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No. 92 Original

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ALEXANDER L. STEVAS

In the

# Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1981

Filed Apr. 29, 1985

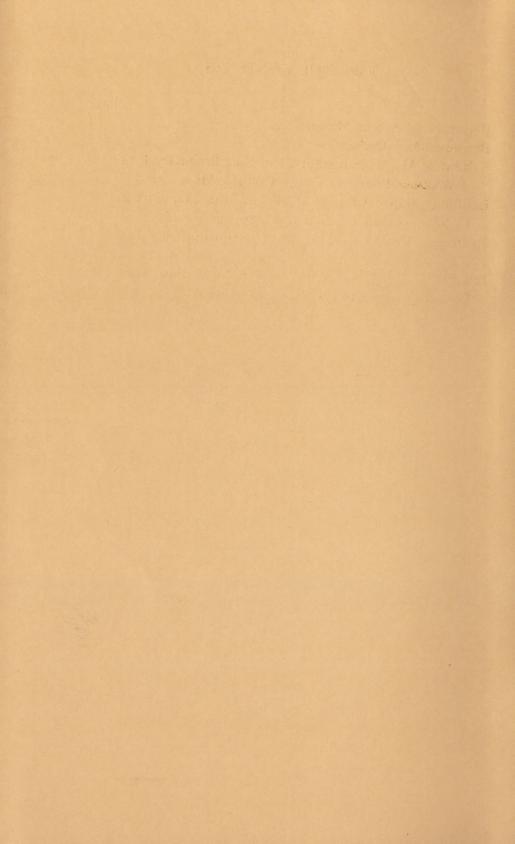
STATE OF ARKANSAS,
PLAINTIFF - COUNTER-DEFENDANT.

U.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI,
DEFENDANT - COUNTER-CLAIMANT.

REPORT OF SPECIAL MASTER

Paul C. Reardon Hingham, Massachusetts Special Master



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STATE OF ARKANSAS, PLAINTIFF - COUNTER-DEFENDANT,

D.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI,
DEFENDANT - COUNTER-CLAIMANT.

#### REPORT OF SPECIAL MASTER

TO THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND ASSOCIATE JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES:

This litigation concerns the correct location of the Missis-sippi-Arkansas boundary between Lee County, Arkansas, and Tunica County, Mississippi in the vicinity of Bordeaux Point and Whiskey Island/Bordeaux Island.

The undersigned was appointed on July 2, 1982, as Special Master in the case with authority relative to pleadings additional to those already filed. Authority was also granted to him to summon witnesses, issue subpoenas, take evidence, and finally to submit such reports as he deemed appropriate.

There followed a number of conferences with counsel at the first of which on October 8, 1982 issues were discussed, discovery procedures were established, and a tentative trial date was set. At a second conference with counsel on November 3, 1983, after elaborate discovery had taken place

and a number of conferences held by telephone, the Special Master was presented with a proposed settlement of the litigation. Various questions were raised by the Special Master at that time, particularly with reference to one portion of the proposed boundary between Arkansas and Mississippi which had been left undefined and, therefore, open to future litigation. The parties then embarked on further investigation relative to that portion. Counsel and the Special Master met again on September 26-28, 1984, in Memphis, Tennessee, in a comprehensive discussion designed to terminate the litigation in accord with the law and the facts. At this meeting the Special Master and counsel joined in a low-level flight over the area in controversy.

There followed additional study of remaining questions by the parties and then submission to the Special Master of a Stipulation with exhibits.

The Stipulation has been in process of preparation for many months and the Special Master has been in constant contact with the parties as revisions of earlier drafts have taken place. The Special Master hereby adopts completely and incorporates herein by reference the contents of the Stipulation as now presented as being a faithful report of the facts and a valid statement of the law governing the disposition of this action. In the interests of brevity, therefore, the Special Master does not repeat the history of this case in his report. Nor does he review in detail the applicable law which he submits is competently and thoroughly treated in the Stipulation.

As will be noted in the Stipulation, discovery has been exhaustive, hampered only by flood conditions in the vicinity of Bordeaux Point. The parties have agreed upon a settlement which establishes the boundary along a line described in Exhibit A as amended, attached to the Stipulation. Of course, the Court need not enter a consent decree and the Special Master ought not to recommend the entry of such a decree, merely because it embodies an agreement by the parties to the

litigation if such an agreement has "no relation to law" and where the parties might be "acting under compulsions and motives that have no relation to the performance of (the Court's) Article III functions." Vermont v. New York, 417 U.S. 270, 277 (1974). In Maine v. New Hampshire, 426 U.S. 363 (1976) this Court considered the proper standard to apply to proposed consent decrees which attempt to specify the concrete location of a boundary which has alrady been defined by general rules of law. In that case the Court deemed it appropriate to accept a proposed boundary agreement if it were not "wholly contrary to relevant evidence...even if we would reach a different conclusion upon the same evidence." 426 U.S. at 369.

In this case, the Special Master has concluded that the parties have reasonably applied correct legal principles to the relevant facts and that their agreement should be given effect.

Consequently, the Special Master recommends that the boundary between Arkansas and Mississippi in the vicinity of Bordeaux Point and Whiskey Island/Bordeaux Island should be established on the line described in Exhibit A, as amended, and defined in the recommended decree. The law and facts which support that boundary may conveniently be considered in three segments.

- 1) The parts indicated on Exhibit B between points P1 and P8 and between points P9 and P18 constitute the live thalweg of the Mississippi River. The facts stipulated demonstrate that the thalweg of the River between these two sets of points is the result of a gradual process of erosion and accretion. The settled rule is that the Mississippi-Arkansas boundary in those areas lies in the thalweg of the River, Arkansas v. Mississippi, 250 U.S. 39 (1919), as it has been altered by accretive changes. Arkansas v. Tennessee, 397 U.S. 88, 89 (1970).
- 2) That part indicated on Exhibit B between points P18 and P32 constitutes the dead thalweg of the River as it existed

prior to 1942-1947, running easterly from the present locus of the live River to Fox Island Bend. The River abandoned this course as a result of an avulsion created by the cut-off of Hardin Point by the United States Corp of Engineers in 1942. Under established law, this avulsion fixed the boundary in the abandoned thalweg. Arkansas v. Tennessee, 397 U.S. 88, 89 (1970); Missouri v. Nebraska, 196 U.S. 23, 35 (1904); Nebraska v. Iowa, 143 U.S. 359, 361 (1892).

3) That part of the proposed boundary between points P8 and P9 on Exhibit B was originally omitted from the proposal settlement. As stated in the Stipulation at P13, "the Special Master became concerned about the propriety of submitting to the Supreme Court an agreed boundary having as shown on Exhibit B a gap between the two points of intersection of the current live thalweg of the River with the upper and lower extensions of the dead thalweg in "old" Walnut Bend looping the Whiskey Island/Bordeaux Island area." The Stipulation recounts at PPs13 and 14 the "extensive" and painstaking work in which the parties engaged relative to the location of the state boundary in this area north of the Mississippi River. Without more, it appeared initially that the location of the common boundary would, under settled law, be the dead thalweg of "old" Walnut Bend.

However, the investigation of the parties produced agreement that while the state boundary in the western portion of the "old" Walnut Bend area should be established along the line of the dead thalweg, the eastern line should be established somewhat to the east of the dead thalweg in that area as shown on Exhibit K. The history of this line, dating from the avulsive cutthrough of the Mississippi River in 1874 which abandoned the "old" Walnut Bend area, is thoroughly described in the Stipulation at PPs36-41.

It is apparent that Arkansas and Mississippi have for many years recognized as the eastern boundary in the eastern portion of "old" Walnut Bend the so-called "Guyer line" (Exhibit F) based on a survey made in 1974 and 1975 by W. H. Guyer which in effect reasserted earlier lines of surveys made by A. L. Cummings in 1910 and 1912, and C. B. Bailey in 1924. In addition, a series of decisions in state and Federal courts and recorded agreements of private land owners have honored the Guyer line. The taxing authorities of the Arkansas and Mississippi counties involved have for years recognized as the state boundary the private boundaries resulting from litigation and agreement, and their current assessment rolls reflect their recognition of the Guyer line (Exhibits G & H).

Under the doctrine of acquiescence, the rule of avulsion and the rule of the thalweg both yield to this long acceptance of the Guyer line by all interested public and private parties. *Arkansas* v. *Tennessee*. 310 U.S. 563, 571 (1910). It follows that the boundary in the "old" Walnut Bend area should be shown on Exhibit K.

For greater convenience Exhibits F, K, E and B attached to the Stipulation are lettered respectively as Exhibits A, B, C, and D reproduced at pp. 17-20.

#### Recommendations

In accord with the foregoing, I recommend as follows:

- that the proposed consent decree appended be allowed and entered;
- 2) that the compensation of the Special Master, his legal assistant and clerical costs be proposed in a subsequent application, to be thereafter determined by the Court and to be borne equally by the States of Arkansas and Mississippi.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul C. Reardon

Special Master



## In the Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1981

No. 92 Original

STATE OF ARKANSAS.
PLAINTIFF - COUNTER-DEFENDANT.

v.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI,
DEFENDANT - COUNTER-CLAIMANT.

#### DECREE

This Cause came on this date for final adjudication upon the Report of the Special Master and the Court, being fully advised in the premises, finds, that the Report of the Special Master should be adopted and approved as submitted, and a Final Decree entered accordingly.

It Is Now Ordered, Adjudged, and Decreed as follows:

- 1. The Report of the Special Master is hereby approved as submitted.
- 2. The common boundary between the States of Arkansas and Mississippi in the Mississippi River is the thalweg, which is the middle of the main navigable channel followed as the principal course of downstream navigation. This judgment determines the geographical location of this boundary in the reach of the Mississippi River, as more particularly described hereinafter, separating portions of Lee County, Arkansas and Tunica County, Mississippi in the vicinity of Bordeaux Point and Whiskey Island/Bordeaux Island.

- Establishment of the common Arkansas-Mississippi boundary in "old" Walnut Bend, looping Whiskey Island/ Bordeaux Island, originated with the Bordeaux Chute Cutoff. which occurred in or about 1874 and was complete in or about 1883. The locus of that portion of the state boundary consisting of approximately the eastern one-half of "old" Walnut Bend has been subsequently established by long acquiescence by the States of Arkansas and Mississippi in private boundary lines resulting from prior litigation and agreements among the owners of lands adjacent thereto. The locus of these private boundaries, which the States of Arkansas and Mississippi have adopted by acquiescence as also being the locus of the interstate boundary, is as shown on the map of Mr. W. H. Guver, a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and described by geodetic coordinates as Segment B, Points PA through PL, in the composite description set forth hereinafter. The remainder of the interstate boundary in approximately the western one-half of "old" Walnut Bend lies along the dead thalweg of the Mississippi River as it existed when the River's flow ceased in this abandoned bendway subsequent to, and caused by, the Bordeaux Chute Cutoff. The locus of this portion of the interstate boundary in "old" Walnut Bend is as shown in Exhibit "B" and described as Segment B, Points Pm through Pbb in the composite description set forth hereinafter.
- 4. Establishment of the common Arkansas-Mississippi boundary along the southerly limit of Bordeaux Point originated with the Hardin Point Cutoff, constructed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers in 1942. In 1947, when the Mississippi River ceased to flow in this abandoned bendway (Fox Island Bend), the locus of the state boundary along the dead thalweg was determined by Mr. St. George Richardson, whose plat thereof has been accepted since that time by the States of Arkansas and Mississippi as correctly depicting this portion of the interstate boundary looping Bordeaux

Point. A true and correct copy of the St. George Richardson survey is attached hereto as Exhibit "C" and described as Segment D in the composite description set forth hereinafter.

The common Arkansas-Mississippi boundary looping Bordeaux Point between Lee County, Arkansas and Tunica County, Mississippi, from the upper end of Mhoon Bend to the upper end of Fox Island Bend, exclusive of that portion of this boundary in "old" Walnut Bend looping Whiskey Island/Bordeaux Island, is depicted on Exhibit "D" and described as Segment A and Segments C and D in the composite description set forth hereinafter.

5. The common Arkansas-Mississippi state boundary looping Bordeaux Point between Lee County, Arkansas and Tunica County, Mississippi, from the upper end of Mhoon Bend to the upper end of Fox Island Bend, as depicted on Exhibits "B" and "D" hereto, is described using geodetic coordinates as follows:

#### a. Segment A

That portion of the Arkansas-Mississippi state boundary line being the line of the live thalweg of the Mississippi River, points P1 through P8 as depicted on the accompanying map titled "Arkansas-Mississippi State Boundary in the Vicinity of Bordeaux Point," and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at point P1 on the live thalweg of the Mississippi River at Mhoon Bend, said point being at approximately River Mile 686.3, at longitude 90°28′00″ west and at approximately latitude 34°43′36″ north;

thence westerly, downriver, coincident with the River's live thalweg (Arkansas being on the right and Mississippi being on the left) the following approximate courses:

Commencing at point P1,

thence westerly to point P2 at latitude 34°43′26″ north, longitude 90°28′30″ west,

thence westerly to point P3 at latitude 34°43'20" north, longitude 90°29'00" west,

thence westerly to point P4 at latitude 34°43′17″ north, longitude 90°29′30″ west,

thence westerly to point P5 at latitude 34°43′18″ north, longitude 90°30′00″ west,

thence westerly to point P6 at latitude 34°43'25" north, longitude 90°30'30" west,

thence westerly to point P7 at latitude 34°43'38" north, longitude 90°31'00" west,

thence westerly to point P8 at latitude 34°43′53″ north, longitude 90°31′27″ west,

Said point P8 being at the easternmost intersection of the River's live thalweg with the fixed thalweg of the abandoned Old Walnut Bend Channel which resulted from the 1874 Bordeaux Chute Cutoff.

#### b. Segment B

That portion of the Arkansas-Mississippi state boundary being the boundary line as surveyed and marked in October, 1974 and November, 1975 by W. H. Guyer, which plat of survey is recorded at Plat Book 1, Page 183, Lee County, Arkansas land records; and at Plat Book 2, Page 25, Tunica County, Mississippi land records; AND said state boundary being the line of the 1883 fixed thalweg line in the sector of the Old Walnut Bend Channel that was abandoned after the avulsive Bordeaux Chute Cutoff; being Points A through L (the W. H. Guyer survey) and Points Pm through Pbb (the fixed thalweg line) as depicted on the accompanying map titled "Arkansas-Mississippi State Boundary in the Vicinity of Whiskey Island and Bordeaux Island" and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at said point P8 at the intersection of the River's live thalweg with a line bearing geodetic South 35°50' West from the southern terminus of the said W. H. Guyer survey line;

thence North 35°50′ East to point A at the southern terminus of the said W. H. Guyer survey line at approximately latitude 34°44′20″ north, and approximately 90°31′03″ west;

thence northerly coincident with the said W. H. Guyer survey line the following courses:

Commencing at point A,

thence northeasterly to point B of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°44′40″ north, and longitude 90°30′46″ west,

thence northeasterly to point C of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°44′52″ north, and longitude 90°30′35″ west.

thence northeasterly to point D of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°45′04″ north, and longitude 90°30′17″ west,

thence northeasterly to point E of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°45′16″ north, and longitude 90°29′57″ west,

thence northeasterly to point F of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°45′27″ north, and longitude 90°29′39″ west,

thence northerly to point G of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°45′53″ north, and longitude 90°29′33″ west,

thence northerly to point H of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°46′21″ north, and longitude 90°29′34″ west,

thence northwesterly to point I of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°47′00″ north, and longitude 90°30′11″ west,

thence northwesterly to point J of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°47′16″ north, and longitude 90°30′30″ west,

thence northwesterly to Point K of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°47′24" north, and longitude 90°30′41" west,

thence northerly to point L of the W. H. Guyer survey at latitude 34°47′52″ north, and longitude 90°30′40″ west,

thence continuing north to the fixed thalweg line in the sector of the Old Walnut Bend Channel at point Pm at latitude 34°47′54″ north and longitude 90°30′40″ west,

thence westerly and southerly along the fixed thalweg line in the sector of the Old Walnut Bend Channel the following courses:

Commencing at point Pm,

thence westerly to point Pn at latitude 34°48'00" north, longitude 90°30'50" west,

thence westerly to point Po at latitude 34°48'03" north, longitude 90°31'00" west,

thence westerly to point Pp at latitude 34°48'07" north, longitude 90°31'16" west,

thence westerly to point Pq at latitude 34°48'06" north, longitude 90°31'35" west,

thence westerly to point Pr at latitude 34°48'00" north, longitude 90°32'00" west,

thence southwesterly to point Ps at latitude 34°47′45″ north, longitude 90°32′27″ west,

thence southwesterly to point Pt at latitude 34°47′30″ north, longitude 90°32′39″ west,

thence southwesterly to point Pu at latitude 34°47′15″ north, longitude 90°32′46″ west,

thence southwesterly to point Pv at latitude 34°47′00″ north, longitude 90°32′52″ west,

thence southeasterly to point Pw at latitude 34°46'30" north, longitude 90°32'47" west,

thence southeasterly to point Px at latitude 34°46'15" north, longitude 90°32'43" west,

thence southeasterly to point Py at latitude 34°46'00" north, longitude 90°32'37" west,

thence southeasterly to point Pz at latitude 34°45'30" north, longitude 90°32'26" west,

thence southeasterly to point Paa at latitude 34°45′19″ north, longitude 90°32′22″ west,

thence southwesterly to point Pbb at latitude 34°45'02" north, longitude 90°32'28" west,

thence continuing southwesterly along course Paa to Pbb extended to point P9 at approximately latitude 34°44′20″ north, longitude 90°32′44″ west.

Said point P9 being the westernmost intersection of the River's live thalweg with the fixed thalweg of the abandoned Old Walnut Bend Channel.

#### c. Segment C

That portion of the Arkansas-Mississippi State boundary being the line of the live thalweg of the Mississippi River, points P9 through P18, as depicted on the accompanying map titled "Arkansas-Mississippi State Boundary in the Vicinity of Bordeaux Point," and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at point P9 which is the westernmost intersection of the River's live thalweg with the dead thalweg of the abandoned, truncated portion of Old Walnut Bend Channel resulting from the 1874 Bordeaux Chute Cutoff, said point being at approximately River Mile 681.5, approximately latitude 34°44′20″ north, and approximately longitude 90°32′44″ west;

thence westerly and southerly downriver, coincident with the River's live thalweg (Arkansas being on the right and Mississippi on the left) the following approximate courses:

Commencing at point P9,

thence westerly to point P10 at latitude 34°44′23" north, longitude 90°33′00" west,

thence westerly to point P11 at latitude 34°44′21″ north, longitude 90°33′30″ west,

thence westerly to point P12 at latitude 34°44′16″ north, longitude 90°33′49″ west,

thence southerly to point P13 at latitude 34°44′06″ north, longitude 90°34′00″ west,

thence southerly to point P14 at latitude 34°44′00″ north, longitude 90°34′04″ west,

thence southerly to P15 at latitude 34°43′30" north, longitude 90°34′07" west,

thence southerly to Point P16 at latitude 34°43′17″ north, longitude 90°34′07″ west,

thence southerly to point P17 at latitude  $34\,^\circ 43\,'00\,''$  north, longitude  $90\,^\circ 34\,'15\,''$  west,

thence southerly to point P18 at latitude 34°42′46″ north, longitude 90°34′19″ west,

Said point P18 being the intersection of the River's live thalweg with a line bearing geodetic North 82°41' West from the western terminus of the said St. George Richardson survey line.

#### d. Segment D

That portion of the Arkansas-Mississippi state boundary principally, being the 1947 survey line of St. George Richardson, points P18 through P32 as depicted on the accompanying map titled "Arkansas-Mississippi State Boundary in the Vicinity of Bordeaux Point", and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at point P18 at the intersection of the River's live thalweg with a line bearing geodetic North 82°41' West from the western terminus of the said St. George Richardson survey line,

thence geodetic South 82°41' East to point P19, at longitude 90°34'00" west,

thence continuing geodetic South 82°41' East to the said western terminus, being point P20, at latitude 34°42'39" north, longitude 90°33'34" west,

thence easterly coincident with the said St. George Richardson survey line the following courses:

Commencing at point P20,

thence easterly to point P21 at latitude 34°42'30" north, and longitude 90°33'24" west,

thence easterly to point P22 at latitude 34°42′14" north, and longitude 90°33′00" west,

thence easterly to point P23 at latitude 34°42′00" north, and longitude 90°32′33" west,

thence easterly to point P24 at latitude 34°41′55" north, and longitude 90°32′22" west,

thence easterly to point P25 at latitude 34°41′47″ north, and longitude 90°32′00″ west,

thence easterly to point P26 at latitude 34°41'44" north, and longitude 90°31'42" west,

thence easterly to point P27 at latitude 34°41'44" north, and longitude 90°31'00" west,

thence easterly to point P28 at latitude 34°42'00" north, and longitude 90°30'00" west,

thence easterly to point P29 at latitude 34°42′15" north, and longitude 90°29′00" west,

thence easterly to point P30 at latitude 34°42′19" north, and longitude 90°28′27" west,

thence easterly to point P31 at latitude 34°42'08" north, and longitude 90°28'08" west,

thence easterly to point P32 at latitude 34°42′00" north, and longitude 90°28′00" west.

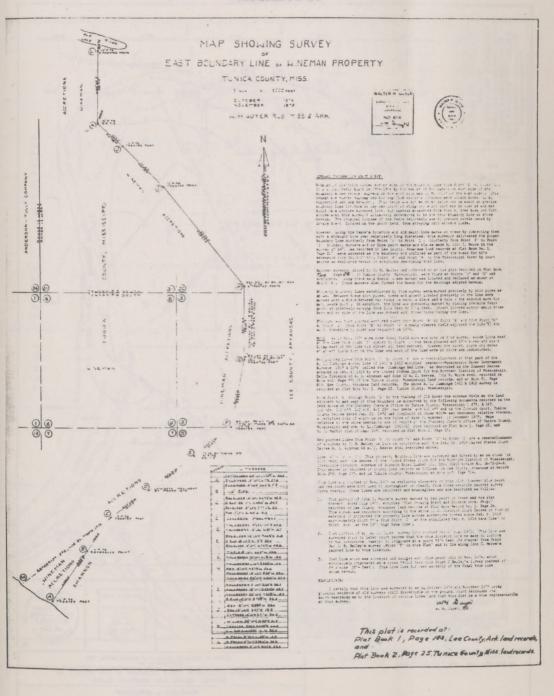
6. All lands now lying on the Arkansas side of the boundary line described hereinabove are wholly within, and a part

of, the State of Arkansas. All lands now lying on the Mississippi side of the boundary line described hereinabove are wholly within, and a part of, the State of Mississippi.

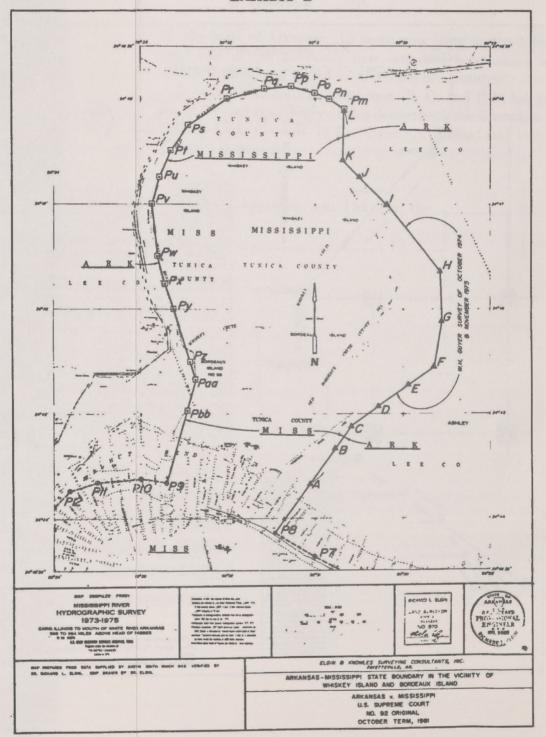
7. Certified copies of Exhibits A, B, C, and D in full size are to be filed upon entry of this decree with the Custodian of Official Land Records, in Lee County, Arkansas and Tunica County, Mississippi.

Ordered, Adjudged, and Decreed. the da	ay of

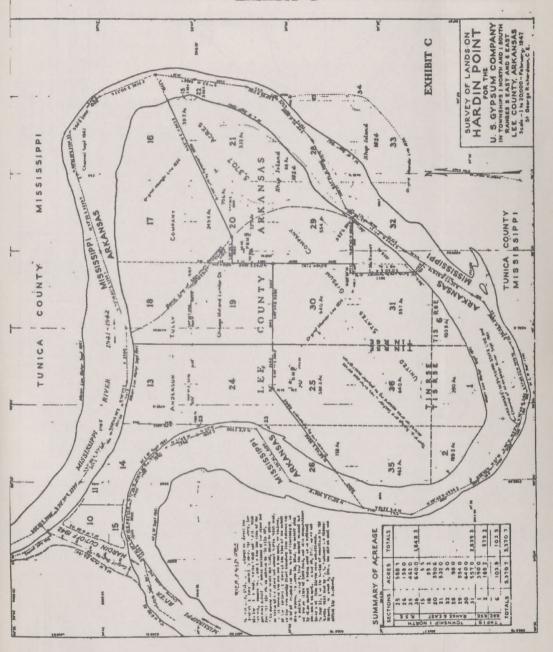
#### EXHIBIT A



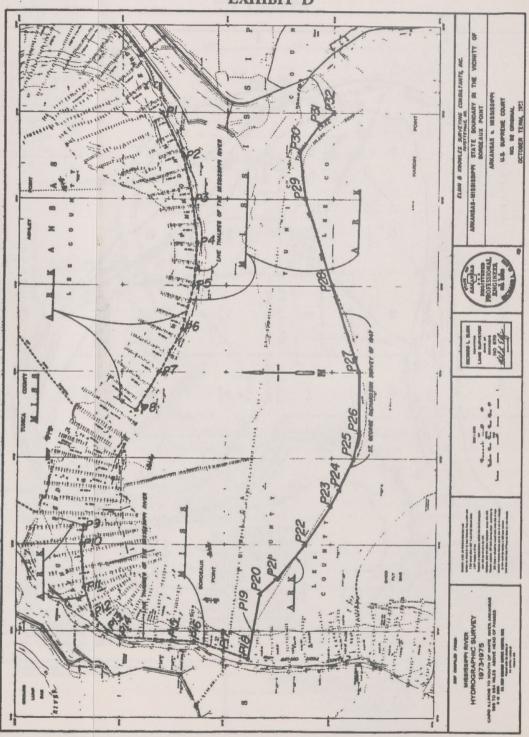
### EXHIBIT B

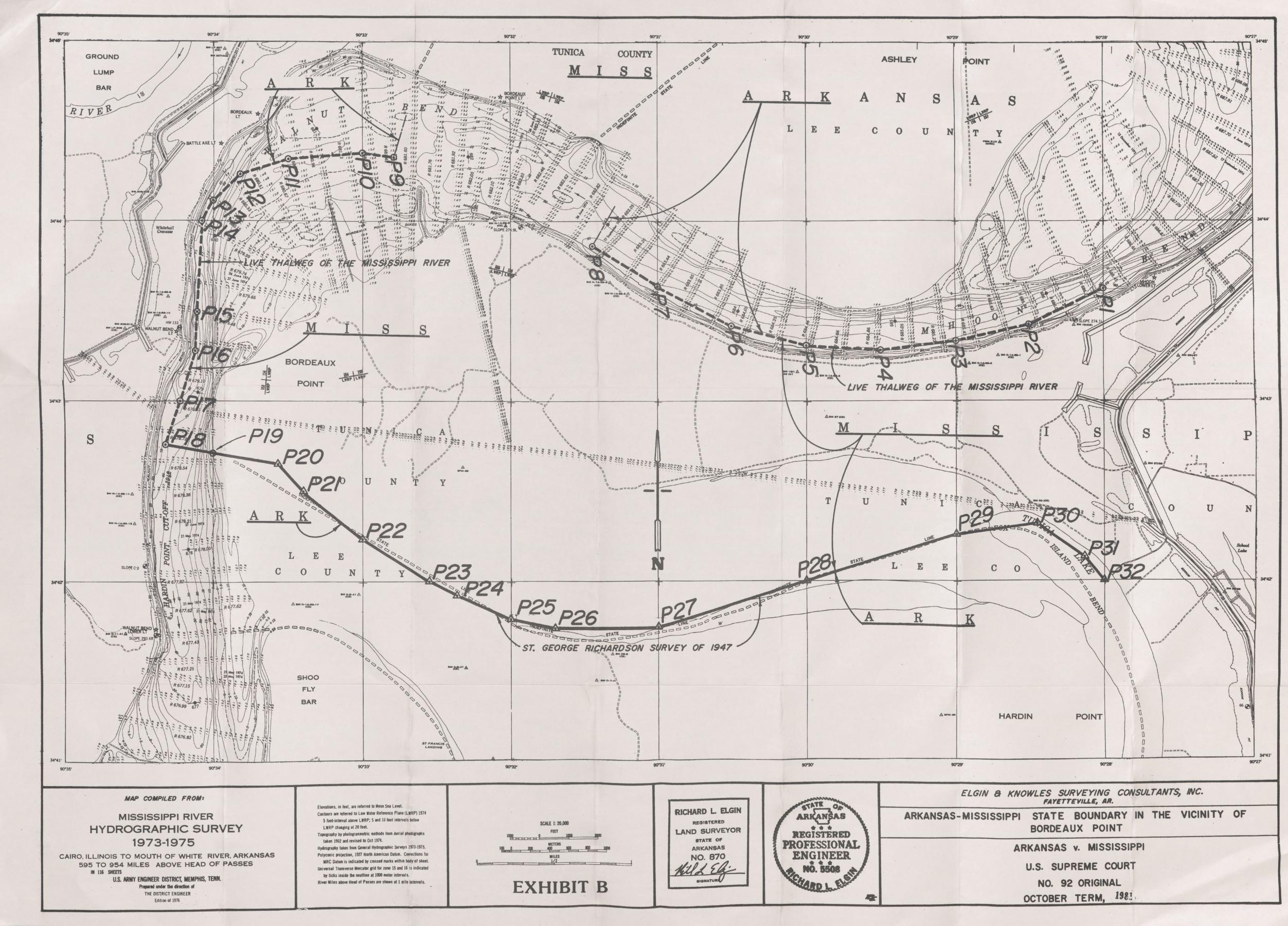


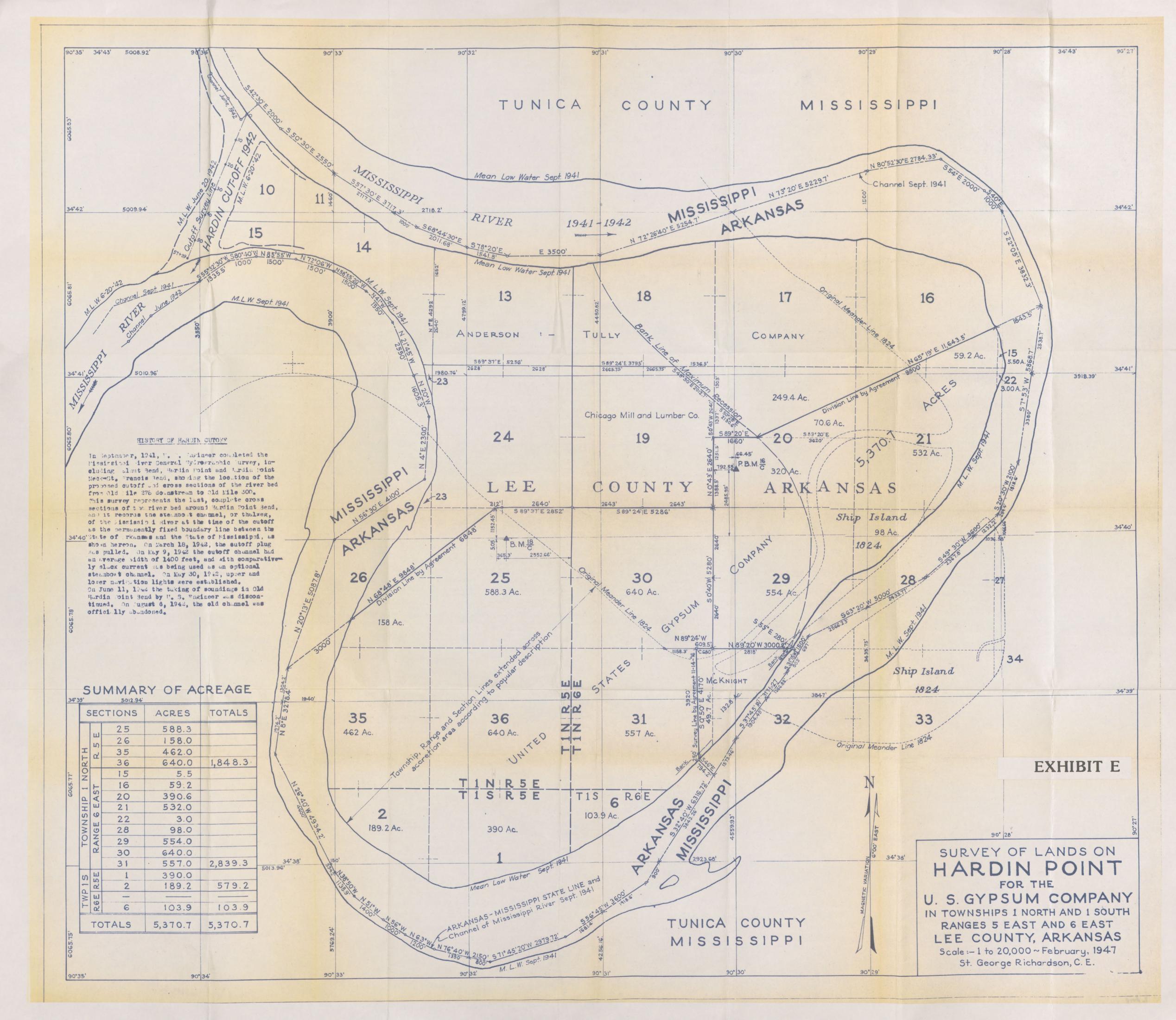
### EXHIBIT C



## EXHIBIT D







That portion of my (W. H. Guyer) survey line painted red in Aug. 1971. This line surveyed prior to later court decree that the true division line be made to conform to two conditions, namely: to originate at a point 5874 feet (89 chains) from Point Two C. B. Bailey's survey (Point 'F'' on this Plat) and to lie along John T. Moore's painted line to this location. 25, Tunica WALTER H. GUYE LINEMAN W. H. GUYER TUNICA SHO BAILE V. PIPE TREAT NOVER BOUNDARY MAP 9 9 EAS **EXHIBIT** 6 ACC PETTONS TOWNSHIP 3 Iddississim ADINUT MINEMAN ACCRETIONS (3) RANGE IS WEST (F) (-) ANDERSON - TULLY COMPANY

From Point "K" through Point "L" to the thalweg of Old River the Wineman title to the land adjacent to and west of this boundary is supported by the following documents recorded in the Deed Books at the Chancery Clerk's Office in Tunica County, Mississippi U/235, X/163, G-2/524, I-2/633, L-2/408, R-2/285 (two deeds) and V-2/455 and in the Circuit Court, Tunica County Decree dated Jan. 21, 1932 and Complaint in Cause #2694 and testimony relative thereto a certifled copy of which is in the files of Wade S. Wineman, in December 1975. Maps relative to the above testimony are of record in the Chancery Clerk's office of Tunica County Mississippi and are, A. L. Cummings (1910-12) plat recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 28, and H. G. Martin plat of Jan. 1930 recorded in Plat Book 2, Page 15.

This line was painted in Nov. 1975 as explained elsewhere on this plat, however blue pain and red paint were both used to distinguish it clearly from three separate painted survey lines nearby. These lines are incorrect and meaningless and are described as follows:

