

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Arkansas Highway 57 Bridge  
other names/site number Bridge #M1038, Site #OU0181

**2. Location**

street & number Arkansas Highway 57 (Ruby Street)/ Over the Union Pacific Railroad  not for publication  
city or town Stephens  vicinity  
state Arkansas code AR county Ouachita code 103 zip code 71764

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets   
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
 nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
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 certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
I hereby certify that the property is:		
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____ _____ _____	_____	_____

Arkansas Highway 57 Bridge  
Name of Property

Ouachita County, Arkansas  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing                      Noncontributing

_____	buildings
_____	sites
_____	structures
_____	objects
_____	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historic Bridges of Arkansas

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road related (vehicular)

TRANSPORTATION/pedestrian-related

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road related (vehicular)

TRANSPORTATION/pedestrian-related

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Parker pony truss

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls N/A

roof N/A

other STEEL

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B.** removed from its original location.
- C.** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- 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.

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

State  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation  
Engineering  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1928-1955  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1928-1955  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(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: Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department

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# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

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### SUMMARY

The Arkansas Highway 57 Bridge is located on Highway 57 in Stephens, Arkansas. The bridge crosses the railroad tracks near the intersection of Highway 57 and Highway 79 in the center of town. The bridge is comprised of a Warren pony truss with a total length of 98 feet.

### ELABORATION

The bridge is accessed from both the east and west. The Warren truss was patented by James Warren and Willoughby Monzoni in 1848. The defining feature of the Warren truss is the presence of equilateral or isosceles triangles created by the members connecting the top and bottom chord. The Warren truss used on the Arkansas Highway 57 Bridge has a polygonal top chord rather than a straight chord. This variation of the Warren truss is rare and is the only known example of one on a state highway in Arkansas.

The Arkansas Highway 57 Bridge at Stephens has a single Warren pony-truss span measuring 96.1 feet, with a total structure length of 98.1 ft. The overall width of the bridge is 33 feet. This width includes a five foot pedestrian walkway outside the truss itself on each side of the bridge. The walkway has a steel lattice railing to protect pedestrians. This walkway is the only known example in Arkansas and the steel lattice is the best preserved example of its type in the state.<sup>1</sup> The deck surface is wood plank over the steel truss. The abutments are concrete.

### Integrity

There have been no structural alterations to compromise the integrity of this bridge. The town of Stephens has changed very little over the last eighty years, thus the setting has remained much the same. The original design and materials remain intact (with the exception of replacement wood decking). The bridge still serves vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

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<sup>1</sup> Scoggin, Robert. Personal interview conducted by the author. Little Rock, Arkansas. 03 August 2005.

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### SUMMARY

The Arkansas Highway 57 Bridge was constructed in 1928. It is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **statewide significance** under **Criterion C**. This bridge is the only known example of a Warren pony truss with a polygonal top chord used on a state highway in Arkansas. The bridge is also being nominated under **Criterion A** for its associations with the development of vehicular transportation in Ouachita County. This nomination is being submitted under the multiple-property listing “**Historic Bridges of Arkansas**” and under associated historic context “**Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department Era: 1923-1939.**”

### ELABORATION

Ouachita County was originally inhabited by various Native American groups, the first white settlers were the French, who arrived in the area toward the end of the seventeenth century. Baron La Bastrop received the first land grant in 1799 which spurred permanent settlement. Hunters, traders, and trappers made their way along the Ouachita River. The first official settlement in present day Ouachita County was on Fabre’s Bluff. This site developed as a trade stop along the river and grew as traffic increased.

The community at Fabre’s Bluff was called Ecore a Fabre. In 1829, Union County was formed and Ecore a Fabre was chosen as the county seat. The county had a population of 640. In the following decade smaller counties began forming, and in 1842 the present day Ouachita County was formed and selected Ecore a Fabre as its county seat. At this point officials renamed Ecore a Fabre Camden.<sup>2</sup>

Railroads arrived in Ouachita County after the Civil War. The St. Louis Arkansas and Texas Railway had forty-six miles of track in the county by 1882. Stephens, Arkansas was established as a direct result of the railroad influx.<sup>3</sup> The St. Louis Southwestern

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<sup>2</sup> *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*. Southern Historical Press; Easley, South Carolina. 1978. p. 641-643.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 646

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Railway took control of the St. Louis Arkansas and Texas Railway which ran through Stephens. The St. Louis Southwestern line was more popularly known as the Cotton Belt Route. The railroad owned 160 acres at the site of Stephens and they laid out the town. The railway company then lured business owners from the nearby community of Richland to move to Stephens and establish the new town.<sup>4</sup>

Stephens was incorporated in 1889. By this time the town had a handful of healthy businesses, a school, a hotel under construction, and a bank in progress to serve a population rising over five hundred.<sup>5</sup>

When the Cotton Belt Railway initially laid the plans for Stephens, they planned three streets. First, North, and Ruby were the original travel routes in Stephens. The Cotton Belt tracks run parallel to First Street. Ruby Street runs over the tracks and intersects First Street. A bridge had to be constructed over the tracks to accommodate vehicular and pedestrian traffic. There is record of a bridge in this location as early as 1890.<sup>6</sup> The present bridge was constructed in 1928.

It is unknown who manufactured the steel truss comprising this bridge. It was constructed as part of a road improvement project of State Highway 57. This project, called the Stephens to Mt. Holly Road Project, was initiated in 1927. It dealt with grading and drainage improvements as well.<sup>7</sup>

The Warren pony truss was developed in 1848 by James Warren and Willoughby Monzoni of Great Britain. These trusses are characterized by the triangles formed by the members connecting their top and bottom chords.<sup>8</sup> The Arkansas Highway 57 Bridge in

<sup>4</sup> "Cotton Belt Route: The History." Accessed online from [www.geocities.com/TheTropics/8199/c\\_belt.html](http://www.geocities.com/TheTropics/8199/c_belt.html).

<sup>5</sup> *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*, 649.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 648.

<sup>7</sup> Scoggin, Robert. Telephone interview conducted by the author. Little Rock, Arkansas. 28 March 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Criddlebaugh, Bruce S. "Bridge Basics: A Spotter's Guide to Bridge Design." 02 November 2001. accessed online from <http://pghbridges.com/basics.htm>.

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Stephens has an unusual feature for bridges of this type in Arkansas.<sup>9</sup> This bridge has a pedestrian walkway extending an extra five feet beyond the vehicular deck of the bridge. The walkway is outside of the Warren pony truss and has a steel lattice rail to protect pedestrians. There are no other Warren pony truss bridges on record in the state with this type of walkway.<sup>10</sup>

### Statement of Significance

The Arkansas Highway 57 Bridge was constructed in 1928. It is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **statewide significance** under **Criterion C**. This bridge is the only known example of a Warren pony truss with a polygonal top chord used on a state highway in Arkansas. The bridge is also being nominated under **Criterion A** for its associations with the development of vehicular transportation in Ouachita County. This nomination is being submitted under the multiple-property listing “**Historic Bridges of Arkansas**” and under associated historic context “**Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department Era: 1923-1939.**”

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

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#### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

From the west corner of the bridge, proceed westerly 40 feet to the point of beginning. From the point of beginning, proceed northeasterly 100 feet, thence proceed southeasterly 145 feet, thence proceed southwesterly 100 feet, thence proceed northwesterly 145 feet to the point of beginning.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary includes the St. Louis and Southwestern Railway Bridge and its immediate setting.