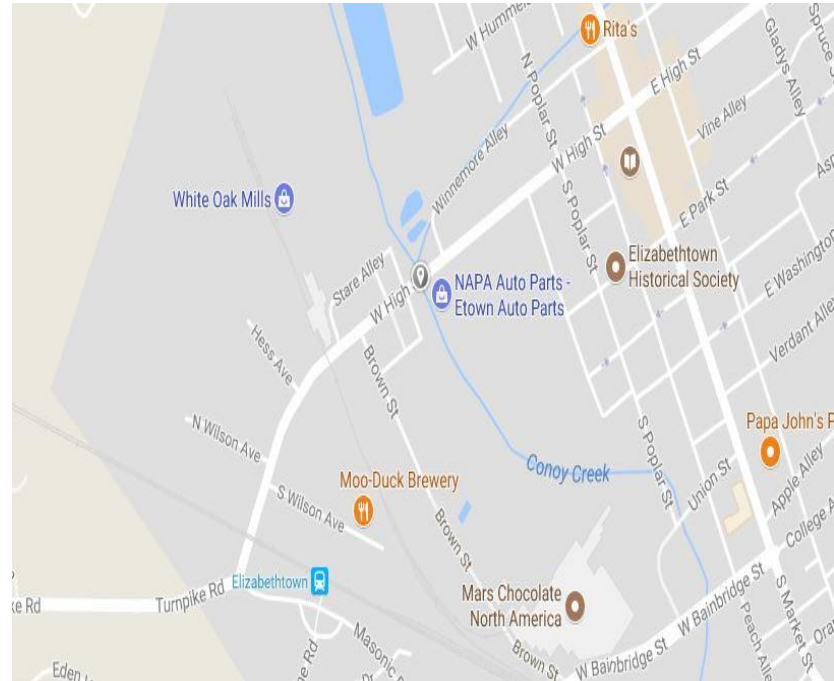


State Road 241 West High Street Bridge over Conoy Creek



Abstract:

As early as 1805 this double arched stone bridge was constructed over the Conoy Creek linking High Street to the Falmouth and Elizabethtown Turnpike. In 1791 a petition was sent from Elizabethtown to the Lancaster County Court, requesting building a public road to link Elizabethtown to Falmouth and providing access to the Rankin's Ferry and the Susquehanna River. Today this is Turnpike Road which at Masonic Drive becomes Pennsylvania Rt. 241. This route was carved primarily by members of the Church of the Brethren migrating from Manheim to Elizabethtown. The west arch crossed the creek. The east arch crossed a cattle path connecting the Martin Keller stockyards to various butchers and tanneries.

Deed Search Report:

The current community of Elizabethtown is situated between the Conoy Creek and the Conwego Creek along the Susquehanna River. In 1534 French King Francis, I (1494-1547) colonized North America establishing New France with Jacques Cartier (1491-1557) as Viceroy in Quebec.² As early as 1615 Étienne Brûlé (1592-1633) explored the Susquehanna River and its tributaries in Lancaster County.³ Pennsylvania was claimed by Sweden in 1638 and then by the Dutch in 1655. The British claimed the former Dutch holdings in 1674.⁴ British King Charles, II (1630-1685) granted William Penn (1644-1718) the Province of Pennsylvania in 1681.⁵ The French and British disputed control of Pennsylvania between 1688-1763.⁶ During this time in

¹ Robert Yahara audited this class and Robert Pavlik is a student at Elizabethtown College. Ramon R. Rios III edited the report.

² Robert Jean Knecht, *Francis I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 333-343.

³ Consul Willshire Butterfield, *History of Brulé's Discoveries and Explorations, 1610-1626 Being a Narrative of the Discovery by Stephen Brulé of Lakes Huron, Ontario and Superior, and of his Explorations of Pennsylvania and western New York: Also of the Province of Ontario* (Cleveland, OH: Herman-Taylor, 1898), 49-51.

⁴ Randall M. Miller, ed., *Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2002), 50-60.

⁵ Jean R. Soderlund, *William Penn and the Founding of Pennsylvania, 1680-1684: A Documentary History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1983), 39-50.

⁶ Henry Melchior Muhlenberg Richards, *The Pennsylvania-Germans in the French and Indian War: A Historical Sketch Prepared at the Request of the Pennsylvania-German Society* (Lancaster: The Pennsylvania German Society, 1905), 16-22.

1707 French fur trader Peter Bezaillion (1662-1742) established a settlement between the Conoy and Conwego Creeks along the Susquehanna River.⁷ In 1719 Peter Bezaillion invited the Piscataway Indians to move from Maryland and settle with him along the Conoy Creek and Susquehanna River.⁸ Captain Thomas Harris (1695-1801) settled in Pennsylvania in 1726. In 1730, he builds a log cabin along the Conoy Creek and in 1741 he legally receives the warrant to the land.⁹ Then, in 1745 he builds the Sign of the Bear Tavern, which is the first permanent structure in Elizabethtown.¹⁰

Thomas Harris owned the land until it was sold to Lazarus Lowery in 1751. The ownership of the land passed in succession from after Lazarus Lowery to Barnabas Hughes (July 1753-2 January 1765), Samuel Hughes (2 January 1765-28 October 1790), Alexander Boggs (28 October 1790-21 February 1809),¹¹ George Wealand (21 February 1809-unknown),¹² John Bender (unknown-1843),¹³ Thomas Winnemore (1834-1844),¹⁴ Henry Gingrich (1844-1855),¹⁵ Andrew Wade (1855-14 April 1857),¹⁶ Henry A Wade (14 April 1857-2 April 1884),¹⁷ and Martin G. Keller (2 April 1884-1 April 1905).¹⁸

Architectural Style:

The type of bridge is a stone two-arch bridge, which is consistent with the period it was built in. The bridge is stone closed spandrel arch bridge, 24' long, with steel stringer additions in ca. 1950 to support the side walk, and W-beam rail replacements for earlier parapets or railings in ca. 1980. The structure was plastered over but the stone arch can be view where it has deteriorated and fallen off (exhibit 9, 10, 11, attached). The AGL Summary dates the stone arch bridge to 1910. Photos and maps predating 1910 of the bridge suggest it was built in the early 1800s.

Stone arch bridges can be dated back to 1300 BC from the Greece but it was the Romans which developed their practicality, to the point of being able to support large loads.¹⁹ The bridge has two arches which can be explained by the surroundings. A historic map, drawn by C. L. Fulton C. E. dated 1875 of Elizabethtown, shows a bridge crossing High Street at its present location. The arch on the left connected the live stock yards of Martin Keller's land (90 acres) to a Seam Tanner owned by John Doner. Farmers owned land that they could have been used to move live stock to the stock yards using the double arched bridge to go under High Street. Along the Conoy Creek, there is another bridge exhibiting a similar structure. The left for cattle to go under with a floor connecting the farmers land on both sides of the road, and the passage on the right for the Conoy Creek to flow through.²⁰ This location is not the only instance of cow tunnels. In the late nineteenth century there was a cow tunnel built under twelfth street in Manhattan so that cow could be processed.²¹ Also, there is a bridge located downstream from this bridge which has two openings. The owner of the land on either side of the bridge said it was built so that his cattle could cross to the other side of the road.²²

⁷ David L. Martin, A Clash of Cultures: Native Americans and Colonialism in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Morgantown, PA: Masthof Press, 2010), 21-23.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Richard K. MacMaster, Elizabethtown: The First Three Centuries (Elizabethtown, PA: Elizabethtown Historical Socieity, 1999), 5.

¹⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹¹ Lancaster County Recorder of Deeds, Search Online Records, Infodex, Document, Book: LL, Page Number: 545, accessed 25 April 2017, <https://www.searchiqs.com/palan/InfodexMainMP.aspx>.

¹² Book: 1, Page: 120.

¹³ Book: Q, Volume: 5, Page: 53, Accessed April 25, 2017.

¹⁴ Book: Q, Volume: 5, Page: 55, Accessed April 25, 2017.

¹⁵ Book: D, Volume: 6, Page: 45, Accessed April 25, 2017.

¹⁶ Book: Y, Volume: 6, Page: 386, Accessed April 25, 2017.

¹⁷ Book: I, Volume: 8, Page: 262, Accessed April 25, 2017.

¹⁸ Book: A, Volume: 9, Page: 34, Accessed April 25, 2017.

¹⁹ Hellenic Ministry of Culture: Mycenaean bridge at Kazarma Archived April 8, 2008, at the Wayback Machine.; Colin O'Connor: "Roman Bridges", Cambridge University Press 1993, p. 187ff. ISBN 0-521-39326-4

²⁰ Robert Yahara, interview, May 8, 2017.

²¹ Brian Wiprud, "Cow Tunnels," 99% Invisible, May 20, 2014, <http://99percentinvisible.org/episode/cow-tunnels/>.

²² Robert Yahara.

Historical Context and Purpose:

Between 1736 and 1738 "The Great Road" from Harris Ferry to Lancaster was established.²³ During this time, cities and towns were growing and wanted to expand economic opportunities through trade and used turnpikes, bridges, and canals to expand the trading areas.²⁴ Settlers and travelers wanted more of these tools, but the United States did not have enough capital to support all of the public projects. The private sector was the primary facilitator in building roads, bridges, and canals. In 1791 a petition was sent from Elizabethtown to the Lancaster County Court, requesting building a public road to link Elizabethtown to Falmouth and providing access to the Rankin's Ferry and the Susquehanna River.

In 1810, the Pennsylvania State Legislature chartered the Falmouth and Elizabethtown Turnpike Company. Again managers consisting of John Wolfley, Abraham and Jacob Gish, John Greer, and others met at Michael Colbe's tavern to select a bid for the construction of the turnpike.²⁵ In 1811 the final installments from stockholders was paid and construction of the turnpike began. As early as 1805 this double arched stone bridge was constructed over the Conoy Creek linking High Street to the Falmouth and Elizabethtown Turnpike. The bridge played an import role to the rail road station and the mill located on High street. The banks along the creek at this point would have been too high to cross a wagon without a bridge being built early in the Borough history. Heavy wagons going to the mill would have created a need for a stone arched bridge to support the loads. Many expected Elizabethtown to receive trade from the river point at Falmouth with the construction of this new turnpike, but the trade began to slowdown at Falmouth and the company abandoned the project before its completion.²⁶ Eventually the path that was cleared became overrun with vegetation, including pumpkin plants, which gave it the nickname, Pumpkin Turnpike.

A post card produced from a photo taken by George Ness Falkenstein was said to be the bridge on Market Street. George Falkenstein lived and worked in this area during the founding of Elizabethtown College. He operated a store at 39 South Market Street. He was in the area as early as 1899 and could have taken the photo of the bridge as depicted in the sketched drawing around that time. The post card was a picture of the bridge on High Street near the former Grub Mills 419 West High Street. This can be noticed by the slope of the bridge on this terrain matches the Falkenstein photograph. The West High Street Bridge may possibly be the oldest remaining bridge in the borough crossing the Conoy Creek ca. 1805.²⁷

Today this is Turnpike Road which at Masonic Drive becomes Pennsylvania Rt. 241. In the 1870s members of the Church of the Brethren from Ephrata and Manheim migrated to Elizabethtown. They established many of the local industries, banks, civic organizations, and Elizabethtown College. The arrival of the Church of the Brethren in Elizabethtown was transformative. Many of the members of the Church of the Brethren in Elizabethtown had been associated with the Ephrata Cloister. They migrated west from Ephrata along Rothsville Road, through Rothsville Pennsylvania Rt. 772, then further west onto Newport Road where it crosses White Oak Road and becomes Elizabethtown Road moving west. In Elizabethtown Borough, Elizabethtown Road becomes High Street and moving west (after passing under the RR bridge bearing right) it becomes Turnpike Road which is named for the Elizabethtown Falmouth Turnpike which has its terminus at Pennsylvania Route 441. This continuous path westward brought members of the Church of the Brethren to Elizabethtown. This route was carved primarily by members of the Church of the Brethren migrating from Manheim to Elizabethtown.

²³ MacMaster, 7.

²⁴ Ibid., 65

²⁵ Ibid.

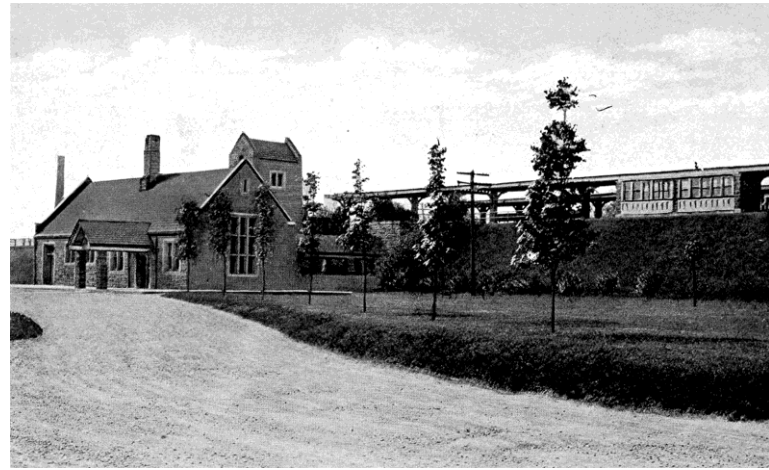
²⁶ MacMaster, 67

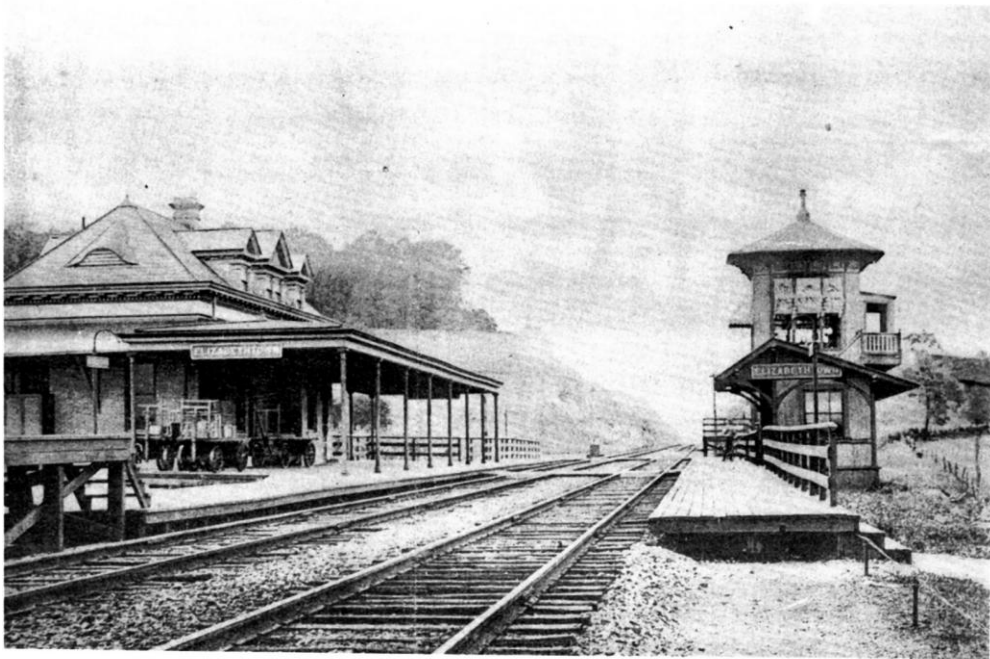
²⁷ Alethia White, 1.

Appendix Historical Photos:



Old Stone Bridge over Conoy Creek, Elizabethtown, Pa.
S. PUBLISHER





PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD STATION, ELIZABETHTOWN, PA.

Appendix Current Photos:



