

PH 0010146

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

|                               |                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| STATE:<br>Alabama             |                  |
| COUNTY:<br>Blount             |                  |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY              |                  |
| ENTRY NUMBER<br>70.12.01.0015 | DATE<br>12/29/70 |

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
HORTON MILL COVERED BRIDGE

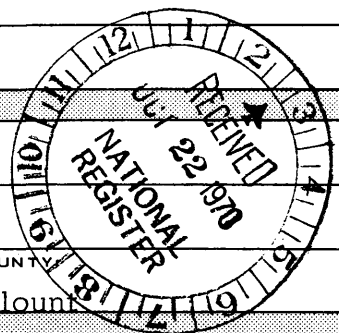
AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Route 3 5 mi. N. of Oneonta

CITY OR TOWN:  
Oneonta

STATE: Alabama CODE: 01 COUNTY: Blount CODE: 009



**3. CLASSIFICATION**

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)   | OWNERSHIP  | STATUS  | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC  |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District<br><input type="checkbox"/> Site<br><input type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both                                    | Public Acquisition:<br><input type="checkbox"/> In Process<br><input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered   | <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)  |  |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural<br><input type="checkbox"/> Commercial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Educational<br><input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Government<br><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Military<br><input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park<br><input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence<br><input type="checkbox"/> Religious<br><input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)   |

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Alabama Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Blount County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Oneonta STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Covered Bridge Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Alabama Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery STATE: Alabama CODE: 01

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:  
COUNTY:  
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DATE

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**7. DESCRIPTION**

|           |                                    |   |                               |                                       |   |                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                        |   |                               |                                       |   |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                        |   |                               | (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 Horton Mill Covered Bridge is a two-span structure with a Town truss. It is 220 feet long, 14 feet wide, 10 1/2 feet high, and 70 feet above the Calvert prong of the Warrior River.

The end abutment of Horton Mill Bridge is constructed on a massive rock ledge, and the center piers are of masonry and concrete. The floor and truss are wooden, but a tin roof now replaces the original wooden shingles. Years of former neglect have caused the bridge to tilt, and a wire cable tied to a big mountain oak has become one of its main supports.

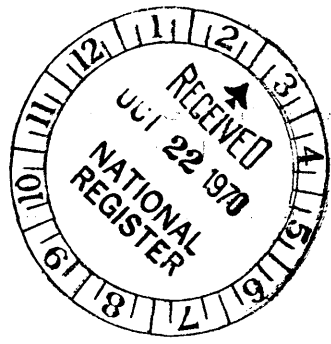
In 1967, Blount County made minor, temporary repairs to protect the wooden truss and flooring, covering the sides of the bridge with tin.

Built in 1934-35 by Zelmer Tidwell, the bridge is located less than 100 feet off the west side of Alabama Highway 75, five miles north of Oneonta in Blount County.

The bridge crosses a deep gorge with vertical rock cliffs. It is surrounded by a scenic woods offering potential development of a nature trail. There is space on the right-of-way of heavily traveled Alabama Highway 75 where a parking area could be built.

The Alabama Historical Commission and the Blount County Historical Society plan to restore the covered bridge by replacing any rotted timbers in the truss and floor and adding a wood shingled roof. All exposed wood will be protected with appropriate preservatives or penetrating stain, and the surroundings will be cleared of undesirable underbrush and litter to beautify the area and to reduce fire hazards.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**SIGNIFICANCE**

**PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)**

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

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

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)**

- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                         | <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation |  |  | _____  |

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Horton Mill Covered Bridge is the highest above water in the United States. It is one of only sixteen remaining in Alabama out of 46 which were standing in 1958. In the 1930's, when the bridge was built, there were several hundred of these vanishing rustic structures in Alabama.

The present covered bridge is a replacement of the one 3/4 mile downstream built in 1895 by T. M. Horton to make his mill complex more accessible. Horton had built two dams to provide water power for corn and flour mills, a cotton gin, and a sawmill. He also had a blacksmith shop, a general merchandise store, and a woodworking shop. This mill complex covered about five acres of the Horton farm.

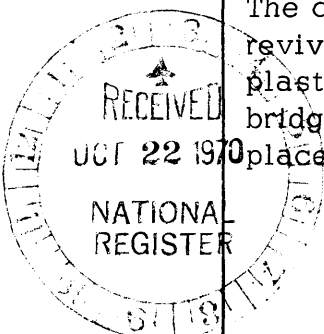
Covered bridges were first built in the late eighteenth century in the north-eastern United States. The bridges were covered chiefly to protect the wooden flooring so it would have to be replaced less often. The covering also prevented easily frightened horses from seeing the rushing water beneath them and provided a haven for weary travelers.

In addition to filling a vital role in transportation many of the covered bridges were toll bridges, providing additional revenue for an area.

The local covered bridge also doubled as a community social center. It was an ideal gathering place for political discussions, gossip, or a friendly game of checkers. The beams and rafters were perfect substitutes for the modern "jungle gyms" to occupy the rambunctious children while their parents visited.

The covered bridge often provided a drill floor for the local militia. Even revival meetings were held at the bridges, and the sidewalls were often plastered with local advertisements. For the romantically inclined, the bridges seemed designed for courting; they were so popular as "sparking" places that they earned the nickname "kissing bridges."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Alabama Historical Commission. Alabama's Covered Bridges. Montgomery: Skinner Publishing Co., 1969.

Junior Blount County Historical Society. Blount County: Glimpses from the Past. The Junior Blount County Historical Society, 1965.

Owen, Thomas M. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, Vol. IV. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921.

\_\_\_\_\_. Deed Books, Blount County Courthouse.

\_\_\_\_\_. Minutes, Blount County Commissioners Court.

\_\_\_\_\_. Records, Southern Covered Bridge Association.

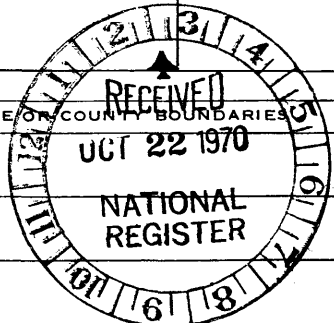
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |           |         |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-----------|---------|
| CORNER  | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |        | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE |         |
|   | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |        | Degrees   | Minutes   | Seconds |
| NW  | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | 34°   | 00'       | 58"     |
| NE  | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | 86°   | 26'       | 55"     |
| SE  | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        |   |           |         |
| SW  | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        |   |           |         |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

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:  
W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: Alabama Historical Commission

DATE: October 14, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:  
305 South Lawrence Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montgomery

STATE: Alabama

CODE: 01

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: <u>Wils B. Howard, Jr.</u></p> <p>Title: <u>State Liaison Officer</u></p> <p>Date: <u>October 16, 1970</u></p> | <p><b>NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION</b></p> <p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>Ernest A. Connally</u><br/>Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p><b>DEC 29 1970</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>William J. Smutney</u><br/>Keeper of The National Register</p> <p><b>DEC 22 1970</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p> |
|--|--|

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| STATE<br>Alabama |          |
| COUNTY<br>Blount |          |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |          |
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(Number all entries)

8. Significance

Continued

The Town type truss, used on the Horton Mill Bridge, was promoted by a New Englander, Ithiel Town, who was granted a patent on the truss. His bridges were built in a lattice style with planks forming a webbing. Only vertical forces were used on the abutments. A genuine American invention, the Town truss made for a durable bridge which could withstand an excessive amount of weight.

