

HAER INVENTORY

Missouri Historic Bridge Inventory

NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

Dicks Bridge
MHTD: 025000.0

COOP07

DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION

1908

LOCATION

County Road 25 over Lamine River; S12, T49N, R19W
3.5 miles southeast of Blackwater; Cooper County, Missouri

USE (ORIGINAL / CURRENT)

roadway bridge / roadway bridge

RATING NRHP possibly eligible (score: 53)

CONDITION

fair

OWNER

Cooper County

span number: 2
span length: 160.0'
total length: 390.0'
roadway wdt.: 14.0'

superstructure: steel, 8-panel, pin-connected Parker through trusses; one 50-foot, 3-panel, pin-connected Pratt pony truss approach span at west end and three steel stringer approach spans at east end
substructure: concrete abutments and wingwalls with concrete-filled steel cylinder piers
floor/decking: timber deck over steel stringers
other features: upper chord and inclined end post: two channels with cover plate and lacing; lower chord: two punched rectangular eyebars; vertical: two channels with lacing; diagonal: two looped rectangular eyebars; counter: square eyebar with turnbuckle; lateral bracing: round rod with threaded ends; strut: two angles, braced; portal strut: two angles, latticed; floor beam: I-beam, field-bolted to verticals; endpost stiffener: two angles with batten plates; guardrail: lattice; builder's plate text on pony truss: **built by / A.M. Blodgett, C. E. / Kansas City, MO**; county portal plate: **1908** on through truss endpost

In May 1907, the Cooper County Court conditionally announced that it would rebuild the Dicks Bridge if the local citizenry would pay for one-half its estimated cost. Located over the Lamine River some three miles southeast of Blackwater, the existing structure here had deteriorated beyond the point of repair. County road and bridge commissioner, E.T. Hale, presented the following month his estimate of \$6000.00 to construct the Dicks Bridge. He noted that the previous bridge's masonry abutments and steel cylinder piers were largely salvageable, but would need to be elevated approximately four feet. Competitive bids for the reconstruction project were received on August 5, 1907. The Kansas City Bridge Company of Missouri, a prominent contractor in Cooper County, was awarded the contract for this and other structures, totaling \$49,600.00. To the discouragement of the county court, local citizens eventually only met a fraction of this amount. The contract for improving the existing abutments was awarded in November to Charles Hutchinson for \$5.75 per cubic yard. Hutchinson also handled the re-erection of several piers which had collapsed or were missing. Completed in early May the next year, the Dicks Bridge, a pin-connected Parker through truss, continues to retain a strong degree of visual integrity.

As one of Missouri's most prolific bridge fabricators, the Kansas City Bridge Company maintained an extensive catalogue of truss types, ranging from the exotic to the commonplace. KCBCo, like most of the region's bridge builders of the time, relied heavily on pin-connected Pratt truss variants for its standard truss types. After the turn of the century, however, KCBCo began fabricating polygonal-chorded Pratt variants (particularly Parkers) for long-span applications. Their relatively long spans, light structural members and archaic detailing have

rendered pin-connected Parker trusses particularly vulnerable to subsequent replacement. As a result, of the hundreds that once carried vehicular traffic throughout the state, fewer than three dozen remain in place today. These range in span length from 110 feet to 200 feet and in erection date from 1900 to 1932. The Dicks Bridge, with its 160-foot span and 1908 construction date, falls within the mainstream of this trend. It is noteworthy for its excellent state of preservation and its two-span configuration.