

IDENTIFICATION

Historic name: Surprise Truss Bridge
 Common name: Surprise Truss Bridge
 Address: Sewee Creek Road (BRS-1191)
Ten Mile, Tennessee
 Owner's name: Meigs County Highway Dept.
 Owner's address: Eaves Ferry Road
Decatur, Tennessee 37332
 Classification: Structure-public
 Tax map reference: Dist. 4, Map 17
 Acreage: .15 acres
 UTM reference: Zone 16 N 3947230
E 714330

STATUS

Open to public: Yes No Restricted
 Visible from road: Yes No
 Occupied: N/A Yes No
 Present use: Transportation
 Current condition: Good
 Alterations: N/A
 Site features: Bridge built across Sewee Creek. Adjacent to Black Cabin (#8) in ghost town of Surprise.

HISTORY

Date of construction: 1917
 Architect/builder: Champion Bridge Company
Wilmington, Ohio
 Original or previous owners: Meigs County
Road Commission
 Original use: Transportation
 Theme/s: Primary Transportation
 Secondary N/A
 Other N/A

SOURCES

Bibliographical data: "Meigs County Court Minute Books, Volumes 11-13"
Interview with Kim Edgemon, Meigs County, Tennessee, February 27, 1979.
Duyall, Glyn and Janice Nolen. An Archaeological and Historical Assessment of the Bridge and Approaches over Sewee Creek, Meigs County, Tennessee. 1980.
 Form prepared by: Ann Toplovich
 Title: Cultural Resource Surveyor
 Organization: Tennessee Historical Commission
 Date: 8/12/81

DESCRIPTION

The Surprise Bridge is a single steel bedstead/truss leg span. Utilizing a Pratt configuration, the pinconnected structure displays vertical end posts which extend below the deck to ground level where there are concrete footings. The top chords and vertical end posts are channels connected with cover plates while the bottom chord on the two end panels are small channels or I-beams. The center panel bottom chord is a rectilinear eyebar. Additional features include a metal deck, metal handrails, and concrete abutments. An attached bridge plate identifies the bridge as built by the Champion Bridge Company of Wilmington, Ohio.

SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1917 by the Champion Bridge Company of Wilmington, Ohio, the Surprise Truss Bridge crosses Sewee Creek, one of the major secondary streams of northern Meigs County. The bridge is located in the small ghost community of Surprise, once an important commercial center with a mill and stores. The Meigs County Court Minute Books (Volumes 11-13) show that at least three wooden bridges stood at Surprise before the present steel truss bridge was built in 1917. The wooden bridges at Surprise were repaired twice and replaced twice between 1897 and 1917, when the Surprise Truss Bridge was built. The truss bridge was in use until 1981, when a new concrete bridge was built. The Surprise Truss Bridge, with its increased load-bearing capacity and longer life, was essential to the shift in Meigs County toward motorized overland transport.

PHOTOGRAPHIC DATA

Photographer: Stephen T. Rogers

Date: 2/27/79

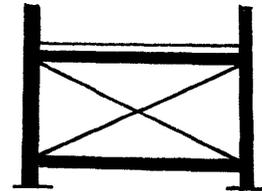
Negatives on file: Tennessee Historical
Commission

Photographer facing: Facing east

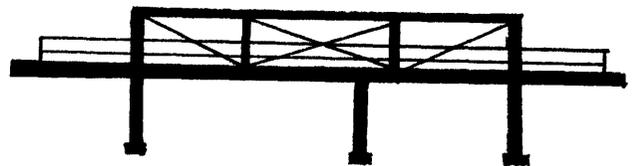
Photograph number 7 of 55.

CONTINUATION

SITE PLAN - Include North Arrow



End View



Elevation View

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCERS use only

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date entered

Continuation sheet Historic Resources of Meigs County, Tennessee **Item number** Identification **Page** 2

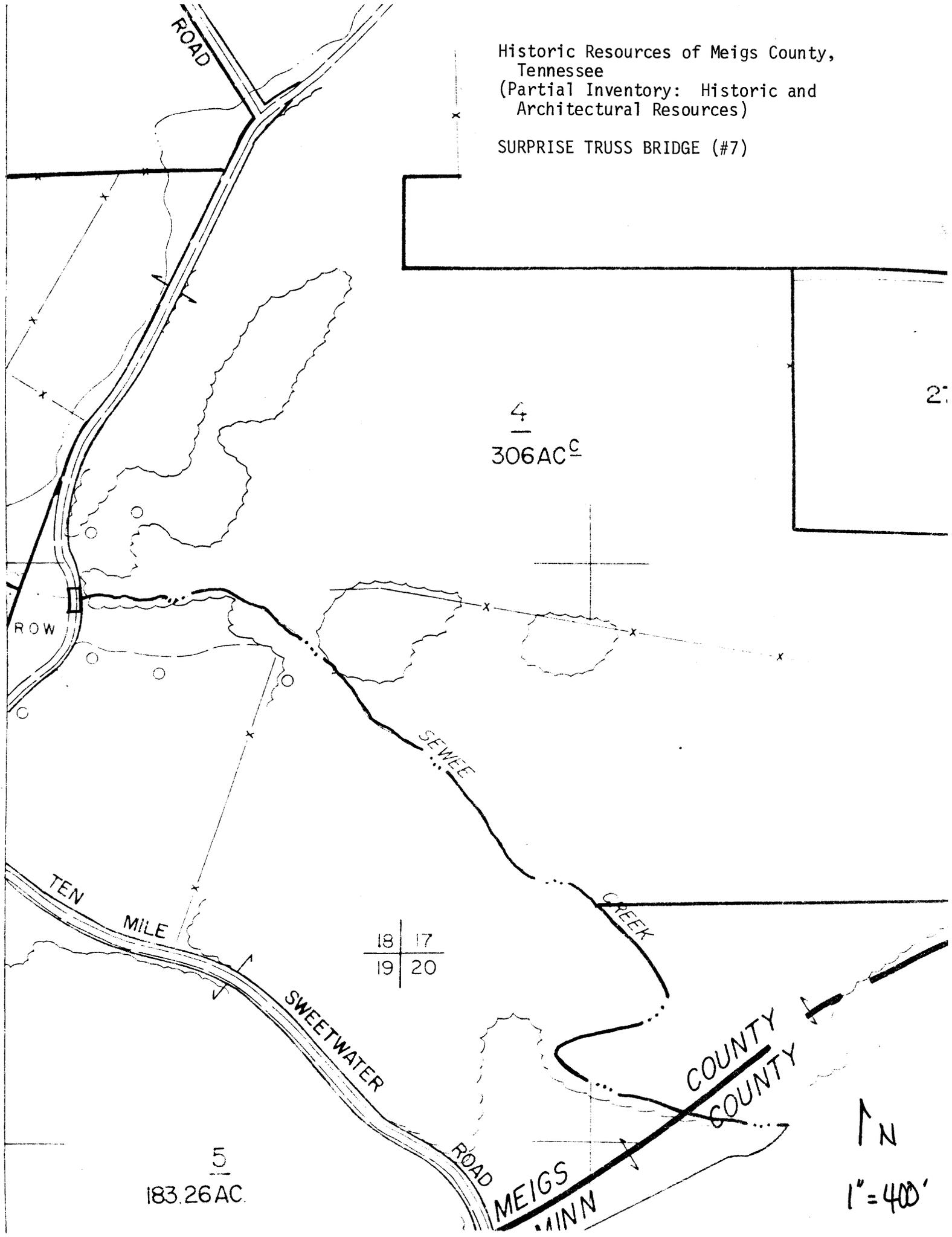
MEIGS COUNTY MULTIPLE RESOURCE NOMINATION - Surprise Truss Bridge (#7)

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:

7. The boundaries include the bridge, which is 98' x 12' in length, located on Sewee Creek on the Ten Mile-Sweetwater Road.

Historic Resources of Meigs County,
Tennessee
(Partial Inventory: Historic and
Architectural Resources)

SURPRISE TRUSS BRIDGE (#7)



25

18	17
19	20

↑ N
1" = 400'