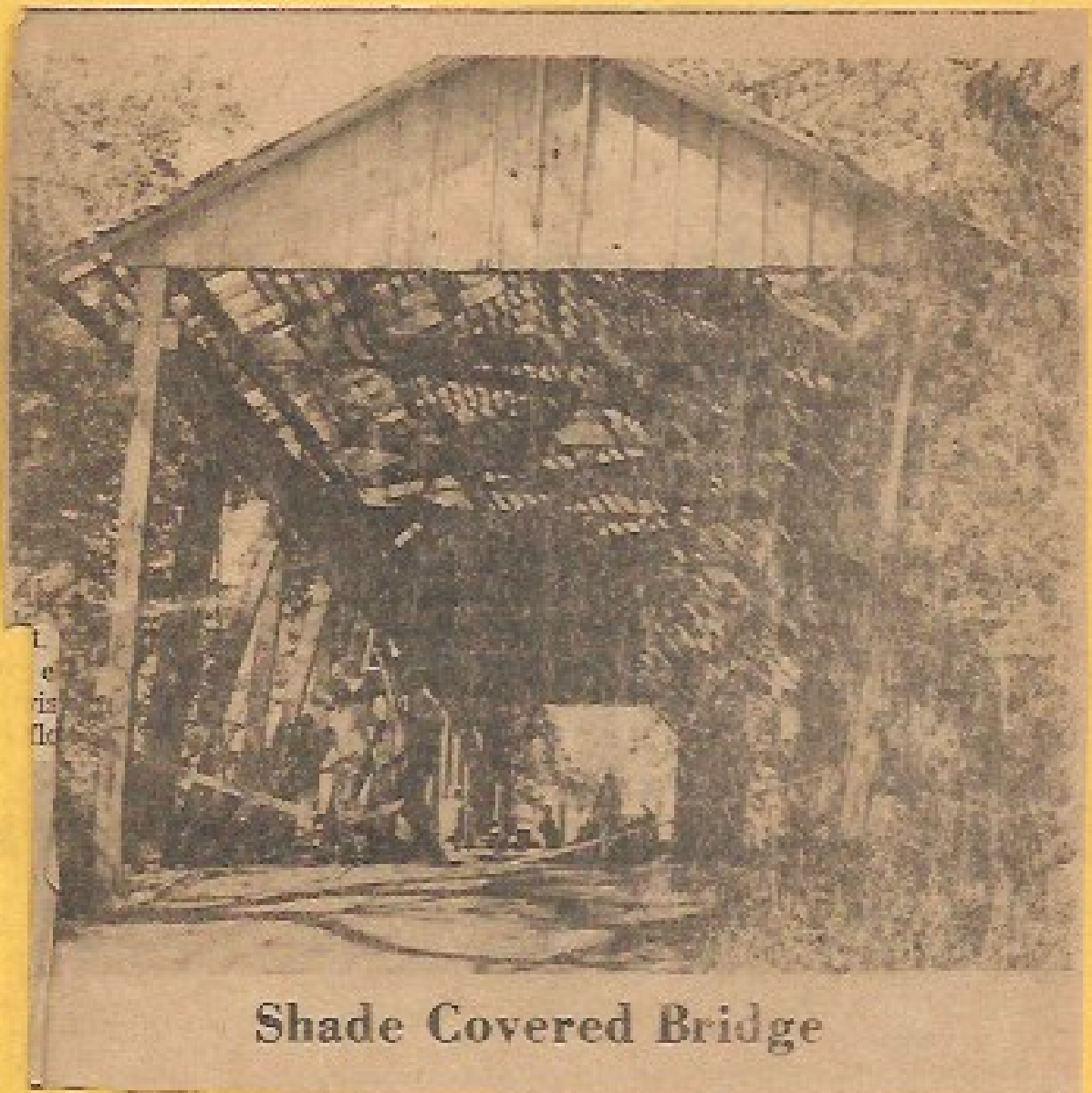


IF IT FALLS TO THE LEFT,
JUMP TO THE RIGHT



Shade Covered Bridge

by Bill Pierson

June 1, 1980---In January of 1980, Betty and I stopped at the Fairfield County Courthouse in Lancaster, Ohio to inquire about a covered bridge that the paper said was going to be flooded with a new lake. It said it was north of Rushville on County Road 403, over Rush Creek. It was the 66 feet long, R. F. Baker Bridge, that was built in 1890.

Leon E. Wolford, county engineer, said a group of people had already asked for the bridge and were going to try to move it to the Fairfield Union High school grounds. He said, 'You are in luck because I have another bridge I can give you.' We said, 'That is great because 66 feet seems like an awful long bridge anyhow.'

He said, 'The one I will give you is called the Shade Bridge, built in 1883, over Walnut Creek at Waterloo. It is 122 feet

long, full of termites and the kids have tried to burn it down many times. The bridge is closed now because the southeast corner is sagging. We are not going to replace the bridge because we don't have the money.'

We have gone to the bridge many times in the last five months trying to figure out how to take it down. When they built these bridges, they used horses and mules. I don't have a mule, but I do have Betty so I guess it works out about even.

May 30, 1980---Stopped at the bridge to see if we could get the nuts loose. The bridge is held together with hundreds of large bolts, some as long as fifteen feet. We hit them with a hammer and turned them with a large pipe wrench. I think they are going to come off O.K.

We went to the farm house at the north end of the bridge to see how the people

felt about someone taking down the bridge. The Ed Haughn family said they had lived there seven years and liked the bridge, but if we were going to rebuild the bridge as a free museum it would be alright. Ed said two weeks ago the bridge was on fire and he put it out. Ed asked if we had enough help, I don't know if he will help or not. Tomorrow we are going to the Courthouse in Lancaster to talk to Leon Wolford to see if the county will help us if we really get in a mess.

I think we can get the bridge apart down to the lower cords. The cords are the large timbers across the top and bottom that run clear across the creek. They are 122 feet long. First we will take off the remaining siding; not much left because most has been stolen. Then we will take the boards from each

end of the bridge, they are all there. Next we will take off the metal roof and the lath and rafters. Next we will take up the top layer of a double floor. Removing all this weight will make the bridge much weaker instead of stronger because covered bridges were built as a series of triangles using king-posts and queen-posts. The more weight you put on a triangle the stronger it becomes. We really don't know at what point the bridge will collapse or even if it will. If it goes to the right, better jump left, but first we have to remove a lawn mower and some other junk from beneath the bridge, hate to land on a lawn mower. The roof of the bridge is forty feet above the water; the floor is twenty. The water under the bridge is three feet deep with a sand and gravel bottom.

We are going to haul this lumber with a school bus with the seats removed, a pick up truck and a large trailer. We don't know yet where we will get a trailer or if the bus will run or if it will stop because it doesn't seem to have any brakes as I write this. The emergency brake is laying on the floor so I don't think it will be of much help.

Monday, June 2---First day of vacation

It is pouring down rain and we are watching Kyle as Connie is working two days. Went to Lancaster to talk to Leon Wolford about the bridge and find out if we could still have it. He said we could have it as long as we would rebuild it to resemble a covered bridge. He said when we really got in a mess he would send a crane to help us.

Had a flat tire on the way to Sugar Grove

to fill in the holes Steve dug to plant the orchard;afraid Bob Piper will run into one of them coming to plow the corn field and plant hay. Stopped at the bridge to wire brush and soak the bolts with oil. Water is eight feet deep and complete trees are floating down. Lawn mower is gone.

Kyle has a black eye from jumping on the bed,he just cut his hand on a piece of glass laying on the bridge floor and hit his nose with the hammer;he is going to be a real help. Tomorrow I must try to get the bus running. Installed a new water pump,hope it doesn't leak, don't have a battery for the bus,think I will use the one in the Jeep. Kyle just called the dog 'Oro' about ten times. Hit his head on the T.V. and is now taking everything out from under the sink.

June 3-----Worked on the bus all day, cleaned the plugs,installed new water

pump and fan belt, repaired emergency brake, washed it, aired the tires, lubricated it, added new oil, cleaned the engine, installed the jeep battery, poured in some gas, put a little in the carburetor and it started right up. Runs so quiet you can hardly hear it. Tomorrow we start taking down the bridge.

June 4, 1980---Sun shining, birds are singing--48 years old today!

Worked on the bridge all day, Rick and I removed the siding, Betty and Connie pulled nails. Loaded the truck but will have to take the siding down to Sugar Grove tomorrow and put it in the corn crib-I think we can get the siding, lath and the rafters in it. Pete is going to let us use his trailer and I bought the license for it today. Rick built me a picnic table for my birthday and we had dinner on it at the bridge.

The sheriff came to the bridge today and said 'What are you doing?' Here we are with tools laying all over the place, boards laying everywhere and Rick says, 'We are building picnic tables'. The sheriff turns around and walks back to his car, telling us we really make good picnic tables.

I tell him we are really taking down the bridge and will rebuild it as a free museum. He says he would like to help us on his days off. His name is Jim Schoor and I wonder if he will help us. Ed Haughn came down in the company truck, he works at the concrete plant just up the road. He said they had big equipment maybe we could use. It's midnight now and we have to get up early in the morning.

June 5, 1980--- Took the lumber to Sugar Grove and put it in the corn crib; there

is a lot more than we thought. We left the picnic table there and loaded up the ladders. Bob Piper is working in the corn field. Looks really good. Betty and I stopped at Bob Evans for breakfast and the manager said to me, 'Don't I know you from someplace, aren't you the millionaire that hangs around the park?' I said I was and I also owned Hide-A-Way Hills and would he like to buy a lot? He said, 'Thanks, but I already own thirty acres south of Lancaster.'

On the way back to the bridge to meet Rick, we picked up a hitchhiker. His name was Norm, he had just got out of the marine corps and was on his way to Columbus to pick up his seven thousand dollar motorcycle. We took him to see the bridge, unloaded the ladders and Norm and Rick climbed up on the roof. I went up and took pictures. Rick had also caught a large carp while he

was waiting for us. Norm said he would stop back and help us. Betty took him back up to the highway to hitch on to Columbus. He didn't come back today like he said he would but I bet he'll come back in a couple days. Worked hard on the bridge today taking off the rest of the siding. Betty pulled nails all day.

We looked down the road today and saw a man walking toward the bridge with a determined walk that said, 'I am going to find out what is going on and maybe stop it.' It turns out that Rick knows him from building houses. He is a plumber and lives in the house just south of the bridge. He is going to find out about a large barn in Grove City that the farmer wants taken down. Oro runs away three times today to go up the road to see a dog friend. Rick falls in the creek today getting a

board I dropped. Loaded up the truck and went back to Sugar Grove; corn crib is getting full of siding. Cut some weeds, and got eaten up with mosquitos. We left the ladders at the bridge hidden in the weeds, wonder if they will still be there tomorrow morning? Everything has gone fine so far.

June 6, 1980--- Stopped at Pete's to get the trailer and go to the bridge. The ladders were still in the weeds. We removed the rest of the siding and all the 3X5 stringers that the siding was nailed to. Removed the 2X12 ban boards-those are the boards that run longways through the bridge that your car bumper would hit if you ran into the side of the bridge, two hundred and fifty feet of these. Removed all the curbboards-these are 5X5 timbers on the floor along each edge. There are two hundred and fifty feet of these too. We cleaned the nails from

all of this and loaded it all on the truck and trailer. Betty and I took it to Sugar Grove and put it in the shed across from the barn. Rick's truck runs so good.

We had a lot of company at the bridge today. First came Peggy Woods, about sixty years old and a member of the Canal Winchester Historical Society. She said she had just helped save a school house that was being torn down. They had moved it into town and made a museum of it. She looks like trouble with a capital T. About one half hour later, I look up the road and here comes the sheriff. I think it is Jim Schorr coming back but it isn't. I walk up to shake hands but he don't want to because I might be some kind of bad guy that steals bridges. Said he just got a call from the county garage that some guys were tearing down the bridge. All the

time he is talking on the radio to a lady dispatcher in the sheriff's office who wants him to ask us if we have any papers. We show him the papers giving us permission. As he leaves we tell him to come back anytime. His name is Mr. Killbarger. Then came Richard, the slow learner, Chickie Haughn, John and Shawn, Bill and Elaine Haynes and three month old Heather. Jim Winy, Bill Loucks, five boys with inner tubes to float down the creek. Next came a man that was angry and said he wanted to keep it for a bicycle trail. Next was a fat man in shorts with a lot of tatoos and necklaces. Betty came up to see if he also had an earring, but he didn't. We thought he was walking but closer inspection showed that he was riding a mo-ped. ←

Then came Mr. and Mrs. Swayer. They have lived by the bridge all their married life-48 years. She said they used to

spoon in the bridge. She said she didn't know if she was happy or sad about the bridge. I asked her to write down how she felt, but she would not, nor would they sign their names. She asked if the newspaper had been out yet. Tomorrow is Saturday and I bet there will be a hundred people down there. We sure don't need the newspaper too. We should stay away tomorrow but we are one day behind schedule already.

June 7, 1980---Didn't get much done today. Removed about one tenth of the metal roofing and all of the cap. Started to pour down rain with lightening-roof is O.K. to walk on when it is dry, but slippery when wet. We removed enough of the top layer of flooring to get a trailer load. Betty and I took it to Sugar Grove late in the afternoon. All the people did not show up. Jim Walter, president of the Fairfield Covered Bridge

Society came in the afternoon and said he had a lot of phone calls about could we really remove the bridge. He called Charles Deeds, one of the county commissioners and he said he had never heard of us. He then called Leon Wolford, who said we had his permission to remove the bridge. Leon gave us the bridge in January and never asked any of the commissioners about it or even told them. Leon doesn't need a committee to help him make a decision---lucky for us.

Jim Walter and the society are trying to move a seventy foot bridge and restore it as a forty foot bridge for a walking and bicycle trail. They could not raise enough money to receive a federal grant that they needed to hire it moved and he doesn't have enough help to move it by himself. They have already spent twelve thousand dollars. He showed us hundreds of pictures of bridges from all over the United States and Canada that he has taken.

He also has a slide presentation that he shows to interested groups.

Everyone is interested but no one wants to help. Jim said he though it would be easy to raise money but found out it was almost impossible. We don't have a big budget ourselves--I think we have about enough money to buy the nails to put this thing back together. Jim gave us lots of advice and said he would help us and loan us cable, a come-along and other tools. He thinks we should tie the bridge to a couple sycamore trees up the creek,also get bull dozers and build falsework underneath. Rick and Jim took up almost thirty floor planks and Betty and Richard Fannin cleaned them. Joe the plumber and the man on the mo-ped came back today.

Jim told us good-bye and walked out the wrong end of the bridge,going away from his car. He told us he always got turned around in bridges. He also had his four

year old son, Jason with him who climbed high up on the great arch and that ain't easy to do when you have your tennis shoes on the wrong feet.

June 8, 1980----Cool and windy

We went to church, then out for dinner. Went to the bridge at 2p.m. We had a lot of help and got a lot done. Rick and Richard Skinner pryed up the first layer of planks on the floor. Betty and I cleaned them; that is pulled all the nails out. Mom swept the floor. Harold and Melanie came down and really helped, Carrie and Marlo played. Jim Walter and his wife came down, Ed and Chickie Haughn and their two sons came down. Lots of other people came down and took pictures. I placed the long ladder at the end of the bridge so they could climb up and take pictures over the length of the roof--some did and some were afraid. Connie, Kyle and Betty's mother came down. We took up about half of the floor. It was too windy to go up

on the roof--we will do that tomorrow. Rick and Richard took a truck and trailer load of planks to Sugar Grove, came back and we loaded the trailer again and parked them at Ed's because it was dark and the trailer has no lights.

June 9, 1980---Cold and windy

Too windy to go up on the roof. Rick and Richard Fannin took up most of the top floor, Betty and I pulled nails, took a trailer load of planks to Sugar Grove and came back and loaded it again and parked it at Ed's. We haul twenty planks on the truck and thirty five on the trailer. The top layer of the double floor runs longways and the bottom layer runs crossways. They are all fifteen feet long. There are 6X6 inch stringers under this floor. These are held up by cross-members that are held up by fifteen feet long bolts that go clear up to the top cords. Tomorrow I hope we can take off the metal roof and some of the lath and rafters. At one time

this bridge had a slate or shingle roof.

June 10, 1980---Cold and no wind

First thing this morning Betty and I took the load of planks to Sugar Grove and put them in the shed. Rick and I worked on the metal roof all day and got half of it removed. Loaded it on the truck and trailer and brought it home with us. We should get the rest of it off tomorrow and start on the lath and rafters.

Rick went in the creek in his underwear because I dropped a hammer his dad had given him. We had so many lookers today I can't remember half of them. Bill Walker came down with Connie and Kyle. Fairfield County Water and Soil conservation agent came down. He is the same man that showed Steve and Lynne where to build the farm pond. Four girls from Georgia stopped because three of them had never seen a covered bridge. A man looking for arrowheads in the corn field stopped and showed us what he found. I had

some of ours in the truck.

Three men with pistols and high powered rifles were shooting tin cans floating in the creek. We were listening to country music real loud on the truck radio and Rick said he was going to tell them if they didn't like it, we would be glad to change stations. Two farmers and two township employees came down, one with a dumptruck and one with a mower. They said the township didn't know anything about us taking down the bridge; they said they would write a report and give it to the township trustees. The lady from the Canal Winchester newspaper, Cheryl, came down and said she would be back when it was warmer and bring her camera.

Stopped at Pete Peyton's, Neil Dye was there and said he would fly his experimental, open cockpit airplane over the bridge Saturday.

If he really does we will get a picture of the bridge and the plane at the same time. He said he had a large tandem trailer and maybe a John Deere tractor with a front end loader on it that

we can use,he didn't say for sure about the tractor.

June 11,1980---Cold and no wind

This was really a great day. We got a lot done,met a lot of people and didn't fall off the roof. The top of the roof is forty feet above the water. There are 112 sheets of metal,2 feet wide by 12 feet long. Guy removed the rest of the top floor today; there were 230 ten inch planks. We loaded up the trailer and the truck and will take it down and unload it in the morning:Kyle will go with us. I wonder if you are allowed to have three people and a dog in the front seat of a pick up. Betty soaked her feet in the creek and killed two catfish. The newspaper lady came today with her camera and note paper. She is young and pretty,she is from Texas and this is her first job. She was asking serious questions and we were giving funny answers because we don't know the answers to serious questions. She asked

how we were going to move it to Sugar Grove, we said we were going to rent a helicopter but were afraid they might drop it on Lancaster. We then told her we were going to move it with a Johnson Bar and an old school bus. She asked how did we get the seats out of the bus? We told her we put a bunch of ^{first} graders in it and told them not to touch anything. She asked us about the stress factor and we said, We aren't under any stress, we have already taken down two barns and a house. She says she doesn't know if she can believe a word we say. She said the townspeople are angry but she thinks we are doing the right thing. She took a lot of pictures and is coming back in a couple days. It will be in the paper this Wednesday.

A family of white-faced gray mice are living in the very top of the bridge.

The oldest carved date in the bridge is 1886.

This bridge was built in 1883. Tomorrow we hope to remove the rest of the metal roof, all the lath and the rafters. That will be all

nail pulling; everything else is wooden pins and bolts.

June 12, 1980--New record low temperature 43°

We had a lot of help today--Rick, Howard Hazlett, Maynard and Ruth Streets, Mom, Betty, Kyle and Richard. We also had a lot of visitors. One man was R.B. Bolenbaugh, about eighty years young, who used to live close to the bridge, but now lives in Van Couver, British Columbia, that is thirty three hundred miles from the bridge. He said his grandfather had a horse named Buster that he used in his hardware business in Canal Winchester. He would ride Buster through the bridge just to hear the sound of his hoofs on the wooden floor. His grandfather would not let him ride Buster on Sundays because he said Buster needed a day off too.

A man that we were joking with last night came back today. He said he just had breakfast at the local restaurant with all the important business leaders of the town and all they talked about was us. He told them we attracted carp by Betty soaking her feet

in the water. He said his grandfather used to live on the farm where Ed Haughn lives now. He said his grandfather was always mad because the farmers field across the road always got more sunshine, more rain, more snow and had bigger crops. Mom asked: How can that be? He said; The other farmers field was bigger.

Jim Milay wame early this morning and stayed about an hour, he is not feeling very well.

Richard was sitting on a rock in the sun talking to himself when a board fell off the roof and struck him in the chest. I thought he was a goner, but we kept telling him he was O.K. and he finally got up. I guess he really was O.K. because he ate three ham sandwiches, a pack of potato chips, and a quart of Coca-Cola.

We removed all the roof and part of the lath, tomorrow we will remove the rest of the lath and take down the rafters, clean them and take them to Sugar Grove. All we have left is the bare bones of a covered bridge. We

must partly knock out the wooden pins tomorrow because if they get wet, they are almost impossible to get out. As I was leaving tonight, I passed two boys in a car going to the bridge--I hope they don't set it on fire or throw our boards in the creek.

June 13, 1980---Everything was O.K., no one bothered anything last night. Today we removed the lath and all the rafters, got done about 8:30 p.m., now it is almost 12:00. Tomorrow we will pull all the nails and haul everything to the farm. There will be at least three loads. Tomorrow we will brush and soak all the nuts with oil. Rick, Howard, Guy and I worked all day. Betty and Kyle brought us milkshakes a couple times. Rick, Howard and the two dogs went swimming two times. They fished in the morning but didn't catch anything.

Noel Brenner, sixty nine years old, who owns the farm on the south side of the bridge, came to see us today. He is the fourth generation to farm this farm. He said last week he

bought a \$22,000 John Deere tractor with a high lift but it wouldn't raise high enough to take down the top cords. There were so many people at the bridge today I am not going to try and name them. Tomorrow Neil Dye is going to fly his airplane over the bridge and we are going to take pictures.

Saturday, June 14---Flag Day

Great day. Rick and Howard hauled two loads to Sugar Grove, came back and loaded up another one that Betty and I will take down tomorrow afternoon. Mary came to the farm wondering where we had been for two weeks. We are back on schedule, Monday we start taking down the really big timbers. We are going to use a larger trailer. Neil Dye flew his plane down like he said he would, he had a hard time finding the bridge because the trees hid the bridge and the road. He came in real low and we took his picture and he took ours. A couple hours later, Neil and Gladys came down in their

car. A man walked down and said his wife wanted a couple of the big sandstone foundation blocks. I said she could have them. He asked how I was going to get them out, I said I didn't know-that I was going to watch him and do mine the same way.

We had a lot of visitors today, people come from everywhere to see these bridges. The state of Ohio puts out a pamphlet that has directions to all the bridges in Ohio. We gave them each one of the original cut nails made by blacksmiths in the 1880's. We let them climb up on the bridge and take pictures.

Louis Meeker, the painter, and his wife, Ann, came down and said he was coming back tomorrow. The newspaper called Mrs. Haughn today to find out how she felt about us taking down the bridge. Nobody that lives near the bridge wants a new one built, that really surprises Betty and I.

Tomorrow afternoon we will make our drawing and mark the timbers, and try to find a large

all day. Stopped at Taylor Implement Co. to see if Gale would let us borrow some rope and telephone poles, he would not. Stopped at Mrs. Harris to see if there was anything we could do for her. Mr. Harris who owns the farm next to ours, died Thursday. She said she would call us about buying the Land Rover. A young man named Tim Grandy that lives two miles from the bridge came by, he said he had a lot of rope at home and he would go and get it for us. He has an excavating business. He was driving a like-new 55 Ford pick up truck. He also makes and sells muzzle loading rifles, knives, tom-o-hawks and leather Indian clothes. He brought us back the rope that we use to tie the bridge to the sycamore trees to keep it from tipping over.

We are having a hard time getting the bolts out of the arches, the nuts come off O.K. but then you can't drive the bolts out. The bridge is twisted and it makes the bolts tight. Tomorrow we are going to try to pull

them out with a automobile jack. We can't wait to go down there in the morning and see if it will work. We are going to take the grill and cook out on the bridge tomorrow if it doesn't fall down before dinner. Betty just said her, the dog and the grill are going to stay on the road. Howard helped us all day and his sister and her two boys came down and they fished while Betty talked with their mother.

Kermit, who walks six miles a day for his heart, visits us every day and said he will miss us when we are through. He thinks the bridge will fall and is always disappointed that it hasn't. He said he reported in 1938 that the bridge was unsafe and going to fall. At that time, he was a lawyer, real estate man, auctioneer, square dance caller and school bus driver. He told us today that he has a doctors appointment for tomorrow but thinks he will cancel it because if the bridge falls he doesn't want to miss it.

Midnight again--time for bed.

Tuesday, June 17--- Worked on the east side arch all day, got about half of it down and loaded on the truck. It is a double arch so we will have four arches to take down. We force the bolts out with a jack and lower the pieces with a couple of ropes. We now have the bridge tied to a couple sycamore trees. Leon Wolford came out today with a bridge engineer and took pictures. Ed Haughn came down with tomorrows paper, we will stop at the drugstore in the morning and buy a copy. The story of the bridge is on the front and back pages, with pictures and everything. Tomorrow we hope to get two of the arches completely down and start on the other two. We had a lot of visitors today, I wonder what it will be like after the paper comes out tomorrow. I wish the creek would clear up so I could find my hammer.

Wednesday, June 18--Today we worked on the same arch all day and didn't get it completely

down. Tomorrow we will start on the other two. We loaded up the trailer and took it to Sugar Grove and unhooked it. Tomorrow morning we will get the bigger tandem trailer. A real bridge man came today, 77 year old Don George. He said we could use his cable and jacks. He also said the bridge would fall before we got it apart if we didn't hold it up with false work underneath. He keeps talking about steam engines and large equipment, he says we should cut trees and prop up the bridge. Kermit, who has always said the bridge was going to fall now says he doesn't think it is going to. Richard didn't show up today. The story in the paper is really good.

Today there was a large black snake on the end of the bridge. We also have ground hogs behind the sandstones under the bridge. There are butterflies that land on your shoulder, hummingbirds that come to the wild grapes and deer in the cornfield. Chipmunks and ground squirrels everywhere and a big carp

under the bridge. The little kids catch minnows and crawdads and find clam shells for jewelry boxes.

It's midnight again. Still cool, another record low last night.

Thursday, June 19--- Another great day and the nice people keep coming to the bridge, just too many to write about. Karl Bitler, an elderly gentleman that works part time at Bolenbaugh's hardware came down and asked for a piece of the bridge to make a lamp- we gave him a 4X4 brace that goes from the side post up to the top cord. We can make another one to replace it.

A reporter from the Pickerington newspaper came today and said he was going to have T.V. Rapidcam come out tomorrow. I don't think they really will come but I'm going to wear a clean shirt just in case. We will have Oro do all his swimming tricks.

Jim Walter, president of the Fairfield County Covered Bridge Association never came back.

Richard came back today, said he had been to his grandmothers in Chillicothe. He had on clean clothes today, first time in three weeks. We don't get downwind from Richard. It started to rain hard at 7:30p.m. so we quit early today. We now have two trailers loaded that we will have to unload tomorrow. Betty will cut the grass at the farm while Howard and I unload the trailers. Guy and Rick will stay at the bridge and work on the remaining arch.

Friday, June 20--Almost have the arches down, Rick and Guy worked on them all day. Howard and I unloaded the trailer. We put the arches in the milking parlor of the barn, the braces in the manger and the blocks of wood that separates them in the passage way between the horse stalls and the cows. The bolts and nuts are with the blocks and shims. I'm writing this down so we will know where everything is. I just talked to Sharon of Channel 10 on the phone. They want to come out tomorrow or next Saturday. She said

they were coming tomorrow for sure but her boss just called and said for her to come to work at 7:30a.m. to stake out a meeting of some kind. She was telling me that a man in Cambridge, Ohio that has a 1922 Ford that he drives backwards. I told her she would have to climb to the top of the bridge. She is all for it. I hope she comes, we will tell her all the funny things we tell everybody else. She wants us to bring the scrap book to show all the people at home how it looked before and after.

Paul Ford, the photographer for the Pickerington newspaper took a great picture of Oro laying by the charcoal grill looking at two hotdogs. Oro never takes a bad picture. He cut his foot today jumping in the creek. Kermit had dinner with us today. He told us the story of the iron eagles at his farm. He wanted an iron eagle to place at the end of his driveway but could not find exactly what he wanted. He wanted a large eagle with a four foot wing span. He heard

of a man in Medina, Ohio that had a mold for such an eagle. He bought the mold for \$10,000 and now sells the eagles for \$300 each. He sold one man fifteen eagles and has made over \$20,000 so far. We can have an eagle for \$300 but we don't have the money. We do have a lot of buzzards that fly over the farm every time Betty takes her shoes off. Maybe we can train one of them to sit on the end of the bridge every time a bus load of kids come, they will see a yellow bus coming down Route 33 and say, O.K. you guys, let's fly over the bridge and throw up all over the school kids.

The sheriff came back today and said he will put up Keep Out signs. No one will steal anything because you can't get anything apart.

Saturday, June 21--Nice cool day

Somebody stole our rope last night, I mean the one Tim Grandy loaned us. I called him and he said don't worry about it. We were there until dark and the rope was tied to the bridge in two places and tied around two sycamore

trees. I bet it took half the night to get it loose. Ed Haughn slept on the couch and walked down to the bridge in the middle of the night to see what was going on and a car took off. He is sure it will be burned.

We got the arches completely down and also the long beams that the rafters rest on. Tomorrow we are going to have a picnic after church at the bridge. Some of us will go to the farm and unload two trailers and some will stay at the bridge and wire brush and put oil on the bolts. I just called Neil Dye and told him we are going to bring his trailer back tomorrow and show him the good airplane pictures we took of him through the bridge. He told us just to keep the trailer. Oro laid under the trailer all day with a sore foot. Toby runs across the bridge and almost shakes it down.

Channel 10 came today at 12 noon. Sharon

Cornagay was the reporter. It is supposed to be on at 11p.m. tonight or 6p.m. Sunday. She was really nice and we had a lot of fun with

her. She wouldn't climb to the top of the bridge but the cameraman did.

— Sunday, June 22---Had a picnic at the bridge, went to Sugar Grove and unloaded both trailers. We left Pete's trailer in the barn and took Neil's trailer to Ed's. We were on television at 6p.m. and 11p.m. Rick caught a water snake and it bit Oro on the nose.

Saturday, June 28---Steve Berry of the Columbus Dispatch came to the bridge at 10:00 a.m. and stayed until 1p.m. He said he wished he had brought his wife and son Jonathan. He took lots of pictures and said the story would be in the paper a week from Sunday. Channel 10 is still trying to get Mary but she is always outside.

We are now taking down the the top cords and the cross beams, we can lower them with a rope on each end. We dropped one in the creek and had a heck of a time getting it out, we must be careful not to drop anymore. A group of bicycle riders came through and one of them was from New Zealand. Steve took their picture and also some of Kyle and Toby. Ed Jeffers said he had a house and barn to take down in Carroll, Ohio. We loaded everything on the trailer and will take it down tomorrow.

Sunday, June 29--- Had a picnic at the bridge after church, we didn't get anything done because it looked like rain. We came home at 4p.m. and it never rained. Rick and Howard unloaded the trailer.

Monday, June 30--- called Leon Wolford and asked him to put some more posts at the end of the bridge because someone is going to drive on the bridge and it is going to fall. I just returned Garry Williams hammer and Mack's dads splitting wedges. Just called Pete and told him his trailer was out of the weather, in the barn—he said they saw us on T.V. and to keep the trailer as long as we need it. Jim Milay called at 11:30 last night and wants to borrow the trailer to take his tractor to the farm. He can't figure out why I don't know what size ball fits the trailer hitch; he doesn't know I borrowed both the trailers. Mrs. Harris wants us to take the Land Rover and pull the Cadillac up to the house.

Rick just told me him and Howard stopped at the bridge last night and it definitely is sagging.

Friday, July 4, 1980--- Worked on the bridge all day—things are really going slow. Ed Jeffers and Marilyn came to watch the fireworks at the park with us.

Saturday, July 5-- Had a big storm this morning, we had to wait in the car at Ed Haughn's waiting to get the truck and go to Sugar Grove. Trees blown over

and Lancaster airport damaged. Rick is trading beer cans and will come to the bridge later. Road to the farm is blocked and Arlen Drisker is cutting up trees. We help him clear the road. Everything is O.K. at the bridge and we work all day but can only remove six timbers. Everything is in a bind but the bridge is not falling. Last night we removed four boards on each end of the bridge so a car cannot get across. Paul Romine of the Southern Ohio Covered Bridge Association came today and wants a story and pictures for their paper. He is an artist and painter from Amanda, Ohio. He owns a company called Country Art and does illustrations, books, ads, and advertising, water color, acrylic, oil painting.

Sunday, July 6----Went to the bridge after dinner and worked until dark. Only could get down one cord timber and one upright. Everything is in such a bind.

Steve Berry's story and pictures were in the Sunday Dispatch.

Saturday, July 12----Rick, Howard and I took down all of the overhead X timbers. The bridge never

moved. I think they are for stability in high wind blowing against the roof and side walls, we don't have either so the X's are just extra weight on the lower cords. We have a big load for the trailer and tomorrow we will take it to Sugar Grove.

Sunday, July 13---- Had a picnic at the farm today. Betty, Connie, Kyle, Rick, Howard, Steve, Lynne, Mom Carol, Krista, Belinda, Steve, Guy, Mary and Jim Milay. Steve cut the grass,; Rick caught a big black snake. The rescue unit was all along the creek looking for a body. Rick, Steve and I unloaded the trailer and put the X's in the milking parlor. The timbers we had laying in front of the barn we put in the barn and straightened everything up.

There were lots of hummingbirds coming to the red flowers in the side yard. Mary mowed our field this week and the T.V. people are coming to Mary's this week to film her making hay. Sharon Corn agay will never be the same.

Bob Piper's hay is about six inches high.

Saturday, July 19----THE BRIDGE FELL TODAY, just like Don George said it would, it took about two

seconds, just like you would break a match. Howard was the only one on the bridge; he was taking a bolt out of the top cord. He fell right down through all the falling timber, he has bruised legs, arms and a cut eye. The emergency squad from Madison Township came and took him and I to Mt. Carmel East hospital. I called his mother to bring him dry clothes and he was released in about two hours after X-rays and sewing up his eye. Tomorrow he will be too sore to move.

At the moment it fell, no one else was on the bridge. Johnnie and Vernice, Byron and Gracie had just come and were standing at the end of the bridge talking to Betty and Rick. I had just walked to the other end of the bridge to talk to a man that was watching us work. I heard a loud noise and turned to see Howard falling through the air with timbers falling everywhere. I jumped in because I was sure he would be pinned down by a timber and I wanted to hold his head out of the water. Rick came out, took a look and ran back to tell Betty to go to Ed Haughn's and call the emergency squad. Canal Winchester's

emergency squad was not running because the brakes were locked up. They came out in two big fire trucks. Madison Township came about ten minutes later. They strapped him on a back board and six of them tried to carry him up the muddy bank, two of them on the end and Rick. They fell down and Rick was carrying it by himself.

Neil and Pete came over in the airplane real low about ten times, I think the wind from the propeller probably blew the bridge over.

We found everything except Rick's hammer and the photo album.

Sunday, July 20---Today we pulled the rest of the bridge down because we are afraid it might fall on someone. Don George and his son helped us and we used his cable and snatch blocks. We hooked his truck and Rick's together and still couldn't get it to lay down. The iron is bent and the timbers are shattered. Everything is twisted and still in a strain. Saturday, if the creek don't rise we will

start taking it all out of the creek. Jim Walters called last night to see if we were ready to quit and could he have the floor and the timbers underneath it? I told him we had the bridge just where we wanted it and were still on schedule. Howard came with his mom and dad and said he would be back next Sunday afternoon to help us. Saturday he is going to help a friend move.

Monday, July 21---- Called Leon Wolford but he was out of the office. I asked the clerk to tell Leon the bridge fell but we were still going to get it out. Stopped at Howard's on the way to work. Rick started his new job today, Steve starts a new job tomorrow. Betty has poison ivy on her butt. The dog has tar all over him from laying in the road. Sunday's temperature --97 degrees at 4:10p.m. Saturday, July 26----Betty and I stopped at Pete's and Ruby's this morning to return his stretch board and borrow a long log chain. We stopped at Don Georges to give him a basket of fruit for helping us last Sunday. His wife came to the door and said it was too bad about us losing the bridge. I said, What do you mean? She said, Last Monday night the

bridge washed away.

We went to the bridge and the middle sixty feet of it is about three hundred feet down the creek. Monday night the creek came up about six feet in a couple hours. Rick walked one half mile down the creek and was still finding timbers. We worked all afternoon unbolting cords and pulling them up on the road with the truck. We have a large pile by the side of the road. Tomorrow we will work on the south side of the creek, there is about twenty feet of floor and supports over there. We will pull it out and load it on the trailer. We will pull up the washer and dryer and clean up the area.

If the middle of the bridge stays where it is now, we will unbolt it and float it in one piece at a time up to the road and pull it out with the truck. Ed Jeffers told us the townspeople said we would never come back to clean up the mess. The work we did today made it look a lot better and tomorrow will really make a difference.

We are taking care of Kyle tonight while Rick and Connie go to a Sunday school class cook-out. We took him to the park to play on the little horses

and sliding board. It was his first time and he really liked it because ^{of} ~~he~~ all the other kids.

Nancy called Guy from Israel this morning. We stopped at Ed's tonight and gave them a framed picture of their boys that we took at the bridge.

Sunday, July 27---- Rick and Howard took the bridge apart that is on the south side of the creek and Ed and I pulled each timber up with a rope. We loaded it all on the trailer and cleaned up the area. We had an earthquake that shook the sandstone. Jim and Rosa Keer came today with their children, also Richard and Jeremy.

Saturday, August 2 ----Worked on the middle section of the bridge all day and pulled everything up to the field with the truck. It's 10 p.m. and we are having a storm. If the creek don't rise too much we are going way down where there id fifteen timbers that are just floating free. Rick had to save Toby today because she couldn't swim, she just quit paddling and sank to the bottom.

Sunday, August 3 ----Couldn't work today because the water is too high. It is over eight feet deep where part of the bridge is.

Saturday, August 9 --- Worked on the bridge about three hours and a big storm came up And we had to quit.

Sunday, August 10---Went to the bridge after church and the water is so deep and fast that is unsafe to work. The high water has taken the bridge someplace and we will have to get a canoe to find it. The part of the bridge on the north shore is still holding fast.

The Air Force may not take Howard because of his hurt leg. We bought a British Land Rover with a winch on the front. We have a pile of timbers along the side of the road and also in the field. We will start hauling them when we get all the wood out of the water.

Saturday, August 16 --- A nice cool day and we got a lot done. Rick and I worked on the north shore taking off floor boards and joists. Betty pulled nails; we carried everything up and piled it by the side of the road, we have one more days work pulling up all the large pieces.

Then we will try to find the rest of the bridge, the water is still too high to get in. Kyle's toe nail finally came off from where he dropped the hammer on it the first week we started. Rick and Guy pulled the Land Rover home last night. I sold the jeep yesterday and had to back out because Guy would not sell it for a thousand dollars. I thought one time he said he would. Howard went to the Air Force.

Sunday, August 17 ---Rained all day.

Saturday, August 23 and Sunday, August 24----

Two fine days. We completely cleaned up all the bridge and pulled everything up onto the road.

Next weekend is three days, we will try to find the rest of the bridge and take it apart and pull it up into some farmers field. If we don't find any more, we'll start hauling what we already have; looks like about fifteen trailer loads. Rick's friend, Doug and Richard Skinner helped us today. Mosquitos ate us alive and even the groundhogs came up and wanted us to spray them with Off. Ed Haughn, Ed Jeffers, Marilyn and Mr. Hartzler that used to

teach at Whitehall came at 8:30 p.m. as we were leaving.

Rick told us the story about the West Virginian who came into Ohio to buy a mule. The farmer told him ^{AT} the present time he didn't have a mule for sale but would sell him a mule egg for twenty dollars. The farmer pointed to a pile of water-melons and the guy picked out a big one and started walking home. He floated it across the Ohio River and started up the big hill at Point Pleasant when he dropped it and it rolled down the hill, struck a big bush and exploded in a thousand pieces. A rabbit ran out of the bush with the West Virginian right behind him. He chased him about halfway to Portsmouth when he gave up and said, Heck, he would have been too fast to plow with anyhow.

Saturday, August 30 --- Rick brought his friend from work named Paul and Paul's friend, Will, to help us today. They were both nice guys and really good workers. We unbolted the stringer that has been laying in the creek on the south side, and pulled it all up with Betty driving the truck.

We pulled up the washer and dryer and all the other

junk. The bridge location is now completely clean. Some one stole the cable on both sides of the bridge. Betty fixed dinner and also went after milkshakes. Connie and Kyle came down and Kyle played with the tools and had a good time. I found a cow skull in the bottom of the creek with the horns and everything. Tomorrow we will go down the creek and try to find the rest of the bridge. I'll bet we won't find anymore of the bridge but Rick says he knows where it will be.

Sunday, August 31 ---The bridge is about a half mile down the creek caught in a big sycamore tree that has fallen across the creek. Some of the timber is six feet up in the branches and the water is eight feet deep under the tree. Rick stays in the tree tying the rope on the boards and Guy, Jeff and I pull them down and pile them on a sandbar. We can't leave them in the middle of the creek so we must try to get them up at the edge of the corn field. The corn field is twenty feet above the creek straight up a mud bank. We build a board ramp and Rick and Guy pull up the timbers and stack them, while Jeff and I float them up the creek and tie on the rope.

We got about one fourth done today and will work again tomorrow.(Labor Day). We will haul it out when the farmer picks his corn this fall.
Monday, September 1 ---Labor Day

Rick, Guy, Robbie, Jeff and I worked six hours on the bridge today. We pulled the timbers up into the edge of the corn field with a rope. We floated the stringers up the creek and pulled them out with the truck. Connie and Betty grilled hamburgers and hot dogs at 4:30. We still have at least two days work in the water.

The Air Force operated on Howard's leg and he is on crutches,they said Mt. Carmel didn't do a very good job. He called his mother yesterday and said he will be O.K.

While we were working down the creek about dark,we heard a lot of noise up where the bridge used to be. There were seven boys and five girls drinking beer and throwing the iron braces back in the water. We asked them nice not to do it and we stayed there until they left. We really wanted to bust their heads and throw them all in the creek.

Saturday, September 6 ----Today Rick, Jeff and I

unbolted the part of the bridge that is still in the water. We floated it all up to a sandbar that is about two feet higher than the water. It got too dark and late for us to take them to the pull-out place. If the water comes up two feet, we will lose it all.

Sunday, September 7 ---After church today we loaded the trailer and the bus, drove them to Sugar Grove and unloaded them. We had a birthday party at the farm for Betty today. Betty, Connie, Rick, Kyle, Steve, Lynne, Guy, Jeff, Jim Milay.

Rick and Steve both got stung by a big bumble bee as we were unloading the trailer.

Friday, September 12 --Betty and I loaded the bus and took it to Sugar Grove and unloaded it.

Saturday, September 13 --Betty and I loaded the bus and took it to Sugar Grove and unloaded it. We painted most of the house and put up the shutters. The bus runs great.

Sunday, September 14 --The creek is low and clean. Today after church we floated the big timbers from the sandbar up to the take out place and pulled them out with the bus. Jim Keer drove the bus and Andy

unless we take them apart.

Betty stepped in a groundhog hole and sprained her ankle. We are both so sore from yesterday that we can hardly move.

October 4 ---Betty and I found out today that we can load the big timbers on the trailer by ourselves using the Jeep and a rope. We make a ramp out of two boards leaning against the trailer. We place the Jeep on the other side of the trailer and run the rope across the trailer to the timbers and pull them up. We unloaded them down at the farm by sliding them down boards into a field that is much lower than the road.

I found a small motorcycle that someone had stolen and hidden in the field where we are stacking the timbers. It is a Pugh with 288 miles on it. We took it in to Sugar Grove and left it with the fire department; they said they would give it to the sheriff.

Ed Jeffers took us to meet the lady that gave us the barn. Her name is Phyllis and her dogs name is Jasper. The barn is a mile back in a corn field

and we will wait until the corn is picked before we go back to see it. Betty tore her pants and hurt her leg on a nail and her foot is black and blue because a timber rolled over it. It was cold and raining all day. We left the Jeep at Joe's house with a note telling him who it belongs to and that we will pick it up tomorrow.

October 5 --A fine day with lots of sunshine.

Betty and I loaded one load and took it to the farm. We had supper with Mary.

October 11 ---Betty and I loaded all the timbers on the south side of the creek, those in the field and also the bridge. The only things left on the south side are a couple pieces of iron about twenty feet long. The county put up new BRIDGE OUT signs at each end of the bridge.

Sunday, October 12 --Betty and I loaded a big load from the north side of the bridge. Today was cloudy and overcast with a temperature of 48 degrees.

While we were loading the trailer we heard this Honk-Honk-Honk and a big flock of geese flew over in an imperfect formation. They were trying to fly in a V formation but couldn't seem to get their

stuff together. Some wanted to go north and some south;with a little practice I'm sure they will get it right. When we were unloading the trailer, Jim, Rosa, Andy and Toni Kerr came down and we took them on a long walk and gathered leaves,nuts,grapes,bugs, and all kinds of things for her first grade class. We stopped at Mrs. Harris's and gave her four of Mr. Gross's books to read.

October 18 ---Beautiful day-sunshine and the leaves are all bright colors. Red Hartley, Mavis and Steve helped us today. Steve brought his chain saw and we cut all the bad ends off all the timber left at the bridge. We loaded Steve's truck and trailer with firewood. We didn't haul any down today because we had to meet a man that wanted to look at the land we have for sale. Red and I walked all over the farm while Betty stayed at the house with Mavis. Some of Nell's relations came down today and talked with Betty.

Betty and I are taking care of Kyle tonight while Rick and Connie and Scott and Beth go out.

Sunday, October 19 -----Great Day-Praise the Lord

Sunshine --55 degrees

Betty and I went to Fellowship Baptist Church with Pete and Ruby, Mrs. Hyatt, Gary and Diane Bauman. Gary is an attorney, Mrs. Hyatt is the wife of my friend Dick Hyatt that died a couple years ago. He owned Dick Hyatt Realty and along with Chet Sharp of ACT Realty and Dick Scanlon of Century 21 wrote a letter to the judge and jury when we had our second trial with Hide-A-Way Mills. The judge (Bill Boyland) would not allow us to introduce them into evidence because they had to be a written deposition taken in the prescence of a court reporter. Pete and Ruby are the ones we bought the '29 Chevy and '29 Marmon from. We also use Pete's trailer and tools, log chains and cables. Gary and Dianna live in the house at the end of Pete's lane. It was Fellowship Baptist's fifteenth birthday. There were twelve hundred in attendance. They gave the minister the paid up deed to his home. They had a guest speaker and the Cathedral Quartet that arrived in a custom coach that must have cost ⁵⁰~~45~~,000. They had a choir of 100 people, the choir sounded like a million

bucks but the congregation couldn't sing worth a nickel. We sat in the back underneath the balcony. I sat right behind a post, everytime the preacher came down hard on sinners I would slide behind the post. Trouble was, there was a lot more sinners than there were posts. I think there were about 1198 sinners and two that were not. I know the preacher said he had already overcome Demon Rum, fast women and slow horses.

After church we went to Pete's and had ham sandwiches pie and coffee. We waited for Rick to come with the trailer. Rick and I loaded the trailer-Betty, Connie and Kyle went on to Sugar Grove. I rode in the truck with Rick and his big dog, Toby. She weighs about 150 pounds and when she lays down she is longer than the truck seat. She rides with her head in Rick's lap, so that puts the other end in my lap. I'm going home in the car.

When we got to the farm, there were a few people there having a picnic. Johnnie and Vernice, Maynard, Ruth, Mom, Homer, Mary, Jim Milay, Guy, Ritchie, Sharon, Kathy, Bob, Steve, Lynne, Betty, Connie and Kyle.

Ritchie and Guy unloaded the trailer. We still have one load of steel beams to haul down this Saturday. There was a painting of our bridge in the Sunday Dispatch today. It was painted by a man named Tom Keller who is 83 years old. I am going to call him and find out if we can have it for the bridge museum. He forgot to paint in the great arches.

Wednesday, October 23 --I looked in the phone book for the telephone number of Tom Keller, it was not there. I called Sara Carroll, Dispatch Arts writer, she said she could not give me his number but she would call him and have him call us if he was interested.

Tom Keller called Betty this morning and said he wanted to meet us and go to the farm to paint. He wants to see our scrap book and Betty and Kyle are taking it to him tomorrow.

I called him tonight at 10p.m. and talked about one half hour. He is going to be a delightful experience for us. He worked at the Ohio State Journal and Dispatch in advertising art and editorial art.

Now he paints portraits and landscapes. He is also doing bas relief pieces and some detailed cabinet work, plus a little writing and working on a book of poetry.

Thursday, October 24 ---Betty and Kyle took the scrap book to Mr. Keller this morning. Betty said he is a tall dignified gentleman that you like right away. As you go in his house, the painting of the bridge is hanging in the living room where everyone will be sure to see it. She says there is no way he will ever part with it because it is such a good work and he is so proud of it. Kyle went to sleep on Betty's lap and didn't even get up to rearrange the house. Mr. Keller thinks he is a great little kid.

Friday, October 25 -- I went over to Mr. Keller's after work tonight to get the scrap book and see the picture. I did not ask to buy it but he said it would cost six months pay to get it if he ever wanted to sell it.

Saturday, October 26 --- Rick, Betty and I loaded and hauled down the steel beams from the bridge. Now there is nothing left at the bridge site. They

were much too long and heavy for the trailer. We could only go 10mph or the trailer would make the truck uncontrollable. We loaded them with log chains and the jeep. We unloaded them with pry bars. It started to snow as we turned onto Sullivan Road.

November 1, 1980----The farmer is picking his corn today and we can go into the field and get the boards we pulled up onto the bank last summer. We go in with the jeep first to see how soft the ground is. We load and haul two loads up to Ed Haughn's and unload them. The third load we leave on the trailer and will take it to the farm tomorrow.

Today is beautiful and Rick and Red take the boat down the creek to look for parts of the bridge. There is still one days work in the water. Mavis fishes all day but doesn't catch anything. Betty drove the jeep to pull the boards out of the creek and talked to Mavis while she fished.

Sunday, November 2----After church today we go to Ed Haughn's to get the trailer that we loaded yesterday. We go to the farm for dinner and music.

Red plays an electric base, Paul plays banjo and Will plays guitar. Kyle, Connie, Linda, Rick, Marilyn, Ed, Tracy, Jeff, Guy, Kevin, Mavis, Mary, Betty and I listen. The sun is so bright and the chipmunks running through the leaves sound like horses. Red takes me to get Mary and we take him up to the church on the hill to see the view. It is one of the places where you think you can see at least three states. On the way back to the farm we go the back way past the fire tower and down the big hill by the waterfall.

Wednesday, November 5-----Sunshine, bright day, temp. 50 degrees.

Betty and I walked along the creek looking for timbers between Ed Haughn's and the bridge on old Route 33. There is an eight foot section of floor and about five big timbers. There is a perfect queen-post about ten feet up in a tree. If we can't get it down we must take a picture of it. The field is plowed and too wet to get in so we will have to float it down and pull it up on the south bank. We will have to buy or borrow a pair of waders.

This afternoon we went to look at the barns that Phyllis gave us. There are four of them, we don't know if we can get them out because they are one mile back in a muddy field. The lane is impossible because trees have grown up in it. Phyllis gave us coffee and cake.

November 8----Rick, Jeff and I used Red's boat and floated the timbers down the creek to a pull out place.

November 9 ----Betty drove the jeep to pull the timbers up onto the bank, we have twenty timbers in the cornfield behind the new house back the lane and ten pieces on old Route 33 at the concrete bridge. Ed Jeffers came by and said he had just gotten stung taking care of his bees.

November 16--The weather is still good and the corn field is not muddy. Rick, Guy, Dick and I load all the timbers and Guy and Rick take them to Sugar Grove. Dick Janez and I go to Carroll to look at the barns and get some barn siding for Guy to make picture frames. Lynne and Steve have a boy on the 12th and name him Daniel Edward.

November 19---Betty and I went to Bellefontaine, Ohio to look at a bridge that was written up in the

paper. It is a replica of the Rock Mill bridge close to Carroll. This man also made a plaster cast of a big footprint that he found in a corn field on his farm. It was also written up in the paper but at the time we didn't know it was the same man.

November 22---Betty and I hauled the next to last load of wood today. It was covered with snow and frozen together.