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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JAN 04 1994

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 Bedens Brook Road Bridge

other names/site number County Bridge #C-01-05

#### 2. Location

street & number Bedens Brook Road, 0.1 mile east of Province Line Road  not for publication

city or town Montgomery Township  vicinity

state New Jersey code 034 county Somerset code 035 zip code 08504

#### 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 forth 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]  
Signature of certifying official/Title

12/20/93  
Date

Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO  
Title

State of Federal agency and bureau  
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

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

<u>for</u>	Signature of the Keeper	Entered in the	Date of Action
<u>[Signature]</u>		National Register	<u>2/18/94</u>

Bedens Brook Road Bridge  
Name of Property

Somerset County, NJ  
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 the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
<u>1</u>		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

Early Stone Arch Bridges of Somerset County, NJ

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

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

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

Transportation: road-related (vehicular)

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

Transportation: road-related (vehicular)

**7. Description**

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

Other: stone arch bridge

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Stone

roof N/A

other Stone

**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 N/A

(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 a birthplace or grave.
- 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.

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): N/A

- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Engineering

Period of Significance

c. 1872 to 1890

Significant Dates

c. 1872 to 1890

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Bedens Brook Road Bridge  
Name of Property

Somerset County, NJ  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre Rocky Hill, NJ Quad

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

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Zone Easting Northing

3 

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Zone Easting Northing

2 

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4 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Marvin A. Brown

organization Cultural Resource Consulting Group date 7/23/92

street & number 54 Woodbridge Avenue telephone (908) 985-4380

city or town Hgihland Park state NJ zip code 08904

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name County of Somerset

street & number County Administration Building telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Somerville state NJ zip code 08876

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7

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*Bedens Brook Road Bridge, Somerset County, New Jersey*

## DESCRIPTION

The Bedens Brook Road Bridge is a single-arched, random rubble structure, approximately 20 feet long and 20 feet wide, which crosses a narrow branch of Bedens Brook just east of Province Line Road in Montgomery Township. Its stonework, arch, parapets, and wing walls are intact and little altered, and the structure retains its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. It also retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. It has not been moved and continues in use - a single vehicle crossing it at a time - and its setting is still wooded and largely rural.

A heavy, cube-like structure, the main body of the bridge is about 20 feet long, 20 feet from outside wall to outside wall, and 11 feet high from the top of its 30-inch-tall parapet walls to the bed of the shallow brook. The large rectangular capstones that top its parapet walls are about 20 inches wide. The inside distance between the parapet walls, across the asphalt roadway, is about 16 1/2 feet. The bridge's single, slightly skewed arch is about 13 feet wide and six feet high. Its voussoirs are rectangular and about 16 inches tall. At the north-facing arch is a raised, rusticated keystone.

Four wing walls abut the arched section of the bridge. Like that section, they are primarily formed of long, rectangular, irregular, randomly laid blocks of local quartzite and argillite, as well as some brownstone. The northwest wing wall is about 17 feet long, the southwest wing wall about 18 feet long. At the other approach to the bridge, the southeast wing wall is about 17 1/2 feet long, the northeast wall about 7 1/2 feet long. Capstones top the wing walls. Modern metal guardrails lead up to them. Aside from some modern remortaring, the bridge is intact and little altered.

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*Bedens Brook Road Bridge, Somerset County, New Jersey*

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bedens Brook Road Bridge is significant for its engineering under National Register Criterion C, for it embodies a type, period, and method of construction. It is one of the few stone bridges surviving in Somerset County from the 18th and 19th centuries. Its permanent nature and relatively late construction date testify to the continued central role of roadways in the county's transportation network late in the century. Its arched form represents the form and method of construction of late 19th-century stone arch bridges in the county. It further suggests the continued use of the stone arch in the county at small water crossings well into the 19th century; many larger water crossings were spanned in the county, by the late 19th century, by metal truss bridges. Even though built late in the century, the bridge is significant as one of the few surviving 19th-century stone structures of any type in the county.

The bridge was likely constructed in the late 19th century, sometime after Bedens Road was laid out in 1872 (Somerset County Road Returns, Book C, p. 242). Its appearance is different than that of the other surviving stone arch road bridges in the county, three of which - the 1798 Kingston Bridge, the 1822 Opossum Road Bridge, and the 1825 Cat Tail Brook Bridge - can be dated to the late 18th or early 19th century. It is constructed of shallower rectangular blocks of stone, more regularly laid, than these earlier dated structures. Two mills stood on Bedens Brook near the site of the bridge in 1850, and farms are shown stretched to the north of the brook, near the present site of the road, on both the 1850 and 1873 maps (Otley and Keily 1850; Beers 1873); it is therefore possible that the bridge (or its abutments) was privately built at an earlier date. The expense of such an endeavor, and the appearance of the structure, make that highly unlikely, however.

The bridge is remarkably intact - retaining its stonework, arch, wing walls, and even parapet walls - for a structure that has been in continuous use. In all likelihood it was built by a local mason who may also have been its engineer. It is built of local stone, its adornment provided by its neatly laid voussoirs and a single rough keystone. It is a good example not only of local bridge building methods, but of stone construction in general in the county. It is one of the most imposing and intact of the few 18th- and 19th-century stone structures of any type that survive in the county.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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*Bedens Brook Road Bridge, Somerset County, New Jersey*

## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Beers, F. W.

- 1873 Atlas of Somerset County, New Jersey. New York: Beers, Comstock, and Cline. On File at Rutgers University, Alexander Library, Department of Special Collections and Archives.

Brecknell, Ursula

- 1972 Montgomery Township: An Historic Community, 1702-1972. Published by the Montgomery Township, New Jersey, Bicentennial Committee. Pamphlet in files of Cultural & Heritage Commission of the County of Somerset, Somerville, New Jersey.

Craig, Robert W.

- 1982 National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form - Kingston Mill Historic District [Princeton, South Brunswick, and Franklin Townships, Mercer, Middlesex, and Hunterdon Counties, New Jersey]. On file at the Office of New Jersey Heritage, Trenton.

Karschner, Terry

- 1974 National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form - Bridgepoint Historic District [Montgomery Township, Somerset County, New Jersey]. On file at the Office of New Jersey Heritage, Trenton.

Kudless, Carol Ann and Joseph C. Kudless

- 1977 Minutes of the Meetings of the Justices and Chosen Freeholders for the County of Somerset. Somerville, N.J.: Somerset County.

McCabe, Wayne T.

- 1976 National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form - Cat Tail Brook Bridge [Hillsborough Township, Somerset County, New Jersey]. Revised by Terry Karschner, Office of Historic Preservation. On file at the Office of New Jersey Heritage, Trenton.

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*Bedens Brook Road Bridge, Somerset County, New Jersey*

Otley, J. W. and J. Keily

1850 Map of Somerset County, New Jersey. Camden: Lloyd Vanderveer. On File at Rutgers University, Alexander Library, Department of Special Collections and Archives.

## Research & Archaeological Management

1989a Somerset County Cultural Resource Survey: Phase I Report. Prepared for the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission, Somerville, New Jersey. On file at the Office of New Jersey Heritage, Trenton.

1989b Somerset County Cultural Resource Survey: Phase II Report. Prepared for the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission, Somerville, New Jersey. On file at the Office of New Jersey Heritage, Trenton.

1989c Somerset County Cultural Resource Survey: Summary Report. Prepared for the Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission, Somerville, New Jersey. On file at the Office of New Jersey Heritage, Trenton.



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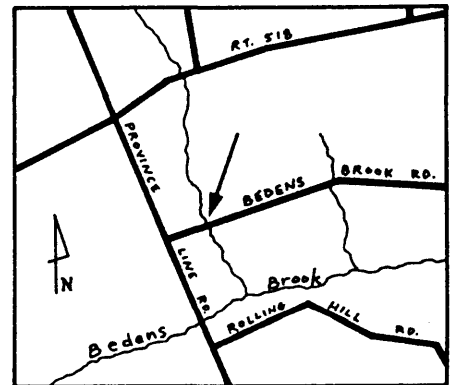
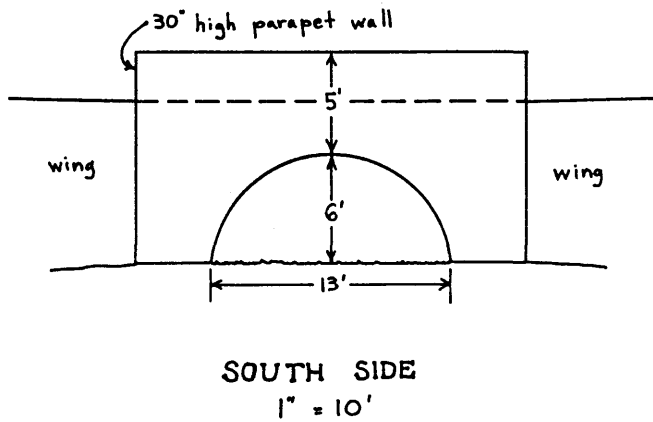
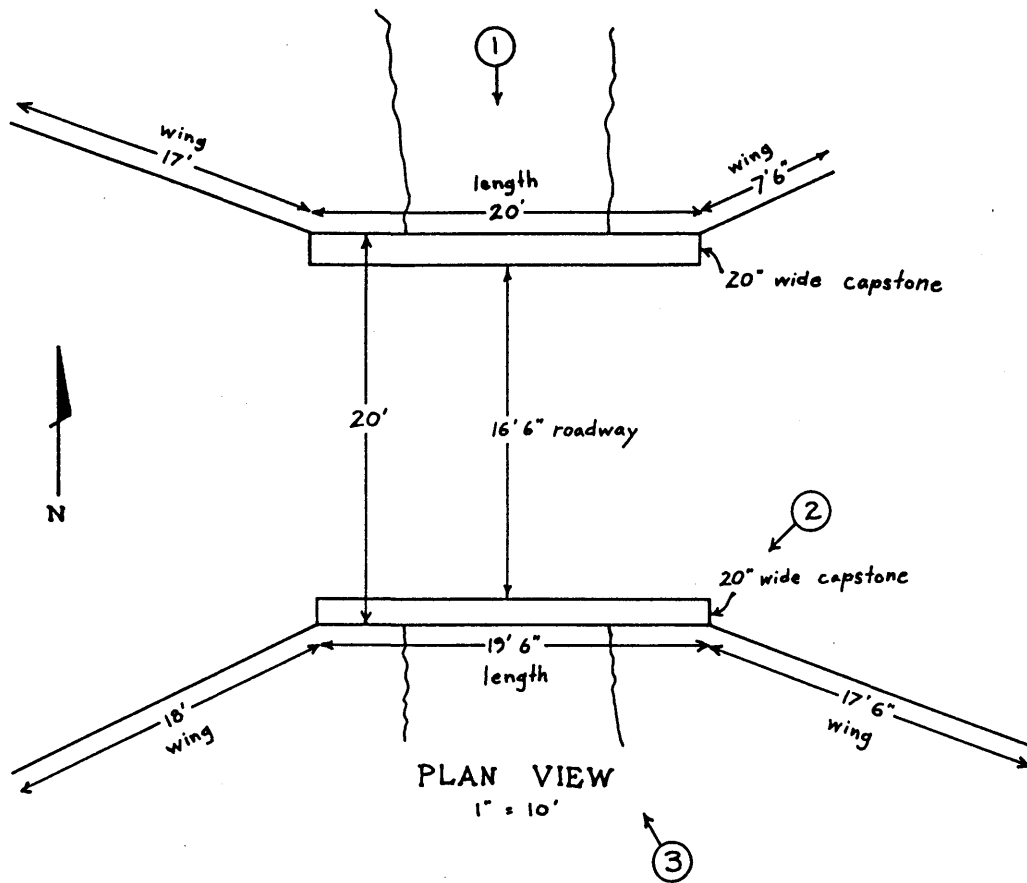
*Bedens Brook Road Bridge, Somerset County, New Jersey*

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated resource occupies the property upon which the main body of the bridge and its wing walls and abutments stand.

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the nominated resource are the same as the boundaries of the property owned by Somerset County. The county owns the bridge and the property upon which it stands; there is no deed which records the boundaries of that property.



BEDENS BROOK ROAD BRIDGE  
MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP, SOMERSET COUNTY, N.J.  
OCTOBER 1990