

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

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

1. NAME

COMMON:
Mary's River Covered Bridge

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Approximately 4 miles northeast of Chester and along the southeast side of Illinois Route 150 in an existing picnic area.

CITY OR TOWN: Chester

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 24th - Congressman Gray

STATE: Illinois

CODE: 17

COUNTY: Randolph

CODE: 157

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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

STREET AND NUMBER: Department of Transportation

CITY OR TOWN: Springfield

STATE: Illinois

CODE: 17

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Illinois Department of Transportation-District #8 Office and County Recorder's Office

STREET AND NUMBER: SBI 13 West

CITY OR TOWN: Carbondale

STATE: Illinois

CODE: 17

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State

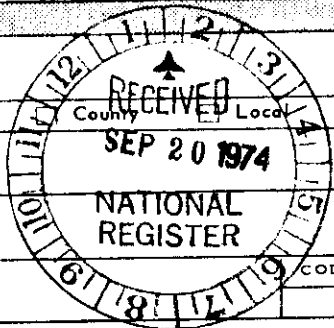
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE
COUNTY
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7. DESCRIPTION

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

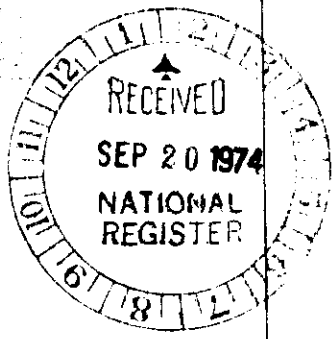
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This bridge is located on a plot of ground presented to the State and is maintained by the Division of Highways. This bridge was completed in 1854 and was constructed of native white oak timber, hand hewn throughout. With the exception of the floor, floor joists, roof, and siding, all of the original timber remains in this bridge. The first roof lasted 45 years. The present roof has been in place 35 years. The floor has been replaced several times. This bridge was in constant use from 1854 until 1930. The name of the builder and the cost of construction are not known.

It was originally part of a Planked Toll Road between Bremen and Chester. The bridge is Burr Arch design with double arches on either side of the King posts. The structure is 86 feet in length, is 17 feet, 8 inches wide and has a vertical clearance of 12 feet. Steel channels have been placed under the lower chord for support. The structure rests on the original stone abutments.



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) 1853

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

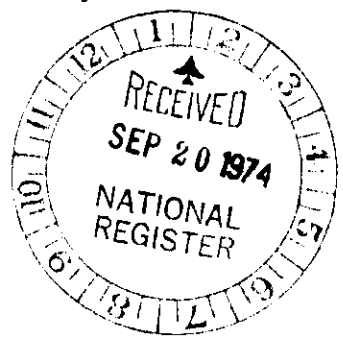
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 checked="" 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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

At the time of construction, the town of Chester was an important trading post because of its location on the Mississippi River. Marketable products such as wheat, corn, lumber, etc., were hauled to Chester by wagons and ox carts and loaded into boats on the river.

In order to facilitate the hauling of supplies to Chester, a one-way plank road 8 or 9 feet wide with frequent turnouts for passing was constructed from Chester to Bremen. This road was owned by a Mr. Hartmann who operated it as a toll road. Mr. Hartmann financed the construction of the road and the covered bridge. Sometime between 1870 and 1875 the planked road, stone culverts, covered bridge, and right-of-way were sold to the County.



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Randolph County Sesquicentennial Supplement, Thursday, March 28, 1968.

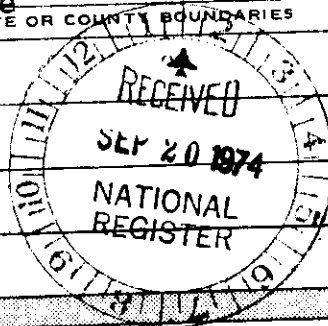
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY.			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"
	89	56	54	37	46	06

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 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



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: J. F. Newton, District Engineer DATE: November 29, 1972

ORGANIZATION: Illinois Department of Transportation

STREET AND NUMBER: State Highway Building, SBI 13 West

CITY OR TOWN: Carbondale 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: _____

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: _____

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8.

Historic Covered Bridge On Rt. 150

It is hard for us, accustomed as we are to good roads on every hand, to realize that there were once no roads and no streams were bridged. One of the recurring entries in old records is that concerning roads. These were generally laid out by men following as nearly as they conveniently could the contours of the land. In general they were intended to go cross-country along the shortest line. Where possible to do so streams were forded. Some streams could not be forded, and at these points ferries were established or bridges were built. One such bridge, dating from 1854, with some of the Old roadway, may be seen beside the paved highway where it crosses Mary's River between Chester and Bremen. Considering the fact that this bridge has stood for almost a century, it is wonderfully well-preserved. Its fine state of preservation is in part accounted for by the fact that it is a covered bridge, as were most of the important bridges of that time.

When one looks at this old wooden bridge with its single span of more than seventy feet, sided up and roofed, he feels that it is almost a story book scene he beholds. When he walks onto the bridge and looks closely at its construction, he realizes that the designers and builders of that day were often highly skilled.

The old roadway that crossed this bridge was in part a plank-ed road, that is, all low and mirey places were floored with heavy planks. Altogether it was a wonderful highway for the



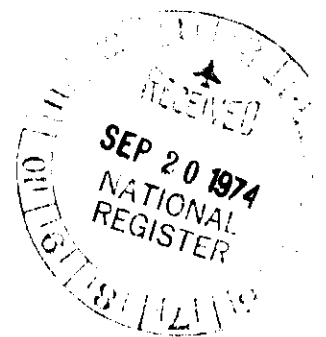
Mary's River Covered Bridge

period it served. This roadway with its bridge was a commercial venture and was termed a toll road. A man wishing to make use of it was required to pay a fee. A toll gate at the Chester end was located about two miles from the town and kept by a man named G. S. Rust, who also kept a small store.

This old bridge has served the emigrant on his journey to seek a new home to the west, the freighter with his heavily laden wagon drawn by slow moving ox teams, as well as man travelling by horseback with old time saddle bags. These were followed by buggies, surreys, farm wagons, sleds and sleighs in winter, mud boats, lizards, high wheeled carts, and other conveyances now seen no more. The stage coach on its scheduled run also used this bridge before the railroads came. Altogether it bespeaks another day.

Since this is the only bridge of its kind left in southern

Illinois, a visit to it will repay anyone interested in the methods of the pioneer builder.



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered DEC 31 1974

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
✓ St. James Episcopal Church	Lewistown Fulton County
Mary's River Covered Bridge	Chester Randolph County

COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION

Also Notified

Hon. Charles H. Percy
Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson, III
Hon. Tom Railsback
Hon. Kenneth J. Gray

ILLINOIS HISTORIC SITES SURVEY INVENTORY

SURVEY USE ONLY

1. Name of Site: Mary's River Covered Bridge
Common

- Archeology
- Architecture
- History

2. Location: On Route 150 East, between Chester & Steeleville

Street and Number

Township

Section

City or Town

Zip Code

Range

1/4 Section

County

Randolph

T7S
R6W

4
SE

3. Classification:

Category (Check one)

- District
- Site
- Building
- Structure

Integrity (check One)
- Altered Unaltered

Position (check One)
- Moved Original site

4. Ownership:

- Private
- Public State of Illinois

Status (check one)
 Occupied
 Unoccupied
 Preservation work in progress

Access to Public

Yes Restricted Unrestricted No

Present Use (check one or more)

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

5. Ownership of Property:

Owner's Name
State of Illinois
Street and Number

Phone Number

City or Town

State

County

Zip Code

6. Description:

Condition

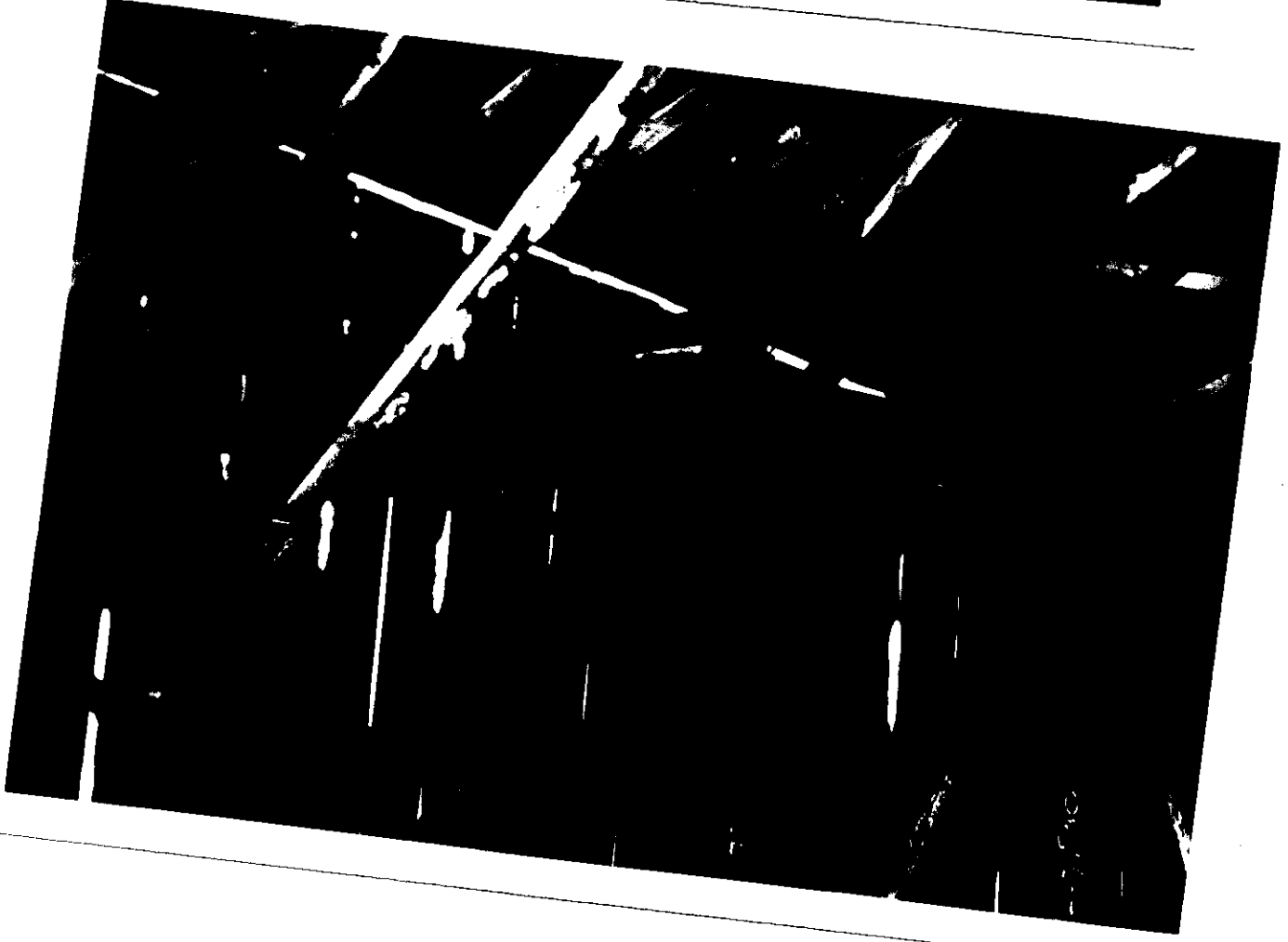
Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

Is there a program of preservation underway? Yes No

TRANSPORTATION

SHRY'S RIVER COVERED BRIDGE
BUILT IN 1854 IN CONTINUOUS SERVICE
FROM 1854-1930. WAS ORIGINALLY A PART
OF A PLANKED TOLL ROAD BETWEEN BREMEN
AND CHESTER. ALL OF THE TIMBER IN THIS
BRIDGE IS THE ORIGINAL WITH THE EXCEPTIONS
OF THE FLOOR, FLOOR JOIST, ROOF AND SIDING
ACQUIRED BY STATE OF ILLINOIS IN 1936 FOR
PURPOSES OF PRESERVATION AND AS A PICNIC
AREA. MONEY FOR PURCHASE OF SITE WAS
DONATED BY CHESTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FOX



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: built and opened to traffic in 1854

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

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Aboriginal (historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Literature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Aboriginal (prehistoric) | <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 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 of necessary.

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title: Mrs. Harold Hahn Date: _____

Organization: Randolph County Historical Society

Street and Number: 1220 Opdyke St.

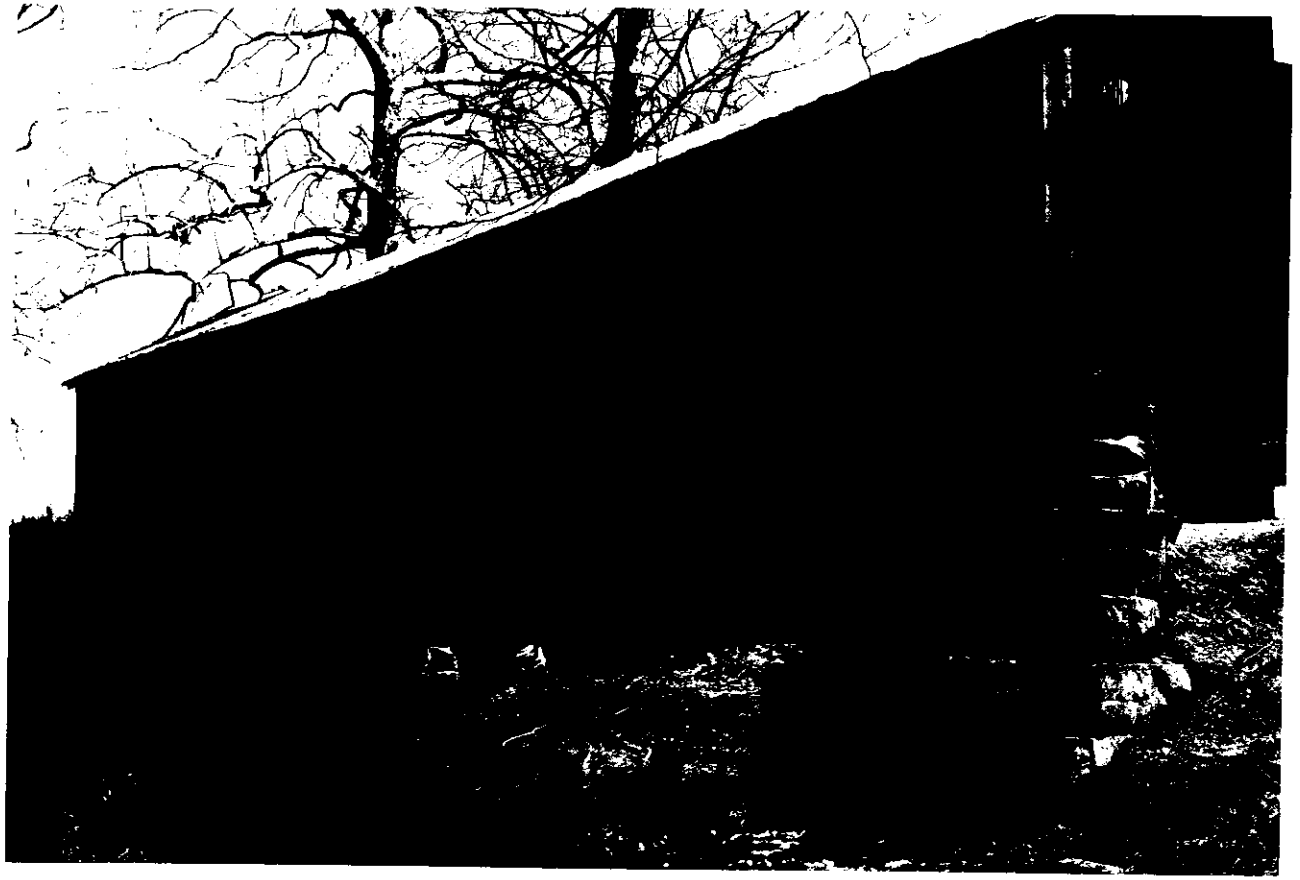
City or Town: Chester County: Randolph Zip Code: 62233

Phone Number: 826-4150

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.



Covered Bridges

One of the few that remains is across Mary's River, on the route of the old plank road that connected Chester and Sparta, in Randolph County. The building of this bridge was promoted by the Randolph County Plank Road Company, chartered by the state on February 11, 1853.

Designed to replace older roads constructed with poles, plank roads were strange structures. They were made by cross-laying the roadway with planks about three inches thick, from eight to twelve or more inches wide, and not less than eight feet long. These planks were placed on stringers laid parallel with the roadway and flush with the earth. The floored surface thus provided was an excellent one over which heavy loads could be hauled. Provisions for the passing of vehicles meeting on plank roads were provided by building wider sections at somewhat regular intervals.

Stations for the collection of tolls from those using these roads were located at points along the way. One of the toll stations on the Chester, Sparta road was on the south side of the highway at Bremen about two miles east of Mary's River and was kept by a family named Hartman.

The bridge across Mary's River was opened to traffic in 1854. It remained a part of the toll road until purchased by Randolph County in October, 1872, at a cost of two thousand dollars. It was continued in use as a part of the highway system of the county until the completion of the concrete pavement in 1930; thus it served about eighty years. Through effort of interested citizens and with funds provided by the Chester Chamber of Commerce, the old bridge and some near-by ground were purchased and given to the State of Illinois.

This bridge, resting on stone piers and flanked with stone approaches, reaches across the river with a single span about ninety feet long. Its overall height is about twenty feet and it is twenty feet wide. A side view of the structure reveals that it is slightly swaybacked, but those acquainted with it for many years state that they have not noted any increase in the dip during their memories.

The large hewn timbers of oak and the ingenious manner in which they are assembled will intrigue those who are even mildly interested in building construction. Skilled workmanship and good engineering practices are illustrated, especially in the large timbers that form the curved tops of trusses that carry the bridge. Careful inspection of the entire bridge indicates that those who designed and built it were highly competent.

One may wonder why bridges were covered. One purpose, perhaps the principal one, was the preservation of the structure, because the cost of such bridges--made of large, unsplit timbers--was considerable. Secondly, nearly all livestock was then driven to market and they could be more easily urged across a covered bridge. Perhaps this may have been taken into consideration. The roof of the bridge also provided a shelter for those journeying along the highway. Also, a covered bridge would present a more attractive appearance than the bare framework, though it is doubtful if any would be covered for that reason.

It is interesting to walk under the covering of this old bridge and see some of the advertisements painted upon the timbers, along with fragments of bills once posted there and thousands of tacks that held other bills and posters. The names of assorted products, then common but now only memories, will be found. The same may be said about the names of individual and business firms. Some names and initials carry dates. Others bear initials often encircled with hearts or geometrical figures, proclaiming that their business bloomed even then.

***** I have read in Eric Sloan's book on Covered Bridges that the trusses as used in the Mary's River Covered Bridge is the Burr Truss or Kingpost Arch which was patented in 1817 and used in the construction of covered bridges. Adele Mann