for the damage, and threats of litigation followed. This dragged on until June 1909, when the contractor agreed to bear the cost of pier removal and replacement, and to finish the bridge. When it proved necessary to use dynamite to remove the old pier, progress slowed again. In December 1909, one month from the new completion date of January 1910, Cotton Brothers asked for and received an extension to August 1, 1910. In early August, they requested a further extension to August 15, but

9. Major Bibliographical References

Snyder, J.W., "Report on Gianella Bridge on 03-But-32, P.M. 0.00, Sacramento River," California Department of Transportation, Sacramento, December 1, 1977.

Snyder, J.W., "The Bridges of John B. Leonard, 1905-1925," presented to the Northern Pacific Coast Chapter, Society of Architectural Historians, October 10, 1981.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Nord, Calif.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	0	5	8	6	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	4	1	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

The property consists of 600 linear feet of State Highway 32 crossing the Sacramento River between Glenn County and Butte County, with the width of the property defined by the physical width of the bridge and its piers.

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

state California code 06 county Glenn code 021

state California code 06 county Butte code 007

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John W. Snyder, M.A., Architectural Historian

organization N./A.

date November 26, 1981

street & number 3429 Wemberley Drive

telephone 916/487-6472

city or town Sacramento

state California

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature K m Ellison

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date May 26, 1982

For HCRS use only

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

located in the
National Register

date 7/8/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Records

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

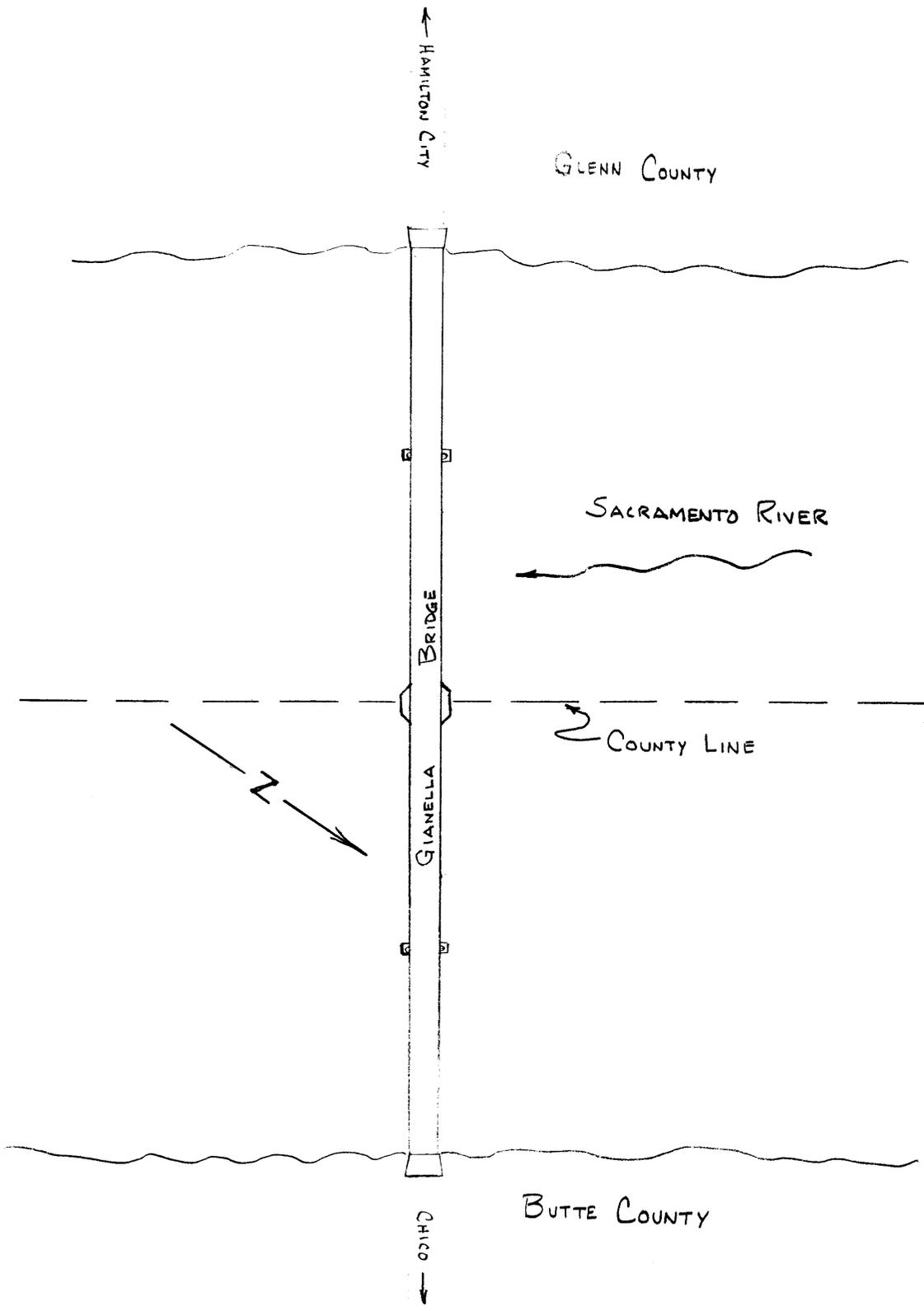
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

the Supervisors refused, invoking a daily penalty for each day after August 1. The construction dragged on, with the joint boards finally informally accepting the bridge on December 8, 1910, though it was early January before it formally opened. Final cost to the counties was estimated at \$260,000 to \$270,000, and the bridge was hailed as a bargain sure to well serve local interests. The structure was taken into the State highway system in the early 1930s.



GIANELLA BRIDGE
GLENN/BUTTE COUNTIES

SCALE: 1" = 100'