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FOREWORD

The Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers, Volume 125, 1960, consists of two parts, of which this is Part I. Volume 125, Part II (which is available only in cloth binding) is a Symposium on Rockfill Dams, the "core" of which is a series of papers presented before the Power Division of ASCE in June 1958 at Portland, Oregon. The decision to issue the second part to Volume 125 was made by the ASCE Committee on Publications in June 1960, in Reno, Nevada, when it became apparent that the interest in this subject warranted the publication of a volume of Transactions devoted exclusively to the science of rockfill dams.

CONTENTS

No.		PAGE
3011	DIGITAL COMPUTATION FOR STIFFNESS MATRIX ANALYSIS By JOHN S. ARCHER.....	1
3012	CELLULAR COFFERDAMS AND DOCKS By EDWARD M. CUMMINGS.....	13
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Samuel Heyman.....	34
	Cevdet Z. Erzen	37
	Edward M. Cummings.....	43
3013	ANALYTICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF HELICOIDAL GIRDERS By YEE F. YOUNG AND ALEXANDER C. SCORDELIS.....	46
3014	DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE OF VERMILION DAM By KARL TERZAGHI AND THOMAS M. LEPS.....	63
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Maurice L. Dickinson.....	86
	John R. Kiely.....	88
	Ralph W. Spencer.....	89
	Philip J. West.....	90
	Joseph H. Birman.....	93
	Bruce R. Laverty.....	94
	Karl Terzaghi and Thomas M. Leps.....	99
3015	WATER—A LIMITING RESOURCE By ROBERT O. THOMAS.....	101
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Douglas R. Woodward.....	112
	Donald McCord Baker.....	114
	Alfred R. Golze.....	117
	Robert O. Thomas.....	119
3016	TRENDS IN PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION By JAMES W. HALL.....	123
3017	USE OF MODELS TO STUDY GROUND-WATER PROBLEMS By KENNETH R. WRIGHT.....	133
3018	CLAY STRENGTH INCREASE CAUSED BY REPEATED LOADING By H. BOLTON SEED, ROBERT L. MCNEILL, AND JACQUES DE GUEININ.....	141
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Richard G. Ahlvin.....	161
	D. Hugh Trollope.....	163
	H. Bolton Seed, Robert L. McNeill, and Jacques De Guenin.....	164

No.		PAGE
3019	DISTRIBUTION OF SEDIMENT IN LARGE RESERVOIRS By WHITNEY M. BORLAND AND CARL R. MILLER.....	166
3020	CONSTRUCTION OF THE VARIABLE-ANGLE LAUNCHER By ARTHUR C. BRAVO.....	181
3021	AMPLIFIED STRESS AND DISPLACEMENT IN GUYED TOWERS By ROBERT S. ROWE.....	199
	DISCUSSION: By Vitelmo Bertero.....	215
	Robert S. Rowe.....	225
3022	GARRISON DAM TEST TUNNEL: A SYMPOSIUM FOREWORD.....	229
	INVESTIGATION AND CONSTRUCTION By HARRIS H. BURKE.....	230
	EVALUATION OF TEST RESULTS By KENNETH S. LANE.....	268
	DISCUSSION: By A. A. Eremin.....	307
3023	INELASTIC BUCKLING IN STEEL By GEERHARD HAALJER AND BRUNO THURLIMANN.....	308
	DISCUSSION: By Paul P. Bijlaard.....	338
	Geerhard Haaijer and Bruno Thurlimann.....	343
3024	HYDRAULIC DESIGN OF COLUMBIA RIVER NAVIGATION LOCKS By GEORGE C. RICHARDSON AND MARVIN J. WEBSTER.....	345
3025	NUMERICAL SOLUTIONS FOR INTERCONNECTED BRIDGE GIRDERS By HENRY MALTER.....	365
	DISCUSSION: By Dronnadula V. Reddy.....	383
	Henry Malter.....	386
3026	SELECTION OF DESIGN WAVE FOR OFFSHORE STRUCTURES By CHARLES L. BRETSCHNEIDER.....	388
	DISCUSSION: By J. E. Chappelear.....	414
	Charles L. Bretschneider.....	415
3027	PIPELINE FIELD WELDING AND QUALITY CONTROL METHODS By ARMAND G. BARKOW.....	417
3028	MOMENTS IN BEAMS BY THE METHOD OF PARTIAL MOMENTS By HARRY POSNER.....	430
	DISCUSSION: By William S. Walker and Joseph T. Kolibal.....	451
	A. A. Eremin.....	452
	Lembit Kald.....	453
	Harry Posner.....	454

No.		PAGE
3029	SELF-AERATED FLOW IN OPEN CHANNELS	
	By LORENZ G. STRAUB AND ALVIN G. ANDERSON.....	456
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Michele Viparelli	482
	Lorenz G. Straub and Alvin G. Anderson	485
3030	LOWER-COST CANAL LINING PRACTICE	
	By RICHARD J. WILLSON.....	487
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Frederick L. Hotes	500
	Richard J. Willson	501
3031	EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE OF ELEVATED TANKS AND VESSELS	
	By DONALD F. MORAN AND JAMES A. CHENEY.....	503
	DISCUSSION:	
	By A. A. Eremin	515
	Donald F. Moran and James A. Cheney.....	515
3032	HYDRAULIC PROBLEM SOLUTION ON ELECTRONIC COMPUTERS	
	By EDWARD A. LAWLER AND FRANK V. DRUML.....	517
3033	CONTAINMENT SPHERE FOR DRESDEN STATION	
	By LEONARD P. ZICK, JAMES T. DUNN, AND JAMES B. MAHER	536
3034	WELDED PIPELINE BRANCH CONNECTIONS	
	By EVERETT C. RODABAUGH AND HENRY H. GEORGE.....	554
3035	THE COLUMBIA RIVER CONTROLLED	
	By LOUIS H. FOOTE.....	583
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Roy T. Bessey.....	597
	Louis H. Foote.....	601
3036	STRENGTH OF REINFORCED CONCRETE BEAMS	
	By SIDNEY A. GURALNICK.....	603
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Henry J. Cowan.....	633
	Robert F. Warner.....	634
	Bela Goschy and George Balazs.....	635
	Kuang-Han Chu	636
	Sidney A. Guralnick.....	637
3037	ELECTRIC PIPELINE FOR HIGH-VISCOSITY FUEL	
	By ALBERT G. PURDUE.....	644
3038	WATER FORCES ON ACCELERATED CYLINDERS	
	By ALAN D. K. LAIRD, CHARLES A. JOHNSON, AND ROBERT W. WALKER.....	652
3039	BLAST PHENOMENA FROM A NUCLEAR BURST	
	By FERD E. ANDERSON, JR.....	667
3040	FLOW TESTING BY AMMONIA DISPLACEMENT	
	By JACK N. WHITE AND THOMAS THAWLEY.....	673

No.		PAGE
3041	COMPACTED CLAY: A SYMPOSIUM STRUCTURE	
	By T. William Lambe.....	682
	DISCUSSION:	
	By D. Hugh Trollope.....	706
	Benno P. Warkentin and Raymond N. Y. Yong.....	707
	Gerald A. Leonards.....	709
	D. P. Krynine.....	712
	Dean R. Freitag.....	714
	T. William Lambe.....	716
	ENGINEERING BEHAVIOR	
	By T. William Lambe.....	718
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Alfred C. Scheer.....	741
	Raymond N. Y. Yong and Benno P. Warhentin.....	742
	J. MacNeil Turnbull.....	743
	Jose A. Jimenez Salas.....	746
	D. Hugh Trollope.....	753
	T. William Lambe.....	754
3042	NUMERICAL SOLUTIONS FOR BEAMS ON ELASTIC FOUNDATIONS	
	By HENRY MALTER.....	757
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Norman J. Ryker, Jr.....	770
	Alexander Dodge.....	774
	Lymon C. Reese.....	786
	Victor R. Bergman.....	789
	Henry Malter.....	790
3043	UNDERSEEPAGE CONTROL AT FORT RANDALL DAM	
	By STANLEY T. THORFINNSEN.....	792
3044	LATERAL BRACING OF COLUMNS AND BEAMS	
	By GEORGE WINTER.....	807
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Anthony A. Chibaro.....	826
	Giles G. Green.....	827
	Bruce G. Johnston.....	830
	Marvin A. Larson.....	830
	William Zuk.....	838
	George Winter.....	840
3045	TORQUE-LOADED CONTINUOUS BEAMS OF PROFILE SECTION	
	By DONOVAN H. YOUNG AND JOHN F. BRAHTZ.....	846
3046	FORCES INDUCED ON A LARGE VESSEL BY SURGE	
	By JOHN T. O'BRIEN AND DAVID I. KUCHENREUTHER.....	855
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Basil W. Wilson.....	877
	J. T. O'Brien and D. I. Kuchenreuther.....	883

No.		PAGE
3047	CONCRETE BEAMS AND COLUMNS WITH BUNDLED REINFORCEMENT	
	By NORMAN W. HANSON AND HANS REIFFENSTUHL.....	889
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Homer M. Hadley.....	905
3048	ARCH DAMS: A SYMPOSIUM	
	FOREWORD	910
	DESIGN AND OBSERVATION IN PORTUGAL	
	By M. ROCHA, J. LAGINHA SERAFIM, AND ANTONIO F. DA SILVEIRA.....	911
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Robert E. Glover.....	949
	Fred A. Houck.....	950
	By Manuel Rocha, J. Leginha Serafim, and Antonio F. da Silveira.....	952
	DEVELOPMENT IN ITALY	
	By CARLO SEMENZA.....	954
	OBSERVED BEHAVIOR IN ITALY	
	By DINO TONINI.....	974
3049	GEOTECHNICAL PROPERTIES OF GLACIAL LAKE CLAYS	
	By TIEN H. WU.....	994
	DISCUSSION:	
	By T. Cameron Kenney	1012
	Tien H. Wu	1021
3050	DESIGN FEATURES OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE LOWER DECK	
	By IRVINE P. GOULD.....	1022
3051	FACTOR OF SAFETY IN DESIGN OF TIMBER STRUCTURES	
	By LYMAN W. WOOD.....	1033
	DISCUSSION:	
	By E. George Stern.....	1045
	Richard G. Kimbell.....	1045
	Emilio Rosenblueth.....	1046
	Ludvik Cizek	1048
	Milos Vorlicek	1049
	Lyman W. Wood.....	1051
3052	SLEUTHING THE BEHAVIOR OF A RIVER	
	By EDWARD J. CLEARY.....	1053
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Bernd H. Dieterich	1066
	George E. Walker	1070
	Edward J. Cleary	1071
3053	FREEWAYS IN URBAN PLANNING	
	By HAROLD M. LEWIS.....	1072
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Richard A. Haber and William J. Miller, Jr.....	1081
	George H. Herrold.....	1083
	Harold M. Lewis	1085

No.		Page
3054	STRUCTURAL DYNAMICS IN EARTHQUAKE-RESISTANT DESIGN	
	By JOHN A. BLUME.....	1088
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Lydik S. Jacobsen	1122
	A. A. Eremin	1124
	Emilio Rosenblueth	1124
	Michael J. Murphy, R. Ivan Skinner, and	
	Keith M. Adams	1126
	Reuben W. Binder	1128
	John A. Blume	1129
3055	RESISTANCE PROPERTIES OF SEDIMENT-LADEN STREAMS	
	By VITO A. VANONI AND GEORGE N. NOMICOS.....	1140
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Emmett M. Lsursen	1167
	Tsung-Lien Chou	1168
	Daryl B. Simons and Everett V. Richardson.....	1170
	Vito A. Vanoni and George N. Nomicos.....	1172
3056	ELASTI-PLASTIC ANALYSIS OF CONTINUOUS FRAMES AND BEAMS	
	By LAWRENCE P. JOHNSON, JR. AND HERBERT A. SAWYER, JR.....	1176
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Giuliano Augusti	1192
	Tullio Renzulli	1194
	Emilio Rosenblueth	1198
	A. A. Eremin	1202
	Lawrence P. Johnson, Jr. and Herbert A. Sawyer, Jr.....	1203
3057	AMBUKLAO ROCK-FILL DAM, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION	
	By E. MONTFORD FUCIK AND ROBERT F. EDBROOKE.....	1207
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Frederic L. Lawton	1222
	Jose O. Lahoz.....	1223
	E. Montford Fucik and Robert F. Edbrooke.....	1226
3058	STABILITY OF COASTAL INLETS	
	By PER BRUNN AND FRANS GERRITSEN.....	1228
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Robert E. Hicksen.....	1259
	Per Bruun and Frans Gerritsen.....	1264
3059	DELTA PROJECT: A SYMPOSIUM	
	GENERALITIES ON COASTAL PROCESSES AND PROTECTION	
	By JOHANNES B. SCHIJF.....	1268
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Richard Silvester	1278
	Johannes B. Schijf.....	1279
	TIDAL COMPUTATIONS IN COASTAL AREAS	
	By J. J. DRONKERS.....	1281
	HYDRAULIC INVESTIGATIONS FOR THE DELTA PROJECT	
	By H. A. FERGUSON.....	1290

No.		PAGE
3060	METEORIC VERSUS NOMETEORIC GROUND WATER BY HAROLD E. THOMAS AND DONALD E. WHITE.....	1304
3061	HYDROLOGY OF URBAN RUNOFF BY A. L. THOLIN AND CLINT J. KEIFER.....	1308
	DISCUSSION:	
	By Peter O. Wolf.....	1355
	M. B. McPherson and Joseph Willis.....	1357
	Paul Bock	1361
	Carl F. Izard and Charles L. Armentrout.....	1365
	A. L. Tholin	1370
	Clint J. Keifer	1373
3062	PROGRESS IN ASCE ANNUAL ADDRESS AT THE CONVENTION, RENO, NEVADA, JUNE 22, 1960 BY FRANK A. MARSTON, President.....	1380
	MEMOIRS OF DECEASED MEMBERS: ABSTRACTS.....	1393
	SUBJECT INDEX	1447
	AUTHOR INDEX	1466

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DIGITAL COMPUTATION FOR STIFFNESS MATRIX ANALYSIS

By John S. Archer,¹ M. ASCE

SYNOPSIS

An energy development of the basic theory for the stiffness matrix method of structural analysis is contained herein. The method is particularly adaptable to a systematic analysis of any structure which may be described as a composition of simple structural elements, such as beams and plates.

Application of the technique to the analysis of structures is presented, with an example to show how the procedure works in a typical case. The present application of the technique to the analysis of aircraft structures is also described. Some suggestions are given for a practical method of developing a similar procedure for individual needs.

INTRODUCTION

History.—The stiffness matrix type of structural analysis was described in 1944 by Gabriel Kron.² The first practical application of the technique using digital computers was reported by H. U. Schuerch³ in December 1951. Samuel Levy⁴ investigated the stiffness matrix procedure which was published in July and September 1953. Gilbert Best and M. Phillip Keating⁵ described the technique based on their experience with the IBM 701. D. Williams⁶ prepared a

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¹ Project Structures Engr., Convair, General Dynamics Corp., Fort Worth, Tex.

² "Tensorial Analysis and Equivalent Circuits of Elastic Structures," by G. Kron, *Journal, Franklin Inst.*, Vol. 238, No. 6, 1944.

³ "Vibration Mode Analysis For Delta Wing Structure," by H. U. Schuerch, Convair Memo DG-G-100, San Diego, December 18, 1951.

⁴ "Structural Analysis and Influence Coefficients for Delta Wings," by S. Levy, *Journal of the Aeronautical Sciences*, Vol. 20, No. 7, July, 1953.

⁵ "A Stiffness Matrix Method of Delta Wing Stress Analysis," by G. Best and M. P. Keating, Convair SRG-16, Fort Worth, Tex., September 8, 1953.

⁶ "Recent Developments In the Structural Approach to Aeroelastic Problems," by D. Williams, *Journal of the Royal Aeronautical Society, London, Eng.*, June, 1954.

comprehensive paper on the subject. The following year the technique of using matrix algebra for the analysis of aircraft structures was published by Raymond L. Bisplinghoff.⁷

Theory.—Let U represent the strain energy stored within a structure that is loaded by the forces $P_1, P_2, \dots, P_1, \dots, P_n$. The temperature of the material remains constant and the supports are rigid. Applying Castigliano's theorem of structure equilibrium (Theorem I):

$$P_1 = \frac{\partial U}{\partial \delta_1} \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

in which δ_1 is the deflection of the point of application of the load P_1 in the direction of P_1 .

If the strain energy is evaluated in terms of the loads P_1 acting upon the structure we may expand Eq. 1 as follows:

$$P_1 = \frac{\partial U}{\partial \delta_1} = \sum_j \left(\frac{\partial U}{\partial P_j} \right) \left(\frac{\partial P_j}{\partial \delta_1} \right) \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

If the structure is assumed to be elastic, then Castigliano's theorem for linear structures (Theorem II) may be applied:

$$\delta_j = \frac{\partial U}{\partial P_j} \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

Substituting Eq. 3 into Eq. 2,

$$P_1 = \sum_j \delta_j \left(\frac{\partial P_j}{\partial \delta_1} \right) \dots \dots \dots (4)$$

The partial derivative $\frac{\partial P_j}{\partial \delta_1}$ represents the force developed at point j due to a deflection of point i , all other points remaining fixed. This force is represented by the symbol s_{ji} , the subscript j representing the point at which the force acts, and the subscript i representing the point at which the unit deflection is imposed. With this substitution, Eq. 4 becomes:

$$P_1 = \sum_j \delta_j s_{ji} \dots \dots \dots (5)$$

From Betti's Law or the generalized Maxwells' law of reciprocal deflections we obtain the relation

$$s_{ji} = s_{ij} \dots \dots \dots (6)$$

and, hence,

$$P_1 = \sum_j \delta_j s_{1j} \dots \dots \dots (7)$$

Writing Eq. 7 in its expanded form,

$$P_1 = s_{11} \delta_1 + s_{12} \delta_2 + \dots + s_{1j} \delta_j + \dots + s_{1n} \delta_n \dots \dots \dots (8)$$

⁷ "Aeroelasticity," by R. L. Bisplinghoff, H. Ashley and R. L. Halfmann, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co. Inc., Cambridge, Mass., 1955.

It is evident from the expanded form that Eq. 7 is a superposition equation expressing the total load at point i as the sum of the loads developed by each deflection component δ_j acting by itself. Each part of Eq. 7 describes an independent component of the structural behavior. The components may represent translation or rotation. The total number of components is the number of degrees of freedom that the idealized structure possesses.

Using matrix algebra notation, Eq. 7 may be rewritten as

$$P = S \delta \dots \dots \dots (9)$$

in which P is a vector or column matrix made up of load components $P_1, P_2, \dots, P_i, \dots, P_n$; and δ is a vector made up of the deflection components $\delta_1, \delta_2, \dots, \delta_i, \dots, \delta_n$, and S is a square matrix consisting of an ordered array of the stiffness influence coefficients s_{ij} of Eq. 7. Matrix S is called the stiffness matrix of the structure. In the expanded form, Eq. 9 appears as follows:

$$\begin{pmatrix} P_1 \\ P_2 \\ \vdots \\ P_i \\ \vdots \\ P_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} s_{11} & s_{12} & \dots & s_{1j} & \dots & s_{1n} \\ s_{21} & s_{22} & & s_{2j} & & s_{2n} \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ s_{i1} & s_{i2} & & s_{ij} & & s_{in} \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ s_{n1} & s_{n2} & \dots & s_{nj} & \dots & s_{nn} \end{bmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \delta_1 \\ \delta_2 \\ \vdots \\ \delta_j \\ \vdots \\ \delta_n \end{pmatrix} \dots \dots (10)$$

Eq. 9 may be manipulated similar to an ordinary algebraic equation. For instance, it may be solved for the deflections by premultiplying both sides of the equation by the inverse of the stiffness matrix S .

$$\delta = S^{-1} P = F P \dots \dots \dots (11)$$

The symbol F represents the inverse of the stiffness matrix which in turn represents the flexibility influence coefficient matrix. It is composed of an ordered array of the flexibility influence coefficients f_{ij} . In the expanded form it appears as follows:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \delta_1 \\ \delta_2 \\ \vdots \\ \delta_i \\ \vdots \\ \delta_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} f_{11} & f_{12} & \dots & f_{1j} & \dots & f_{1n} \\ f_{21} & f_{22} & \dots & f_{2j} & \dots & f_{2n} \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ f_{i1} & f_{i2} & \dots & f_{ij} & \dots & f_{in} \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots \\ f_{n1} & f_{n2} & \dots & f_{nj} & \dots & f_{nn} \end{bmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} P_1 \\ P_2 \\ \vdots \\ P_j \\ \vdots \\ P_n \end{pmatrix} \quad \dots (12)$$

In a typical problem, Eq. 11 must be constructed and solved for the deflections in terms of the loads. The direct determination of the coefficients f_{ij} of Eq. 11 is difficult and impractical for a large indeterminate structure. However, the coefficients s_{ij} of Eq. 9 are readily calculated. The usual procedure is to compute the stiffness matrix coefficients directly from the known properties of the individual elements of the idealized structure. The coefficients of the flexibility matrix are obtained through the mathematical operation of inverting the stiffness matrix.

After the deflections of the structure are found, the stresses developed in the structure may be determined. This is accomplished by using the stiffness matrix of the individual elements of the structure. Using computed deflections and equations of the same type as Eq. 9, the internal loads on individual parts of the structure are obtained readily. After the internal forces on the individual elements have been obtained, the stresses in the structure can be readily computed.

PRESENT APPLICATIONS

Structure analyses have been performed on the IBM 701 for structures having up to 106 independent coordinates. The structures analyzed were idealized as a group of interconnected structural elements. These elements consisted of beams, torque tubes, torque boxes, and concentrated springs (Fig. 1). The procedure followed for a typical stress analysis was as follows:

1. Compute the stiffness matrices for the individual structural elements (Fig. 2(a)). Store the results on magnetic tape.
2. Assemble the stiffness matrix for the complete structure by bringing together the coefficients for all structural elements and adding corresponding coefficients (Fig. 2(b)). Individual coordinate identification numbers are indispensable for keeping the coefficients in order.
3. Invert the stiffness matrix to obtain the flexibility matrix for the structure ($F = S^{-1}$).
4. Compute the deflections by determining the matrix product of the applied load vector and the flexibility matrix ($\delta = F P$).

5. Compute the internal forces on the individual structural elements by computing the product of the appropriate deflections with the stiffness matrices for the individual structural elements.

$$\begin{Bmatrix} P_{2A} \\ P_{3A} \end{Bmatrix} = [A] \begin{Bmatrix} \delta_2 \\ \delta_3 \end{Bmatrix} \dots\dots\dots (13a)$$

$$\begin{Bmatrix} P_{3B} \\ P_{4B} \end{Bmatrix} = [B] \begin{Bmatrix} \delta_3 \\ \delta_4 \end{Bmatrix} \dots\dots\dots (13b)$$

$$\begin{Bmatrix} P_{1C} \\ P_{2C} \\ P_{5C} \\ P_{6C} \end{Bmatrix} = [C] \begin{Bmatrix} \delta_1 \\ \delta_2 \\ \delta_5 \\ \delta_6 \end{Bmatrix} \dots\dots\dots (13c)$$

and

$$\begin{Bmatrix} P_{6D} \\ P_{7D} \end{Bmatrix} = [D] \begin{Bmatrix} \delta_6 \\ \delta_7 \end{Bmatrix} \dots\dots\dots (13d)$$

The largest problems, of the order of 106 independent coordinates, required a total of 4 hr to assemble the stiffness matrix and 8 hr to invert in order to obtain the flexibility matrix. Double precision arithmetic was used in this operation. Each stress calculation for a given load condition was obtained in an additional $1\frac{1}{2}$ hr of computing time. Smaller problems were solved in considerably less time.

The analysis of beam elements was performed considering bending deformation only. A linear variation in moment of inertia from one end of a beam to the other was assumed. In addition to the stress analyses, normal mode analyses were successfully performed. In such an analysis, the natural frequencies and normal mode shapes were computed by an iteration technique.

The IBM 704 is much faster and has a larger speed storage capacity than the 701 computer. Therefore, a substantial savings in time can be realized by its use. Experience indicates that a matrix representing 100 independent coordinates can be assembled in 1 hr and inverted in 3 hr.

The 704 computer program has incorporated the following additions and refinements to the aforementioned 701 computer program:

1. Shear deformation is included in the analysis of beams.
2. Effect of tapering flanges is computed.
3. Rectangular structural plates may be analyzed using a lattice analogy representation.
4. Beam moments of inertia are automatically computed if desired.
5. Length and direction of beams are determined by the computer from basic geometric input.

The stiffness matrix structural analysis has been coded on the Remington Rand 1103, a computer comparable to the IBM 701. The sizes of the problems

worked by the 1103 computer were generally smaller than those worked by the 701 computer. However, the speed with which a given problem could be worked was greater for the 1103.

APPLICATION TO STRUCTURES

Indeterminate Trusses.—A bridge truss could be analyzed easily by the stiffness matrix technique, but because the analysis of a determinate truss problem is simple, it would not be worthwhile to analyze it on a high-speed

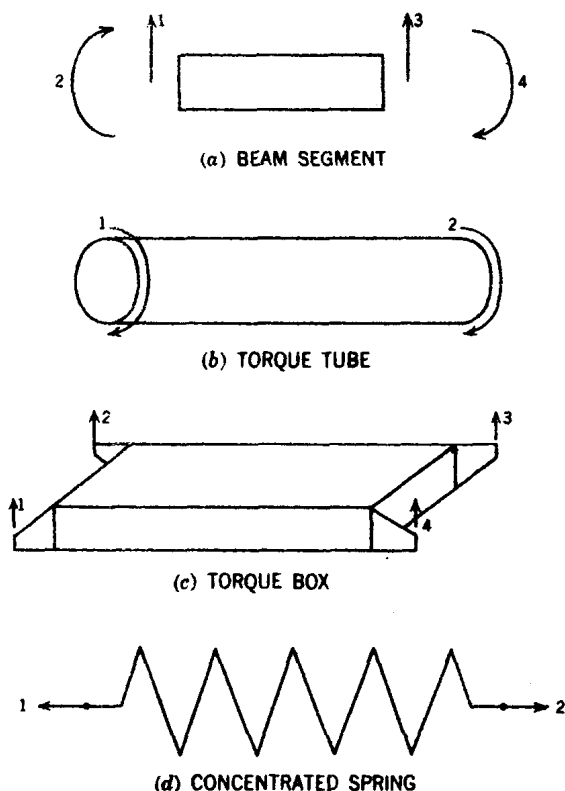


FIG. 1.—INDIVIDUAL ELEMENT STIFFNESS MATRIX

digital computer. This is not always the case in the design of an indeterminate truss.

Consider the truss in Fig. 3(a). The distortion and loads on this structure can be described by two orthogonal displacements at each joint. Hence, the analysis of the structure requires a matrix of order 17 for its solution. If a secondary stress analysis is required, it may be obtained simultaneously with the primary analysis. However, a rotation displacement at each joint must be represented, requiring a matrix of order 27 for its solution (Fig. 3(b)). The stress analysis of the truss gives the forces in all members and the deflections of all joints. For a structure of this type the order of the matrix is generally much greater than the degree to which the structure is indeterminate.

Building Frames.—For the simple building bent (Fig. 4(a)) the distortion is completely defined by five coordinates: One rotation at each joint, and one displacement at the roof level. Even in the case of a more complicated broken story bent (Fig. 4(b)) only twelve coordinates are necessary.

It is evident from these examples that the analysis of building frames could be accomplished by using the stiffness matrix technique of analysis. If three-

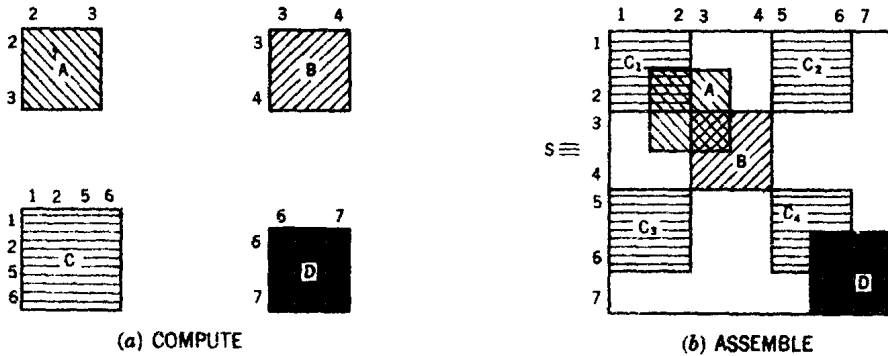


FIG. 2.—STIFFNESS MATRIX PROCEDURE

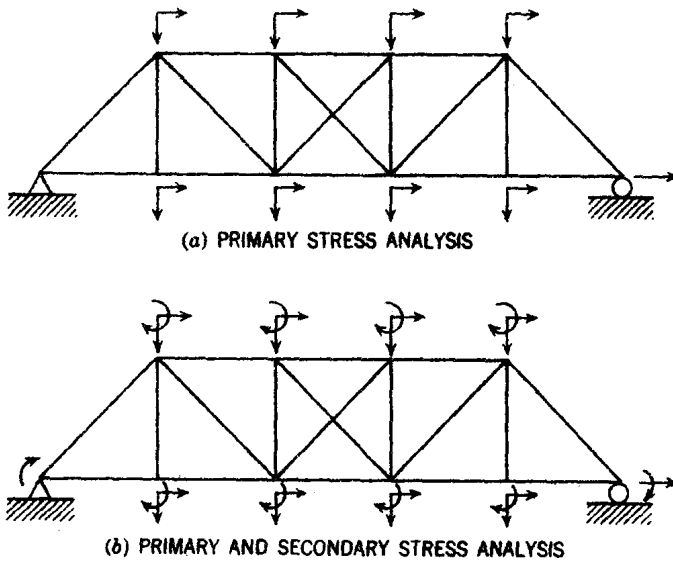
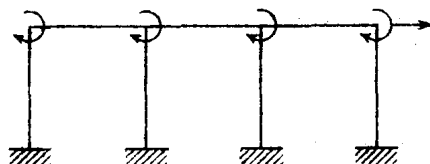


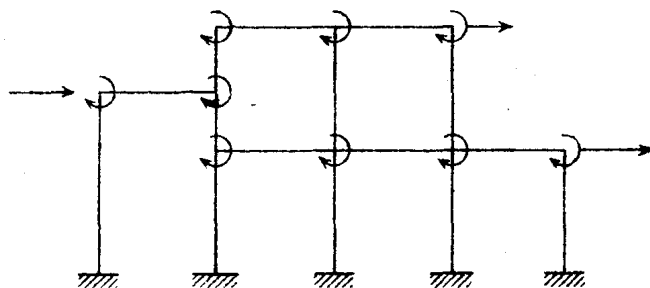
FIG. 3.—INDETERMINATE TRUSS ANALYSIS

dimensional frames are to be analyzed, the torsion of the building, as well as axial deformation of the columns may be included. The computed answer in this type of problem gives the rotation and translation of each end of the columns and beams, and the moments in the members.

Miscellaneous Structures.—The arch rib structure, Fig. 5(a), may be represented by a series of straight beam segments between the load points. The distortion and loading of the structure can then be represented by a system of coordinates (Fig. 5(b)). Twenty-one coordinates are required for a stiffness

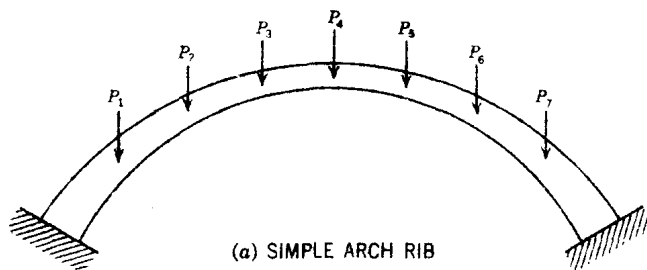


(a) SIMPLE BUILDING FRAME

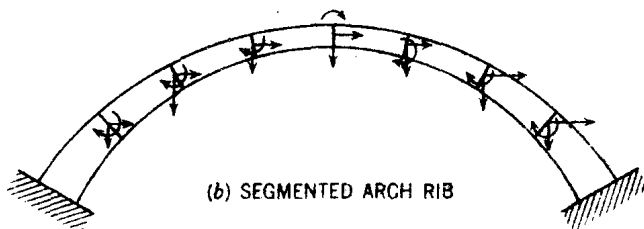


(b) BROKEN STORY BUILDING FRAME

FIG. 4.—BUILDING FRAME ANALYSIS



(a) SIMPLE ARCH RIB



(b) SEGMENTED ARCH RIB

FIG. 5.—ARCH RIB ANALYSIS

matrix analysis. Moments, shears, and axial thrusts are computed at each end of each segment. The stiffness matrix technique can also be used in the analysis of arch dams, suspension bridges, towers, and shell-type structures. A