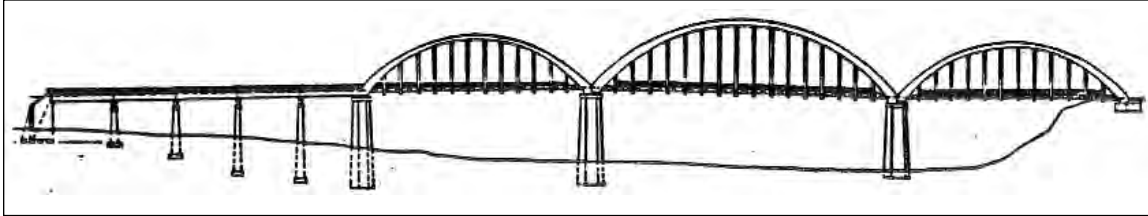


(#133) 47-01262-04.68: McBee (or Mascot) Bridge spanning the Holston River in northeast Knox County (Mascot Quad, 155 SW).



Significant under Criterion C as a rare open spandrel through arch bridge.

In 1929 the Knox County Court approved the construction of two major county bridges, each to replace a ferry: the Solway Bridge across the Clinch River (demolished 1970s) and the McBee Ferry Bridge across the Holston River. At this site, the combination of government guidelines that required a fifty-foot clearance above the water and a railroad along the bank would have resulted in a deck arch prohibitively elevated above existing road levels. Thus, Freeland-Roberts, the designer, used an open spandrel through arch design. The firm completed the plans in January 1930, and the county soon let the construction contract for \$250,000 to the Southern Company of Birmingham. The county held dedication ceremonies with speeches and a free barbecue lunch at noon on 12 October 1931.

The 785-foot McBee Bridge contains three concrete arches and five concrete deck girder approaches. Each arch is an open spandrel through arch (or tied rainbow arch). This type is also sometimes called a bowstring arch. The main span is 222 feet and each flanking arch is 165 feet long. The bridge originally contained two traffic lanes and a sidewalk, but in 1979 the sidewalk was removed, making the curb-to-curb width 24 feet. At the same time, a concrete parapet railing was built on the inside of the original concrete railing, a post and rail design.