

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
Mass.

COUNTY:
Essex

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER
AUG 21 1972

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

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☐ Site ☐ Building ☒ Structure ☐ Object	☒ Public ☐ Private ☐ Both	☒ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☐ Restricted ☒ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Agricultural ☐ Commercial ☐ Educational ☐ Entertainment	☐ Government ☐ Industrial ☐ Military ☐ Museum	☐ Park ☐ Private Residence ☐ Religious ☐ Scientific	☒ Transportation ☐ Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____	☐ Comments _____ _____
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4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Town of Ipswich

STREET AND NUMBER:
Town Hall

CITY OR TOWN:
Ipswich

STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 025

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

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Massachusetts

COUNTY: Essex

ENTRY NUMBER
AUG 21 1972

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☒ Excellent	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	☒ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ 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)

☐ Pre-Columbian

☐ 16th Century

☒ 18th Century

☐ 20th Century

☐ 15th Century

☐ 17th Century

☐ 19th Century

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

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal

☐ Prehistoric

☐ Historic

☐ Agriculture

☐ Architecture

☐ Art

☐ Commerce

☐ Communications

☐ Conservation

☐ Education

☒ Engineering

☐ Industry

☐ Invention

☐ Landscape

☐ Architecture

☐ Literature

☐ Military

☐ Music

☐ Political

☐ Religion/Phi-

losophy

☐ Science

☐ Sculpture

☐ Social/Human-

itarian

☐ Theater

☒ Transportation

☐ Urban Planning

☐ Other (Specify)

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	0 0 0	0 0 0		42° 40' 46"	70° 50' 16"	
NE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SW	0 0 0	0 0 0				

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
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
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. H. [Signature]
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.

[Signature]
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 8/21/72

ATTEST: [Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

PROPERTY

Choate Bridge

Essex

STATE

Mass

DATE OF RECEIPT

3/16/72

YES

NO

NUMBER

REGISTERED

AUG 21 1972

DATA PAGE

PHOTO (S)

PHOTO DESCRIPTION (S)

MAP (S)

MAP DESCRIPTION (S)

LOGGED

ACKNOWLEDGE

3/16/72

RESUBMIT

REVIEW

HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

ARCHITECT

ASST. KEEPER

KEEPER

WRITER/EDITOR

DIRECTOR, OAHP

EDITORIAL PROCESSING, EDITOR

Federal Registry Entry

9-5-72

Annual Edition Entry

Logged

AUG 21 1972

Card

AUG 21 1972

COMMENTS:

WORKING NUMBER

3/16/72/381

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

6



OK Indigo 8/8/72

OK Jay. Seale 8/9/72

OK Charles 8-10-72

OK Mullen 8/5/72

OK 8/16

OK 8/14/72



Choate Bridge, Ipswich - Eastern side

MHC 1971

NPS Number

Title:

Loc.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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
AUG 21 1972	

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. 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

PROP



NPS Number

August 21, 1972

Title:

Choate Bridge

Loc.

Essex County, Mass.
Choate Bridge, Ipswich,
eastern sideUNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL 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 AUG 21 1972	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. 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

PROP



Choate Bridge, Ipswich - Western side

MHC

1971

NPS Number

August 21, 1972

Title:

Choate Bridge

Loc.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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

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

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

CODE

COUNTY:

025

Essex

CODE

009

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

STATE

Massachusetts

COUNTY

Essex

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

AUG 21 1972



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

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

STATE

Massachusetts

COUNTY

Essex

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

AUG 21 1972

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

COUNTY:

025

Essex

CODE

009

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:

U. S. G. S. 7 1/2' quadrangle, "Ipswich, Mass."

SCALE: 1 : 24,000

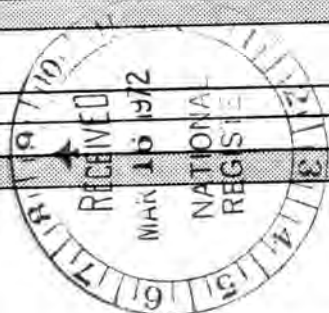
DATE: 1966

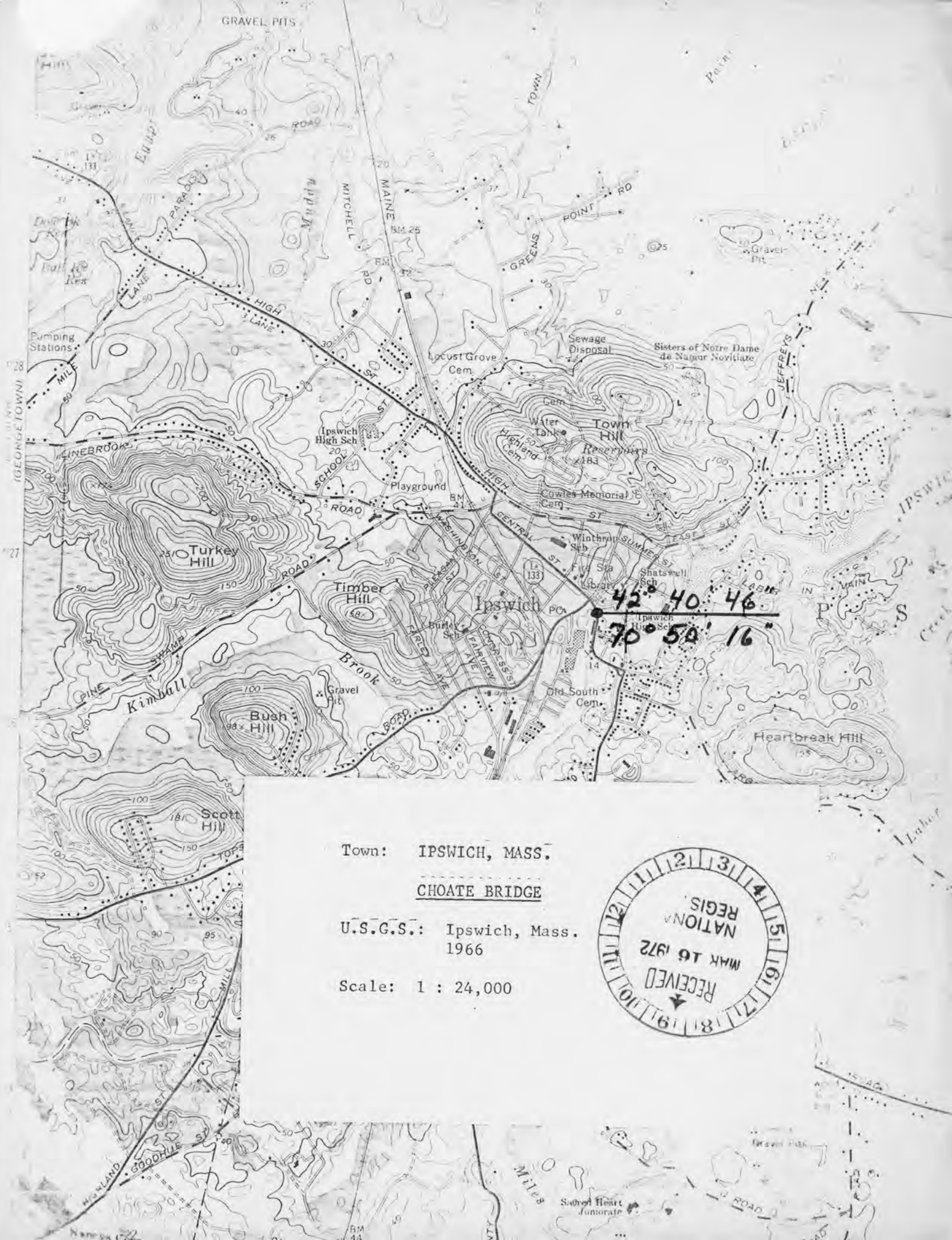
4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





Town: IPSWICH, MASS.

CHOATE BRIDGE

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

Scale: 1 : 24,000





Zone 19
E 349450
N 4726620

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1941-1942. Revised 1966
Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 213 (1965)
and 243 (1964). This information is not intended for navigational
purposes.

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown
Boundaries in tidewater areas from information
furnished by Massachusetts Department of Public Works

UTM GRID AND 1966 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 24,000
1 MILE
1 KILOMETER
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET-DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 8.6 FEET
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
State Route

IPSWICH, MASS.
N4237.5—W7045/7.5

1966
AMS 6869 III NE—SERIES V814



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of the Secretary
State House, Boston 02133

John F. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth

March 7, 1972

Office of Archeology & Historic Preservation
National Park Service
801 Nineteenth Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20006

CERTIFIED MAIL

Attention: Miss Mary Means

Enclosed is a National Register submission for:

1. Choate Bridge, Ipswich, Massachusetts

It has been declared eligible for submission by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the State Review Board, and has been signed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth, John F. X. Davoren, Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission and designated State Liaison Officer.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard W. Hale, Jr.", written in dark ink.

Richard W. Hale, Jr.
Acting Chairman
Massachusetts Historical Commission

RWH/akc
enclosures

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered AUG 21 1972

Name

Location

Middlesex Canal

Towns of Woburn, Wilmington,
Billerica, Chelmsford, Lowell
Middlesex County

Choate Bridge

Ipswich
Essex County

Also Notified

Hon. Edward M. Kennedy
Hon. Edward W. Brooke
Hon. F. Bradford Morse
Hon. Michael J. Harrington

Director, Northeast Region

HR NRoland:mm 8/21/72

State Liaison Officer
Hon. John F. X. Davoren
Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical
Commission
Office of the Secretary, State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133