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# BEHAVIOR OF CONCRETE PILES DURING DRIVING 

By Teddy J. Hirsch

## INTRODUCTION

During the year 1960-61, engineers of the Texas Highway Department Bridge Division engaged the staff personnel at Texas A\&M University to dem velop a computer program to accomplish the rigorous mathematical calculations for use of the wave equation to analyze the behavior of piling during driving. With the aid of Mr. Edward A. Smith* as a special consultant, a functioning computer program was developed and used successfully on a number of pile problems (2, 3).** This program was written for the IBM 709 Computer at the Texas A\&M University Data Processing Center.

In order to gain confidence in the results computed by this program, it was considered necessary to conduct field tests to obtain actual stress and displacement data to correlate with the theory. During the 1961-62 year, three prestressed concrete piles 95 ft in length and two piles 92 ft in length were instrumented with strain gages and displacement transducers and were field tested during driving (4). During the current year, two prestressed concrete piles 26 ft in length were field tested (5). The correlation of these data with results from the computer program was considered very good and provided experimental evidence that this method could be used to analyze practical pile problems. Consequently, it was decided to use the computer solution of the wave equation to investigate the theoretical behavior of various size piles when driven by different equipment under different foundation conditions. The results from this study are presented in the form of graphs that can be used by office engineers in the design of prestressed concrete piles or can assist them in selecting or regulating driving equipment.
*Formerly Chief Mechanical Engineer for Raymond International, now retired.
**Numbers thus $(2,3)$ refer to corresponding items in the list of References.

## OBJECTIVES

Project No, 2-5-62-33 entitled "Study of Variables Which Affect Behavior of Concrete Piles During Driving" was initiated September 1, 1962. The objectives of the 1962-63 year were to
(1) make an orderly theoretical computer investigation of the influence of various factors on the behavior of piles during driving.
(2) present these results in the form of charts, diagrams, or tables for direct application by office design engineers, and
(3) instrument and field test at least two concrete piles to obtain data on dynamic stresses in piles to correlate with the computer results.

The results of objective 3 were presented in a report entitled "Field Tests of Prestressed Concrete Piles During Driving, " which was prepared for the Bridge Division of the Texas Highway Department in August 1963.

The results of objectives 1 and 2 are presented in this report.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION OF STUDY

A theoretical analysis was conducted to determine the effects of ram weight, ram energy output, cushion stiffness, pile cross-sectional area, pile length, soil resistance, and distribution of soil resistance on the driving stresses in and the permanent set of concrete piling. The computer solution of the wave equation (3) was used to solve the 2106 problems involved in this study and the results are presented in the form of graphs. This program was essentially the same as that described by E.A.Smith (1) and C.H. Samson (2), except that it has been modified to include the effect of gravity and a separate frictional and point force on the last pile segment.

Table 1 lists twenty factors known to affect the behavior of piles during driving. In this study only seven of the more significant factors were varied and the others were held constant.

Table 1
Factors Known to Affect the Behavior of Piling During Driving

| Factor | Number of Variations | Values Used in This Investigation |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Ram weight | $4_{13 *}$ | $2,5,10 \text {, and } 20 \mathrm{kips}$ |
| Energy of Ram |  | 4, 20, 40, 50, and $60 \mathrm{kip}-\mathrm{ft}$ |
| Cross-sectional area of pile $=A$ |  | 200, 400, and 600 sq in. |
| Stiffness of cushion block | 3 | $\begin{aligned} & 5,000 \mathrm{~A}, 15,000 \mathrm{~A}, \text { and } \\ & 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \mathrm{~b} / \mathrm{in} . \end{aligned}$ |
| Length of pile | 3 | 30, 65, and 100 ft |
| Soil resistance | 2 | Equivalent to 800 psf and 400 psf on a friction pile embedded 0.8 of its length |
| Distribution of soil resistance | $3 * *$ | All friction on embedded length, 0.5 friction and 0.5 point bearing, all point bearing. |
| Stiffness of cap block | 1 | $80,000 \mathrm{~A} \mathrm{lb} / \mathrm{in}$. |
| Coefficient of restitution of cap block | 1 | 0.5 |
| Weight of pile cap (helmet) | 1 | 1000 lb |
| Coefficient of restitution of cushion block | 1 | 0.5 |
| Unit weight of pile concrete |  | 150 pcf |
| Modulus of elasticity of pile concrete | 1 | 5,000,000 psi |
| Coefficient of restitution of pile concrete | 1 | 1.0 |
| Soil quake at point | 1 | 0.1 in . |
| Soil quake in friction | 1 | 0.02 in . |
| Damping constant of point | 1 | $0.15 \mathrm{sec} / \mathrm{ft}$ |
| Damping constant in friction | 1 | $0.05 \mathrm{sec} / \mathrm{ft}$ |
| Pile configuration | 1 | Prism with square cross section |
| Diesel hammer explosive force | 1 | None |

Total Number of Problems $=13 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 2 \times 3=2106$
*Only 13 different combinations of ram weights and energies were used. See Table 2.
**See Table 3 for total magnitudes of soil resistances used in investigation.

## Ram Weights and Energies

In this study 13 different combinations of ram weights and energies were used as shown in Table 2. These values will encompass the ram weights and energy ratings of most steam and diesel pile drivers now available. The velocity of a given ram corresponding to a given energy can be determined using the equation

$$
V=\sqrt{2 g E 1 / W}
$$

where
$\mathrm{V}=$ velocity of ram in $\mathrm{ft} / \mathrm{sec}_{,}$
$\mathrm{g}=$ acceleration due to gravity in $\mathrm{ft} / \mathrm{sec}^{2}$,
$\mathrm{E}^{\prime}=$ Energy of ram in kip-ft, and
$\mathrm{W}=$ ram weight in kips.

Table 2
Combinations of Ram Weight and Energy Used in Investigation

| Ram <br> Weight <br> (kips) | Energy of Ram |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 4 | 20 | 40 |  |
| 5 | 4 | 20 | 40 | 50 |
| 10 | 4 | 20 | 40 | 60 |

## Areas and Lengths of Piles

The cross-sectional areas (200, 400 and 600 sq in.) and lengths ( 30 65 , and 100 ft ) of piles used will encompass a large number of concrete pile sizes now available. The pile configuration considered was a prism with a square cross section.


Figure 1A. Distribution of total magnitude of soil resistance.

Table 3. Total magnitude of soil resistance in kips.

| PileLength (ft) | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Pile } \\ & \text { Area } \\ & \text { (in. }{ }^{2} \text { ) } \end{aligned}$ | TOTAL MAGNITUDE OF SOIL RESISTANCE kips |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Soil Resistance H (800 psf) |  |  | Soil Resistance S (400 psf) |  |  |
|  |  | Distr. 1 | Distr. 2 | Distr. 3 | Distr. 1 | Distr. 2 | Distr. 3 |
| 30 | 200 | 90.5 | 90.5 | 90.5 | 45.3 | 45.3 | 45.3 |
|  | 400 | 128.0 | 128.0 | 128.0 | 64.0 | 64.0 | 64.0 |
|  | 600 | 156.8 | 156.8 | 156.8 | 78.4 | 78.4 | 78.4 |
| 65 | 200 | 196.1 | 196.1 | 196.1 | 98.1 | 98.1 | 98.1 |
|  | 400 | 277.3 | 277.3 | 277.3 | 138.7 | 138.7 | 138.7 |
|  | 600 | 339.7 | 339.7 | 339.7 | 169.9 | 169.9 | 169.9 |
| 100 | 200 | 301.7 | 301.7 | 301.7 | 150.8 | 150.8 | 150.8 |
|  | 400 | 426.7 | 426.7 | 426.7 | 213.3 | 213.3 | 213.3 |
|  | 600 | 522.7 | 522.7 | 522.7 | 261.3 | 261.3 | 261.3 |

## Stiffnesses of Cushion Blocks

The cushion block stiffnesses $5000 \mathrm{~A}, 15,000 \mathrm{~A}$, and $45,000 \mathrm{~A} \mathrm{lb} / \mathrm{in}$. are approximately equivalent to 9,3 , and 1 in . of compressed oak, respectively. "A" is the loaded area or cross-sectional area of the pile in square inches.

## Soil Resistances

The soil resistances used were equivalent to shear strengths of 800 psf and 400 psf on a friction pile embedded 0.8 of its length. Consequently, the total magnitude of the soil resistance used on a given pilewas a function of its length, its perimeter and the soil shear strength. The total resistance on a given pile was found by

$$
R(\text { total })=T \times 0.8 L \times 4 \sqrt{A}
$$

where
$R$ (total) $=$ total magnitude of soil resistance in kips,
$\mathrm{T}=$ shear strength of soil ( $0,8 \mathrm{ksf}$ of 0.4 ksf ),
$\mathrm{L} \quad=$ length of pile in ft , and
A $\quad=$ cross-sectional area of square pile in in. ${ }^{2}$.
Table 3 shows the total magnitudes of soil resistance used in this investigation. The 800 psf soil shear strength is designated Soil Resistance H and the 400 psf soil shear strength designated Soil Resistance S.

## Distribution of Soil Resistance

After the total magnitude of soil resistance was determined for the friction pile with embedded length of $0.8 \mathrm{~L}_{\varepsilon}$ it was distributed as shown in Figure $1 A_{\text {。 }}$

## Other Factors

The other factors known to affect the behavior of piling during driving were assigned a reasonable value that was kept constant for all problems (See Table 1). The properties of the concrete pile such as unit weight and modulus of elasticity were assigned values based on typical hard rock concrete. The value of the coefficient of restitution of the concrete, or concrete damping parameters, was not known and, therefore, the concrete was assumed to be perfectly elastic. The soil damping constants and quakes were assigned values recommended by E.A. Smith (1) except that a value of quake in side friction of 0.02 in . was used.

## RESULTS OF STUDY

The effects of the ram weight, ram energy output, cushion stiffness, pile cross-sectional area, pile length, soil resistance, and distribution of soil resistance on the maximum tensile and compressive stresses produced in a pile are illustrated by Figures 1 through 54 . Each of the 54 figures contain 3 graphs making a total of 162 graphs. These result from the possible combinations of three pile lengths, three pile areas, three cushion stiffnesses, two soil resistances, and three soil distributions. Table 4 gives the values for each of the 5 variables corresponding to a given figure number. The 13 combinations of ram weights and ram energy outputs are shown on each of the graphs. The curve designations 2, 5. 10 , and 20 are the ram weights in kips.

These graphs can be used to estimate the driving stresses that may occur in piles under similar conditions. They can be used for ram weights other than those shown by interpolation.

Figures 55 through 108 illustrate the effect of ram weight, ram energy output, cushion stiffness, pile cross-sectional area, pile length, soil resistance, and distribution of soil resistance on the permanent set of piles for a single blow of the ram. Table 5 gives values of each of the 5 variables for a given figure number. These graphs can be used to estimate the effectiveness of different size and energy rams when driving similar piles.

Table 4
Key to Figure Numbers Illustrating Maximum Tensile and Compressive Stresses Produced in Piles Under the Given Conditions


Table 5
Key to Figure Numbers Illustrating the Permanent Set of Piles Under the Given Conditions

| Pile Length (ft) | $\begin{array}{r} \text { Pile } \\ \text { Area } \\ \text { (in. }{ }^{2} \text { ) } \\ \hline \end{array}$ | Cushion Stiffness (lb/in.) | FIGURE NUMBERS |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  | Soil Resistance H Soil Resistance S |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { Distr } \\ 1 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Distr } \\ 2 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Distr. } \\ 3 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | Distr. $1$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Iistr. } \\ 2 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { Distr. } \\ 3 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |
| 30 | 200 | $\begin{array}{r} 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 15,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \end{array}$ | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
|  | $\begin{aligned} & \\ & 400 \end{aligned} \quad \begin{array}{r} 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \end{array}$ |  | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 |
|  | 600 | $\begin{array}{r} 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 15,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \end{array}$ | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 |
|  | $\begin{array}{rr}  & 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 200 \quad 15,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ & 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \end{array}$ |  | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 |
| 65 | 400 | $\begin{array}{r} 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 15,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \end{array}$ | 79 | 80 | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 |
|  | 600 | $\begin{array}{r} 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 15,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \end{array}$ | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 |
|  | 200 | $\begin{array}{r} 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 15,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \end{array}$ | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 |
| 100 | 400 | $\begin{array}{r} 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 15,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \end{array}$ | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 | 101 | 102 |
|  | 600 | $\begin{array}{r} 5,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 15,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ 45,000 \mathrm{~A} \\ \hline \end{array}$ | 103 | 104 | 105 | 106 | 107 | 108 |

## Conclusions

A study of the results presented in Figures 1 through 108 indicates the following general conclusions concerning the behavior of the piles investigated in this report. Any variables not mentioned in the specific conclusion below are held constant.

It should be recognized that some of these conclusions might not be applicable to problems that have variables different from those used in this study.

1. For a given energy output a heavy ram produces lower tensile and compressive stresses than a light ram. (See Figures l through 54)
2. For a given energy output a heavy ram produces more permanent set than a light ram. (See Figures 55 through 108.)
3. A soft cushion is very effective in reducing both tensile and compressive stresses in a pile. (See Figures 1 through 54). .
4. A soft cushion gives more permanent set per blow than a hard cushion if both have the same coefficient of restitution. (See Figures 55 through 108.)
5. A soft soil resistance produces larger tensile stresses in the piles than a hard soil resistance. (See Figures 1 and 4, 2 and 5.3, and 6.)
6. A greater permanent set per blow is obtained with a soft soil resistance than with a hard. (See Figures 55 and 58, 56 and 59. 57 and 60.)
7. In general, the tensile stresses produced in friction piles were higher than those in point bearing piles. No consistence change can be noted in the compressive stresses.
8. Friction piles 30 and 65 ft long experience greater permanent set than point bearing piles of the same length. On the other hand, point bearing piles 100 ft long experience greater permanent set than friction piles of the same length.
9. In general, long piles have higher tensile stresses than short piles. The length of the piles has no significant effect on the compressive stresses.
10. For a given soil condition, short piles experience much greater penetration per blow than long piles. It is noted, however, that the long piles have a greater total soil resistance to overcome.
11. Increasing the cross-sectional area of these piles produces a slight decrease in the compressive stress, but no consistent change is noted in the tensile stress.

As a final comment, it should be noted that the concrete material used in this study was assumed to be perfectly elastic. No damping or energyabsorbing parameters were used, since the values for concrete and other materials have not been established. Consequently, it is the writer's opinion that the magnitudes of the maximum tensile stresses shown on the figures are probably higher than actual piles would experience. However, the qualitative effects of the other variables on these tensile stresses are thought to be representative of what would be experienced in the field under similar conditions. The results of other studies have shown that the damping parameters have only a small effect on the maximum compressive stresses and permanent sets.

## REFERENCES

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FIGURE 72

































FIGURE 103







