

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic George Street Bridge, County Bridge #159

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number Intersection of George, Main  
and Importing Streets

N/A not for publication

city, town Aurora N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Dearborn code 029

**3. Classification**

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Category</b>                               | <b>Ownership</b>                           | <b>Status</b>   | <b>Present Use</b>                                 |
| <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"/> commercial                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both              | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress             | <input type="checkbox"/> educational               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                 | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                  | <b>Accessible</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object               | <input type="checkbox"/> in process        | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted              | <input type="checkbox"/> government                |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial                |
|   | N/A  | <input type="checkbox"/> no                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                    |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> park                      |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence         |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> religious                 |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                    |

**4. Owner of Property**

name Dearborn County Commissioners, Dearborn County Courthouse

street & number West High Street

city, town Lawrenceburg N/A vicinity of state Indiana 47025

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dearborn County Courthouse

street & number West High Street

city, town Lawrenceburg state Indiana 47025

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Indiana Historic Sites  
and Structures Inventory

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Indiana Department of Natural Resources

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

## 7. Description

|  |                                       |   |   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Condition</b>                         |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                            | <b>Check one</b>                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good            | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The George Street Bridge (County Bridge #159) traverses Hogan Creek, which borders the northern edge of the original Town of Aurora. The bridge, erected in 1887, provided access from the northeast to the commercial and residential buildings of Aurora's downtown, which is still a densely developed historic district. The bridge is now closed to vehicular traffic.

The George Street Bridge is an iron, double intersection Pratt, or Whipple, through truss. The single span is made up of 16 panels, each 12'5½" wide; the overall length of the truss is 199'4". Based upon measured drawings, the roadway width is 21'6", the deck width is 26'6". The truss is 33' in height.

In the main truss, top chords and end posts are channel girders fabricated from plates and angles, with bracing plates, all fastened with rivets. Bottom chords are eye bars. Posts are channel girders fabricated from plates and angles, braced with plates and intersecting, single, bar lacing fastened with rivets. Hip verticles and diagonals are eye bars; counters are rods with turnbuckles. Diagonals and counters are not joined to their intersecting verticles, but are carried free on pins bolted to the verticles. Connections at panel points are with pins. Portal bracing is paired angles and bar lattice, with name plates, fastened with rivets and extending into the truss. Top lateral struts are paired angles and single bar lattice fastened with rivets. Top and bottom lateral braces are rods with turnbuckles.

Floor beams are plate girders fabricated from plates and angles, fastened with rivets, on 12.5 foot centers. Wings on each beam extend eight feet on either side of the trusses. Both wings carry a utility pipe. The west wings carried a pedestrian walkway until the walkway was removed, about 1974, to the bridge deck because of the deterioration of the walkway supports on the wings. Stringers are rolled I-beams 8" x 3.5" x 26', eleven across the width of the truss. They are not the originals. There is some deterioration of these stringers near both ends of the bridge. The deck is a steel grid, laid about 1950 to replace a wooden block deck. It carries a pedestrian walkway 4.5 feet wide, protected by a guard rail carried on channels welded to the deck. The deck also carries a sewer line on the inside of the east side of the truss. The walkway is in use, but the bridge has been closed to vehicular traffic since 1979 by channels welded across the end posts.

The truss rests on abutments of random ashlar laid with mortar. It is approached from the north by a deck truss, which has not been included in this nomination because of a loss of integrity due to severe deterioration of its structural members.

# 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"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic    | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation           | <input type="checkbox"/> law                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture            | <input type="checkbox"/> economics              | <input type="checkbox"/> literature                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> military                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> art                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government       |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> religion                  |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> science                   |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture                 |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian       |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> theater                   |
|   |   |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)           |

Specific dates 1887

Builder Architect Lomas Forge & Bridge Works

**Statement of Significance** (~~in one paragraph~~)

The George Street Bridge #159 is one of the earliest iron bridges in Indiana, and one of the few remaining metal bridges of its type in the state. The bridge is a double intersection Pratt through truss, also known as a Whipple truss for its inventor, Squire Whipple. The bridge was constructed in 1887 by the Lomas Forge and Bridge Works of Cincinnati, Ohio and is one of only two in the state by this company. The bridge is also significant because of its prominent location in the heart of downtown Aurora, and its important role in connecting the northern part of the city with the downtown.

Whipple was a civil engineer from New York State. His highly influential book, A Work on Bridge Building (1847), was the first comprehensive American work on the design of truss bridges. In 1847, he obtained a patent for a Pratt truss variation, known as a Whipple truss, in which the diagonal supports each crossed two panels. This type of truss, of which the George Street Bridge is one, was used extensively in early iron railroad bridge construction in this country.

The George Street Bridge is one of only three Whipple trusses in Dearborn County, one of which is the triple-intersection Laughery Creek Bridge, listed on the National Register in 1976. It was built by the Lomas Forge and Bridge Works, with F. J. P. Brackett as engineer and construction superintendent. Brackett acquired the company in 1890, changing the name to the Brackett Bridge Company, and later, in 1918, to the Brackett Construction Company. The company was active in the Cincinnati area until the mid-1920s.

The predecessor to the present bridge greatly facilitated growth of the city by providing access to the downtown from the middle and upper-class residential areas to the north, across Hogan Creek. The present bridge, which can be seen in a photo in City Hall carrying trolley cars, also carried U.S. Highway 50 across the creek, from the highway's opening until its relocation in about 1950. It also carried Indiana Highway 56 until that route's relocation over a newer bridge in about 1972. Its proximity to the state and federal highways and to the Aurora business district has made the George Street bridge a highly visible element in the downtown, particularly since it is at the foot of Main Street (see photo 3).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Minutes of the meeting of the Dearborn County Commissioners, 1886 and 1887, passim (indexed),  
 Dearborn County Courthouse, Lawrenceburg, Indiana  
 The Aurora Spectator, 1887, passim.  
 Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, Dearborn County Interim Report (Indianapolis, 1983)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Aurora, Indiana-Kentucky

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The George Street Through Truss Bridge and its abutments, plus ten feet of the roadway (Main Street) at the south end.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | N/A | code | county | code |
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|
|       |     |      |        |      |

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|       |      |        |      |

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert A. Markwalter

organization N/A date June 13, 1983

street & number R. 2, Box 232 telephone 812/926-0680

city or town Aurora state Indiana 47001

## 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 

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date January 24, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

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date entered

Continuation sheet George Street Bridge

Item number 9

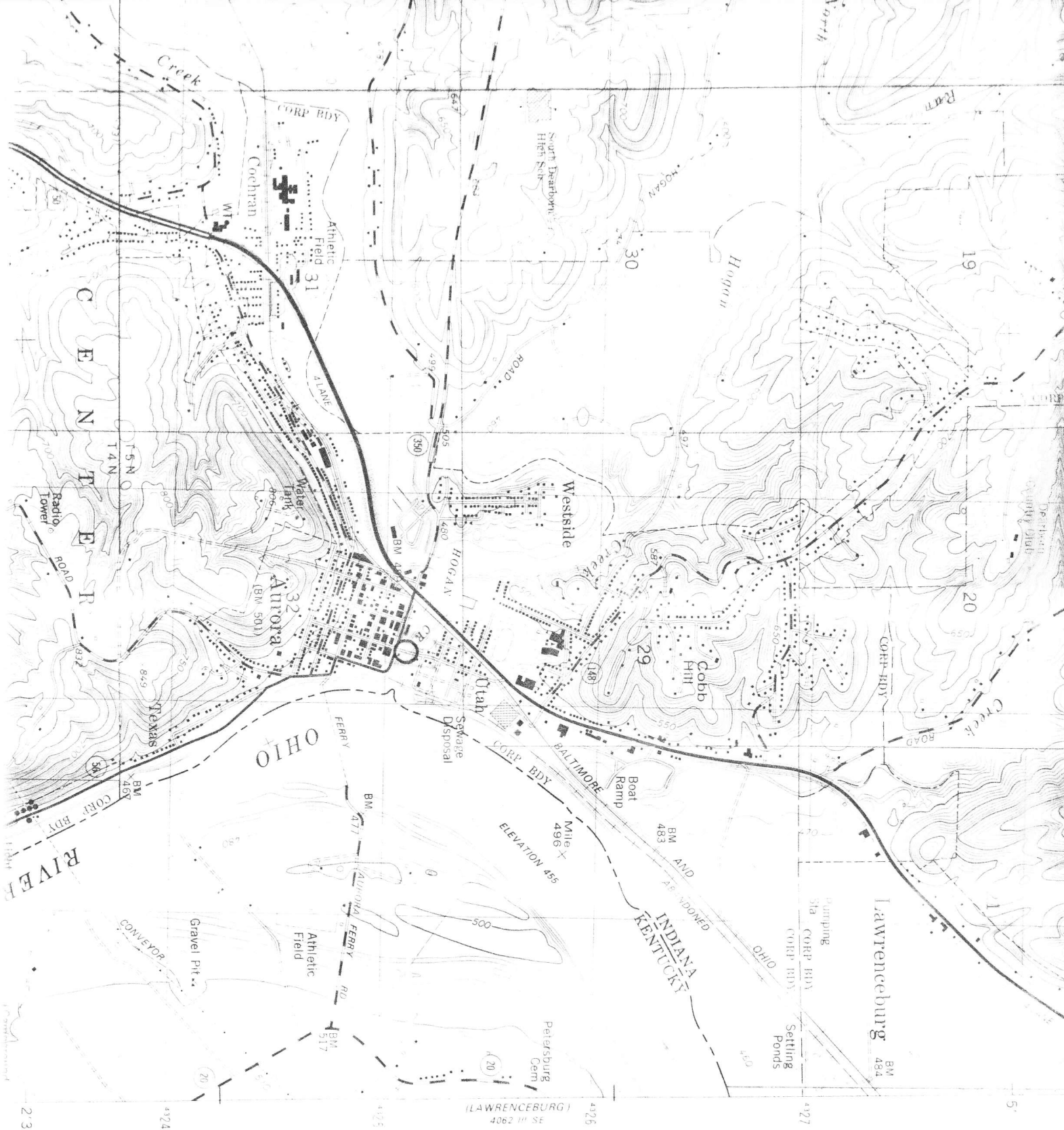
Page 1

Mortensen, A.R., to Dallace Chatham, March 11, 1974, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

Williams Cincinnati Director, 1887: Cincinnati.

Measured drawings from 1978 Dearborn County safety report, AEC Corporation, in possession of Jim Cooper, DePauw University





George Street Bridge  
Aurora, Indiana  
UTM Reference: 16/681760/4325100