

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property GLENVILLE TRUSS BRIDGE

historic name Glenville Truss Bridge

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number: Conrad Court not for publication N/A

city or town: Glenville vicinity N/A

state: West Virginia code: WV county: Gilmer code: 021 zip code: 26351

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Susan M. Peice 10/8/98
Signature of certifying official Date

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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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 of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

_____ private
X public-local
_____ public-State
_____ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

_____ building(s)
_____ district
_____ site
X structure
_____ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing Noncontributing

_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
1	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	_0_	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

TRANSPORTATION: road related

Current Functions

TRANSPORTATION: pedestrian related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Pratt Through Truss

Materials

foundation sandstone piers
roof
walls steel beams
other steel beams and cables
wood deck

Narrative Description (See continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- ☐ 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.

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Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance
Engineering

Period of Significance
1885 - 1929

Significant Dates
1885

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Wrought Iron Bridge Builders, Canton, Ohio
Architect Stewart Shirreffs & Co., Richmond, VA

Narrative Statement of Significance
See continuation sheet

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9. Major Bibliographical References

(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: West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, District Seven,
Weston, WV 26452

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

Glenville Quad Map

17 513960 4309120
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

see continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

see continuation sheet

Glenville Truss Bridge
Name of Property

Gilmer County, WV
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kim A. Valente

organization

date June 1, 1998

street & number 226A Bradford Street

telephone 304/344-5149

city or town Charleston

state WV

zip code 25301

Property Owner

name Gilmer County Commissioners

street & number Gilmer County Courthouse, 10 Howard Street

telephone 304/462-7641

city or town Glenville

state WV

zip code 26351

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The Glenville Truss Bridge is located within the central business district of the town of Glenville. The bridge is located 0.02 mile south of Main and Court Streets on Conrad Place. The bridge crosses the Little Kanawha River, a tributary of the Ohio River.

The bridge was built and designed in 1885 by Stewart, Shirreffs & Co., Richmond, Virginia and was fabricated by the Wrought Iron Bridge Builder Company, Canton, Ohio. The super-structure is a steel pinned Pratt Through Truss design, meaning that the truss supports have a height restriction and that it is pinned and not welded together.

The overall length of the bridge is 240 feet, 6 inches. The bridge consists of three spans: the north pony truss span is 43 feet, 6 inches; the main through truss span is 147 feet; and the south pony truss span is 47 feet long. The three foot difference is for a 1.5 foot gap between the spans to allow for proper expansion of materials and load specifications. The horizontal clearance, or distance from curb to curb is 15 feet, 7 inches. The vertical clearance, or height at which something can pass through the bridge is 16 feet, 2 inches. The bridge deck or floor is wood, and was replaced within the past 15 years with same materials. A pedestrian walkway or sidewalk, on the down river side of the decking, is 5 feet in width. The sub-structure abutments are constructed of cut sandstone. The stones were cut, dressed and laid on site.

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The Glenville Truss Bridge is being nominated under Criterion C for Engineering, as an early example of wrought iron, fabricated constructed bridges in the region. The period of significance for the bridge is from construction in 1885 to 1948.

Most of Glenville is situated on the north bank of the Little Kanawha River. The town is the county seat of Gilmer County. The town was laid out by S.L. Hays on land belonging to William H. Ball, and designated as a county seat for the newly formed Gilmer County in 1845. Gilmer County was formed from parts of Kanawha and Lewis County, Virginia, in 1845 at the request of the settlers because of the distances in traveling to Charleston or Weston to attend court.

The Glenville town lots are laid out in a grid pattern with lots running along the north riverbank in an east/west orientation two streets deep and one cross street, running up a steep hill in a north direction away from the river. The majority of the population and private homes were located however, along the south bank of the river. The residents therefore had to ford the river or boat across it in order to conduct court business and commercial business. The Little Kanawha River was also the lifeline for those who lived in the area. Many boat builders made a living shuttling passengers and goods down river to Parkersburg or up river to Gilmer Station, where the closest railroad line was located.

The timber industry flourished in the early part of the twentieth century. At certain times of the year, the river would be dammed-up to collect enough water, only to be released to carry the timber down stream to markets in Parkersburg, and other markets along the Ohio River. Crossing the river at times was impossible, due to the flooding which often occurred. According to a 1972 US Geological Survey Report on the Little Kanawha River Basin, "... floods have exceeded the 23 foot flood stage at Glenville 74 times in 66 years". The flooding of the river over its banks mixed with unpaved roads made travel in town a challenge. Mud rutted "roads" were common and travel by river continued as the most effective mode of transportation.

One of the first orders of business when the first County Court was in session in 1845 was to elect a surveyor of lands. Michael Stump (1808-1886) was elected Surveyor of Lands for Gilmer County and began to assess the infrastructure needs of the county. The county is rural by nature and is bisected by The Little Kanawha River, a tributary of the Ohio River. To improve how goods and services moved throughout the county was a priority.

Land surveyor Stump compiled a report of proposed sights for foot and wagon bridges to cross the creeks and rivers throughout the county. The goal was to help in the transportation of people and goods. His report with recommendations would lay the ground work for roads and bridges to be built throughout the county for many years to come. The county began contracting with builders and engineers to build the roads and bridges to comply with the Office of the Surveyors findings.

On December 1, 1884, J.R. Stewart, Ruben Shirreffs and George H. Goffs, who were partners in Stewart and Shirreffs of Richmond, Virginia, signed a contract with the County Court of Gilmer County to build, erect, complete and ready for travel six wrought iron highway bridges at a cost of \$13,132. Work on the bridges was to be completed by July 1, 1885. It was the responsibility of the county to have the sub-structure abutments built and in place ready to accept the super-structure. The six bridges were part of an important step in connecting areas of the county where the river and tributaries separated it.

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Stewart and Shirreffs of Richmond, Virginia, were only one of more than three dozen bridge designers and builders who bid on contracts to build bridges in West Virginia at this time. The Wrought Iron Bridge Co., Canton, Ohio, was also one of the many bridge fabricators who worked in the state from the 1880's to the 1910's. They fabricated bridges in many surrounding counties including Cabell, Jackson, Kanawha, Mineral and Ohio. The majority of these bridges were of the Pratt Through type.

The Glenville Truss Bridge was one of the six highway bridges built in 1885 by Stewart, Shirreffs and Company. The other bridges were located at: Fink Creek, Cove Creek, Sand Fork, Leading Creek and Cedar Creek. There is no information available when these bridges were replaced or removed. The Glenville Truss Bridge was the first iron bridge built in Glenville to accommodate both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. It is the only one in existence of the original six bridges.

Throughout the first 40 years of the 1900's, Gilmer County and Glenville saw a steady rise in population. Commercial buildings were built, new businesses opened, residential areas expanded outside of the downtown center and the town continued to function as a major source to buy supplies and conduct county court business.

With vehicular traffic on the rise, the county commissioners sought state and federal funds to improve the condition of the roadways by upgrading them from muddy ruts to graded and paved roadways. The state highway system was in place to accommodate requests from counties for these improvements. The Glenville Truss Bridge was becoming over burdened with traffic and in 1963, the West Virginia State Highways Department deemed the bridge unsafe for vehicular traffic. A new bridge to carry traffic over the Little Kanawha River was opened. The new bridge was built within 50 yards from the original bridge. Pedestrians, however, continued to have a safe and practical way to cross the river to their community via the old bridge. Since 1963, the Glenville Truss Bridge has remained opened for pedestrian traffic only.

The Glenville Truss Bridge was important to the development of Gilmer County, especially for Glenville as the county seat. It served the county for almost 80 years as a vehicular bridge and today is important to the community's pedestrian traffic.

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Bibliography

Bain, George L and Friel, Eugene A. Water Resources of the Little Kanawha River Basin, West Virginia. US Geological Survey, Morgantown, WV. 1972.

Kemp, Emory L, West Virginia's Historic Bridges. West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 1984.

Gilmer County Courthouse Deed Book 1, page 135-136, 1847 plat map of Glenville by William H. Ball.

Gilmer County Courthouse Records Miscellaneous Book 3, page 150-163.

WV Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, Office of the District Engineer, District Seven bridge report dated October 9, 1990, - W. Richard White, District Engineer.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point S47W and 306 feet south from the intersection of Court Street and Main Street, with Conrad Court, and at the NW corner of the bridge; thence following the contours of the bridge 250+ feet across the river, and the width of 18.0 ft, including the two cut stone piers on each side of the river and the approaches.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is the bridge structure, abutments and the approaches.

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Section number Photo Page 1

Name: Glenville Truss Bridge
Address: Conrad Court
 Glenville, West Virginia
 Gilmer County

Photographer: Kim A. Valente

Date: January 1998

Negatives: Cameras In Architecture
 226A Bradford Street, Charleston, West Virginia 25301

Photo 1 of 4: View looking down deck of bridge
 Camera looking north towards town and up Conrad Court

Photo 2 of 4: View looking across deck of Bridge
 Camera looking south away from town

Photo 3 of 4: East elevation, looking up river
 Camera looking West

Photo 4 of 4: Detail of construction plaques - north end of bridge
 Camera looking South

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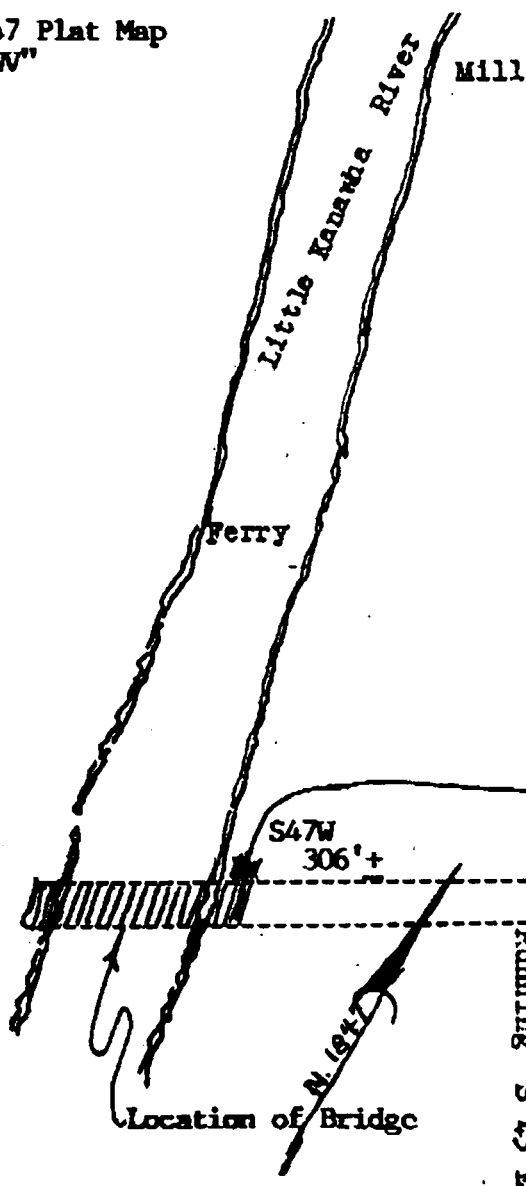
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Section Sketch Map Page 1

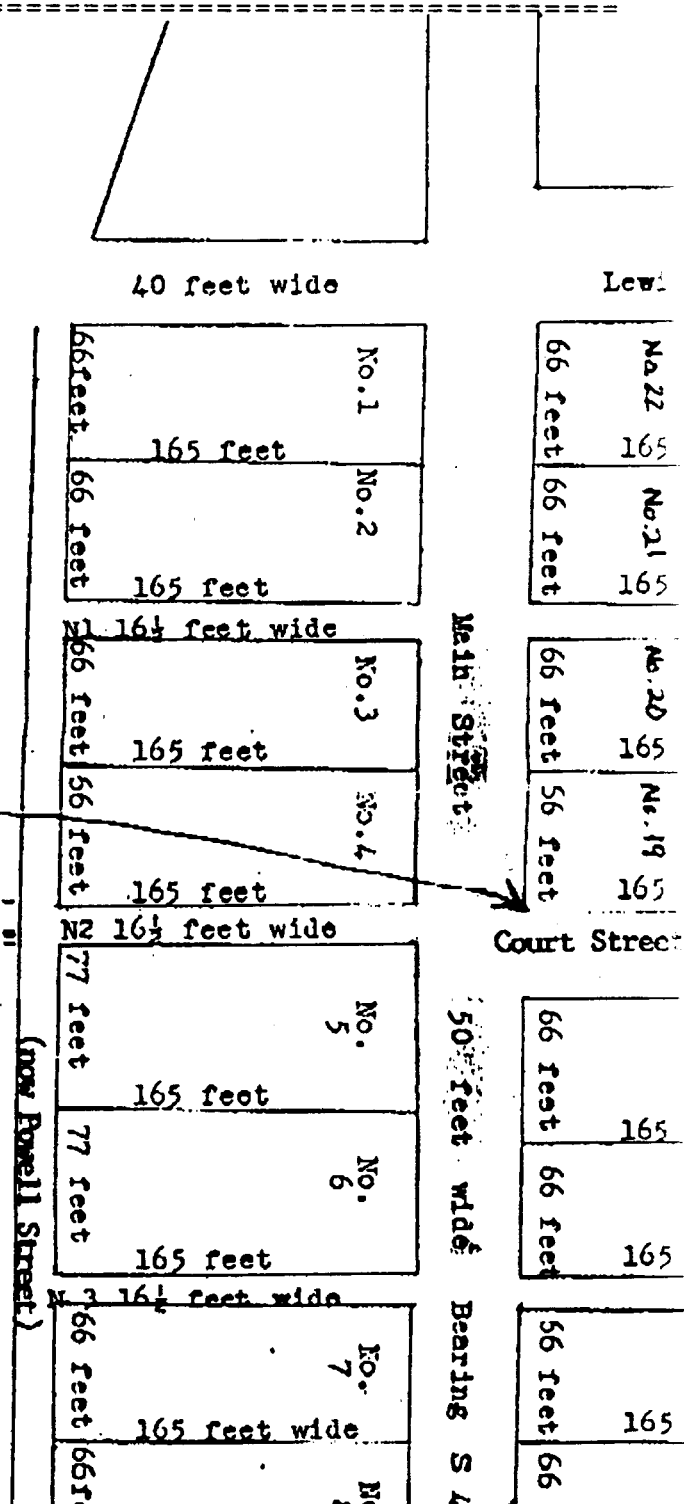
Glenville Truss Bridge

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county and State

Section of 1847 Plat Map
"Glenville, WV"



S47W 306'+ feet from the intersection of Court Street and Main Street, also corner to original lot No. 19, to the NW corner of the Bridge. Bridge is 18.5' feet wide and 250'+ feet long and sits on two cut stone piers, one on either side of the river. R/W is 30 feet



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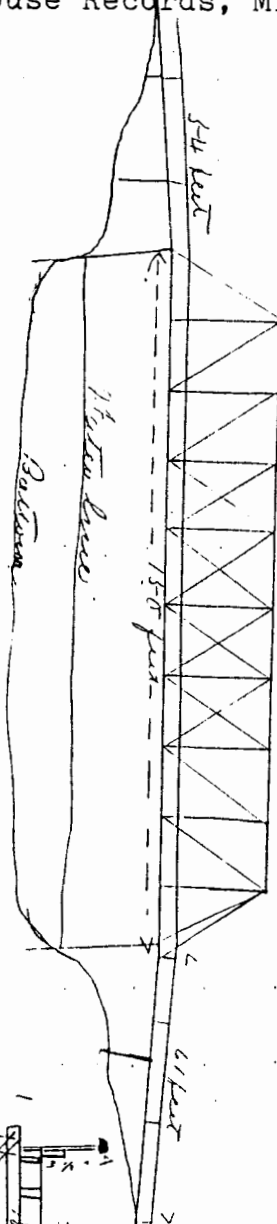
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COUNTRY STORE MUSEUM
GILMER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

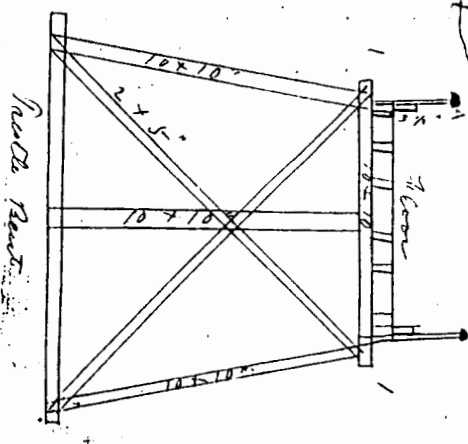
Section number Sketch Map Page 1

Taken from Gilmer County Courthouse Records, Miscellaneous Book 3, page 160

All from the frame on each of them at a depth
of 4 feet the inside end of Shingles - 1/2 inch then to
the present and this last is longer than the
the latter case being built to present and
the latter case 1 1/2 x 1/2 inch built at each corner.



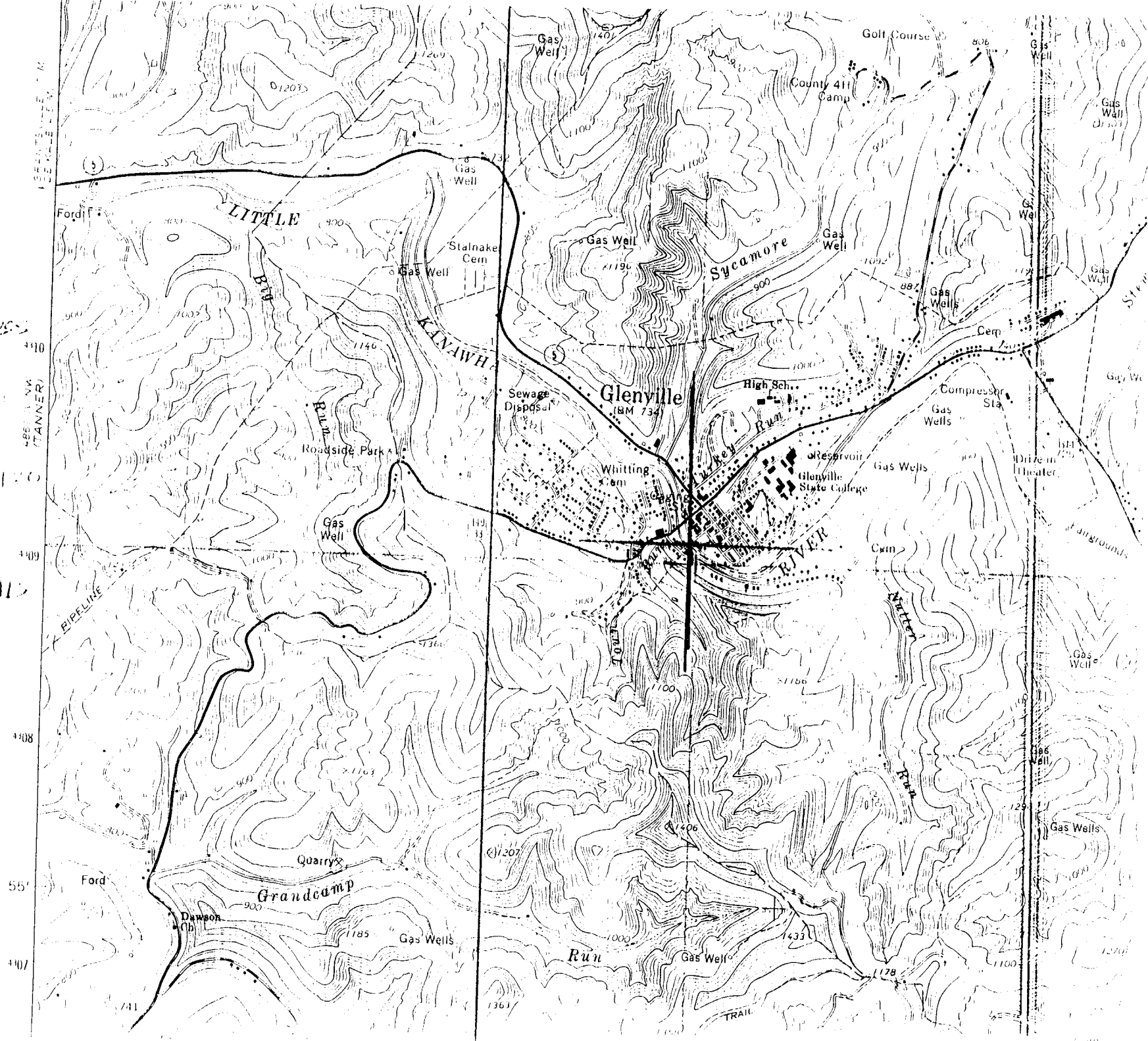
*Article of Little Harshaw River bridge
to be built opposite the city between
Mains and West of Main*

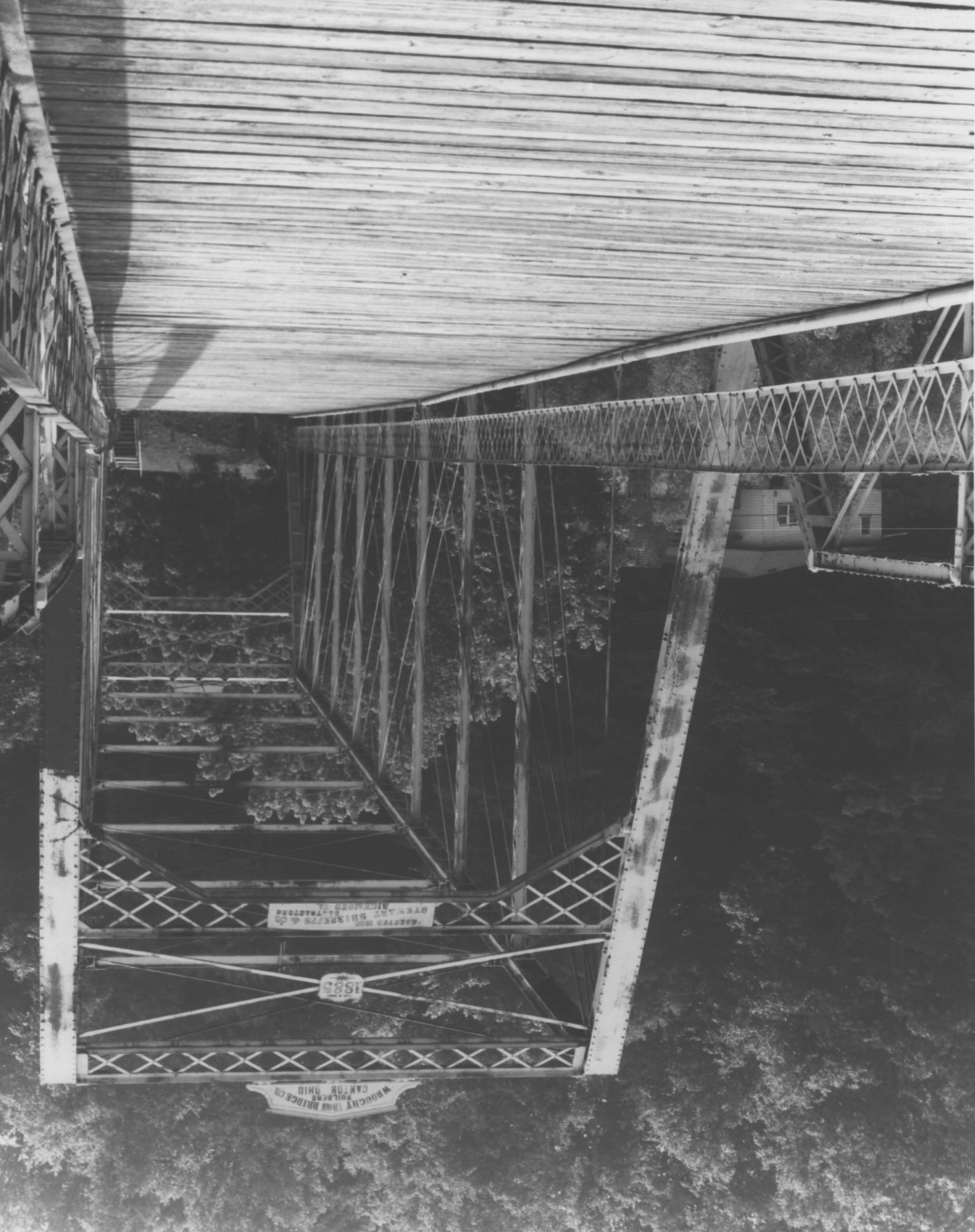


GLENVILLE TRUSS
BRIDGE

DATE:
17 513960 420120

GLENVILLE GLAD





W. H. HARRIS & CO.
STEEL AND IRON
BUILDERS

1885

WOUGHY IRON BRIDGE CO.
CANTON, OHIO