
NAME: Moscow Covered Bridge
LOCATION: Intersection of County Road 875 South and County Road 625 West
over Big Flatrock River, Rushville vicinity
OWNER: Rush County Commissioners
ADDRESS: Rush County Courthouse, Rushville, Indiana 46173

DESCRIPTION:

The Moscow Bridge (see photo #5), erected in 1886 by Emmett Kennedy, crosses the Big Flatrock Creek at Moscow, Indiana, southwest of Rushville. It is a two span structure of wood timber construction protected by a gable roofed enclosure. The structural system of the bridge consists of two Burr arch trusses, each specially adapted to span a distance longer than normal, by the insertion of a ten foot long Queenpost truss section in the center of each arch. The total length of the truss system is 330 feet; the enclosure is 16 feet longer so as to provide an additional eight feet of protection at either end. The bridge deck is 15.8 feet wide; vertical clearance above the deck is 12.8 feet. The portals have a rounded arch configuration. The portals are flanked by pilaster corner boards which serve as the impost points of the portal arches. Elaborate scrollwork is applied to the siding in the spandrel areas immediately above the corner boards. Vertical siding is used in the gable areas above the portals; horizontal shiplap is employed in the north and south sides. Wide, plain frieze boards are used below the gables with ornate cornice brackets used in pairs. This bridge is in fair condition, suffering from some deterioration of the arch bearing points and the cut stone abutments. Repairs are currently under way.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Moscow Bridge is significant as the longest covered bridge ever constructed in Rush County, and is the longest Kennedy bridge extant in the state. It is also the state's only surviving multi-span Kennedy bridge; nine others were built but they have all been demolished. This bridge is particularly interesting in the way that it demonstrates Emmett Kennedy's engineering expertise, as he devised a variation of the Burr arch truss to cross a 330 foot gap in only two spans. Various technical problems, most notably the weight factor, prevented him from building a traditional Burr arch truss in a length exceeding 155 feet; therefore, he divided each truss in the center and inserted a ten foot long Queenpost truss section. This novel solution proved to be entirely satisfactory, and has remained sound for more than ninety years.

The decorative detailing on the portal facades included all the hallmarks of the Kennedy bridges: rounded arch portals, scroll-sawn decorative trim; the plain frieze boards with ornate paired cornice brackets, and pilaster corner boards (since removed).

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Acreage: Less than one acre

Quadrangle Scale: 1:24,000

Quadrangle Name: Adams, Indiana

UTM References:

16 / 624300 / 4371380
Zone Easting Northing

Boundary Description:

Boundary includes the bridge, its abutments and 10 feet of the roadway at either end.