

MAIN STREET BRIDGE  
Spanning Cottonwood Creek on  
Main Street  
Deer Lodge  
Powell County  
Montana

**HAER NO. MT-146**

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

**HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD**  
**Intermountain Support Office - Denver**  
**National Park Service**  
**P.O. Box 25287**  
**Denver, Colorado 80225-0287**

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
MAIN STREET BRIDGE

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Location: Main Street Bridge  
Spanning Cottonwood Creek on  
Main Street  
Deer Lodge  
Powell County  
Montana

Quad: Deer Lodge, Montana (1989)  
46.40205200, -112.735036

UTM: ~~12/366700/5139980~~ Google Earth, point obtained  
on 16 March 2014

Date of Construction: 1933

Present Owner: Montana Department of Transportation  
Helena, Montana

Present Use: Highway Bridge

Significance: The Main Street Bridge is significant for its association with the first federal relief programs to combat the effects of the Great Depression in the early 1930s. The programs, initiated by the Hoover Administration, contained many make-work provisions that would later be adopted by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal in 1933. In Montana, 25 percent of the 350 bridges built on the state's highways from 1930 to 1933 were reinforced concrete structures. The Main Street Bridge is an unusual example of a skewed reinforced concrete slab structure with guardwalls rather than the open concrete railings common to Montana concrete bridges of the time. There have been no significant modifications made to this bridge since 1933.

Historian: Jon Axline, Montana Department of Transportation  
September 2013

## II. HISTORY

The Deer Lodge Valley was well-known to Native Americans before the arrival of Euro-Americans in the early nineteenth century. The high mountains bordering the valley protected it from extremes in winter weather, giving the western Montana valley a relatively mild climate. The Shoshone Indians called the valley Soo'-Ke-En-Car'-Ne, the "Lodge of the White-tailed Deer." The lodge, in fact, is a geological feature located about ten miles south of Deer Lodge at the current site of the Warm Springs State Hospital. A salt lick at the base of the thermal feature attracted deer to it. French-Canadian fur trappers corrupted the Shoshone name to "Deer Lodge" by the late 1850s.<sup>1</sup>

Former American Fur Company engag  Johnny Grant established a ranch along the Clark Fork River at the future site of Deer Lodge in 1859. Beginning in the early 1850s, Grant and his father, Richard, bartered for worn-out cattle and oxen on the Overland Trail and then drove the animals north to Montana's southwestern valleys, where the animals fattened on the rich grasses in the valley. The following year, the Grants drove them south and traded the healthy animals to travelers on the trail: two worn out animals for one healthy animal – the process was repeated annually, netting the Grants a comfortable living. At the time of Montana's first gold rush in 1862, Johnny Grant's ranch was a popular stopping place on the road between the mining camp of Bannack and the Missoula Valley. French and Spanish settlers established a small settlement, called Spanish Fork, just south of Grant's ranch on the banks of Cottonwood Creek. The *Virginia City Montana Post* later described the town as consisting of "six small cabins, some peacefully ruminating cows, a stray vaquero, and a lot of half-breed papooses engaged in making mud pies."<sup>2</sup>

Grant's ranch, its proximity to the Mullan Military Road, and strategic location on the road between the mining camps and the Hellgate settlement near the Missoula Valley, and the mines in the Bearmouth District made it an attractive place for entrepreneurs wishing to take advantage of the area's opportunities. In July 1862, Joe La Barge established a store in what was by-then called Cottonwood. La Barge and several others created the Deer Lodge Town Company in 1862 and laid out "some two or three streets." The men gave away lots in the new community, now called La Barge City, to whoever chose to settle there. By 1865, the "city" had grown to include around 125 log cabins and a business district consisting of "three or four stores, several hotels, a cabinet shop, brewery, butcher shops, saloons, and corrals." William A. Clark, Robert V. Donnell, and S.E. Larabie established a bank there in 1869. Like Bozeman and Hellgate, Deer Lodge prospered not as a mining camp, but because it was an important transportation and trade center.<sup>3</sup>

By the end of the 1860s, Deer Lodge was the trading center for mining camps in the surrounding mountains. The *Montana Post* described the prosperous settlement as

Not in itself a mining town peopled by a relatively larger number of families than other towns, and this having an inherent social superiority; its cozy dwellings built on good sized separate lots, surrounded by shade trees, and neatly inclosed [sic] combines with other characteristics to give it a distinctive and superior appearance, while the industry and steady thrift of its denizens is particularly noticeable.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, although the town was originally platted out in 1862 by Joe La Barge and several others, it was not until 1864 that Walter W. DeLacey completed a more formal lay-out for the town. DeLacey's plan included wide north and south avenues, with narrower east-west streets. The surveyor, however, failed to officially file the plat for the town. General William Tecumseh Sherman described Deer Lodge in 1877 as "quite a pretty little town, with a good hotel, stores, dwellings, churches, and school-house." It was not until 1888 that Probate Judge Polk Newcomer officially filed a plat for the City of Deer Lodge. The city's business district was clustered along C Street (now Main Street or Secondary route 275), while the residential area was located primarily east of C Street. Industries, including the state penitentiary (after 1870), and the rail yards (after 1889) were located west of C Street. Deer Lodge's streets obtained their current designations about 1910.<sup>5</sup>

Deer Lodge's economy prospered during the 1870s and stabilized with the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway in the northern end of the valley in 1883. The Utah & Northern Railroad, built a narrow gauge branch line from Butte to Garrison through the city of Deer Lodge in 1889. For several years, the Utah & Northern and the Northern Pacific shared the line until the latter acquired the railroad in 1898, reconstructed it, and incorporated it into the Northern Pacific's system. In 1908, the Milwaukee Road Railroad completed its transcontinental line, which passed through the Deer Lodge Valley. Deer Lodge became a Milwaukee Road division point, which included extensive locomotive and car shops, support buildings, and a roundhouse. Deer Lodge also benefitted as the site of Montana first college, the Montana Collegiate Institute, in 1878. The federal government established the territorial prison in Deer Lodge in 1870. Unlike many Montana settlements in the nineteenth century, Deer Lodge enjoyed a stable, broad-based economy that ensured its continued existence.<sup>6</sup>

Deer Lodge became the seat of newly created Powell County in 1901. Through the first half of the twentieth century, Deer Lodge's population grew because of the presence of the state prison and the Milwaukee Road Railroad shops. The state prison began an extensive expansion program in 1912 with the construction of a second cell block and the extension of the high rock wall surrounding the grounds to encompass it. Indeed, by 1930, the prison had become the city's primary employer with much of its economy concentrated on the penitentiary. The population of the city began to decline in the 1960s as the Milwaukee Road began cutting back on its presence in Deer Lodge. The state prison on Main Street closed in 1979, relocating its operations west of town. The Milwaukee Road ceased operations in Montana in 1980.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Main Street Bridge**

On September 9, 1932, the Montana State Highway Commission awarded a contract to the Butte, Montana-based Charles C. Goddard Company to construct a concrete bridge across Cottonwood Creek on the Deer Lodge-Kohrs section of US Highway 10-South. The Hoover Administration and the highway commission funded it as an "Emergency Relief" project. That meant the federal government funded the project without the usual state matching money required under Federal-Aid Highway legislation. Goddard won the contract with its low bid of \$3,067; it was one of seven firms that bid on the project. The bridge was part of a larger project to reconstruct 5.3 miles of US Highway 10-South in Powell County. Goddard completed the bridge by the deadline specified by the highway commission.<sup>8</sup>

## **III. THE BRIDGE**

### **A. DESCRIPTION**

The Main Street Bridge consists of a single-span reinforced concrete slab structure. The bridge is skewed at a forty degree angle where Cottonwood Creek crosses under Main Street in Deer Lodge. The bridge is 23 feet long and 47 feet wide with a roadway width of 40 feet. The bridge rests on concrete abutments with concrete wing walls on the downstream (west) side of the structure. The west wing wall culminates in a concrete beam strut that was installed as part of the 1932 construction project.

#### **Substructure**

The bridge consists of two concrete abutments with wingwalls and a concrete strut on the west side of the structure.

Abutment No. 1 (south) is approximately 53 feet in length and 5' 9" in height. The abutment is one foot thick. The west wing wall extends 12' 7" beyond the abutment and is ten inches thick. The abutment extends three feet below the creek bed and is supported by a 2' 6" x 1' 6" concrete footing.

Abutment No. 2 (north) is approximately 53 feet wide and five feet in height. The abutment is one foot thick. The west wing wall extends 13' 2" beyond the abutment and is also one foot thick. The abutment also extends three feet below the creek bed and is supported by a 2' 6" x 1' 6" concrete footing.

Strut (west) is located approximately nine feet downstream of the bridge. It consists of a reinforced concrete beam that is 14' 8" in length and one foot wide. It widens to three feet where it connects to the retaining walls flanking the creek. The beam is one foot deep. It is canted at the ends where it is incorporated into the concrete walls lining Cottonwood Creek.

### **Superstructure**

The Main Street Bridge is a single-span reinforced concrete slab structure. The bridge is skewed at a forty degree angle along the tangent of Cottonwood Creek where it crosses Montana Secondary Highway 275/Main Street in Deer Lodge. The bridge is 23 feet long and 47 feet wide with a roadway width of 40 feet. The concrete slab deck is 1' 3" thick and currently has an asphalt overlay.

The most distinctive features of the bridge are the reinforced concrete guardwalls that flank the roadway. The concrete guardwalls are 2' 6" feet in height, 16' 6" in length and 10 inches thick. They surmount the 9 inch high curbs that flank the deck of the bridge. Both walls have three recessed panels on the interior and exterior faces of the features. The panels are recessed three-quarters of an inch. The panels are 4' x 1' 7" and spaced 1' 6" apart. The walls are anchored at the ends by concrete endposts. The endposts are 2' 8" in height. On the northeast and southwest corners of the bridge, the endposts are 3.0' in length, while the posts on the northwest and southeast corners are 4' 2" in length. The endposts are skewed to the tangent of Cottonwood Creek. Both have recessed panels on the interior and exterior faces of the features.

The guardwall on the west side of the bridge has two steel lampposts on the north and south ends of the feature. The posts are fluted with plain capitals and bases; they are bolted to the concrete endposts. The frosted glass globes on both posts are broken and the lamps no longer function. The lampposts are 6 inches in diameter and 5' 10" feet in height.<sup>9</sup>

### **Material**

The contractor, Charles C. Goddard, utilized 121.6 cubic yards of concrete for the structure and 12,400 pounds of reinforcing steel. The cement used for the bridge likely came from the Three Forks Portland Cement Company in Trident, Montana. The Pacific Coast Steel Company of Seattle supplied the reinforcing steel for the bridge.<sup>10</sup>

## **B. MODIFICATIONS**

Other than occasional asphalt overlays of the concrete deck, there have been no significant modifications made to the Main Street Bridge since its construction in 1933. The bridge is situated at its original location and the setting of the site is mostly intact.

## **C. OWNERSHIP AND FUTURE**

The Main Street Bridge is currently owned and maintained by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). The bridge was originally proposed for replacement by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2004 as part of a broader project to improve flood control along Cottonwood Creek in Deer Lodge, Montana. FEMA replaced several other simple

concrete slab bridges that spanned Cottonwood Creek in Deer Lodge built in 1912, but did not replace the Main Street Bridge as it originally planned. Consequently in 2011, the MDT programmed this on-system bridge for replacement. Mitigation for National Register of Historic Places-eligible bridges are treated under the terms of a Programmatic Agreement (PA) that was implemented in 2007. The Main Street Bridge will be replaced in 2015.

#### IV. BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

##### **Charles C. Goddard**

Born in Wisconsin in 1871, Charles C. Goddard moved to Butte in 1882 and worked, at first, in the logging industry with his brother. He then helped install the machinery in copper king F. Augustus Heinze's Rarus Mine and assisted in the construction of Heinze's smelter in Butte. By 1900 he was working as a building contractor in Butte. Over the course of his long career there, he built several business blocks and apartment buildings, the Silver Bow Club (later the Miners' Union Hall), First National Bank, Elks Hall, and the McKinley and Emerson elementary schools. Goddard was not a prolific contractor for the Montana Highway Department and was active with it for only a few years between 1932 and 1935. During that time he built four bridges, including the Main Street Bridge in Deer Lodge and the Northern Pacific Railway Overpass at Logan (HAER No. MT-114). Goddard had retired by 1940 and died in February 1956. At the time of his death, he was the "oldest licensed stationary engineer in Montana."<sup>11</sup>

#### V. FOOTNOTES

1. Don Spritzer, *Roadside History of Montana* (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing Co, 1999), 206; *Montana Place Names from Alzada to Zortman: A Montana Historical Society Guide*, (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 2009), 66-67.
2. Merrill G. Burlingame, *The Montana Frontier*. (Helena: State Publishing, 1942), 264; Dorene Courchene 1989, *Powell County: Where it all Began*. (Deer Lodge: Powell County Museum and Arts Foundation, 1989), 113; *Historical Sketch of Deer Lodge Commemorating One Hundred Years of Progress*. (Deer Lodge: Centennial Committee of Deer Lodge, 1964), 3; Edward B. Reynolds, "Deer Lodge, One of Montana's Oldest Cities," *Great Falls Tribune*, 1 August 1940; Federal Writers Project, *Montana: A State Guide Book* (Helena: Montana Department of Agriculture, Labor and Industry, 1939), 208; Spritzer, *Roadside History of Montana*, 206.
3. Courchene, *Powell County*, 118, 124; *Historical Sketch of Deer Lodge*, 3; "Little Village on Trail to Bear' Has Become Wonderful Little City." *The Anaconda Standard*, 2 July 1922; Roberta Carkeek Cheney, *Names on the Face of Montana: The Story of Montana's Place Names* (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 70-71; Burlingame, *The Montana Frontier*, 84.
4. Courchene, *Powell County*, 118.
5. Courchene, *Ibid*, 122, 189; *Historical Sketch of Deer Lodge*, 3; Sanborn maps, 1884-1945; William Tecumseh Sherman and Philip H. Sheridan, *Reports of Inspection Made in the Summer*

of 1877 by General William Tecumseh Sherman and General Philip H. Sheridan (Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1984), 60.

6. Louis Tuck Renz, *The History of the Northern Pacific Railroad* (Fairfield, Wash.: Ye Galleon Press, 1980), 132, 154-55, 197; Cheney, *Names on the Face of Montana*, 70-71; Burlingame, *The Montana Frontier*, 325-26; Donald B. Robertson, *Encyclopedia of Western Railroad History*, Vol. II (Dallas: The Taylor Publishing Company, 1991), 2, 326; Ellen Baumler, *Dark Spaces: Montana's Historic Penitentiary at Deer Lodge*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 1.

7. Montana Place Names, 66-67; Federal Writers' Project, *Montana: A State Guide Book*. (Helena: Montana Department of Agriculture, Labor and Industry, 1939), 208-09; Baumler, *Dark Spaces*, 48-49, 103.

8. A review of the highway commission meeting minutes did showed that the commissioners did not invoke the Liquidated Damages clause of Goddard's contract for this project, indicating that it was completed on time and within budget. Montana State Highway Commission Meeting Minutes, book 5, pp. 201, 203.

9. The lamp posts do not appear on the 1932 design plans for the bridge. The posts may have been added as a change order to the project or were added by the City of Deer Lodge at a later date. The construction file for the bridge has not survived and a review of the city's records failed to reveal any information about the lamp posts.

10. Bridge Plans & Quantities: Federal Aid Project No. 184-F, Unit 2, Bearmouth-Deer Lodge Road. Drawing No. 974 (August 30, 1932); Montana Highway Planning Survey, Bridge Condition Survey: Bridge No. 0100-0257. Montana Department of Transportation, Helena, Montana.

11. "Charles C. Goddard Sr., Pioneer Contractor, Dies at 86," *The (Butte) Montana Standard*, 22 February 1956; U. S. Census Records, 1880, 1900-1940, viewed at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com); MSHC, book 5, pp. 201, 203; Ibid, book 6, pp. 85, 234; "Goddard Rites are Conducted," *The (Butte) Montana Standard*, 25 February 1956.

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## **B. PERIODICALS**

## **C. NEWSPAPERS**

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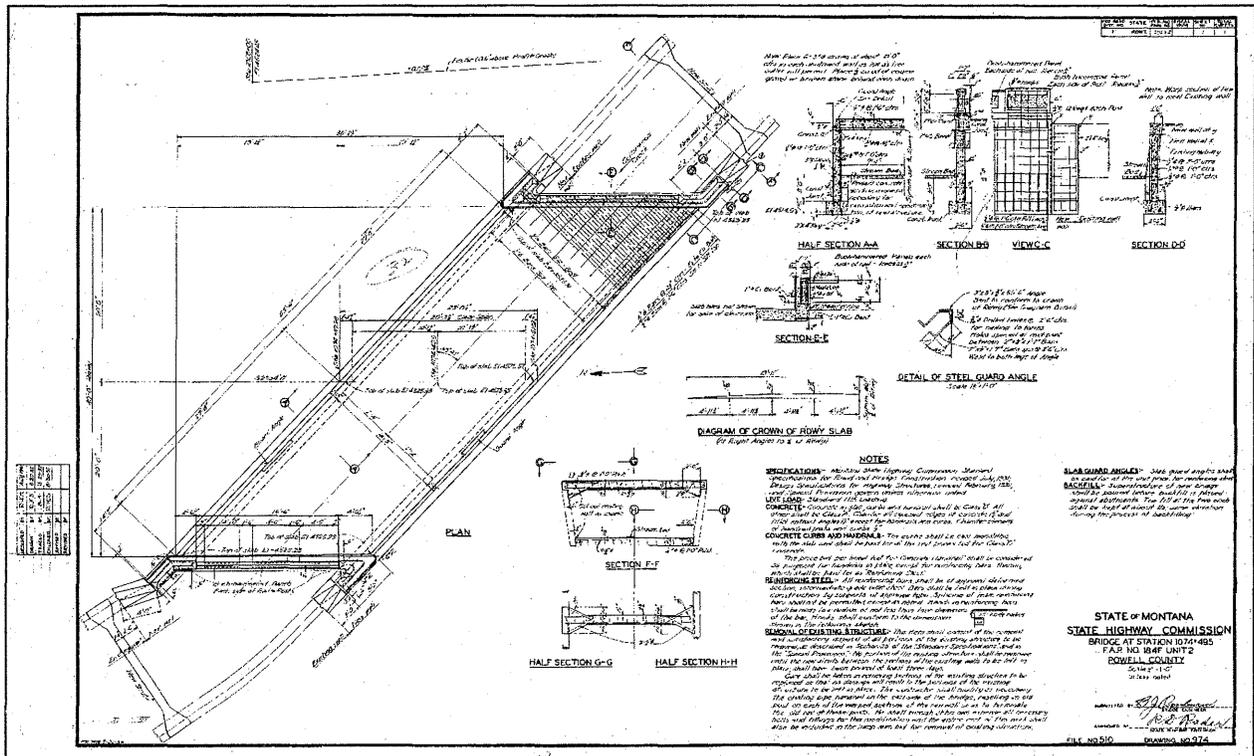
**D. MISCELLANEOUS**

Bridge Inspection File No. S00275001+00951. Montana Department of Transportation. Helena, Montana.

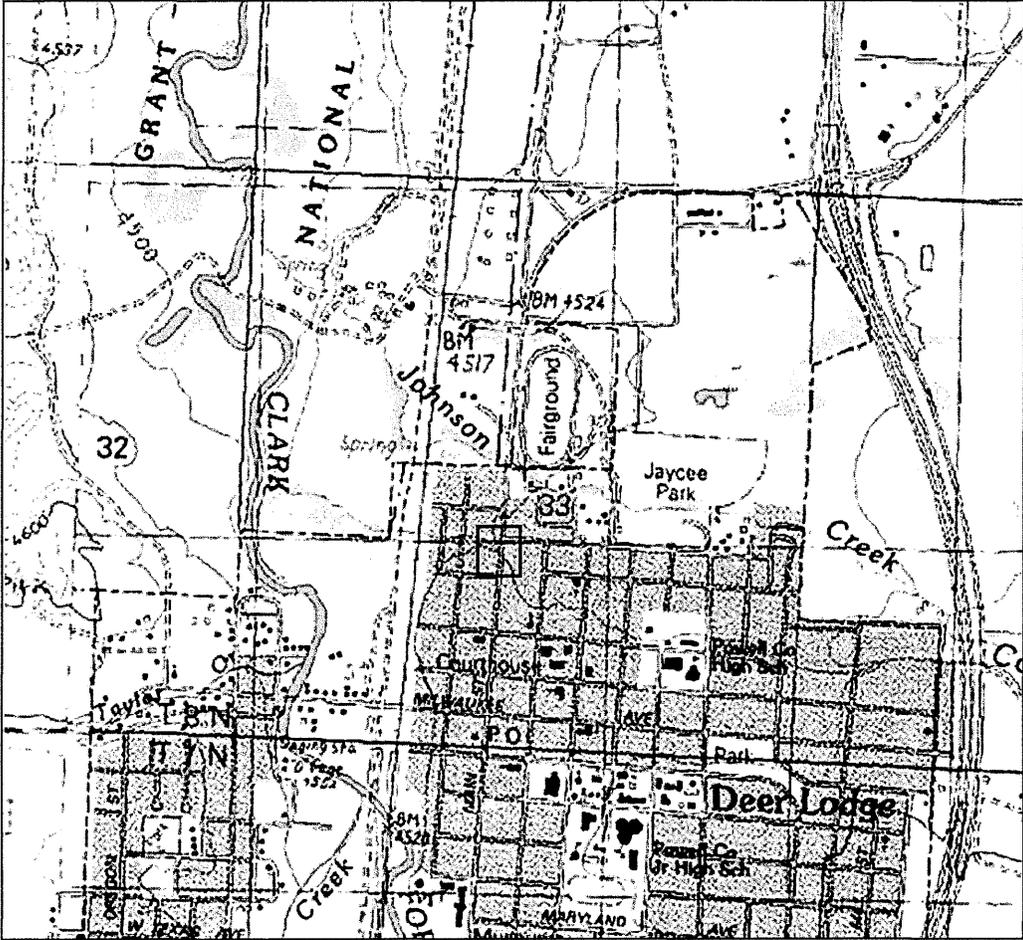
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General Land Office Map, October 1868. Viewed at [www.glorerecords.blm.gov](http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov).

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Deer Lodge, Montana USGS Quadrangle Map, 1989