

LYTER ROAD BRIDGE  
Lyter Road spanning the Little Swan Creek  
Bronson vicinity  
Branch County  
Michigan

HAER No. MI-101

HAER  
MI-101

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

# HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

## LYTER ROAD BRIDGE

HAER No. MI-101

Location: Lyter Road spanning the Little Swan Creek, Bronson Vicinity, Branch County, Michigan.

UTM: 16.644023.4642617

Quad: Colon, Michigan

Date of Construction: 1915

Contractor: Continental Bridge Company

Present Owner: Branch County Road Commission

Present Use: Vehicular Traffic

Significance: The Lyter Road Bridge is one of only four steel through girder bridges left on the Michigan Department of Transportation inventory list and is over 79 years old.

Project Information: This documentation was undertaken in April, 1995, in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement by the Michigan Department of Transportation as a mitigative measure prior to the replacement of the bridge.

Thomas M. Rushlow  
Project Engineer  
Wightman and Associates, Inc.  
920 Broad Street  
St. Joseph, MI 49085

The Lyter Road Bridge is of steel through girder design and was constructed in 1915. The bridge was bid under a joint project by the Branch County and St. Joseph County Drain Commissioners with bids due at 10:00 A.M. on December 15, 1914. The joint project included the construction of one other bridge and reconstruction of two other bridges, all on the Little Swan Creek. A record from the Branch County Drain Commission office indicated four contractors were involved in the project. These contractors were Clyde A. Walb, paid \$12,750.00, Charles Meredith, paid \$560.00, Cole and Norton, paid \$4,507.00, and the Continental Bridge Company, paid \$1,060.00. The total cost of all four bridges was \$18,877.00.

The bridge has a total length of 53 feet and a clear pavement width of 16 feet. It is orientated at a skew of 32 degrees with respect to the stream. The original bridge components include a 6 inch thick reinforced concrete deck on 10 inch high rolled steel beam stingers 37 inches on center supported by riveted and stiffened steel plate girders 49 inches high sitting on reinforced concrete abutments. The plate girders also serve as bridge railings extending 30 inches above the top of the deck. A rolled steel channel 3 inches high is supported 8 inches above the top of each plate girder and forms an additional railing.

The bridge is located in Matteson Township about 1.5 miles east of the Branch County line and 1.25 miles south of Michigan Highway 86. It carries Lyter Road over the Little Swan Creek on a north-south alignment.

The Lyter Road Bridge provides local access to residents and farmers in the area over the Little Swan Creek. Lyter Road is one of only two local paved roads in Matteson Township which connect Michigan Highway 86 to Burr Oak Road, a county primary road. The nearest paved access road is Comm Road located 1 mile east of Lyter Road.

The significance of this structure is that it is one of four known steel through girder bridges in existence in Michigan. It is essentially the same as when it was constructed with the exception of the addition of an asphalt overlay on the deck.

No plans of the bridge are known to exist.

#### References

Little Swan Creek Drain, General Specifications for Bridges, Advertisement for Proposals obtained from the Branch County Drain Commission.

Financial statement of the Little Swan Creek Drain dated January 26, 1915 and obtained from the Branch County Drain Commission.