

MONTANA HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

DEC 21 1987

Site # Inventory #10

FEB - 3 1988
CONTACT
PHOTO

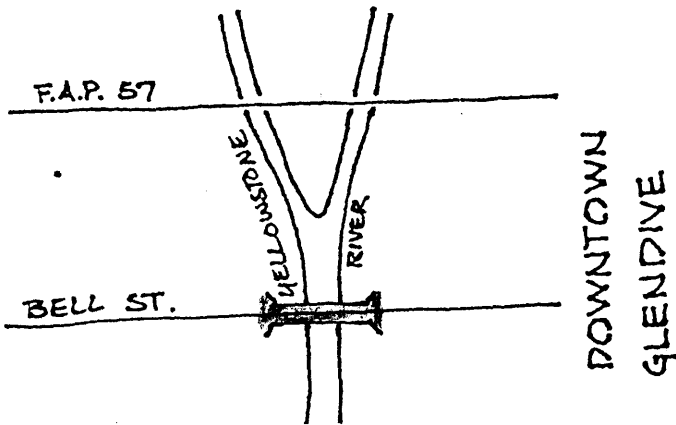
Legal Description: see attached page

Address: West Bell St., Glendive, MT

Ownership Name: City of Glendive

X private address: City Hall, Merrill Ave., Glendive, MT
public

Roll # Frame #



North

Location map or building plan with arrow north.

Historic Name: Bell Street Bridge

Common Name: same

Date of Construction: 1926 estimated documented

Architect: Montana Highway Commission

Builder: Boomer, McGuire, & Blakesley

Original Owner: City of Glendive

Original Use: vehicular bridge

Present Use: same

RESEARCH SOURCES: Note all records consulted to determine dates of construction, original owners, builders, uses, etc.

Title Search: n/a Tax Records: n/a

Bldg. Permit: n/a Census Records: n/a

Sewer/Water: n/a Sanborn Maps: yes

Directories: n/a Newspapers: yes

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

State of Montana, Department of Highways, Office of Planning and Research, State Bridge Inventory, 1969-75.

W.A. Jones, Chief Engineer (retired), Montana State Highway Commission

Billings Gazette, January 17, 1932, p. 6

Quivik, Frederic, Historic Bridges in Montana, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1982.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: Describe present appearance of structure/site, then contrast and compare that with its original appearance, noting additions, alterations, and changes in materials. Discuss significant architectural features.

The Bell Street Bridge crossing the Yellowstone River in Glendive was erected in 1926 and consists of six riveted Warren through trusses, each approximately 219' long and one concrete tee-beam approach span 38' long. Each span is simple and supported on concrete piers and the bridge is 20' wide throughout. The superstructure of each truss span is identical and consists as follows: the lower chords are channel sections with riveted batten plates; vertical members are angle sections with riveted batten plates or lacing bars; diagonal members are channels with riveted batten plates or lacing bars; and the upper chords are continuous plates riveted atop laced channel sections. The bridge was constructed with federal aid under the auspices of the Montana State Highway Commission and was designed for standard H-15 loading.

NOTE: The Bell Street Bridge was officially determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on May 7, 1985.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION: Describe the persons, important events, and/or historical patterns associated with the structure/site and surrounding area.

The Bell Street Bridge replaced an older steel truss bridge over the Yellowstone River at this same location. The first bridge at Glendive, which was also the first bridge to be built of the Yellowstone below Columbus 260 miles upstream, was built in 1896 by the King Bridge Company of Cleveland, Ohio. It was a four-span bridge, one span of which was a swing span because the Yellowstone was still considered to be a navigable river. The original bridge was partially destroyed in 1899 and rebuilt the next year. By then, the Army Corps of Engineers had decided the Yellowstone at Glendive was no longer navigable. The new 1900 bridge included a 301-foot span from the original bridge and three new 308-foot spans designed by C.F. Loweth of St. Paul, Minnesota. That bridge was replaced by the present Bell Street Bridge in 1924-26. This bridge was built alongside of the 1900 bridge, and as soon as construction was completed, the 1900 bridge was dismantled. The contractor for the construction of the Bell Street Bridge was Boomer, McGuire, and Blakesley of Great Falls, Montana.

Boundary: The nominated property includes both approaches to the Bell St. Bridge, the concrete supporting piers, and the entire structure. The bridge measures 20' in width and the bridge with approaches measures approximately 1400' in length. Bridge abutments at both the east and west ends of the bridge are also included within the nominated property.

INTEGRITY: Assess the degree to which the structure/site, and surrounding area accurately convey the historical associations of the property.

The Bell Street Bridge retains complete integrity of design, materials, workmanship, association, location, setting, and feeling.

HISTORICAL and/or ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE: Justify how the persons, important events, or historical patterns associated with structure/site lend the property significance and/or describe the ways in which the structure embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular period, building type, or style.

Designed by engineers working for the Montana Highway Commission, the Bell Street Bridge qualifies for listing in the National Register for its important historical associations with the commercial development of Glendive, Montana and as a significant engineering accomplishment. The present bridge is the third to be built over the Yellowstone River at Glendive, which testifies to the essential nature of this crossing in the city's history. Founded on the banks of the Yellowstone River up against the arid, uncultivable benchland of the Montana "badlands", Glendive merchants looked to the ranchers and farmers that settled to the west of the river for the townsite's economic support. Since Glendive was also the area railroading center, the surrounding stockmen and farmers required passage across the Yellowstone to ship their cattle, sheep, and produce. Since 1926, the present Bell Street Bridge has been fulfilling this function. This bridge is one of the longest riveted Warren through trusses in the State of Montana and well represents the early work of the Montana Highway Commission.

FORM PREPARED BY:

Name: Bill Babcock

Address: Salish Court, Missoula, MT

Date: August, 1987

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Acreage: less than one

USGS Quad: Glendive, Montana

UTM's: 13/521300/5216720