

Carroll Street Bridge
(Wabash County Bridge No. 509)
Spanning Wabash River on Carroll Street
Wabash
Wabash County
Indiana

HAER NO. IN-87 HAER
IND
85-WAB,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Great Lakes System Support Office
Midwest Field Area
Department of the Interior
1709 Jackson St.
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

HAER
IND
85-WAB,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

CARROLL STREET BRIDGE
(WABASH COUNTY BRIDGE NO. 509)

HAER NO. IN-87

Location: Spanning the Wabash River on Carroll Street/Smith Street
In Wabash, Indiana approximately 0.42 mile west of State Roads 13
and 15.
Wabash vicinity
Wabash County
Indiana

UTM: 16.598860.4515940
Quad: Wabash, Indiana

Date of Construction: 1BB9

Construction Company: Milwaukee Bridge and Iron works

Present Owner: Wabash County

Present Use: Vehicular and pedestrian traffic

Significance: One of three extant Pratts of this noted Wisconsin builder, the
trusses appear to retain their original members including decoratively
latticed portals, portal bracing, and guardrails. The nemepletes are
pierced.

Project Information: This documentation was undertaken in August 25,1995, in
accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement by the Wabash
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
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9405 Delegates Row
Indianapolis, IN 46240

The Carroll Street Bridge spans the Wabash River which flows through the central portion of Wabash County in a east to west direction. Riparian woods and agricultural land lines the majority of the Wabash River with typical urban land uses in the City of Wabash. The relief along the Wabash River varies from flat plains in the western part to gently rolling areas in the eastern part. This topography is conducive to farming activities, which is typical of many streams in Wabash County. The natural drainage of the area is towards the Wabash River.

The Carroll Street bridge is a two-span, pin-connected Pratt through structure, which was built by the Milwaukee Bridge and Iron Works of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1889. Concrete abutments, wingwalls and a center pier support the 131 foot long bridge. Intermediate verticals of two sizes of laced channels subdivide each truss into most of its nine panels. Pairs of die-forged and rectangular eyebars provide the diagonals which stretch toward center span from the top panel point to the bottom of all except the center and endpost panels. Cylindrical eyebars with turnbuckles counter the other panel points in the 4th and 6th panels and pairs cross the 5th or center panel. Riveted to pin plates, rectangular girder floor beams carry the asphalt deck with its 17.9 foot deck width and overall 18 foot vertical clearance. The trusses retain the original decoratively latticed portals and portal bracing.

Modifications to the bridge were made in 1964, 1965 and 1980 due to deterioration. The existing pier and abutments were encased in 1964 and 1965. IN 1980, the existing stringers, some floorbeams and the latticed guardrail were replaced. Other structural improvements included new expansion joints, asphalt surface and new steel guardrail. All steel members of the bridge were also cleaned and painted.

The existing bridge plaques identifies the construction year and company:

1889
MILWAUKEE
BRIDGE
AND IRON WORKS

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

Events leading to the construction of this bridge were discovered in minutes from the Board of Commissioners meetings from 1887 to 1890. Local residents of Wabash petitioned the Board of Commissioners to construct a bridge spanning the Wabash River at its subsequent location. The Board of Commissioners, at their September 12, 1887 meeting, determined that a new bridge would be constructed and announced that bids would be accepted for the substructure work. Eight companies bid for the substructure project, of which Bridges and Smith were awarded the contract for \$6,131.50. Bids were accepted from 21 companies for the superstructure with the contract awarded to the Milwaukee Bridge and Iron Works of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in August, 1889. The contract price was for \$4,600 with the bridge being completed in the same year. Construction of the north approach to the Carroll Street bridge was awarded on June 17, 1890, to Schuyler A. Haas for \$.15 per cubic yard and limited to 1,400 cubic yards.

The Milwaukee Bridge and Iron Works was the outcome of a small private business established in 1870 by Leon Soulerin and Garth W. James. Little is known about either man, although Soulerin

patented an unusual draw bridge in 1874. Mr. Soulerin dropped out the company in 1876 followed by Mr. James in 1877. Another one year owner, F.S. Ilsey, controlled the company in 1877. Despite his short tenure, Ilsey was praised as a successful bridge builder. Under his ownership, the company completed bridges in Darlington, Racine, Stevens Point, and Theresa, Wisconsin as well as in Mississippi and Iowa.

In 1878, William H. Keepers, who had joined the firm in 1874 as superintendent, purchased a partnership. Keepers was a native of Ohio and had been engaged in bridge building since 1866. His first partner was James H. Cunningham. Cunningham was a native of Edinburgh, Scotland. He immigrated to this country in 1876, and the same year came to Milwaukee Bridge and Iron as an engineer. He was a member of the Liverpool and American societies of civil engineers. In 1881, the company had a capacity of 1,800 tons per year and was involved in iron work for bridges of all kinds, piers, trestles, roofs, turn-tables and general iron construction.

In 1882, Cunningham retired and was replaced by Augustus T. Riddell, the former owner of a steam bakery. In 1887, the company filed papers of incorporation, with a capital stock of \$125,000. In 1889, the firm employed 200 men in the shops and from seven to ten gangs of from five to seventy-five men each for the erecting. L.E. Sangdahl, a civil engineer, directed ten draftsmen in making shop drawings and designs for new work. The firm grossed over \$800,000 in 1889, on projects in all the contiguous states as well as Texas, Nebraska, and Colorado. Confident of future expansion, the company purchased an additional six acres of land in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to be built upon to furnish more shop and factory room.

Julius G. Wagner, a long time Milwaukee iron manufacturer, took over as proprietor by 1892. At the same time, Wagner maintained his firm of Architectural Iron Works. In 1897, he may have consolidated both into the Julius G. Wagner, Co. Riddell went on the Milwaukee Variety Iron Works and Keepers joined James H. Wynkoop in a consulting and contracting engineering firm. Wagner remained in control of Milwaukee Bridge and Iron until 1901, when it joined with other companies to form the American Bridge Company.

The original name for the bridge was "the Bridge over the Wabash River." The bridge became known as the Carroll Street bridge, even though the bridge was actually located on Smith Street in Wabash. When the current numbering system assigned the number 509 to the bridge, it continued to be locally called the Carroll Street bridge. It still retains the historical name to this day.

No significant events or person 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 the Wabash River provided shorter travel distances, thus, decreasing trip time and costs for travelers, farmers and later, motorists, in the central portion of Wabash County and in the City of Wabash.

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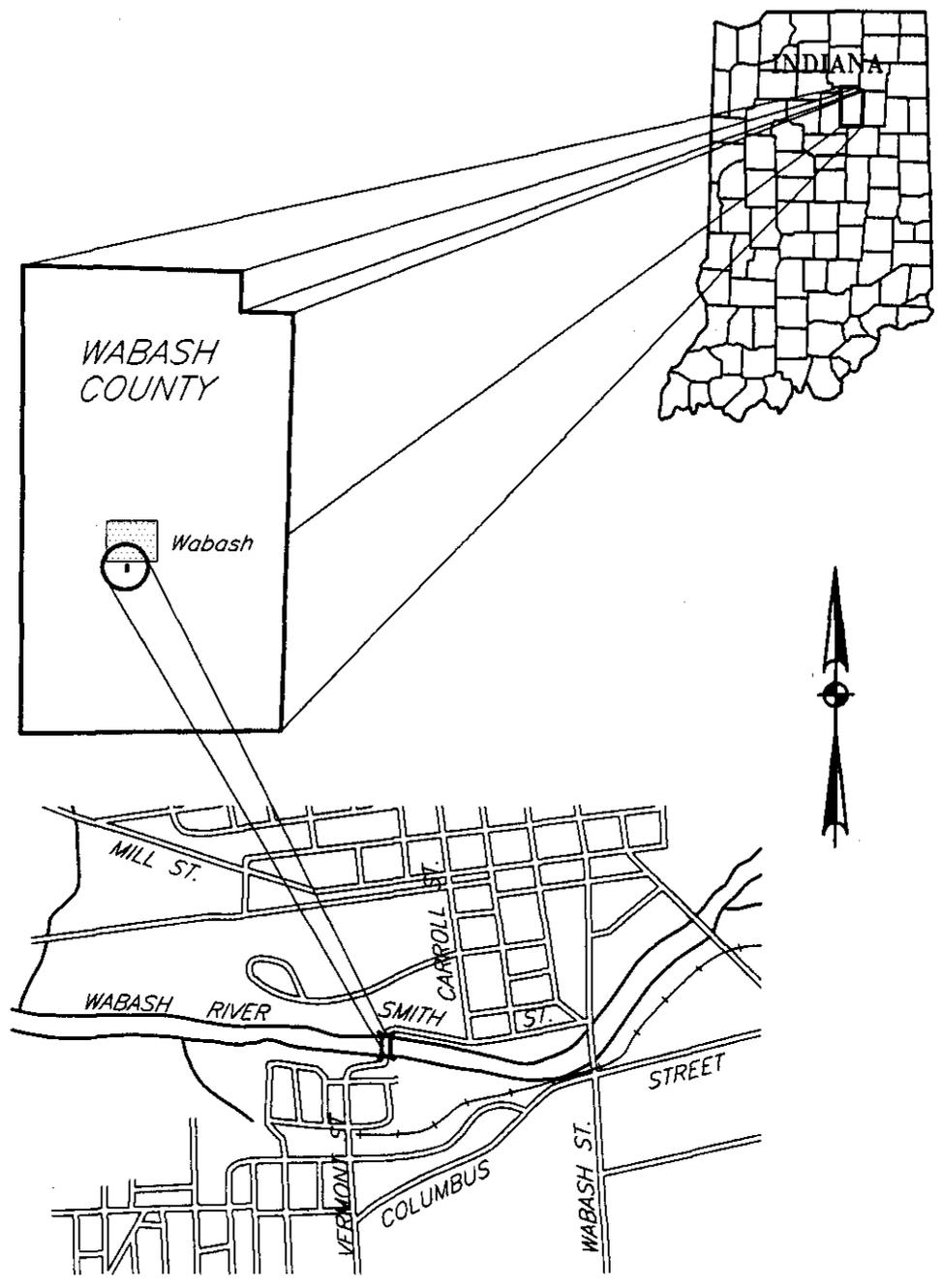
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CARROLL STREET BRIDGE
(WABASH COUNTY BRIDGE 509)
HAER NO. IN-87 (PAGE 5)



SITE
LOCATION MAP

Scale: 1"=2000'