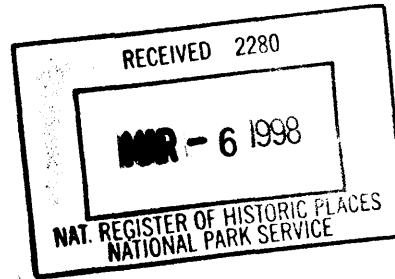


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**



299

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Huffman Mill Covered Bridge
other names/site number County Bridge #151 123-228-20015

2. Location

street & number CR 1490 N (Spencer Co.)/CR 30 (Perry Co.) over Anderson River N/A not for publication
city or town Fulda vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Spencer code 123 zip code 47356

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
[Signature] 2/10/98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other, (explain:)

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 4-1-98

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-Related (vehicular)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Road-Related (vehicular)

OTHER Scenic Attraction

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Burr Arch Truss

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Sandstone

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

roof METAL: Steel

other METAL

CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1865-1946

Significant Dates

1865

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Washer, William T.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge
Name of Property

Spencer IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property <1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	519560	4217160	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathryn E. Irwin, Community Services Intern
organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana date 3-26-97
street & number 340 West Michigan St. telephone 317-639-4534
city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Spencer & Perry Co. Commissioners
street & number Spencer Co. Courthouse, 200 Main St.; Perry Courthouse Square, 2219 Payne St. telephone 812/649-4376 & 547-6427
city or town Rockport (Spencer); Tell City (Perry) state IN zip code 47635 / 47586

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

Narrative Description

The Huffman Mill Covered Bridge is located along the Anderson River in southernmost Indiana. Half of the bridge sits in Harrison Township, Spencer County, three miles east of Fulda. The other half lies in Anderson Township, Perry County, four miles southwest of Bristow. The bridge connects Spencer County Road 1490 North with Perry County Road 30. It is located in rural surroundings with the property, including approaches, abutments, and piers, being less than one acre. There are no surrounding buildings or structures. The bridge's superstructure is constructed primarily of wood, with stone and steel being used in the substructure. This rectangular, one-lane bridge is covered with a gabled, steel roof. The bridge is in good condition and has had very little alteration since initial construction.

The Huffman Mill Covered Bridge is a covered, timber frame, single-span, 20-panel Burr Arch-Truss bridge. Overall bridge span is 148 feet, including the Burr Truss Arch, which spans 146 feet. There is a ten foot overhang on each end. The overall horizontal deck width is 15 feet, 2 inches, with an approaching roadway width of 14 feet, 1 inch. Vertical clearance is 10 feet, 7 inches.

The bridge was constructed in 1864-1865. It was during this time that the Burr Arch Truss system was considered a significant advance in American bridge design. The system, patented by Theodore Burr in 1817, uses a series of timber frame members known as kingposts, or panels. In combination with these panels is the arch, which runs the depth of the frame, for added strength. These frames are then covered with siding and a roof to protect the construction material from environmental degradation.

Structural significance of the Huffman Mill Covered Bridge is also seen in builder William T. Washer's adaptation of the Burr Truss system. According to the book, Covered Bridges in Indiana, only the kingposts of Washer's Burr-Arch bridges were completely upright, with all other vertical members angled to form acute triangles.. Washer's method contrasted typical Burr-style bridges in which framing members were shaped as right-angled, scalene triangles. Washer's bridges also featured timbers that were larger at the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

points of intersection than in the remainder of the members. Except for these changes, Washer consistently followed Theodore Burr's framing method. Unfortunately, it is unknown to historians why Washer used this adaptation.

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge features abutments of sandstone. Three sets of piers consist of steel and wooden posts embedded in concrete. The superstructure consists of a wooden through truss. The deck, truss, and arches are comprised of yellow poplar, chosen for its malleability and general ease of forming timbers into a curved shape. Clapboard siding, also of yellow poplar, encompasses the exterior sections of the panels to form the bridge walls.

A gabled, sheet metal roof covers the entire structure. Immediately below the eaves are long bands of horizontal windows. Each side has two windows, one each located on both the northern and southern ends, which allow for light penetration. In the central portion of the clapboard siding, approximately midway between top and bottom chords on both sides, is another horizontal band of windows admitting light. These windows feature small overhangs to prevent precipitation from blowing into the openings.

The overall condition of the bridge is good. The horizontal clapboard is sound and painted white. The wooden trusses, Burr Arch, floor and roofing members are sound. Graffiti covers most of the exposed areas of the arch and panels. One prominent feature of the bridge is a watermark mounted by the United States Engineering Department during a flood in 1937. Another feature is a sign hung atop a cross-framing member which states the builder, yet gives an erroneous construction date of 1863.

Repairs to the bridge have been minimal. Work during the 1920s added concrete at the footing, as well as the placement of an oak beam underneath the decking for increasing strength. Repairs undertaken in 1988 stabilized the substructure and beams. Most recently, an Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act grant of \$190,000.00 was awarded to Spencer County in November, 1995, for overall rehabilitation of the structure.

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

This money is earmarked for both current repairs and continuation of the structure's historic integrity in the future.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

Statement of Significance

Historically significant on both local and state levels, the Huffman Mill Covered Bridge is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Locally, significance is the longevity of provided vehicular transportation, and the linking of Perry and Spencer Counties. The bridge was constructed in 1864-1865 and continues to operate in near original condition. Statewide, the Huffman Mill Covered Bridge is one of approximately ninety-one remaining covered bridges in the state of Indiana. It is also one of only 64 surviving examples of the Burr Arch Truss method, which marked a major advance in American bridge engineering¹. In addition, it is only one of seven or eight bridges ever built in Southern Indiana by William T. Washer of his modified Burr Arch Truss system, and probably the only one that remains².

The bridge derives its name from the Huffman family, early settlers to the Indiana Territory. George Huffman first arrived in present-day Perry County in 1804 from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In approximately 1808 he moved to Kentucky, but returned to the Anderson River region of Indiana in 1812. Within several years the family became prosperous, eventually amassing some 1100 acres of land where they farmed, lumbered, and raised stock.

As a farmer, George Huffman realized the dilemma that the lack of local milling operations posed his neighbors. Typically, round-trip travel of some 60 miles was required to grind corn for meal and flour. In response, Huffman built a crude water-driven flour and grist mill, circa 1816. This water mill is alleged to be the first such apparatus built in Southern

¹ Eric DeLony, Chief of the Historic American Engineering Record for the National Park Service, claims in his 1993 book, Landmark American Bridges, that ninety-one covered bridges remain in the state. (New York: American Society of Civil Engineers, 1993), 23.

² Gould, George E. Indiana Covered Bridges Thru the Years. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Indiana Covered Bridge Society, Inc., 1977), 18.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

Indiana³. Customers of the mill, who often came from as far as 20 miles away, included a young Abraham Lincoln, whose family resided in Spencer County⁴.

The construction of a mill encouraged settlement in the area. As a result, Huffman sold lands from his holdings to new arrivals, and a small community known simply as Huffman Mill began to grow. The community soon boasted a school, church, and physician, to which Huffman added a blacksmith shop and general store. To compliment the grist mill, he built a saw mill where the timbers for Abraham Lincoln's flatboat were alleged to be cut⁵.

The demand for milled products increased with the rise in population, prompting Huffman to replace the first mill with a steam-powered version. When this second mill burned it was replaced by a third; a water-driven turbine wheel. The third mill necessitated a dam that often caused flooding of nearby farms. As a result, the fourth and final mill, driven by steam, was constructed. This last Huffman Mill was demolished in 1906, ending a family operation that thrived for more than seven generations, and a business that spurred a still extant community.

Prior to the Civil War access to the Huffman community required crossing the Anderson River between Perry and Spencer Counties. This necessitated swimming, rafting, or horseback travel. Yet at times of heavy rains such travel proved impossible. Increasing county populations necessitated improved roadway access between the two counties. In addition, the steady increase of commerce and industry required bridge construction over waterways, connecting such counties and facilitating business growth⁶.

³ This reference is taken from a column in the *Rockport (IN) Journal*, Friday, November 16, 1906, reporting the planned demolition of the Huffman Mill.

⁴ Hobson, J. T. Footprints of Abraham Lincoln, 19.

⁵ Various newspaper articles, county histories, and memoirs of Spencer County residents attest to the claim of the raft lumber being cut at the Huffman Mill. This reference is from Wayne Weber's Covered Bridges in Indiana, 164.

⁶ *ibid.*, 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

To remedy this transportation dilemma, Spencer and Perry County Commissions cooperated in formulating plans to finance the construction of a series of covered bridges. Subsequently, Huffman Mill Bridge became one of five such transportation links between Perry and Spencer Counties, allowing ease in travel and trade between the communities.

Special session records of the Perry County Commission of July 23, 1864 confirm a contractual agreement with William T. Washer for a "bridge across the Anderson River near John H. Huffman's Mill ... of the Burr Truss Plan with arches." Total payment was to be ten thousand dollars in "good and lawfull money of the United States". Installment payments to William T. Washer for both material and labor are documented throughout Perry County Commission records for 1864 and 1865.

Without question, the crucial factor in the site selection for the Huffman Mill Bridge, the bridge's very existence, was the location of the mill itself. The mill was an early economic and social gathering place that subsequently spawned a thriving community. Without the mill and its supporting town, it is highly unlikely the bridge's site would have been chosen.

Completed and opened for travel in the summer of 1865, the bridge at long last eliminated transportation hardships for the mill community. It continues in operation today, although the last Huffman Mill was demolished in 1906. The bridge has closed only once since it was erected, and then only temporarily, for repairs in 1988. It survives as a subtle reminder of ever-advancing transportation and engineering modes, as well as a testimony to its remarkable construction.

There is, however, limited information available on the builder, William T. Washer, of Cannelton, Indiana. Available sources estimate that he constructed some twenty covered bridges throughout southwestern Indiana, including two of the five that once linked Perry and Spencer Counties: the Huffman Mill and Shoals⁷. Washer used a variety of truss

⁷ Gould, George E. Indiana Covered Bridges Thru the Years, 18.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

methods, specifically the Smith and Burr⁸. (See section 7 for a description of Washer's modifications.) It is likely that the Huffman Mill Covered Bridge is the single extant example of his modified Burr Arch Truss. It is the last covered bridge serving Perry and Spencer Counties, as the Shoals and three others linking the two counties were demolished prior to 1968⁹.

For the Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, 132 years of continuous service to the Spencer and Perry County communities is serves strongly attests to superior construction. Most of the original 1865 material remains in good condition. The structure retains its historically significant design. With these attributes in mind, it is therefore submitted for consideration to the National Register of Historic Places.

⁸ Allen, Richard Sanders. Covered Bridges of the Middle West, 78.

⁹ Gould, 59.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

Bibliography

Allen, Richard Sanders. Covered Bridges of the Middle West. New York: Bonanza Books, 1970.

DeLony, Eric. Landmark American Bridges. New York: American Society of Civil Engineers, 1993.

Gould, George E. Indiana Covered Bridges Thru the Years. Indianapolis, Indiana: Indiana Covered Bridge Society, 1977.

Hobson, J. T. Footprints of Abraham Lincoln. Dayton, Ohio: The Otterbein Press, 1909.

"Huffman's bridge gets rehab grant." *The Perry County (IN) News*. 6 Nov 1995. p. 1.

"Landmark to go, Old Mill Dam at Huffman to be removed." *Rockport (IN) Journal*. 11 Nov 1906.

Perry County (IN) Commission Minute Books, 1864-1865.

Weber, Wayne. Covered Bridges in Indiana. Midland, Michigan: Northwood Institute, 1977. p. 164.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, Perry and Spencer Counties, Indiana

Verbal Boundary Description

An area of Harrison Township, Spencer County, Indiana, and Anderson Township, Perry County, Indiana centered on the above UTM point, including the right of way of Huffman Mill Covered Bridge, its superstructure, abutments, piers, and wing to the north and south. Extending from the furthest points of the wing walls, include 20 feet of the approaches on the north and south banks of the Anderson River.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the Burr Arch Truss structure and its historic stone abutments, wing walls, and fieldstone piers.