CHICAGO, BURLINGTON AND QUINCY RAILROAD,  
ILLINOIS RIVER BRIDGE  
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor  
Ottawa  
LaSalle County  
Illinois

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

CHICAGO, BURLINGTON AND QUINCY RAILROAD,
ILLINOIS RIVER BRIDGE
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor

HAER No. IL-71

Location: I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor
Crossing the Illinois River
Ottawa, LaSalle County, Illinois

UTM: 16 E. 345470 N. 4578120
Quad: Ottawa

Date of Construction: 1898, 1932 (addition)

Builder: King Bridge Company

Present Owner: Burlington Northern Railroad

Significance: This multi-span, truss railroad bridge
was erected in 1898 by the prominent
bridge-manufacturing firm of King Bridge
Company. A later reconstruction (1932)
included a Waddell and Harrington
Engineers vertical lift.

Project Information: The Illinois and Michigan Canal was
designated a National Heritage Corridor
in 1984. The following year HABS/HAER
embarked on an extensive inventory and
documentation project of the 100 mile-
long corridor. Field work for this
project was concluded in 1988. Final
editing of the documentation was

A railroad crossing of the Illinois River at Ottawa has existed since 1871 when the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad leased the line of the Ottawa, Oswego & Fox River Valley Company and began operating a road to Streator, Illinois. One of the nation's prominent late-nineteenth-century bridge manufactures, the King Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio, constructed the pin-connected, Pratt, through-truss spans in 1898. With the advent of the Illinois Waterway in the early 1930s, one of the spans was reconstructed with a Waddell and Harrington Engineers vertical lift bridge added. In addition to the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad bridge at Ottawa, several other similar vertical lift spans exist across the Illinois River within the Heritage Corridor. Presently the Burlington Northern Railroad owns and operates the bridge.

The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Bridge is a multi-span railroad bridge built in 1898 by the King Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio. Three of the bridge's spans are fixed steel Pratt through trusses with pin connections. The main span is a vertical lift, Pratt through truss with pin connections; each span measures approximately 200' in length. (The vertical lift span, of the Waddell and Harrington Engineers type, is probably a ca. 1932 addition.) A number of timber trestle approach spans are located to the north and south. Ashlar sandstone piers support each of the truss spans. The bridge is single tracked.

SOURCES:

