

Lenox Bridge  
Spanning Obion River, on Rural Road S8025  
Lenox vicinity  
Dyer County  
Tennessee

HAER No. TN-16

HAER  
TENN  
23-LEN.V,  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
Southeast Region  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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1-

Lenox Bridge

HAER No. TN-16

Location: Spanning the Obion River, on Rural Road S8025, 4.0 kilometers west of Lenox, Dyer County, Tennessee

UTM: 16.272.960 Easting  
3.997.000 Northing

Date of Construction: 1917

Builder/Designer: Vincennes Bridge Company, Vincennes, Indiana

Present Owner: Dyer County Courthouse  
Dyersburg, Tennessee

Present Use: Currently not in use. Attempts to market and convey is in progress, with a projected date for relocation to top bank on November 29, 1985

Significance: The Lenox Bridge is believed to be the sole surviving hand-operated, swing span, pony Pratt through truss bridge within Tennessee. The bridge has retained its integrity of engineering design representative of transportation routes within western Tennessee during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The swing span also serves as a significant example of a method of construction used during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

On January 1, 1917, a contract was entered into between Dyer County and the Vincennes Bridge Company for erection of a bridge across McClure's Ferry (County Court Records, Book R, minutes of 1916-1918, Dyer County Courthouse). Construction was completed in December 1917.

The historical events span several decades which encompass the emergence of surface transportation routes of commercial value within western Tennessee during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The number of swing-span bridges built between 1901 and 1922 in Dyer County, and the additional expense involved in the movable span design, attests to the expansion and improvement of land transportation routes, while clearly demonstrating respect for the importance of river commerce.

#### Architectural Information

The superstructure was designed using live loads for a ten-ton roller, with the roller located at the panel points to determine the maximum stresses in all members. The members were A-7 steel with an allowable unit stress of 16 ksi.

The substructure was designed to have the main channel pier footing being excavated to a depth between ten and fifteen feet below the channel bottom and then founded on driven piles. The actual construction practice was to cofferdam this pier and excavate down at least ten feet or until they found materials suitable for founding the pier. They then would have driven the piles to refusal. The bank piers were excavated down to material that was determined to be suitable for founding the footing.

#### References

Dyer County Quarterly Court. Minutes: 1916-1918. Book R. Dyersburg, Tennessee, 1918.

Garst, Jack L. Memo for Record: Lenox Road Bridge, Mile 26.4, Main Stem Obion River, West Tennessee Tributaries Project. Memphis: U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1971.

Howell III, Charles A. re: Lenox Bridge, Dyer County. Nashville: Tennessee Department of Conservation, 1985.

Taylor-Kelt, Jan, Earl Thornton, editors, Wanted: New Owner for Lenox Bridge. Dyersburg, Tennessee: Dyersburg State Gazette, 1985.

University of Chicago Press. A Manual of Style: for Authors, Editors, and Copywriters, 12th ed., revised, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969.

Project Information

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District

Mengelwood, Tennessee, Item 1, Parcel 4 (part of West Tennessee Tributaries project)

Donald E. Martin, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, material prepared November 5, 1985.

Larry Donald, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, material prepared September 19, 1985.

ADDENDUM TO:  
LENOX BRIDGE  
Spanning Obion River, Rural Road S8025  
Lenox vicinity  
Dyer County  
Tennessee

HAER TN-16  
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FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
100 Alabama St. NW  
Atlanta, GA 30303