

# Young's Ford Bridge

VERN14

## GENERAL DATA

structure no.:	336002.0	city/town:	1.9 miles northeast of Dederick
county:	Vernon	feature inters.:	Clear Creek
		cadastral grid:	S26, T36N, R29W
		highway route:	County Road 336
		highway distr.:	7
		current owner:	Vernon County

## STRUCTURAL DATA

**superstructure:** wrought iron, 6-panel, pin-connected Pratt through truss  
**substructure:** stone masonry abutments and wingwalls

span number:	1	condition:	fair
span length:	100.0'	alterations:	2 angle outriders added to support guardrails
total length:	100.0'	floor/decking :	timber deck over steel stringers
roadway width:	11.3'	other features:	upper chord and inclined end post: 2 channels with cover and batten plates; lower chord: 2 punched rectangular eyebars; vertical: 2 channels with lacing (2 round eyerods with shovel ends at the hip); diagonal: 2 punched rectangular eyebars; counter: round eyerod with sleeve bolt; lateral bracing: looped round eyerod; strut: I-beam; portal strut: lattice; floor beam: tapered "fishtail" plate girder, U-bolted to vertical; guardrail: 2 channels

## HISTORICAL DATA

**erection date:** 1884  
**erection cost:** \$1900.00 (superstructure); \$3.75 per cubic yard of masonry (substructure)  
**designer:** St. Louis Bridge and Iron Company, St. Louis MO  
**fabricator :** St. Louis Bridge and Iron Company, St. Louis MO;  
Carnegie Steel Company, Pittsburgh PA  
**contractor:** St. Louis Bridge and Iron Company, St. Louis (superstructure); J. Blair and James O'Riley (substructure)  
**references:** Missouri Highway and Transportation Department, Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure No. 336002.0; Vernon County Court Record, Book D: page 593 (24 May 1884), page 598 (25 June 1884); Vernon County Court Record, Book E: page 22 (28 August 1884) - located at Vernon County Courthouse, Nevada MO; field inspection by Clayton Fraser, 31 May 1991.  
**sign. rating:** 58  
**evaluation:** NRHP possibly eligible (well-preserved, relatively early example of main-stay structural type)

**inventoried by:** Clayton B. Fraser 25 July 1993

# HAER INVENTORY

Missouri Historic Bridge Inventory

**NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE**

Young's Ford Bridge  
MHTD: 336002.0

VERN14

**DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION**

1884

**LOCATION**

County Road 336 over Clear Creek; S26, T36N, R29W  
1.9 miles northeast of Dederick; Vernon County, Missouri

**USE (ORIGINAL / CURRENT)**

roadway bridge / roadway bridge

**RATING** NRHP possibly eligible (score: 58)

**CONDITION**

fair

**OWNER**

Vernon County

span number: 1

span length: 100.0'

total length: 100.0'

roadway wdt.: 11.3'

superstructure:

substructure:

floor/decking:

other features:

wrought iron, 6-panel, pin-connected Pratt through truss  
stone masonry abutments and wingwalls  
timber deck over steel stringers  
upper chord and inclined end post: 2 channels with cover and batten plates; lower chord: 2 punched rectangular eyebars; vertical: 2 channels with lacing (2 round eyerods with shovel ends at the hip); diagonal: 2 punched rectangular eyebars; counter: round eyerod with sleeve bolt; lateral bracing: looped round eyerod; strut: I-beam; portal strut: lattice; floor beam: tapered "fishtail" plate girder, U-bolted to vertical; guardrail: 2 channels

Erected in 1884 by the St. Louis Bridge and Iron Company, the Young's Ford Bridge is Vernon County's oldest remaining vehicular span. Featuring elements that were archaic even by the turn of the century—most notably fishtail plate girder floor beams, sleeve bolts and U-bolted lower chord connections—the structure also ranks among Missouri's earliest examples of truss bridge construction. In the spring of 1884 citizens from the vicinity of Dederick in east-central Vernon County petitioned for construction of a bridge across Clear Creek at the Young's Ford crossing northeast of town. A subscription of \$800.00 was raised, the subscribers agreeing to deposit the money when a contract for the bridge was let. The county court agreed that a bridge was indeed needed, and on August 28, 1884, separate contracts were let for construction of the substructure and superstructure. For the substructure, J. Blair and James O'Riley were to build masonry abutments priced at \$3.75 per cubic yard. The contract to fabricate and erect the truss was awarded to the St. Louis Bridge and Iron Company, which agreed to build it for \$1900.00. The pinned Pratt truss was completed according to plan and subsequently served to carry wagons, pedestrians, and in later years, motorized vehicles, across Clear Creek. The bridge today appears in fair condition, with its physical integrity intact. Having been in use for more than a century, the crossing still functions as originally built.

Bridge companies such as St. Louis B&I marketed the pinned Pratt truss extensively among their standard iron spans in the late 19th century. With its uniformly fabricated components and easy field erection, the Pratt truss was ideally suited for the highly competitive bidding for county bridge construction. Thousands of pinned Pratt through trusses were built on Missouri's county road system, and many

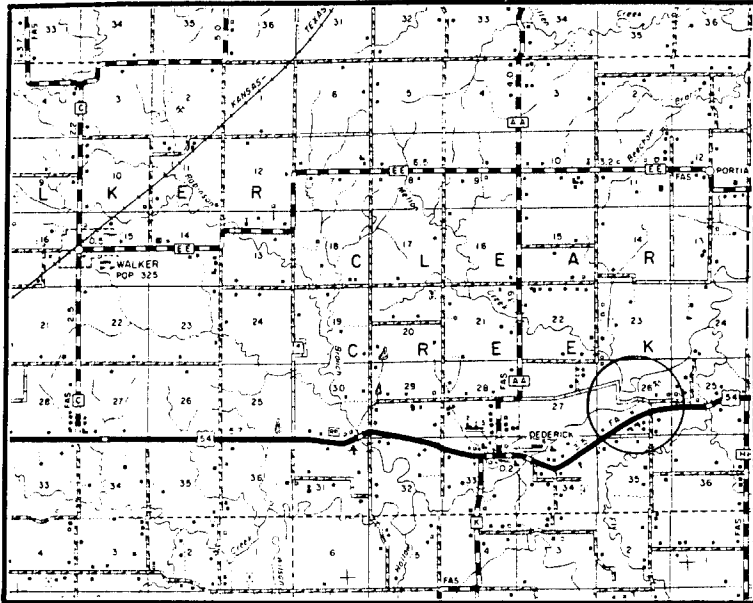
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remain in place today. The Young's Ford Bridge is distinguished among these for its early construction date and for its well-preserved condition. With both superstructure and substructure intact, it is a noteworthy transportation-related resource. The bridge is also noteworthy for its association with the St. Louis Bridge and Iron Works. Founded by J.W. Sebastian in the early 1880s, St. Louis B&I was among Missouri's earliest bridge manufacturers. The oldest wagon bridge in Vernon County, the Young's Ford Bridge rank among the oldest St. Louis B&I structures still in use in the state.

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**NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE**  
Young's Ford Bridge

**PHOTOS AND SKETCH MAP OF LOCATION**



**LOCATION MAP**

TAKEN FROM MISSOURI HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP

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**SOURCES**

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**INVENTORIED BY**  
Clayton B. Fraser

**AFFILIATION**  
Fraserdesign, Loveland CO

**DATE**  
25 July 1993

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