

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Illinois
COUNTY: Shelby
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Thompson Mill Covered Bridge

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
0.5 mile north of Cowden and 2.5 miles east of Illinois Route 128

CITY OR TOWN:
Cowden

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
22nd - Congressman Shipley

STATE: Illinois CODE: 17 COUNTY: Shelby CODE: 173

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
State of Illinois - Department of Transportation

STREET AND NUMBER:
West Jasper Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Paris

STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Illinois Department of Transportation - District 5 Office

STREET AND NUMBER:
West Jasper Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Paris

STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:
ENTRY NUMBER:
DATE:
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
	(Check One)		(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Covered bridge with two steel "I" beam approach spans on each end and the covered span in the center. Covered span constructed of wood with through Howe trusses for main support. Covered span is 103 feet 4 inches center to center of piers, with overall length of 160 feet 4 inches. Horizontal clearance on roadway is ten feet 6 inches and vertical clearance is 11 feet 8 inches. The original timbers are still intact with the roof and siding restored.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) About 1857

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significance due to type of structure, age, and continuous usage. One of only eight remaining 19th century covered bridges in Illinois. Still being used by vehicular traffic on township road. Crosses the Kaskaskia River approximately 2 miles northeast of Cowden, Illinois. A State historical marker for this bridge was dedicated on August 27, 1972.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	39	15	30	88	49	05
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
John C. Mulgrew, District Engineer

ORGANIZATION: Illinois Department of Transportation

DATE: September 18, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
West Jasper Street

CITY OR TOWN: Paris

STATE: Illinois

CODE: 17

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____ Anthony T. Dean</p> <p>Title <u>Director, Illinois Department of Conservation - State Historic Preservation Officer</u></p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

RETURN THIS FORM WHEN THE PROPERTY IS RESUBMITTED. DATE: 11.15.74
PROPERTY Thompson Mill Covered Bridge, Illinois

Attached National Register Inventory-Nomination form is being returned to your office for clarification of the information indicated below.

1. Name. _____
 2. Location. _____
 3. Classification. _____
 4. Owner of Property. _____
 5. Location of Legal Description. _____
 6. Representation in Existing Surveys. _____
 - X 7. Description. Please describe adjustments. Are steel "I" beam approach spans original? When were roof and siding "restored"? A description of the Howe truss would be helpful.
 - X 8. Statement of Significance. Is Thompson Mill still standing? Who used this bridge? Farmers? Include description and documentation.
 9. Bibliography. By J. J. ... see N.S. Allen's ... of the Middle West ...
 10. Geographical Data.
 - a. Longitude and Latitude Coordinates. Not here, a more recent map would help. The one submitted does not include all grid lines.
 - b. Acreage _____
 11. Form Prepared By. _____
 - X 12. Certification. Please fill in date.
- Photographic Coverage. _____
- Map Coverage. Please use a map bearing an identified system of coordinates, preferably an original USGS, which allows us to check latitude-longitude.
- Other. _____

No →

Clarification or correction of the above items must be made prior to the initiation of our professional review. Correction of these technical errors does not necessarily insure that the nomination will then satisfy the National Register criteria in full.

Thank you for your attention to the above items checked.

SIGNED: Charles ...

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Illinois	
COUNTY	Shelby	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

(Number all entries)

Description - continued

The covered bridge was erected at the job site in 1868. At the time all members were constructed of wood and timber including the flooring. The bridge was set on two sets of piers consisting of 5 tubular iron shells each filled with shale. It appears that the steel "I" beam approaches were added some time later and the ends were set on timber abutments and piling. With exception of replacing one or two diagonal cross pieces in the truss, because of rot, and making minor repairs and capping the metal piers with concrete, the Howe Truss and the iron shells are original construction. The roof and siding have been repaired several times since the bridge was erected, the last time being about 1966-67, by State Highway Day Labor Forces. Most of the floor planks have probably been replaced over the years due to wear. The structure had mismatched steel railing along the sides of the approaches. During 1973, this was replaced by rustic wood railing and the steel "I" beam members under the approaches were painted a color to resemble wood in order to restore the original appearance of the structure.

The Howe Truss consists of a series of panels formed by vertical iron tension rods and 2 diagonal wooden compression members that form an X between the rods. A good illustration of this is contained in Eric Sloane's publication, "American Barns and Covered Bridges", on page 100.

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Illinois	
COUNTY	Shelby	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

(Number all entries)

Significance - continued

The covered bridge was erected in 1868 in the vicinity of the Thompson Mill from which it derives its name. The bridge was fabricated in Michigan, shipped to Shelbyville and was transported from there to the job site by horse drawn wagons. The road on which the bridge was constructed, served as a major route from Springfield to Taylorville to Effingham, all in Illinois. It also provided access from the local residences and farms to the Thompson Mill and other communities. The bridge is the narrowest of the remaining eight covered bridges in Illinois, being only 10' 7" wide. A small community of log houses flourished there, but are no longer in existence.

The Thompson Mill, constructed in 1843, was located upstream from the covered bridge. It supplied a much needed service to the surrounding area as a corn and saw mill. The Mill was destroyed and rebuilt in 1872 and remained in operation until 1914 when it was torn down. The remains of the old dam can still be seen from the bridge.

The covered bridge represents one of the few remaining vestiges of a type of construction utilized in Illinois during the 19th century horse and buggy days. One reason given for Covered Bridge Construction is that the bridges were built to resemble a barn to keep the horses from shying at the running water.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Covered Bridges of the Middle West - by R. S. Allen
 Southern Illinois - by Grover Brinkman
 Early History of Cowden and Vicinity - by R. E. Fritz
 Covered Bridges in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin - Leslie Swanson
 See "American Barns and Covered Bridges" - by Eric Sloane for
 description of Howe Truss.

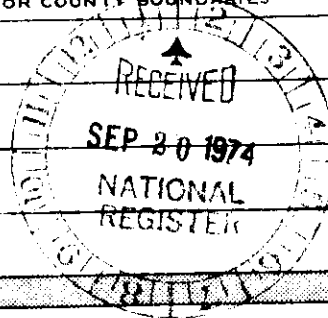
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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
NW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		39	15	30
SE	° ' "	° ' "		88	49	05
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: John C. Mulgrew, District Engineer

ORGANIZATION: Illinois Department of Transportation DATE: September 18, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: West Jasper Street

CITY OR TOWN: Paris STATE: Illinois CODE: 17

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 Anthony T. Dean
 Anthony T. Dean

Title Director, Illinois Department of Conservation - State Historic Preservation Officer

Date August 30, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered MAR 13 1977

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Thompson Mill Covered Bridge	Cowden vicinity Shelby County

COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION

Also Notified

Hon. Charles H. Percy
Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson, III
Hon. George E. Shipley

SH-H-1
200043

ILLINOIS HISTORIC SITES SURVEY INVENTORY

1. Name of Site:

Common Cowden Covered Bridge
Historic Thompson Covered Bridge

2.. Location: Dry Point Twp, near Cowden

Street and Number Township Section
City or Town Zip Code Range 1/4 Section
Cowden vic. ~~3E~~ 9N 1
County ~~3E~~ NW
Shelby

3. Classification:

Category (check one) Integrity (check one)
() District () Building (X) Altered () Unaltered
() Site (X) Structure () Moved (X) Original Site

4. Ownership:

() Private () Occupied
(X) Public () Unoccupied
(X) Preservation work in progress

Access to Public

(X) Yes () Restricted () Unrestricted () No

Present Use (check one or more)

() Agricultural () Industrial () Religious
() Commercial () Military () Scientific
() Educational () Museum (X) Transportation
() Entertainment () Park () Other (specify)
() Government () Private Residence

5. Ownership of Property:

Owner's Name Shelby Co. Phone Number
Street and Number
City or Town
State County Zip Code

6. Description:

() Excellent (X) Good () Fair () Deteriorated () Ruins () Unexposed

Is there a program of preservation underway? (X) Yes () No

ENGINEERING

7. Historical Themes : (check one or more of the following)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeological Site | (Pre-Columbian) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeological Site | (Post-Columbian to 1673) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French Influence | (1673-1780) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Frontier | (1780-1818) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Early | (1818-1850) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illinois Middle | (1850-1900) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Late | (1900-present) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Famous People | (give names & dates) |

8. Specific Date: 1868 constructed

Areas of significance (check one or more of the following)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (pre-historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | |

Brief statement of significance: (include all names and dates) Use additional sheets if necessary. New roof & siding.

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title: Miriam Herron Date: _____

Organization: Shelby Co. Hist. & Gen. Soc. Phone: 774-2772

Street and number: Box 86

City or Town: Shelbyville County: _____ Zip Code _____

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search for references for a particular site. When filling out the Survey form, please list according to the following example, published references to the site for which forms are being completed. If a bibliography can be compiled, it will greatly deduct from the Survey's task.

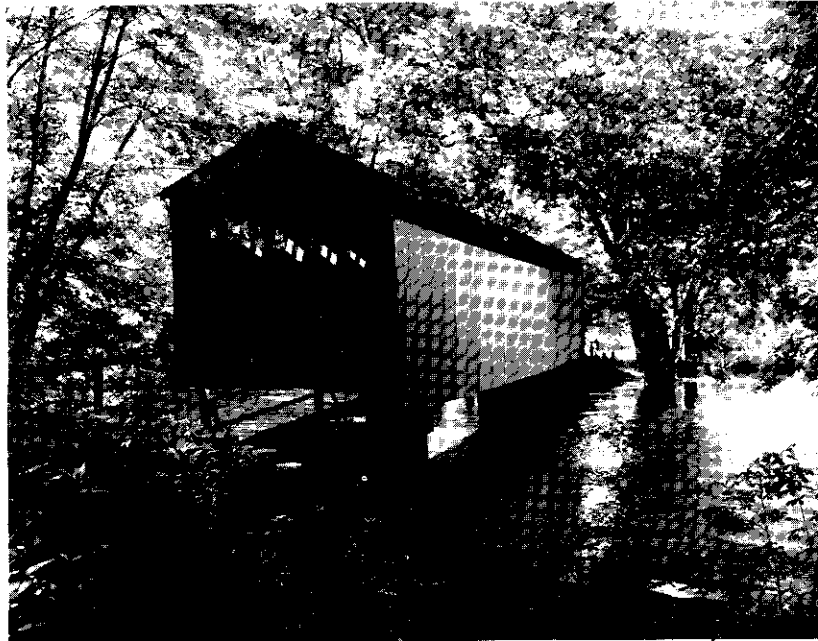
Bibliography

Robertson, Robert, Of Whales and Men. New York, Alfred K. Knopf, Inc., 1954.



SHELBY CO.

VIA OUTDOOR ILLINOIS
(DATE UNCERTAIN)



PICTURED HERE is one of the most beautiful covered bridges in the mid-west. It is the Thompson Mill or Dry Point span over the Kaskaskia River about three miles from the town of Cowden, Shelby County, in south central Illinois.

The bridge measures 160 feet with the approaches. Sunlight filtering through from the upper openings reveal the bridge is of the famed Howe truss with timber diagonals and vertical tension rods.

The Kaskaskia bridge is one of eight being maintained by the Illinois State Highway Division. A ninth bridge, the Hamilton span near the Mississippi River, was destroyed by fire two years ago.

Supplementing Illinois' total of covered bridges is the fairly new Sangamon River bridge, erected in 1963 near Mahomet in Champaign County, and a number of others erected or restored in recent years. This list includes a completely restored covered bridge which was moved to the carriage museum at Petersburg, one in a public park at Rockford, one in a county park near Moline, and others at a pioneer park in Aurora, Rolling Meadows, Litchfield, Crystal Lake, and one privately owned on a farm on the Winnebago-Boone county line. This gives Illinois a total of 17, counting all new and old covered bridges.



Photograph by Leslie C. Swanson of Moline, Ill., author of the book, "Covered Bridges of Illinois, Iowa & Wisconsin."