



Black (Pugh's Mill) Covered Bridge

One of the few remaining covered bridges in southwestern Ohio and the only one in Butler County on its original site, this bridge was built in 1868-1869 to assist farmers in bringing their products into the Village of Oxford and to give access to a saw and grist mill owned by James B. Pugh on Four Mile (Tallawanda) Creek. The wooden frame three-story mill had a 16-foot overshot water wheel to power it. Pugh's Mill ceased operation after two decades. The name of the span gradually changed to Black Bridge, likely because there was a white covered bridge located a short distance downstream.

One of the longest and most impressive of Ohio's covered bridges, it is unique for its combination of two truss types—Childs and Long—within a single structure. Originally a cambered (arched) single span of 209 feet with a roadway width of 18 feet, it was modified in 1869 with the inclusion of a central pier under it for additional support. The trusses were then remodeled by replacing some of the wooden diagonals with iron rods to enable the builders to lower the bridge down onto the pier by backing off the nuts on the ends of the rods, thus eliminating the camber and forming two spans instead of one.

The Oxford Museum Association assumed stewardship of the Black Bridge in 1976 as part of the American Bicentennial celebration. Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975, it was restored and rededicated in 2000 and an Ohio Bicentennial Historical Marker was placed and dedicated in 2001.