

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: West Virginia	
COUNTY: Barbour	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 14 SEP 1972	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Philippi Covered Bridge

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Lemuel Chenoweth Bridge at Philippi

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
U. S. 250 at the Junction with U. S. 119  
Main Street, Crosses Tygart Valley River, 15 miles S. of Grafton

CITY OR TOWN:  
Philippi

STATE West Virginia	CODE 26416	COUNTY: Barbour	CODE 001
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ Fulltime use on U. S. 250

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
West Virginia Department of Highways

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1800 Washington Street, East

CITY OR TOWN: Charleston, West Virginia	STATE: West Virginia	CODE 25305	CODE 54
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Barbour County Courthouse, Office of the County Clerk

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Philippi	STATE: West Virginia	CODE 26416	CODE 54
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

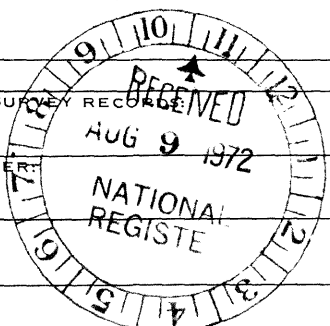
TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  Federal     State     County     Local

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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COUNTY:

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DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Philippi covered bridge is a two-lane wooden bridge on U. S. 250 at the junction of U. S. 250 and U. S. 119, crossing the Tygart's Valley River at Philippi, Barbour County, West Virginia.

The western abutment is built on solid rock at the level of the river bed and is 25 ft. high. The foundation of the original pier is slate rock about 2 feet below the surface of the river bed. The eastern abutment is three feet below the surface of the river bed on a bed of 'stone coal' and built to a height of 20ft. Later, two concrete piers were constructed on either side of the original pier to strengthen the bridge's foundation.

The wooden superstructure consists of two spans with arches of 138-2/3 feet in length. An unusual stringer system is composed of diagonal 3x8 in., 3x10 in., and 3x12 in., beams, notched half and half into the floor beams and into 6x8 in. timbers placed on, and running parallel with the lower chords. These stringers, being framed into the floor beams and pinned as well, serve as bracing, and no lateral system for bracing is used. A type of fish-plate joint is used for lower chord splicing. The only metal in the bridge is in the form of hand-made bolts used to hold the various members together, but in no case do these bolts take any primary stress. The transfer of load from one element to another is accomplished by direct bearing or by notching. Wedges take care of shrinkage conditions and wooden pins are used in the bracing systems.

Some decay has occurred in the arches, but the properly protected timbers are in good condition. After nearly 120 years of continuous use, the structure is almost perfectly aligned.

Original masonry material was from the Philippi vicinity. The yellow poplar used for the superstructure was cut and prepared in Barbour County. The sides of the bridge are boarded.

In the period 1934-38 the foundation and floor of the bridge were strengthened. Two concrete piers were added to accommodate motor vehicle traffic. A concrete floor was laid. A pedestrian walk was added along the southern side of the bridge. The rounded portals were squared to accommodate stake bodied trucks. Because of truck damage to the portals, the clearance limit has been reduced to a height of 12 feet. This limit allows most tractor trailer traffic to use the bridge.

The West Virginia Department of Highways maintains the bridge. The Barbour County Historical Society has waged a constant campaign to prevent the bridge's demise.

The woodwork above the portals has been replaced a number of times following damages from large truck traffic. The woodwork is painted white and carry this historical message: "Philippi W. Va. Scene of First Land Battle of Civil War. This Bridge Erected 1852 Served Both North and South in Passage of Troops and Supplies Across Mountains into Virginia."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



6. SIGNIFICANCE

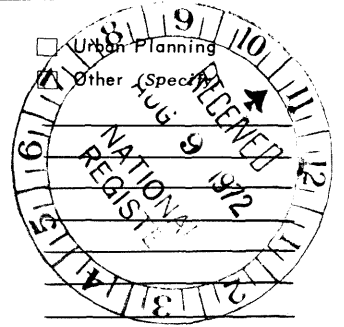
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1852

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |   |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The wooden, two-lane covered bridge, crossing the Tygart's Valley River, at Philippi, Barbour County, West Virginia was built in 1852. It is one of only six remaining two-lane covered bridges in the United States. It is the only wooden bridge to accommodate busy federal highway traffic, U. S. 250. The bridge was constructed in 1851-52 to facilitate the 1848 Beverly and Fairmont Road, which had been built to stimulate the use of the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike, an important link with Richmond and Norfolk. The Beverly and Fairmont Road ended at Fairmont on the Monongahela River, a terminal on the new Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

The Clarksburg Democrat printed a request for bids for the bridge at Philippi in May 1850. Contracts were awarded to Emmett J. O'Brien for the masonry work, and to Lemuel and Eli Chenoweth, of Beverly, Virginia, now West Virginia, for the superstructure of the bridge. The foundation proved a lengthy task and an outbreak of typhoid fever further delayed progress. Late in 1852 the bridge was completed at a cost of \$12,181.24.

Lemuel Chenoweth, a cabinet, furniture and wagon maker had been building bridges on the Staunton Road for nearly twelve years. Meagerly educated in "Pauper Schools", established under the Virginia Literary Fund, Chenoweth credited God for his extraordinary talents in bridge design and construction. Contracts for the Staunton Turnpike bridges had been given Chenoweth, when he took a collapsible model of his bridge 200 miles over the mountains to Richmond. There he demonstrated its sturdiness by placing the model between two chairs and walking the length of the bridge. This model may be seen today in Richmond. The Philippi bridge remains his greatest masterpiece. /With little alteration the bridge has had continuous use in the nearly 120 years since it was built.

/The Philippi bridge figured in an early campaign of the Civil War in 1861 in western Virginia. Union General George B. McClellan in Cincinnati, concerned over Confederate raids against the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the destruction of bridges in western Virginia, sent Ohio and Indiana troops into the region to secure the B&O for the Union. Confederate Col. George Porterfield commanded a group of local militia and cavalry with headquarters in Philippi. Learning of the movement of Union troops, Porterfield prepared to retreat to the South, but delayed too long. On June 2 and 3, 1861, the Union forces under Col.

cont.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Allen, Richard S. Covered Bridges of the Middle Atlantic States. Brattleboro, Vermont: The Stephen Green Press, 1959.  
 Carnes, Eva M. (ed.). Centennial History of the Philippi Covered Bridge, 1852-1952. Philippi, West Virginia: The Barbour County Historical Society, Inc., 1952.  
 Conaway, Calvin R. Covered Bridges in West Virginia. Morgantown, West Virginia University, 1947.  
 Maxwell, Hu. History of Barbour County, West Virginia. Morgantown, West Virginia, 1898.  
 R. P. Davis and L. L. Jemison. "Development of Wooden Bridges." Proceedings, American Society of Civil Engineers, 1934.

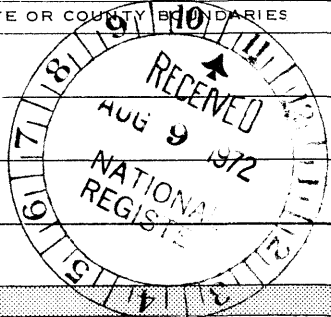
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39 ° 09 ' 11 N	80 ° 02 ' 36 W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Ann Post, Field Agent

ORGANIZATION: State of West Virginia Antiquities Commission DATE: 9/30/71

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Old Mountainlair

CITY OR TOWN: Morgantown STATE: West Virginia CODE: 26506  
54

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: Dr. Carolyn J. Zinn  
 Title: State Liaison Officer  
 Date: August 7, 1972

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

Robert W. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 9/14/72

ATTEST:  
W. Bradford  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date: 9/13/72

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	West Virginia	
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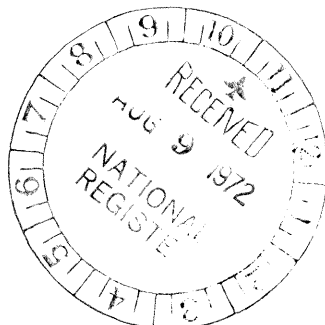
(Number all entries) No. 8 Significance Philippi Covered Bridge continued

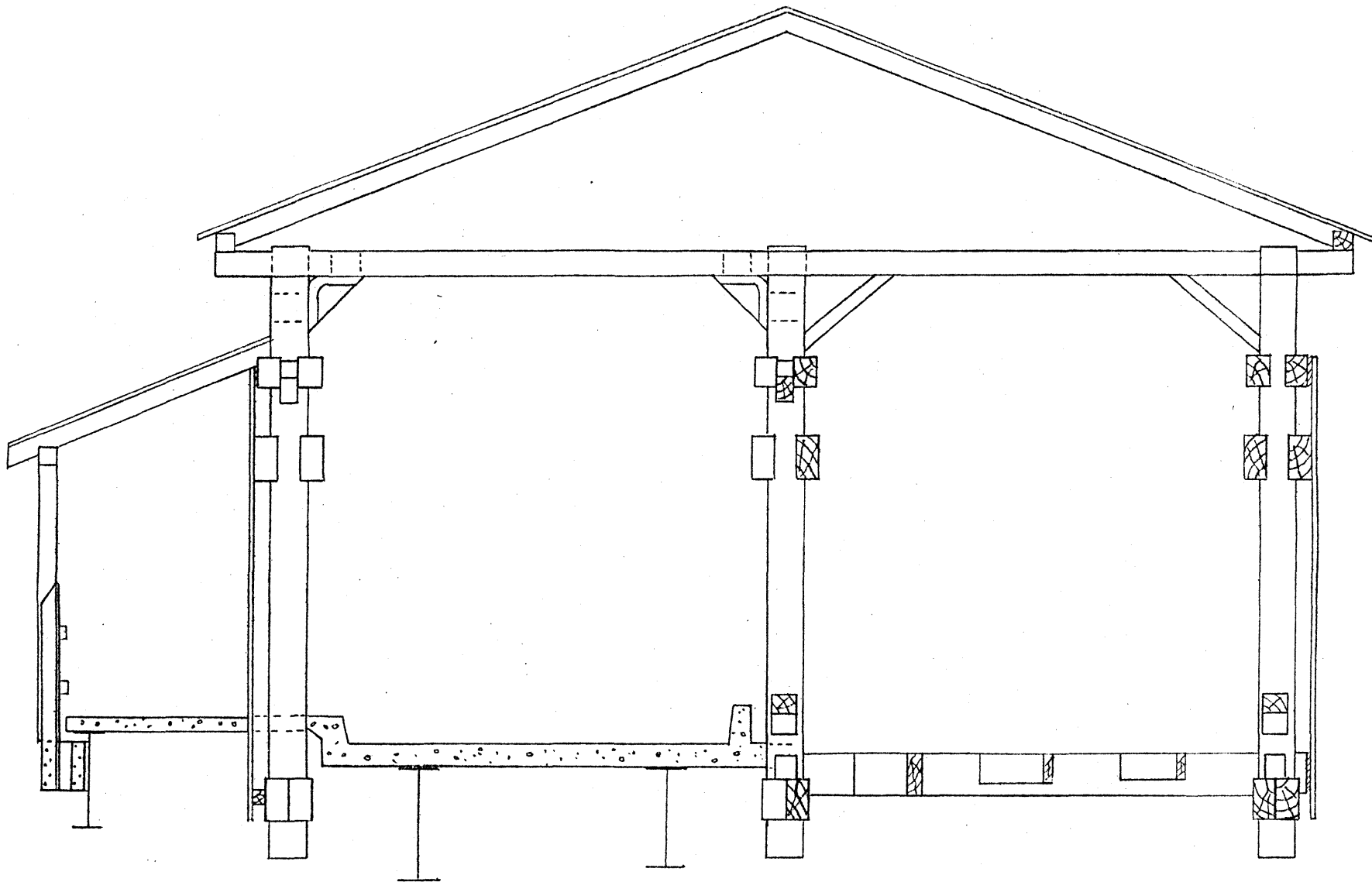
Benjamin F. Kelley, caught up with the retreating Confederates, and a brief skirmish ensued, resulting in three casualties. Confederate troops, some of whom were sleeping within the covered bridge, hastily fled. Dumont's 7th Indiana Volunteers "captured" the bridge for the Union. McClellan's reports of the engagement sent to Washington were so glowing that the engagement was hailed as a major victory for the Union. This first inland engagement of the Civil War and the later battle near Belington did, in large part, secure the B&O and this section of western Virginia for the Union cause.

At times, Union troops used the bridge as barracks and wartime traffic flowed over it in movement of supplies from the railroad at Webster, south along the Tygart's Valley to maintain the army of occupation. Many of the other Chenoweth bridges on the Staunton Pike were destroyed. The Philippi bridge remained intact, largely because it was controlled by the Union, whose cause it served.

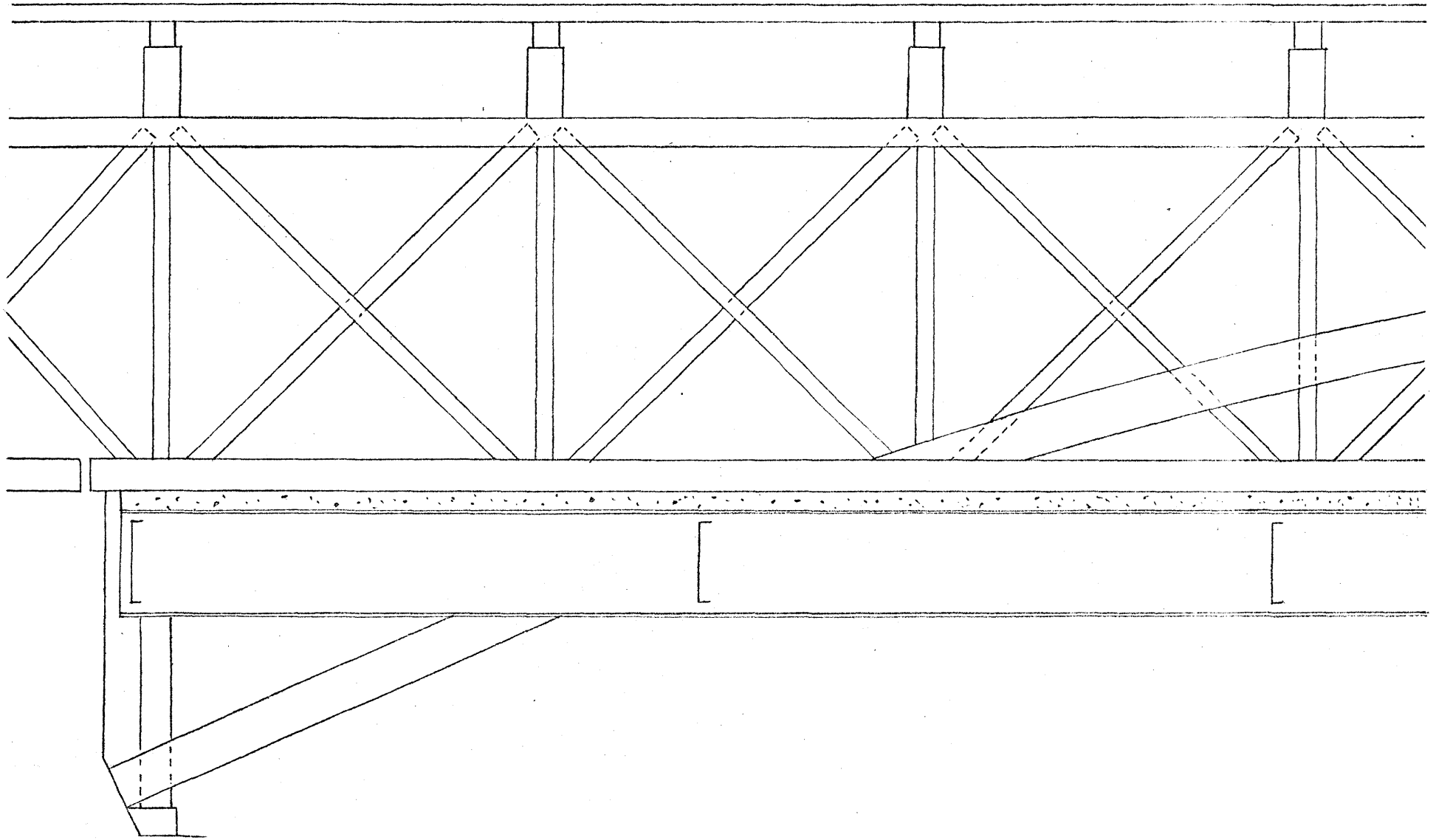
Reportedly, the bridge was in danger on two other occasions during the war. In 1863, the Confederate raider, Gen. William Jones made plans to burn the bridge. A local citizen, Rev. Joshua Corder, convinced Jones to spare the bridge. Again in 1864, three members of Confederate Company D, 20th Virginia Mounted Infantry were ordered to destroy the bridge. Their commander, Brig. General W. L. Jackson rescinded the order when it was learned that their plans were known.

The old covered bridge has survived the elements, war, flood, fire and vehicular damage for nearly 120 years. In 1952 Philippi and the Barbour County Historical Society sponsored a centennial celebration, at which time a history of the bridge was compiled and published. The bridge's real significance may well be its long history of service in providing for the transportation needs of countless Virginians and West Virginians.





1. PHILIPPI COVERED BRIDGE



2. PHILIPPI COVERED BRIDGE