



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered
Arkansas State Highway and
Transportation Department

#MIS26

1. Name

historic Old Rockport Bridge

and/or common Highway 84 Bridge

RECEIVED
MAR 8 1985
RECEIVED
ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION

2. Location

street & number County Road (formerly State Highway 84) running west from U.S. 270 in
Rockport to U.S. Route 1-30 Interchange not for publication

city, town Rockport vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state Arkansas code 05 county Hot Springs code 059

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Hot Spring County

street & number Hot Spring County Courthouse

city, town Malvern N/A vicinity of state Arkansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Circuit Clerk and Recorder

street & number Hot Spring County Courthouse

city, town Malvern state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date January, 1973 federal state county local

depository for survey records Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

city, town Little Rock state Arkansas

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input 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		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Sited in the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains, the Old Rockport Bridge picturesquely spans the Ouachita River near the point where the river valley debouches into an alluvial cove in the coastal plain. The bridge is situated at the western corporation limits of the town of Rockport, which adjoins the city of Malvern, the county seat, at the end of what once was Rockport's Main Street. The handsome bridge exemplifies the multi-span through-truss steel bridges, commonly known as "iron bridges," that were constructed during the last years of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century (roughly 1890-1925) and were derived from the design of the railroad bridges that proliferated shortly after the Civil War. Erected in 1900, the Old Rockport Bridge typifies the middle range of spans that could be achieved with these early highway bridges. The bridge is five-hundred-thirty (530) feet long comprising three separate through-truss spans. Each truss springs from pairs of concrete filled cylindrical columns constructed on iron plates. Abutments at each bank are similarly supported by pairs of columns. Open webbed columns of riveted channels and plates form the trusses' vertical compression members while their vertical tension members are constructed of iron rods fastened with pinned connections. Top and bottom chords of the truss forms are box beams with webs of channel iron and riveted iron plate flanges. The individual spans are composed of two truss configurations connected by "I" beams which also support the bridge's single-lane roadway. This narrow fifteen feet wide road is floored with heavy wood planks. Although the bridge originally serviced heavy freight wagons and later, automobiles, it presently carries only pedestrian traffic.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1900 **Builder/Architect** Stupp Brothers Iron and Bridge Company

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

One of the few remaining one-lane bridges in Arkansas, the Old Rockport Bridge is important for its engineering significance in early highway bridge design and its pivotal role in the commercial and transportation history of south-central Arkansas. Located in Rockport, formerly an important transportation center and county seat (1846-1879), the bridge was built in 1900 to serve heavy freight wagon and carriage traffic generated by the railhead two miles south at Malvern. The Old Rockport Bridge, like the nineteenth century wood bridge it replaced, is actually within a corridor that connects the Mississippi Valley with Mexico. Through its history this route has been known as the Great Path of the pre-Columbian Indians, the Southwest Trail and the Old Military Road. For over six decades the bridge served most of the non-rail surface transport flow through this area. Designed upon the engineering concepts of the railroad bridge, the Old Rockport Bridge is an excellent example of the steel through-truss bridge developed during the nineteenth century. The iron bridge in Arkansas facilitated the movement of heavy commercial traffic, i.e., wagons laden with products of the state's important agriculture and lumber industries that could not safely or economically utilize wood bridges or ferries. The iron bridge played a key transitional role between the non-motored vehicle road system and the automotive age and its modern highway system in twentieth century Arkansas. The Old Rockport Bridge was constructed by the Stupp Brothers Bridge and Iron Company of St. Louis, Missouri. Established in 1856 by John Stupp, a German immigrant, as the South St. Louis Iron Works, the company expanded its operations into the design, fabrication and construction of bridges in the 1880's. The Stupp Brothers were responsible for at least fifty bridges built in Arkansas from 1900 to 1930. It is not known how many of these structures exist in the state. Closed to vehicular traffic in 1980, the Old Rockport Bridge continues to represent an historically important design type and function in the areas of engineering and transportation.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Ferguson and Atkinson, Historic Arkansas, Little Rock, 1966.
Hempstead, A Pictorial History of Arkansas, St. Louis, 1890.
Herndon, Centennial History of Arkansas, Chicago and Little Rock, 1922.
Report on the Rockport Bridge prepared by Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department
September, 1980.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property N/A

Quadrangle name Malvern North, AR

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	5	5	1	4	8	3	5	3	8	0	4	7	3	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Hume, edited by AHPP staff (DRB)

organization N/A

date May 8, 1981

street & number 1900 Marshall

telephone (501) 374-0220

city or town Little Rock

state Arkansas

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 *Wilson Diles*

title SHPO

date 8-30-82

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet

Item number 6

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1. Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department's Road Inventory Log and Bridge Inventory Records, 1979. Arkansas Highway Department, Little Rock, Arkansas.

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"Old Rockport Gets Two New Bridges," Arkansas Gazette, September 27, 1964.

"Old Rockport," Arkansas Gazette, June 7, 1936.

EXP. 12/31/84

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Continuation sheet

Item number 10

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Rockport Bridge lies in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 16, Township 4 South, Range 17 West in Hot Spring County, Arkansas:

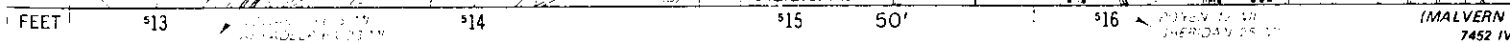
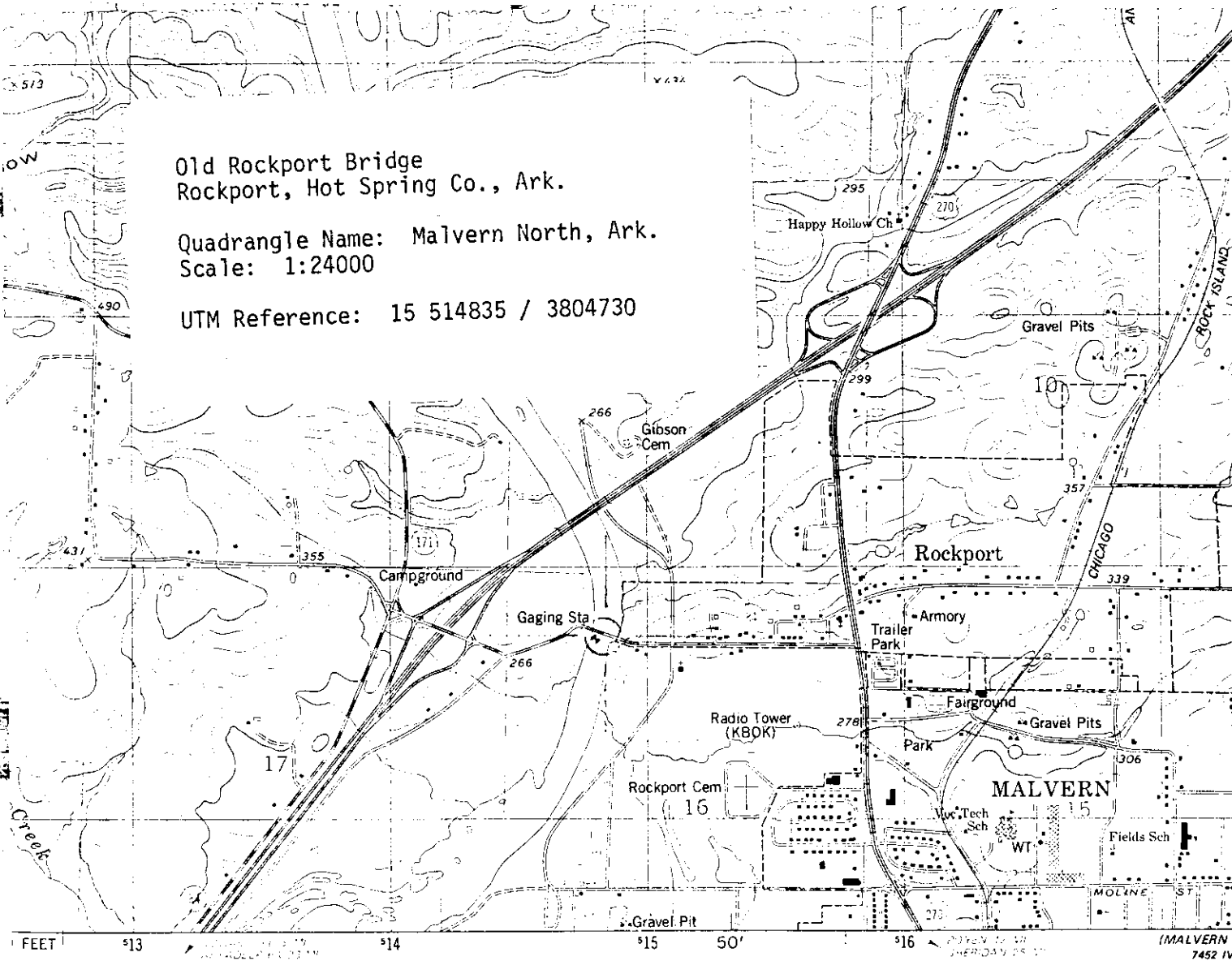
The said bridge spans the Ouachita River from the East toward the West/Northwest and more specifically beginning 0.67 miles West along County Road 944 from its intersection with U.S. 270 in Rockport, Arkansas, with its western terminus at a point approximately 0.31 miles Southeast of Interstate 30.

The boundaries of the bridge describe a perimeter which encompasses the east and west abutment in its length (530 feet) and the outer most extension of supporting members of its width (16 feet).

Old Rockport Bridge
 Rockport, Hot Spring Co., Ark.

Quadrangle Name: Malvern North, Ark.
 Scale: 1:24000

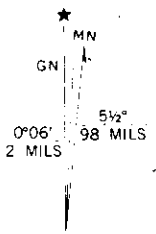
UTM Reference: 15 514835 / 3804730



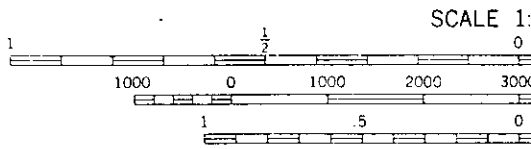
Map prepared by the Geological Survey

Methods from aerial photographs
 Map edited 1978
 Scales: Arkansas coordinate
 Normal conic
 Mercator grid, zone 15

Only landmark buildings are shown
 Dotted fence and field lines where
 possible. This information is unchecked



UTM GRID AND 1978 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER,
 AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS