

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0698776

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RECEIVED
FEB 5 1978
DATE ENTEREDNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Swinging Suspension Bridges in Mississippi *Thematic Review***2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

See accompanying inventory forms

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF
CODESTATE
MississippiCOUNTY
Hinds, Rankin, Jefferson

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDEN
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic Group	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Multiple ownership, see accompanying inventory forms

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

See accompanying inventory forms

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Mississippi State Highway Department Bridge Survey

DATE

1978

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDSMississippi State Highway Department
Box 1850

CITY, TOWN

STATE

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The swinging suspension bridge theme relates to a group of four similar bridges constructed early in the twentieth century in rural areas of southwestern and south central Mississippi. Over one hundred were built in Jefferson County and only three survive (Duncan McCormick interview, September 7, 1978). Of the two known steel-tower bridges built in Rankin County, the Moncure Bridge, constructed ca. 1905 over Fourteen Mile Creek, was demolished in 1977 for the construction of a new bridge.

Shared physical characteristics among the four include forested settings, arched tensile decks, and similar maintenance requirements. The three Jefferson County bridges have identical piers and all-wooden decks. The Byram Bridge utilizes more sophisticated structural features such as the steel I-beam towers and steel subflooring.

Jack A. Gold, architectural historian with the Division of Historic Preservation, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, conducted the bridge survey in August and September, 1978. The survey area was limited to the boundaries of the state of Mississippi. The location of extant swinging suspension bridges was determined through use of the Mississippi State Highway Department Bridge Survey. Inventory forms from the Statewide Survey of Historic Sites, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, are available for state and local planning agencies. The state Highway Department Bridge Survey is a continuous inventory. Statewide data sheets are gathered by inventory crews that cover all roads in each county every three to five years. County highway department records are consulted as a resource by the State Highway Department.

The structural improvements and design changes incorporated into the construction of the Byram Bridge (ca. 1905) expresses the stylistic evolution as well as the improved structural stability of larger swinging suspension bridges constructed in central Mississippi after 1900. The use of steel I-beam towers with a substructure of concrete piers provides the increased structural support necessary for the 360-foot span of the Byram Bridge. The 25-foot steel towers with sway bracing contrast in scale and texture with the squat iron-sheathed tower supports of the three Jefferson County bridges. The technological improvements used in the Byram and Moncure (the latter no longer extant) bridges were adopted by rural bridge builders in Jefferson County because of the ease of construction and standardized maintenance requirements for these bridges. The concrete tower support system was used consistently in Jefferson County through the 1920s.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Meeting the transportation needs of farmers and occasional travelers in Jefferson and Rankin counties, swinging suspension bridges were well suited for construction across the ravines and deep creek beds that separated rural settlement areas. Known locally as "swinging bridges" because of the tensile quality of the arched decks, the structures proved to be a remarkable vernacular adaptation of their larger predecessors, the Wheeling (1849) and Brooklyn (1883) bridges.

The design by Schuster and Jacob of Fayette, Mississippi, for the cable anchoring system incorporated in the four bridges was improved by bridge builders W. H. Groome and Son, also of Fayette. Concrete was used as infill for the cable-anchoring holes instead of wood (Duncan McCormick interview, September 7, 1978).

The proliferation of these bridges in Jefferson County was caused by their simplicity and utility of design, ease of construction, and low maintenance. With the increase in vehicular transportation toward the middle of this century and the concern for speed and continuous two-way traffic, swinging suspension bridges and numerous older connecting roads became disused, abandoned, or bypassed. The more fortunate extant examples are worthy of continued maintenance and preservation.

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Gold, Jack A., architectural historian. Personal interview with George Lemon, Jackson, Miss., July 11, 1978.

_____. Personal interview with Duncan McCormick, Chairman, Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, Fayette, Miss., September 7, 1978.

_____. Personal interview with Nelson Sellers, engineer, Mississippi State Highway Department, Transportation Planning Division, Jackson, Miss., August 21, 1978.

_____. Personal interview with Milton Singletary, retired Rankin County Supervisor, Brandon, Miss., August 15, 1978.

_____. Personal interview with Wallace Wall, assistant engineer, Hinds County Engineer's Office, Jackson, Miss., July 11, 1978.

Jackson, Miss. Clarion Ledger, July 8, 1977.

Jefferson County Board of Supervisors. Minutes Book. Fayette, Miss.

United States. Works Progress Administration. Jefferson County, Miss. Source Material for Mississippi History. Preliminary Manuscripts. Compiled by Statewide Historical Research Project, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson.

From	To	Distance
1	2	100
1	3	150
1	4	200
1	5	250
1	6	300
1	7	350
1	8	400
1	9	450
1	10	500
1	11	550
1	12	600
1	13	650
1	14	700
1	15	750
1	16	800
1	17	850
1	18	900
1	19	950
1	20	1000
2	3	100
2	4	150
2	5	200
2	6	250
2	7	300
2	8	350
2	9	400
2	10	450
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2	13	600
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18	20	150
19	20	100



SWINGING SUSPENSION BRIDGES IN MISSISSIPPI
 Jefferson, Hinds and Rankin Counties,
 Mississippi

Scale: 1 inch equals approximately 14.5 miles

