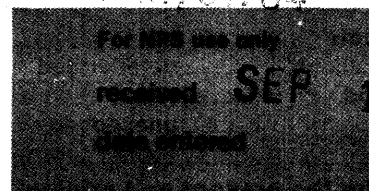


100-1004-0018  
EX-12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1982

1. Name

historic North Manchester Covered Bridge

and/or common

2. Location

street & number South Mill Street at Eel River N/A not for publication

city, town North Manchester N/A vicinity of congressional district

state Indiana code 018 county Wabash code 169

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Wabash County Commissioners

street & number Wabash County Courthouse

city, town Wabash N/A vicinity of state Indiana 46922

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wabash County Court House

street & number Wabash Street

city, town Wabash state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Indiana Historic Sites  
title and Structures Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Indiana Department of Natural Resources

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date N/A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The North Manchester Covered Bridge, constructed in 1872, is one of the two remaining covered bridges which span the Eel River in Wabash County, Indiana. The bridge is located on the southeast edge of North Manchester, Indiana, on State Route 113.

The North Manchester Bridge is a Smith Type 4 truss. The Smith truss is a variation of the Howe truss, and was patented by Robert W. Smith of the Smith Bridge Company, Toledo, Ohio. The Smith truss rarely had vertical posts, whereas the Howe truss had iron rods as vertical posts. This bridge, a heavier version of the Smith truss patent, was built with a double intersectional system of timbers. Braces are set at a 45° angle and counter-braces are set at a 65° angle. With its double system of bracing, the North Manchester Covered Bridge is the strongest type of Smith truss.

The bridge is 150' long, with 12' of overhang at either end. The roadway is 18' wide and 12' high. Originally, a walkway 5' wide and 8' high was attached to the north side of the bridge. Its removal was necessary to prevent the bridge from sagging to the north.

The under support of the bridge is stone and concrete. The remainder of the bridge is constructed of wood. Floor planks are heavy oak and have been replaced several times. Truss supports are of native poplar. Smith frequently employed a method which would ensure that the timbers and planks of the bridge would fit together. Often, his bridges were framed or assembled loosely, then disassembled and shipped to the site for assembly.

The board and batten siding of the North Manchester Covered Bridge is painted barn red. Small openings in the siding are sheltered by wood awnings. To allow light and ventilation into the bridge, the siding stops short of the upper chord.

A gable roof protects the bridge, and extends beyond the structure at either end to shelter the entrances. The gable front has been painted white. A sign above the opening reads, "North Manchester, 1872." The original wood shake roof has been replaced with asphalt shingles.

The North Manchester Covered Bridge is in its original location over the Eel River. Although not in use at the present time, it will receive structural repairs and support. It should open, once more, to light traffic in the near future. The roof and siding of the bridge are in good repair.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1872

**Builder/Architect** Robert W. Smith

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The North Manchester Covered Bridge is significant as one of only two remaining covered bridges out of 30 in Wabash County. By providing access to towns and markets to the south and east, the bridge was instrumental in encouraging the growth of North Manchester. The North Manchester Covered Bridge is also one of only six remaining Smith trusses in Indiana.

✓ From 1800 to 1922, some 600 covered bridges were constructed in Indiana, of which only 98 remain. Thirty covered bridges were erected at various times in Wabash County, but at present, only two bridges remain in use, the Roann and the North Manchester. The Smith truss, which was used in the construction of the North Manchester Bridge, was one of the less common types of truss in Indiana, with only 20 of them ever having been constructed. The most common types were the Howe and Burr trusses.

The Smith truss, a variation of the Howe truss, was patented by Robert W. Smith, of the Smith Bridge Company, Toledo, Ohio, in 1867, and again in 1869, with improvements. It is said that Smith rarely followed his patents exactly, but that he continued to refine and improve the design with each bridge he constructed. Smith truss bridges were erected in Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Oregon.

North Manchester was surveyed in 1836 by Peter Ogan, who built a dam across the Eel River downstream from the bridge site. North Manchester grew rather slowly in its early years, in part because Ogan insisted on selling land for \$10 an acre, an unreasonably high price for land at that time. The town did eventually grow and expand, but the balance of this development occurred after the construction of a bridge over the Eel River at North Manchester.

In 1850, a plank road was built between LaGro and North Manchester. This road joined a second road between North Manchester and Servia. A bridge was constructed at the point where the two roads converged, at a site upstream from the Ogan dam. The construction of this road was vital to the subsequent growth of North Manchester, as it provided access to the town of LaGro, which was located on the Wabash and Erie Canal. Connections to LaGro ensured that North Manchester had access to markets outside the region.

The first bridge over the Eel River at North Manchester washed away in 1857 and was replaced in 1860. The second bridge lasted until 1872, when it washed away, also. These first two bridges were of puncheon construction. They were open wooden structures supported by pilings driven into the river bed. Built close to the water level, these bridges were vulnerable to damage by flooding.

In the summer of 1872, the North Manchester Covered Bridge was constructed by the Smith Bridge Company at a cost of \$22 per lineal foot. Although Smith trusses are considered weaker than other types of trusses, the North Manchester Bridge has survived more than 100 years since its construction. With the construction of the third bridge over the Eel River, the town of North Manchester acquired permanent and reliable access to towns and markets to the southeast.

Restoration efforts by the County Commissioners are under way.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name North Manchester South Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	6	6	0	3	8	5	0	4	5	3	8	8	3	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The nominated property crosses the Eel River at South Mill Street, and includes the bridge, its abutments, and 10 feet of the roadway at either end.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stephen A. Batzka, President

organization North Manchester Historical Society date September 12, 1980

street & number P.O. Box 361 telephone 982-2343

city or town North Manchester state Indiana

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature James R. Brown

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 8-27-82

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the  
National Register

date 9/30/82

Keeper of the National Register

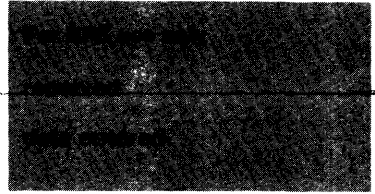
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet No. Manchester Cov'd. Bridge Item number 9, Bibl. Refs. Page 1

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- Billings, W.E. Tales of the Old Days. North Manchester: News-Journal, 1926.
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