

CREVISTON BRIDGE
(Miami County Bridge 150)
Spanning Big Pipe Creek on County Road
1100 South, 2 miles north of Converse,
Indiana and 0.1 mile east of County
Road 1050 East (Old State Road 513)
Converse vicinity
Miami County
Indiana

HAER No. IN-79

HAER
IND
52-CONV.V,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Northeast Region
U. S. Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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CREVISTON BRIDGE
(Miami County Bridge 150)

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South, 2 miles north of Converse, Indiana
and 0.1 mile east of County Road 1050 East
(Old State Road 513)
Converse vicinity
Miami County
Indiana

UTM: 16.595520.4495760
Quad: Sweetser, Indiana

Date of
Construction: 1915

Construction
Company: The Rochester Bridge Company

Present Owner: Miami County

Present Use: Vehicular and pedestrian traffic

Significance: Fabricated by a prolific Indiana firm, the
long structure is of standard design except
for the degree of variety of its diagonals.
The original members, including the
latticed guardrails, are intact.

Project Information: This documentation was undertaken in
August, 1994, in accordance with the
Memorandum of Agreement by the Miami County
Board of Commissioners, Indiana Department
of Transportation and the Federal Highway
Administration as a mitigative measure
prior to the demolition and replacement of
the bridge.

Aaron Davenport
BUTLER, FAIRMAN and SEUFERT, INC.
9405 Delegates Row
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Creviston Bridge
(Miami County Bridge 150)
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The Creviston Bridge spans Big Pipe Creek which flows through the southern portion of Miami County in a southeast to northwest direction. Riparian woods and agricultural land lines the majority of Big Pipe Creek, throughout the county. A lack of significant relief makes the land along this waterway conducive to farming activities, which is typical of many streams in Miami County of that size. The natural drainage of the area is towards Big Pipe Creek.

The Creviston Bridge is a single span, steel, Warren Pony truss . The bridge was built in 1915 by the Rochester Bridge Company of Rochester, Indiana. Concrete abutments and wingwalls support the 103' long, riveted, six panel bridge. The all-interior verticals were manufactured from pairs of laced angles. The diagonals become increasingly lighter toward midspan, varying at the abutment from a pair of heavy angles riveted to stay plates, through two pairs of angles, so connected, to a single pair of light angles attached to stay plates in the center panel. The I floor beams are riveted to gussets and to the verticals above the lower chord, and carry the asphalt-over-timber deck with its 19.5' deck width and bridge roadway opening. The Creviston Bridge is of standard design except for the degree of variety of its diagonals. The original members, including the latticed guardrail, are intact.

The existing bridge plaques (which were removed by the County subsequent to the 1994 closing of the bridge to prevent their destruction by vandals) identifies the County Officials, the builder and the year of construction as follows:

MIAMI COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
C.J. WARD PRES.
D.T. KESSLER
W.H. MYERS

AUDITOR
F.K. McELHENY

ENGINEER
BERNE WELCH

BUILT BY THE
ROCHESTER BRIDGE CO.
ROCHESTER IND.
1915

Available recreational activities at this historic property include sightseeing, (looking at and away from the bridge). No historic photographs of the bridge were found.

Events leading to the construction of this bridge were discovered in minutes from Board of Commissioners meetings in 1915 and 1916. Approval of the plans and specifications for Bridge 150 were approved on April 6, 1915 with bids received, awarded and a construction bond received on May 17, 1915. Alvah Doan was appointed superintendent of construction on May 19, 1915. On July 21, 1915, the Board of Commissioners entered into a supplemental agreement for a change in the substructure, or concrete abutments. The change was determined necessary by conditions found (not stated as to what) by soundings of the contractor. The change reduced the original cost of the bridge by several hundred dollars.

In March 1896, Frank Hoffman, Lorenzo E. Curtis and Robert C. Wallace, of Rochester, Indiana, joined together to incorporate the Rochester Bridge Company. This company started with seven employees and a capital stock of \$30,000. Control of this fledgling company was soon assumed by William L. Deniston of Rochester in 1908. As a Purdue University graduate and successful entrepreneur, William Deniston directed the affairs of the Rochester Bridge Company with the help of his son Arthur L. Deniston, another Purdue graduate. Arthur served as the firm's Secretary in 1908 and succeeded his father as President in 1916, a post he held into the 1920's. When Arthur assumed executive leadership of the firm, the company promoted another Purdue student of civil engineering, Guy R. Barr, to the post of Secretary.

The extensive Purdue connection may explain the company's considerable experimentation with the fabrication of members within traditional truss forms. The company rightly thought of itself as making "standard design bridges." Although it specialized in shorter spans where beams and standard trusses served well, it also built several kinds of longer and higher trusses. Within fairly standard forms, however, the Rochester Bridge Company's designers explored ways to rationalize manufacture by reducing the number of structural shapes used in trusses. They were especially interested in angles and experimented with their use in every possible part of a truss, and they omitted decoration.

By the early twenties, the firm employed 135 men working in four shops, two at 200 feet long and two at 100 feet long. The capital stock of the company had grown to \$350,000 to support the enlarged plant and work force.

The Rochester Bridge Company sold a large number of bridges in at least fourteen counties across northern Indiana as well as in a number of other states. It worked as well through Olo E. Nichols, first of Hebron and then of Bremen, and others who bid successfully for contracts and sublet metal fabrication to the Rochester company. Nichols' relationship with the firm was unusually close for a contractor.

When the Deniston family retired from the firm in the early twenties, the company enjoyed a reputation as "the most successful factory to have its headquarters in Rochester since the first settlement of the county." The Rochester Bridge Company, however, was already in the throws of considerable change. The First World War had intervened in more than a temporary way in the firm's direction. Like many other bridge builders, the company fabricated steel for the federal government's fleet as a part of the war effort. When the war was over, the company continued its structural work which, indeed, provided about three-fourths of its business through the twenties.

Bridges played an important, if decreasing, role in the Rochester company's last decade. The firm bid successfully for a number of the metal structures which northern Indiana counties built in the 1920's, and it built a number of structures for the State Highway Commission. But the company did not survive more than the earliest ravages of the Great Depression of the 1930's.

On August 14, 1915, Mr. Frank N. Hoffman, a Rochester Bridge Company representative, stated to the Commissioners that the weather conditions during the summer had delayed every contract they have had, thus, delaying their work. It was further stated that construction of the Creviston Bridge would be delayed beyond the original completion date.

The original contract bid was for \$5,535.00. On March 6, 1916, a final construction report, prepared by the Rochester Bridge Company, was reviewed by the Commissioners. The final construction cost was not listed.

The historical name of this bridge was associated with the Creviston family residing in the area. This family had no local significance and subsequent to construction of the bridge, the local name was dropped.

No records were found which described any special conditions or technology in the construction of the Creviston Bridge. Machinery and tools were probably similar to those used by other bridge manufacturers of that time.

No significant events or persons are known to be connected with this bridge. The bridge was constructed as part of a highway improvement project. Local and regional economic and social conditions were not significantly affected by the construction of any one bridge in this part of the county. However, collectively, the bridges spanning Big Pipe Creek provided shorter travel distances, thus, decreasing trip time and costs for travellers, farmers and later, motorists, in the southern portion of Miami County.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

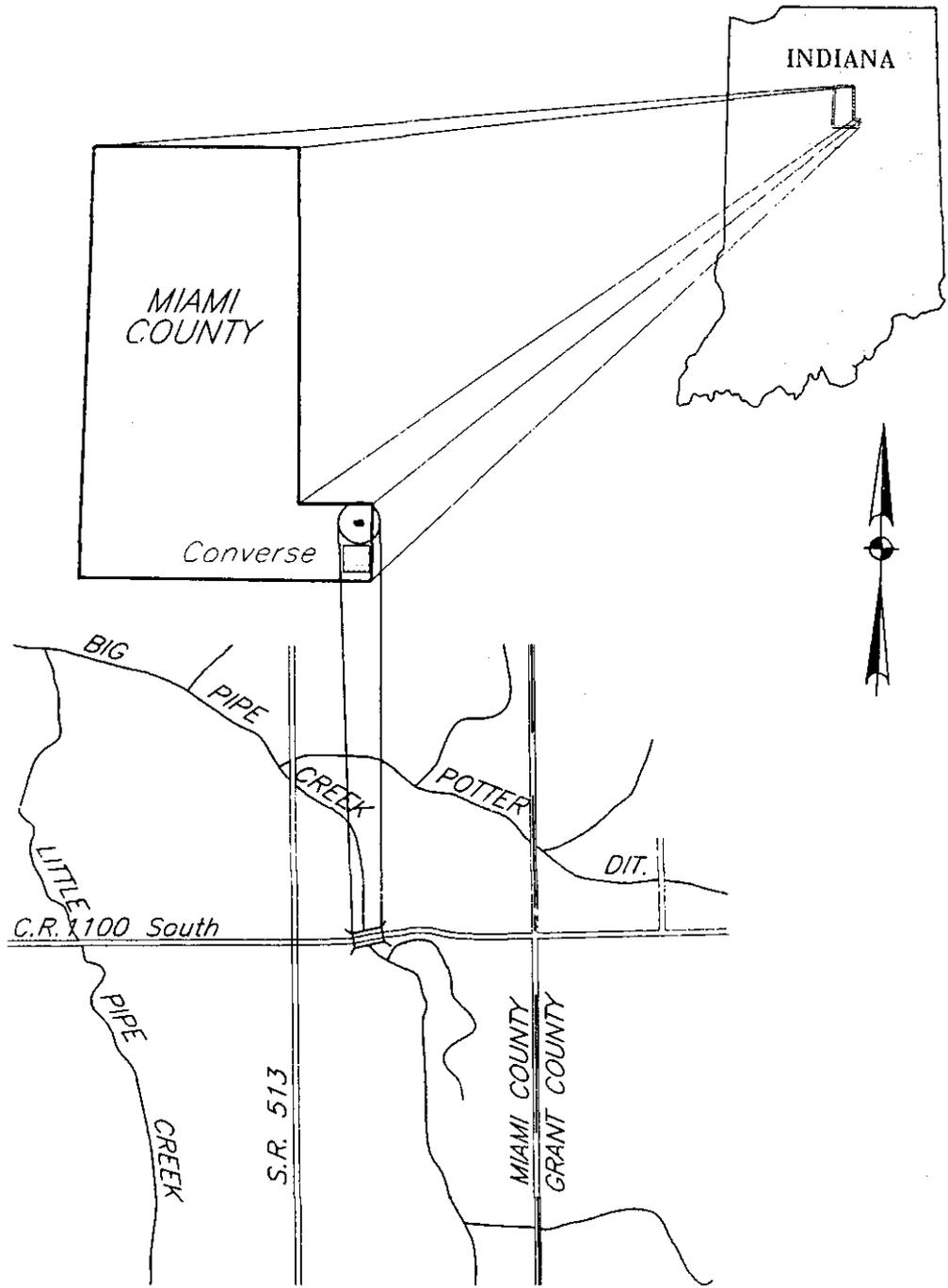
Bridge Nameplate

Miami County Commission Records
Miami County Commissioners
Miami County Courthouse
Peru, IN 46970

Butler, Fairman and Seufert, Inc., Bridge Inspection/Reinspection Report: Miami County, (Indianapolis, 1973, 1977 and 1981)

Cole Associates, Inc. Phase - I, 1993 Bridge Inspection: Miami County, Indiana, (South Bend 1993)

Cooper, James L., Iron Monuments to Distant Posterity, Indiana's Metal Bridges, 1870-1930, 1987, pgs.26-28.



SITE
LOCATION MAP

Scale: 1" = 2000'