

Granddaddy Humpback, a symbol of the past, Alleghany County.

(4) Granddaddy among those remaining as landmarks is old East Humpback—a graceful, arched span erected in 1835 just west of Covington as a part of the Kanawha Turnpike. One of three humpback bridges said to have been built within a mile, it received its name because of its location and a rise of eight feet from the ends to the center.

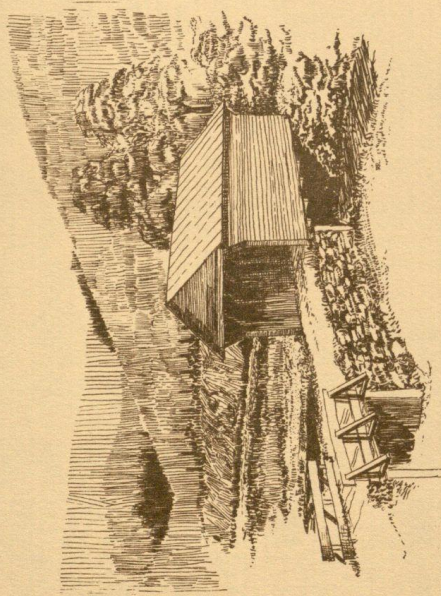
The 100-foot, single-span walled structure carried traffic for nearly 100 years before being abandoned in 1929, and for nearly a quarter of a century stood a derelict near its then modern successor.

Since 1954 it has been maintained as a part of a five-acre highway wayside three miles west of Covington on US 60. The Business and Professional Women's Club of Covington was active in securing donations to help restore the old structure so that it could be preserved as a part of Alleghany County history.

The bridge can be reached from Interstate 64 by taking ramps to US 60 at the Callaghan interchange, and then traveling east on US 60 about a half-mile, or by taking US 60 west from Covington.

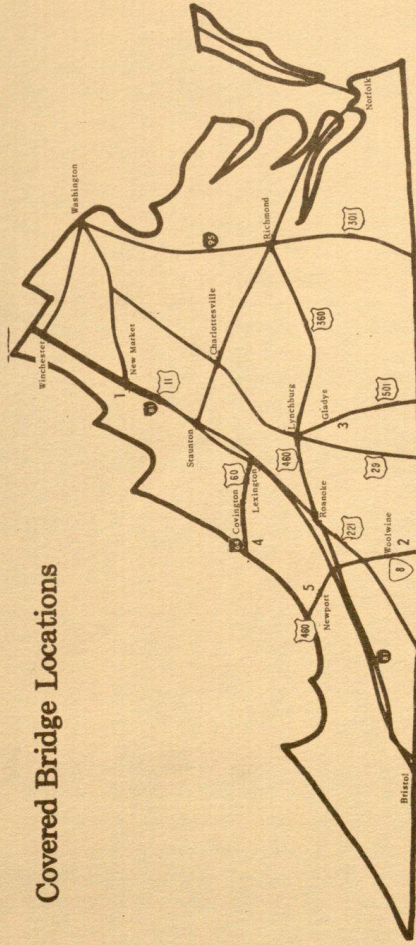
(5) In Giles County north of US 460 are two modified Howe trusses over Sinking Creek, which were built about 1916. A 70-foot span beside Route 601 north of Newport was left in place when a new bridge was built in 1963. It can be reached by following Route 42 from Route 460 north through Newport about one-half mile, turning west on Route 601 and continuing another half-mile.

Standing beside the Mountain Lake Road (Rt. 700) immediately north of US 460 is a 55-foot span left in place for the property owner when a new bridge was built in 1949. The little span on private property is now preserved with a coat of barn-red paint. Route 604, which intersects Route 700 just north of this bridge, connects with Route 601 at the other Giles County bridge.



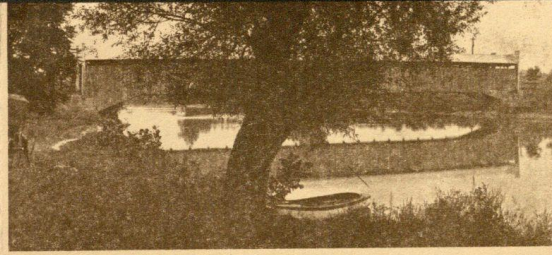
This lonely span stands near its successor north of Newport in Giles County.

### Covered Bridge Locations



VIRGINIA  
Department of Highways  
Public Information Office  
April 1, 1968

Illustrated by Ronald Rose



OUT OF THE PAST. A picture post card made around 1910 describes this bridge, which once spanned the North River at Bridgewater, south of Harrisonburg, as the "Longest single-span wooden bridge in the world."

### Covered Bridges In Virginia

The picturesque covered bridge, favorite courting spot for grandma and grandpa, has almost disappeared from the Virginia scene, although a few remain on side roads to recall the quiet past.

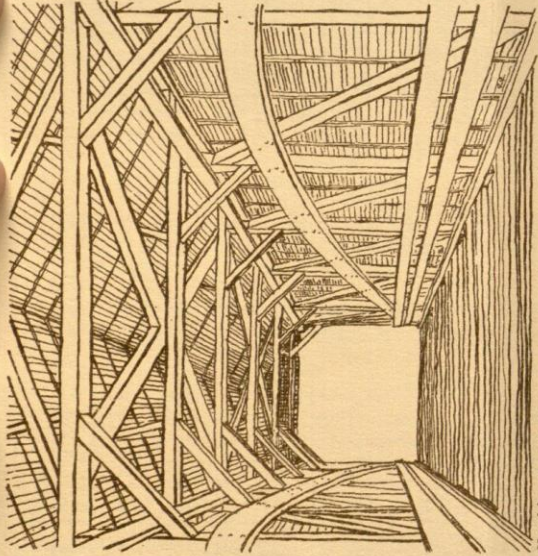
Virginia's first covered bridges were built around 1820-30, and during the following century hundreds were erected across both wide and narrow rivers and streams.

They were particularly vulnerable to fire and flood and were replaced by more durable structures as new designs were developed and new bridges were required. First, the wooden supports were supplemented with steel uprights, and wooden pegs gave way to steel bolts; then toward the end of the 19th century, the overhead steel truss became the modern design.

In 1936, a survey showed some 50 of the covered spans still in use. Most of them were built from the designs (often modified) of three Easteners: Theodore Burr, who patented the Burr arch bridge in 1817; William Howe, who in 1840 patented the forerunner of the steel bridge by combining iron uprights with wooden supports; and Ithiel Town, who took out a patent on the Town lattice design in 1835.

Today Virginia has seven of these reminders of another era (their locations are numbered on the map on the reverse fold). Only two of them still serve traffic. Four others have been left as landmarks at the request of local authorities, and one was left for the use of the property owner.





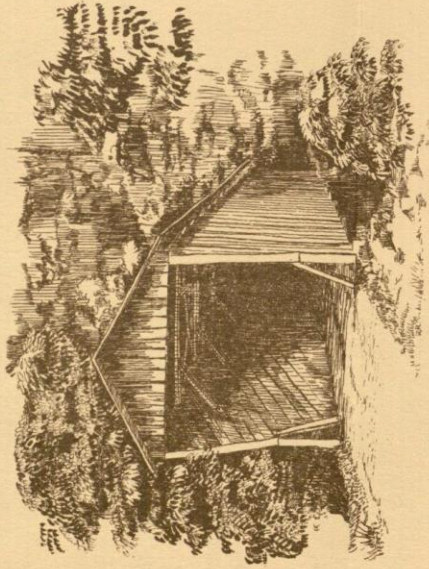
Hand-hewn supports guard today's traffic in Shenandoah County.

(1) One bridge in use is a 204-foot, single-span Burr truss in the Shenandoah Valley, where the romanticist can step back into the past while less than a half-mile away 20th century traffic rolls along today's modern Interstate 81.

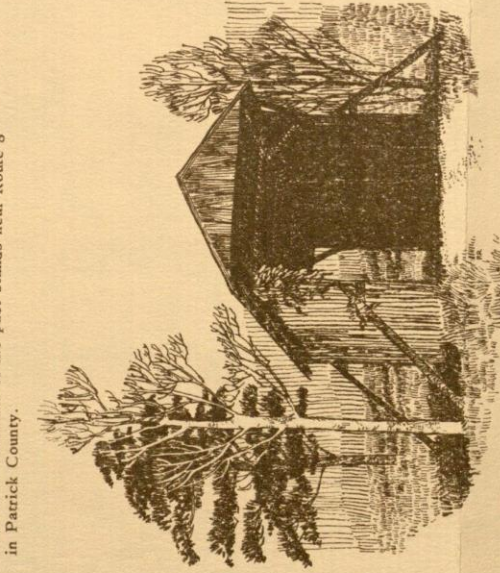
The long span, over the North Fork of the Shenandoah River about two miles south of Mount Jackson and just west of US 11 (the Valley Turnpike of yesteryear), has been carrying traffic for some 75 years. The bridge was built in 1892-93 from materials hewed and quarried nearby for the massive arch supports and the stone abutments, which extend 10 feet below the riverbed.

It succeeded at least two other bridges. Records show that one was burned in 1862 as Jackson went up the Valley ahead of Fremont, prior to the battles of Harrisburg, Cross Keys and Port Republic, and another was washed away during a flood in 1870. "Up the Valley" here is southward, since rivers flow northward to join the Potomac at Harpers Ferry.

The bridge is easily reached from I-81 at Exit 68 between New Market and Mount Jackson, following Route 730 from the interchange four-tenths of a mile to US 11, then north on US 11 nine-tenths of a mile to Route 720, and west a short distance to the river, or on US 11 four miles north from New Market and about two miles south from Mount Jackson. The site is known locally as Meems Bottom, taking its name from the Meems family, who owned Strathmore estate west of the river.



This silent reminder of the past stands near Route 8 in Patrick County.



Witness to a half-century of service in Patrick County.

Another bridge in Patrick County over Smith River is on Route 615 just west of Route 8, about two miles south of Woolwine. The 48-foot span has been replaced, but is being retained in the county and can be seen from Route 8 where Route 615 intersects, or reached by turning west two-tenths of a mile on Route 615.

(3) The second oldest covered bridge still standing is a small wooden truss over Seneca Creek in Campbell County. The 26-foot span was built with wooden approach trestles in 1878, following the destruction by flood of virtually every bridge in the county, and was left in place at the request of local authorities when a new bridge was built alongside it in 1952.

Maintenance, however, became a problem and the little span was neglected for more than 10 years. Then the Board of Supervisors of the county appropriated money to restore the short main span and provide a catwalk from a small wayside area to the bridge where one of the lost trestle approaches had stood.

It is locally known as the Marysville Bridge, and can be reached by traveling south 3.3 miles on Route 761 from US 501 at Gladys to Route 706, taking a right turn there and continuing 1.5 miles.

A sentinel at Seneca Creek in Campbell County near US 501.

