

PHO 358398

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED OCT 1 1976
DATE ENTERED DEC 12 1976

DATA SHEET

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

**

East Putney Brook Stone Arch Bridge

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Former town-highway across East Putney Brook adjacent to River Road (Town-Highway #7)

CITY, TOWN

Putney

VICINITY OF

Vermont

STATE

Vermont

CODE

50

COUNTY

Windham

CODE

025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Disused

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Town of Putney

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Putney

VICINITY OF

STATE

Vermont

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Town Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Putney

STATE

Vermont

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey

DATE

1974

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1902 BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Otis Follett

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The East Putney Brook Stone Arch Bridge holds primary significance for being the work of an intuitive engineer, a farmer and mason from nearby Townshend, Vermont named James Otis Follett. The masonry arch applied by Follett in 1902 to carry a town highway across East Putney Brook represents a highly unusual structure among rural secondary road bridges in Vermont, especially for having been built after the turn of the twentieth century when iron and steel had almost completely displaced wood and stone in bridge construction. The East Putney Brook bridge together with nine other extant stone bridges and culverts built by Follett in Putney and Townshend constitute probably the largest group of such related structures in the state. (An eleventh bridge built by Follett--and the only one with two arch spans--survives in Walpole, New Hampshire.)

Born in East Jamaica, Vermont in 1843, James Otis Follett lived and worked most of his life on a farm in Townshend. Among other public activities, he served that town for several years as road commissioner, being responsible for the maintenance and improvement of its public highways. During the 1890's, Follett seems to have shifted his vocational emphasis from farming to masonry. The first known entry of payment to Follett for the construction of a "stonebridge" appears in the Townshend town records in 1894. Thereafter, Follett built one or two bridges almost every year until his death in 1911, creating substantial yet inexpensive structures to meet the needs of at least three small rural towns. Additionally, he constructed foundations for buildings and abutments for wood covered bridges, including in 1900 a center pier for the famous Holland Bridge (demolished in 1952) across the West River in Townshend.

The total number of bridges built by James Otis Follett is not known definitely. A grandson, Robert Follett of Ascutney, Vermont, estimates that he may have built about forty bridges. Entries in the Putney and Townshend records list payments to Follett for a total of about twenty bridges and culverts built on public highways in those two towns. The Putney records list payments for seven structures between 1902 and 1908; three arch bridges, including the East Putney Brook bridge (which is also the earliest of the seven structures), and one culvert are known to survive.

Although Follett lacked formal training in engineering, apparently he did consult a popular engineering text of the period, A Treatise on Masonry Construction by Ira Osborn Baker. A copy of the ninth edition, published in 1899 and apparently used by Follett, remains in the possession of the Follett family. The book describes methods of constructing stone arch bridges; however it is not known to what extent Follett actually depended on the book in his work, for he built at least four bridges in Townshend prior to the publication of his copy of the Baker text.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Derry, Anne. James Otis Follette (sic), Bridgebuilder. Unpublished manuscript prepared for Graduate Program in Restoration and Preservation of Historic Architecture, Columbia University, New York, New York, 1975.

DeWolfe, Edith, Lura H. Frost, Edith I. Gassett, et al., eds. The History of Putney Vermont 1753-1953. Putney, Vermont: The Fortnightly Club, 1953. (Cont'd. 9-1)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	706	350	4762	1510	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C						D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Hugh H. Henry, Historic Sites Researcher

ORGANIZATION

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

DATE

September 20, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Pavilion Building

TELEPHONE

802-828-3226

CITY OR TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

William B. Pinney

William B. Pinney

TITLE

Director/State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

Sept. 20, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

12/12/96

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/16/76

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

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Notes from interview of Robert Follett, Ascutney, Vermont by Michele Frome on 9 July 1976.