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SANTA FE RAILROAD, I&M CANAL BRIDGE  
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor  
Crossing the I&M Canal at its  
Junction with the DesPlaines River  
Joliet  
Will County  
Illinois

HAER No. IL-59

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

SANTA FE RAILROAD, I&M CANAL BRIDGE  
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**Location:** I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor  
Crossing the I & M Canal at its junction  
with the DesPlaines River  
Joliet, Will County, Illinois

UTM: 16 E.409780 N.4598860  
Quad: Joliet

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1935

**Builder:** American Bridge Company

**Present Owner:** Santa Fe Railroad

**Present Use:** Railroad bridge

**Significance:** Built in 1935, this railroad bridge is  
the only subdivided, double-intersection  
Warren through Truss bridge built in the  
Upper Illinois Valley.

**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  
completed in 1992.

**Historians:** Joseph DeRose and Carolyn Brown, 1986.

Aligned on an extreme skew across the I&M Canal, this bridge was built in Joliet around 1935 as part of the right-of-way realignment and track elevation project initiated by the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad. The Chicago Tack Elevation Project was a monumental, twenty-one year engineering and construction project; Chicago and Joliet were the only cities to adopt track elevation at this time period. Still operated by the Santa Fe, the bridge is the only subdivided, double-intersection, Warren through truss bridge in the Upper Illinois Valley.

This bridge is a single span with a skewed, subdivided, double-intersection Warren through truss. The American Bridge Company of New York fabricated the superstructure. The bridge has riveted gusset plate connections and rests on concrete abutments. The bridge is approximately 200'-0" long and is double tracked.

**SOURCES:**

J. Seymour Currey, Chicago: Its History and Its Builders (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing, 1912): 183-189.

Frank H. Spearman, "Rebuilding a Great Railroad," The Worlds Work, v.8 (October 1904): 5371-5376.

"Track Elevation in Chicago," Engineering News, v.43 (January 11, 1900): 18-22; v.43 (January 11, 1900): 24-26; v.43 (February 22, 1900): 122-126; v.48 (September 11, 1902): 181; v.61 (June 3, 1909): 610-613; v.72 (September 3, 1914): 503-504.

"Track Elevation in Chicago," Engineering Record, v.59 (May 29, 1909): 679-682.

"Track Elevation in Chicago," The Railway Age (April 26, 1901): 462-464; (May 10, 1901): 509-5111.