

# West Virginia Covered Bridges Survey and Restoration



*Fletcher Covered Bridge, Harrison County, W.Va. (IHTIA)*



*Walkersville Covered Bridge, Lewis County, W.Va. (IHTIA)*

## Background

In 1989 the historic Philippi Covered Bridge was destroyed by fire. Two years later, as its restoration neared completion, the West Virginia Department of Transportation/Division of Highways decided to get a complete assessment of restoration issues facing the small, but valuable, stock of nineteenth-century covered bridges in the state.

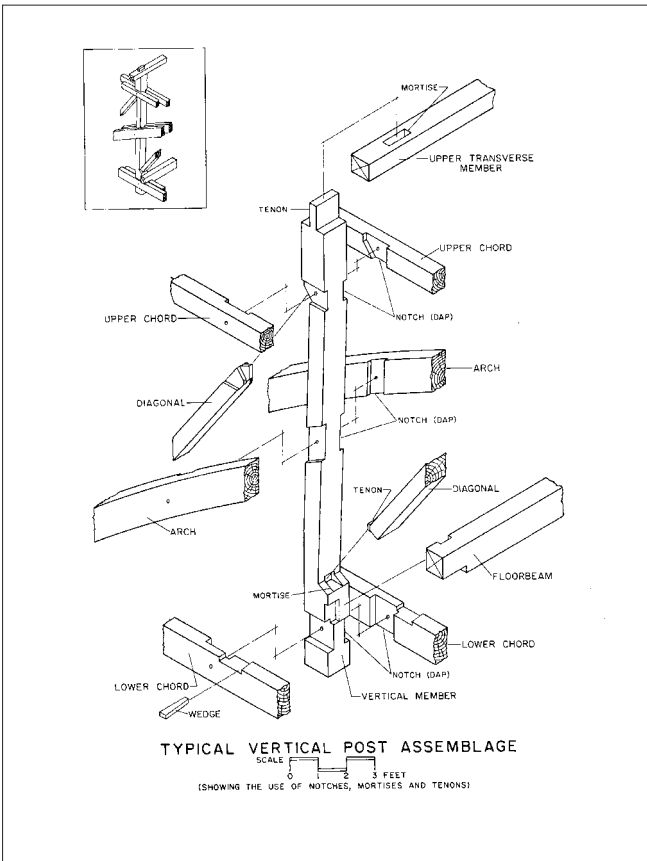
## Scope

In the West Virginia Covered Bridge Restoration Project, IHTIA, Paul D. Marshall and Associates, and the Houston Corporation jointly produced a comprehensive report on thirteen of West Virginia's seventeen extant covered bridges. The report included guidelines and estimates for the restoration of each structure, along with a complete history of West Virginia's covered bridges and histories of each span, with information about their builders and truss types. A separate report was produced by the same parties for the 1852 Barrackville Covered Bridge.

## Results

In 1999 at a cost of about \$1.3 million, the Barrackville Bridge was restored, including truss and floor system repair, the installation of lighting and fire protection, and the restoration of the original facade and color scheme. The following year, the Department of Highways announced its plans to rehabilitate the balance of West Virginia's covered bridges. Because the 1993 report was based on the Secretary of the Interior's standards for restoration, it includes sound recommendations to guide current and future efforts. The reports also led to more prestigious work at the national level in 2000, when IHTIA and the WVU Constructed Facilities Center were awarded a three-year contract by the Federal Highways Administration to produce a Guide to Strengthening Historic Covered Bridges.

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***Clockwise from top:** Carrollton Covered Bridge, Barbour County, interior west wall showing multiple king post and Burr arch truss. (IHTIA); Walkersville Covered Bridge, Lewis County, west abutment. (IHTIA); Typical vertical post assemblage, Barrickville Covered Bridge. (Paul Boxley)*