

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Vermont	
COUNTY: Franklin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JUN 18 1973	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Swanton Covered Railroad Bridge

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Across Missisquoi River south of Swanton Village

CITY OR TOWN: Swanton

STATE: Vermont CODE: 50 COUNTY: Franklin CODE: 011

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	<u>not in use</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad

STREET AND NUMBER: Route 100 (No street number)

CITY OR TOWN: Morrisville STATE: Vermont CODE: 50

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Town Clerk's Office

STREET AND NUMBER: (No street number)

CITY OR TOWN: Swanton STATE: Vermont CODE: 50

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

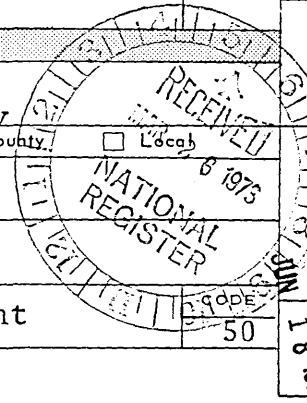
TITLE OF SURVEY: Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 4/71  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Vermont Division of Historic Sites

STREET AND NUMBER: Pavilion Building

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier STATE: Vermont CODE: 50



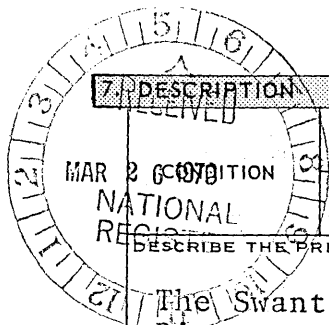
STATE: Vermont

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ENTRY NUMBER: 50

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Swanton Covered Railroad Bridge crosses the Missisquoi River several hundred yards south of Swanton's central business district.

The bridge is built in three approximately equal spans and has a total length of 369 feet. The structure is supported at either side by a continuous Town-Pratt double lattice truss. A three member, multi-segmented chord, running the entire length of the structure, is located at the top and bottom of the main trusses. Diagonal timber lateral bracing connects the two bottom as well as the two top chords.

The bridge deck is located between the two bottom chords and consists of several layers of vertical, horizontal and diagonal timber bracing. This massive construction was necessary to support the weight of loaded trains.

The entire structure is covered with a shallow pitched gable roof. The roof is framed with light gauge rafters extending from the top chords to the ridge pole. The roof structure is reinforced at regular intervals with a timber king post truss. These trusses are further supported by the upper lateral braces which intersect beneath each king post.

A very unusual roof reinforcing truss is located directly behind each of the two portals. It consists of a conventional king post roof truss supported by a small timber lattice truss. The bottom chord of the lattice truss is supported at either side by two wood ship's knees. Similar trusses were used in the roof of the St. Albans' train shed (1869).

The portals are sheathed with narrow horizontal flush board siding. The portal openings are rectangular. The flared eaves of the portals are semi-circular. Vertical board sheathing, which protects the exposed main trusses from the weather, extends approximately 15 feet inside each portal.

On the exterior, the sides of the bridge formed by the main trusses are sheathed with flush laid planks. A small space was left between each plank. This sheathing flares out at the bottom of each side to form a continuous protective apron over the lower chords. A long rectangular smoke escape slot, located near the roof eaves of each side, extends almost the full length of the structure.

An abutment underlies the bridge at either end and the central spans are supported by two evenly spaced piers. Both the piers and the abutments are constructed of rusticated granite blocks.

Major structural joints in the bridge are both pegged and

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

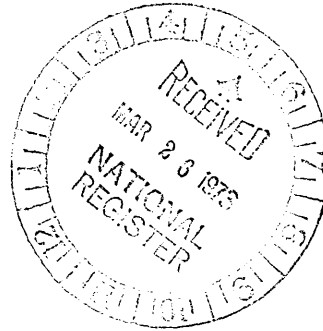
STATE Vermont	
COUNTY Franklin	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUN 18 1975

(Number all entries)

7. bolted.

Three gabled smoke escape cupolas, once located along the roof ridge, were removed after World War II when the railroad was dieselized.

The central section of the bridge roof has suffered extensive wind damage and is seriously in need of repair.



**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1898

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/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

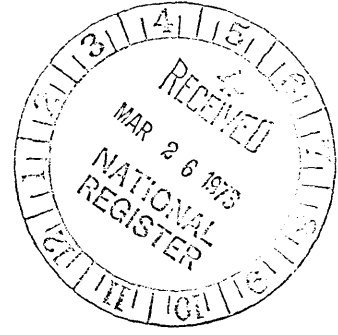
The Swanton Covered Railroad Bridge is the longest of three covered railroad bridges remaining in Vermont.

The structure was built in 1898 to connect what is presently the St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad, a lateral line running from St. Johnsbury to Swanton, Vermont, with the main north-south line of the Central Vermont Railroad directly west of the river.

The structural integrity of the bridge, from abutments to trusses, remains substantially unimpaired.

The pragmatic uses of various structural systems within the bridge and the presence of both pegged and bolted bridge joints document the transition of bridge building technology at the turn of the 20th century.

The tracks leading to the bridge have been removed and the structure is presently not in use. The town of Swanton hopes to acquire and stabilize the bridge for use as a pedestrian crossing. This adaptive use would assure the structure's survival.



**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Allen, Richard Sanders. Covered Bridges of the Northeast. Brattleboro, Vermont : The Stephen Green Press, 1957.

Congdon, Herbert Wheaton; Royce, Edmund Homer. The Covered Bridge. Brattleboro, Vermont : Stephen Daye Press, 1941.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

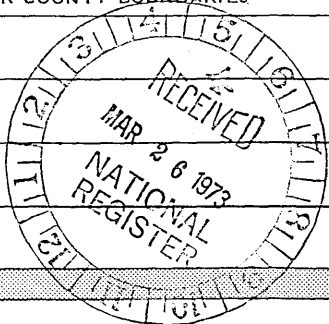
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE			LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"
	44	54	58	73	07	42

19654010  
4977290  
WMM  
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Chester H. Liebs, Supervisor

ORGANIZATION: Vermont Division of Historic Sites DATE: 3/2/73

STREET AND NUMBER: Pavilion Building

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier STATE: Vermont CODE: 50

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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 William B. Pinney  
 Title Director, State Historic Preservation Officer  
 Date 3/2/73

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

Robert M. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
 Date 6/15/73

ATTEST:  
Harold Ford  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date June 4, 1973

