

Kansas Historic Resources Inventory

Printed: 06/28/2016



133-0000-00074
Austin Bridge (Relocated)
-- S SANTA FE AVE
Chanute



LOCATION:

County: Neosho

Address: -- S SANTA FE AVE

Address Remarks: South of E 21ST ST along west side of S SANTA FE AVE

City: Chanute

Zip:

Parcel ID:

Legal Description: SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 of Section 32 Township 27S Range 18E

Legal Description Remarks: relocated in 1996 from 4 miles SE of Chanute, Neosho County (sw 1/4 sw 1/4 sec 02 t28s r18e)

Latitude, Longitude 1: 37.65756 -95.45337

Latitude, Longitude 2:

Latitude, Longitude 3:

Latitude, Longitude 4:

Datum: WGS84

DESCRIPTION:

Historic Name: Austin Bridge (Relocated)

Alternate Name:

Historic Function: Transportation

Subcategory: Road-Related (Vehicular)

Historic Function Remarks:

Present Function: Transportation

Subcategory: Pedestrian-Related

Present Function Remarks:

Residential/Commercial/Religious Style:

Secondary Style:

Barn Type: Not Applicable

Bridge Type: Bowstring Truss

Landscape Type:

Physical Description/Remarks:

Plan Form: Rectangle

Commercial Building Type: Not Applicable

Roof Form: Not Applicable

Stories:

Condition: Good

Principal Material: Metal

Condition Remarks: Wrought iron and wood

Architect/Designer/Builder: King Iron Bridge Co. (Cleveland Ohio)

Year of Construction: 1877

Certainty: Documented

Date Notes:

General Remarks: A proposal to relocate the bridge and retain its National Register status was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review in February 1996. The Keeper of the National Register approved the relocation request on August 2, 1996.
See National Register nomination for more information.

Ancillary Structures: None

Ancillary Structure Remarks:

REGISTER STATUS:

Listed in State Register: Yes

Date of State Listing: 07/01/1977

Listed in National Register: Yes

Date of National Listing: 09/15/1977

Historic District:

Demolished:

Date Demolished (if applicable):

Potentially Eligible for National Register:

Register Status Remarks:

Thematic Nomination (MPDF):

National Historic Landmark:

SURVEY INFORMATION:

There is no survey information for this record.

IMAGES & DOCUMENTS



Austin Bridge. KSmith, 11-2009.



Austin Bridge. SMartin, 6-28-2011.



Austin Bridge. SMartin, 6-28-2011.



Austin Bridge. SMartin, 6-28-2011.



Austin Bridge. SMartin, 6-28-2011.



Austin Bridge. SMartin, 6-28-2011.



Austin Bridge. Original
National Register nomination.
11/09/1976. Neosho Valley Historical
Society/Hosack, Robert.



Austin Bridge. National
Register nomination amendment.
2011. KSHS.

SELGEM

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE: KANSAS	
COUNTY: NEOSHO	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME	
COMMON:	Austin Bridge
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: In the S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of the S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$, connecting lots 4 & 5, Sec. 2, Tsp. 28, R 18.			
CITY OR TOWN: 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ mi. E., 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ mi. S., 3/4 mi. W., of Chanute, Kansas			
STATE Kansas	CODE	COUNTY: Neosho	CODE

3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) use at this time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments It is not in more details are given in Sec. 7.

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY	
OWNER'S NAME: County of Neosho	
STREET AND NUMBER: Neosho County Courthouse	
CITY OR TOWN: Erie	STATE: Kansas 66733
CODE	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION	
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Register of Deeds	
STREET AND NUMBER: Neosho County Courthouse	
CITY OR TOWN: Erie	STATE: Kansas 66733
CODE	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS	
TITLE OF SURVEY:	
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:
CODE	

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Austin Bridge, a bowstring arch, was built in 1877 by the King Iron Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio. It is made of wrought iron, but apparently does have some stringers made of steel. The floor is wood planking supported by steel stringers.

The bridge spans the Neosho River and originally stood east of the city of Chanute, where Kansas highway 39 presently crosses the river. In 1910 A.M. Blodget was contracted to move the bridge three miles downstream to an abandoned townsite known then and now as Austin.

When constructed in 1877 the bridge, as evidenced by photographs dating before 1910, was supported at each end by a foundation made of stone. But when the bridge was moved it was lengthen by adding a girder span at one end and a Pratt (bedstead) truss at the other. Even so, no structural changes have ever been made to the bowstring arch itself.

On March 16, 1972, Austin Bridge was closed to vehicle traffic. The weakness found was not in the bowstring but in the Pratt truss. The bridge is, according to the Neosho County Engineer, perfectly safe when used as a foot bridge.

In the fall of 1976, after a new bridge was opened one mile downstream, the county removed the girder span and wood planking as a prelude to tearing down the bridge. Strong public outcry halted the plans to destroy the bridge -- the girder span and wood planking are being held by the county and could be put back in their place. No real harm has been done to the bridge.

There is a strong county wide effort being made to have the bridge preserved as a historical landmark and a small riverside park established at the site by the county.

See attachment for diagram of Austin Bridge.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This application is being made due to the importance to our engineering heritage of the bowstring arched span of the Austin Bridge. This bowstring, built in 1877, is an early example of iron bridge construction and it ~~and it~~ is extremely rare to find a span of this length -- 160 feet.

The Austin Bridge is ^{the} very last bowstring arched bridge still standing in the state of Kansas.

When Thomas Barr, Historic Sites Archeologist for the Kansas State Historical Society, saw this bridge in the spring of 1976 he recognized it as being a now rare example of bridge construction, but he was not sure as to how rare it was. Mr. Barr then checked with Richard L. Heisler of the engineering firm Cook, Flatt, & Strobel, Topeka, who does bridge surveys for the state. It was confirmed by Mr. Heisler that the Austin Bridge is the last of its kind in the state.

The Austin Bridge, when it stood at its original site, was one of the first bridges to span the Neosho River in Neosho County. It played a very important role in opening up -- making easy access -- the northwest corner of the county.

We believe that the Austin Bridge being an early example of wrought iron bridge construction, which has now become very rare, and being the last bowstring arched bridge in the state of Kansas it has become a very important part of our engineering heritage and should be entered into the National Register of Historic Places.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Austin Bridge File in the office of the Neosho County Engineer, Neosho County Courthouse, Erie, Kansas 66733.

Richard L. Heisler, engineer license #6331; Cook, Platt, & Strobel, 6111 West 29th Street, Topeka, Kansas 66614.

Thomas Barr, Archeologist, Kansas State Historical Soc., Topeka, KS 66612.

Charles Ingle, Neosho County Engineer, Neosho County Courthouse, Erie, Kansas 66733.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: <i>Robert E. Hosack</i> Robert E. Hosack, President		DATE Nov. 9, 1976
ORGANIZATION Neosho Valley Historical Society		
STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 775, 201 East Main Street		
CITY OR TOWN: Chanute	STATE Kansas 66720	CODE

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

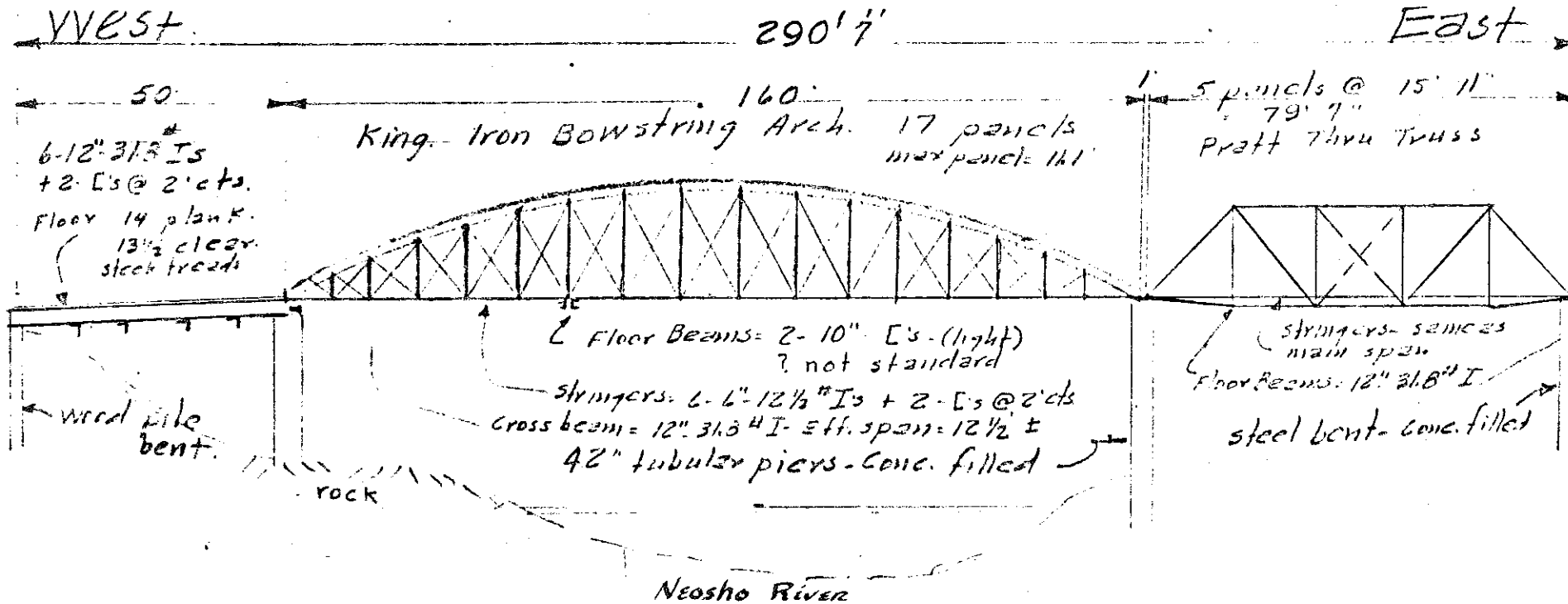
ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Austin Bridge
Neosho County, Kansas



Austin Bridge
No 13 3/4 - L. 64.
9-13-1956 J. H.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Austin Bridge
Neosho County, Kansas
Nomination Amendment

Section number 2, 7, 8, 10 Page 1

Austin Bridge
Neosho County, Kansas

Background

The Austin Bridge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places September 15, 1977. A proposal to relocate the bridge and retain its National Register status was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review in February 1996. The Keeper of the National Register approved the relocation request on August 2, 1996.

This amendment provides additional information on the new location and history of the bridge. It is intended to supplement and update the information provided in the original nomination.

Section 2: Location

Street and Number: West side of Santa Fe Street south of 21st Street
City: Chanute
State: Kansas
Code: KS
County: Neosho
Code: 133
Zip Code: 66720

Section 7 – Narrative Description

Prior to its relocation in 1996, the Austin Bridge included two sections – a bowstring truss and a Pratt truss. These two trusses were linked together when they were moved to the Austin town site in 1910. Prior to 1910, they had functioned independently of one another.

The bowstring section of the bridge was relocated in 1996. It was moved two miles west and one-and-one-half miles north of its former location and placed over Little Turkey Creek, a tributary of the Neosho River in the city of Chanute. That location is just downstream of Santa Fe Lake, and Little Turkey Creek is the outlet for the lake. The Santa Fe Railroad originally constructed lake as a backup water supply. It was later given to the city and over the years the area surrounding it has been landscaped into a park with hiking trails and picnic areas. Little Turkey Creek is a small stream bordered by trees within the park itself. The new orientation is roughly north/south. When originally erected, the orientation was east/west and after the first relocation was northeast/southwest. This is in the SE ¼, NE ¼, S. 32, T. 27, R. 18.

The new bridge abutments and round support columns are constructed of concrete. It features a wood-plank surface.

Section 8 – Statement of Significance

The bowstring structure is significant because of its association with Zenas King of the King Wrought Iron Bridge Company of Topeka. King was originally from Cleveland, Ohio, but came to Iola in 1871 and convinced the city to vote bonds and erect a large bridge and iron works. It went into operation that fall and appeared to be quite successful. By September 1872, we find King having negotiated an agreement with the city of Topeka and the Santa Fe Railroad to remove the plant to that new location. King defaulted on the Iola bonds and moved to Topeka. By the fall of 1873, it would again close its doors and move out of town. The plant was reestablished in Cleveland and was quite successful. The corporation was dissolved in 1906. Although several bridges were fabricated in Topeka during his stay, the Austin Bridge is the only one known to exist in the state.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Austin Bridge
Neosho County, Kansas
Nomination Amendment

Section number 2, 7, 8, 10 Page 2

King fabricated bridges up to at least 500 feet in length, but most of what we have in existence in Kansas is in the 50-foot range. At 160 feet, this is certainly the longest remaining King Patent Bowstring remaining in Kansas and, at the time of its relocation in 1996, was one of just four king bridges in the state.

By the mid-1990s, the bridge had again fallen into disrepair. After the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review and the Keeper of the National Register approved the relocation request, ISTEA funding was used to relocate the bridge to become part of a walking and biking trail in the Chanute area.

The bridge was listed in the National Register initially because of its length and its association with King and the Topeka bridge works. This significance has not changed. The bridge was not listed in the register because of its location. The Pratt truss that was added in 1910 was not moved when the bridge was relocated in 1996. The Pratt truss was not considered significant, however, because it was added to the structure in 1910 and the bridge was listed for its bowstring, not the Pratt.¹

Section 10 – Geographical Information

UTM Coordinates

Chanute, KS Quad Map (NAD 1927) Zone 15 283620 E 4170360 N

Additional Documentation

Archeological Effects

Prior to the relocation of the bridge, the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office reviewed its cultural resource files for the area proposed for relocation of the Austin Bridge in accordance with 36 CFR 800. The location crosses Little Turkey Creek, a tributary of the Neosho River in the city of Chanute. The proposed relocation was reviewed to have no effect on properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places or otherwise identified in our files. This office had no objection to the implementation of the project.

Photographs

Property Name: Austin Bridge / Neosho County, KS
Photographer: Kim Smith (photos 1 & 2); Sarah Martin (Photos 3 & 4)

Photo 1: View of bridge in new location spanning Little Turkey Creek, facing S – taken November 5, 2009

Photo 2: View of bridge in new location, facing S – taken November 5, 2009

Photo 3: View of bridge in new location, looking across bridge, facing NW – taken June 28, 2011

Photo 4: View of bridge in new location, showing concrete supports, facing E – taken June 28, 2011

____ See File

Signature / Patrick Zollner, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

¹ Between 1980 and 1983, the Kansas Department of Transportation and the Kansas State Historical Society partnered to conduct a survey of historic bridges in Kansas. The survey identified 274 Pratt high trusses and 1,040 Pratt low trusses. Eighty-five percent of metal high trusses found in the survey were of the Pratt design. Several significant examples were nominated to and listed in the National Register in 1990. In light of the large number of Pratt trusses, the Kansas State Historical Society was quite selective in identifying National Register candidates. The bridges were evaluated on their rarity, history, condition, manufacturer, and preservation potential. Part of this preservation potential included the potential for continued minimum maintenance. The Pratt truss section of the Austin Bridge was not considered a unique example of Pratt truss construction and little was known of its history.