

PH0698776

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE **DATA SHEET**

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
 RECEIVED FEB 5 1979  
 DATE ENTERED MAY 23 1979

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Swinging Suspension Bridges in Mississippi *Thematic Resource*

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

See accompanying inventory forms

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi

CODE

COUNTY

Hinds, Rankin, Jefferson

CODE

49

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic Group	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Multiple ownership, see accompanying inventory forms

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. See accompanying inventory forms

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Mississippi State Highway Department Bridge Survey

DATE

1978

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Mississippi State Highway Department  
 Box 1850

CITY, TOWN

Jackson

STATE

Mississippi 39205

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The swinging suspension bridge theme relates to a group of four similar bridges constructed early in the twentieth century in rural areas of southwestern and south central Mississippi. Over one hundred were built in Jefferson County and only three survive (Duncan McCormick interview, September 7, 1978). Of the two known steel-tower bridges built in Rankin County, the Moncure Bridge, constructed ca. 1905 over Fourteen Mile Creek, was demolished in 1977 for the construction of a new bridge.

Shared physical characteristics among the four include forested settings, arched tensile decks, and similar maintenance requirements. The three Jefferson County bridges have identical piers and all-wooden decks. The Byram Bridge utilizes more sophisticated structural features such as the steel I-beam towers and steel subflooring.

Jack A. Gold, architectural historian with the Division of Historic Preservation, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, conducted the bridge survey in August and September, 1978. The survey area was limited to the boundaries of the state of Mississippi. The location of extant swinging suspension bridges was determined through use of the Mississippi State Highway Department Bridge Survey. Inventory forms from the Statewide Survey of Historic Sites, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, are available for state and local planning agencies. The state Highway Department Bridge Survey is a continuous inventory. Statewide data sheets are gathered by inventory crews that cover all roads in each county every three to five years. County highway department records are consulted as a resource by the State Highway Department.

The structural improvements and design changes incorporated into the construction of the Byram Bridge (ca. 1905) expresses the stylistic evolution as well as the improved structural stability of larger swinging suspension bridges constructed in central Mississippi after 1900. The use of steel I-beam towers with a substructure of concrete piers provides the increased structural support necessary for the 360-foot span of the Byram Bridge. The 25-foot steel towers with sway bracing contrast in scale and texture with the squat iron-sheathed tower supports of the three Jefferson County bridges. The technological improvements used in the Byram and Moncure (the latter no longer extant) bridges were adopted by rural bridge builders in Jefferson County because of the ease of construction and standardized maintenance requirements for these bridges. The concrete tower support system was used consistently in Jefferson County through the 1920s.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Meeting the transportation needs of farmers and occasional travelers in Jefferson and Rankin counties, swinging suspension bridges were well suited for construction across the ravines and deep creek beds that separated rural settlement areas. Known locally as "swinging bridges" because of the tensile quality of the arched decks, the structures proved to be a remarkable vernacular adaptation of their larger predecessors, the Wheeling (1849) and Brooklyn (1883) bridges.

The design by Schuster and Jacob of Fayette, Mississippi, for the cable anchoring system incorporated in the four bridges was improved by bridge builders W. H. Groome and Son, also of Fayette. Concrete was used as infill for the cable-anchoring holes instead of wood (Duncan McCormick interview, September 7, 1978).

The proliferation of these bridges in Jefferson County was caused by their simplicity and utility of design, ease of construction, and low maintenance. With the increase in vehicular transportation toward the middle of this century and the concern for speed and continuous two-way traffic, swinging suspension bridges and numerous older connecting roads became disused, abandoned, or bypassed. The more fortunate extant examples are worthy of continued maintenance and preservation.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Condit, Carl W., American Building Art. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.  
 Fayette, Miss. The Fayette Chronicle, July 29, 1978.  
 Gold, Jack A., architectural historian. Personal inspections, August 3, 1978;  
 September 7, 1978.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY See accompanying inventory forms

QUADRANGLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ QUADRANGLE SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
		Hinds	49
		Rankin	121
		Jefferson	63

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE	Jack A. Gold	Architectural Historian
ORGANIZATION	Mississippi Department of Archives and History	DATE
		October, 1978
STREET & NUMBER	P. O. Box 571	TELEPHONE
		601-354-6218
CITY OR TOWN	Jackson	STATE
		Mississippi 39205

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Elmer R. Williams*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE January 31, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *[Signature]*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
*[Signature]*  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 5-23-79

DATE 5/22/79

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Gold, Jack A., architectural historian. Personal interview with George Lemon, Jackson, Miss., July 11, 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. Personal interview with Duncan McCormick, Chairman, Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, Fayette, Miss., September 7, 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. Personal interview with Nelson Sellers, engineer, Mississippi State Highway Department, Transportation Planning Division, Jackson, Miss., August 21, 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. Personal interview with Milton Singletary, retired Rankin County Supervisor, Brandon, Miss., August 15, 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. Personal interview with Wallace Wall, assistant engineer, Hinds County Engineer's Office, Jackson, Miss., July 11, 1978.

Jackson, Miss. Clarion Ledger, July 8, 1977.

Jefferson County Board of Supervisors. Minutes Book. Fayette, Miss.

United States. Works Progress Administration. Jefferson County, Miss. Source Material for Mississippi History. Preliminary Manuscripts. Compiled by Statewide Historical Research Project, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson.