

Erie Railway: Delaware Division, Bridge 110.54, 1907
Spanning Lackawaxen River,
600 ft. East of State Route 590
Lackawaxen
Pike County
Pennsylvania

HAER PA-24

Shohola,
18.500880.4592600

HAER
PA,
52-LACK,
2

PHOTOGRAPHS

ADDENDUM TO
ERIE RAILWAY, DELAWARE DIVISION, BRIDGE 110.54
Pennsylvania Historic Railroad Bridges Recording Project
Spanning Lackawaxen River, east of State Rt. 590
Lackawaxen
Pike County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-24

HAER
PA
52-LACK,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

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ADDENDUM TO
ERIE RAILWAY, DELAWARE DIVISION, BRIDGE 110.54

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This report supplements photographs previously transmitted to the Library of Congress.

Location: Spanning Lackawaxen River, east of State Rt. 590, Lackawaxen, Pike County, Pennsylvania.

USGS Quadrangle: Shohola, Pennsylvania (7.5-minute series).

UTM Coordinates: 18/500880/4592590

Date of Construction: 1894.

Basis for Dating: Interstate Commerce Commission valuation records.

Date of Alteration: 1907.

Designer: Unknown.

Fabricator / Builder: Union Bridge Co.

Present Owner: Norfolk Southern Railroad.

Present Use: Railroad bridge.

Structure Types: Pin-connected Pratt deck truss, deck girder.

Significance: The former Erie Railroad bridge over the Lackawaxen River is significant as a late nineteenth-century truss structure remaining in main-line service, and as the work of a major bridge-building company.

Historian: Justin M. Spivey, April 2001.

Project Information: The Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) conducted the Pennsylvania Historic Railroad Bridges Recording Project during 1999 and 2000, under the direction of Eric N. DeLony, Chief. The project was supported by the Consolidated Rail Corporation

(Conrail) and a grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC). Justin M. Spivey, HAER engineer, researched and wrote the final reports. Preston M. Thayer, historian, Fredericksburg, Virginia, conducted preliminary research under contract. Jet Lowe, HAER photographer, and Joseph E. B. Elliott, contract photographer, Sellersville, Pennsylvania, produced large-format photographs.

Description and History

Although chartered in New York state, the Erie Railway (Erie Railroad after 1895) built several segments of its main line on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River. The Delaware & Hudson Canal already occupied the river's east bank, which was too narrow in places for the railroad to share. By 1841, the railroad had already obtained a Pennsylvania charter for a twelve-mile segment around Lanesboro, in Susquehanna County. A supplement to this charter, dated 26 March 1846, authorized construction of the section between Mill Rift and Mast Hope in Pike County.¹ This section included a bridge over the Lackawaxen River, a medium-size tributary on the Pennsylvania side. According to a 1908 history of the Erie Railroad, the original bridge at this location was a 400'-0"- long covered wooden structure built in 1848. A page-long account of its construction is mostly a chatty anecdote of fights between track laborers and bridge carpenters.²

The present bridge over the Lackawaxen, erected by the Union Bridge Co. in 1894, still sees daily freight trains as part of the Norfolk Southern Railroad system. The structure has a total length of 591'-0" and carries two tracks. From east to west, the spans include a 31'-6" riveted deck girder, a 131'-0" pin-connected Pratt deck truss, two 132'-8" pin-connected Pratt deck trusses, and a 47'-0" riveted deck girder.³ A construction photograph in the HAER collection, dated 25 October 1907, shows replacement of the mid-river pier (No. 2 from the eastern end).⁴ The original coursed ashlar sandstone pier had been damaged, perhaps by flooding, and was rebuilt in concrete. Several of the diagonal tension members have also been strengthened by addition of tie rods with turnbuckles. The structure is significant as one of a declining number of nineteenth-century metal trusses remaining in main-line railroad service.

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Notes

1. Thomas T. Taber III, *Railroads of Pennsylvania: Encyclopedia and Atlas* (Muncy, Pa.: Thomas T. Taber III, 1987), 318; cf. Erie Railroad, *Erie Railroad: Its Beginnings — and Today* (1951), 13, in folder "Erie Railroad — Track, Yards, CTC, Radio," Box 55, Taber Collection, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, Strasburg, Pa.
2. Edward H. Mott, *Between the Ocean and the Lakes: The Story of Erie* (New York: Ticker Publishing Co., 1908), 347.
3. Interstate Commerce Commission, Bureau of Valuation, Engineering Field Notes, Erie Railroad, Pa. Notebook, pp. 16-18 (5 Nov. 1918), in Box 759, Record Group 134, National Archives, College Park, Md.
4. U.S. Department of the Interior, Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) No. PA-24, "Erie Railway, Delaware Division, Bridge 110.54," 1971, photograph PA-24-19, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Additional Source

1. Milepost 110.54, region/division/branch 306302, aperture card files, Consolidated Rail Corp., Philadelphia, Pa. [transferred to Norfolk Southern Railway Co., Atlanta, Ga.].