

Easement

WA-V-001
Wilson's Bridge
Vicinity of Wilson
public (restricted)

1819

Wilson's Bridge, which is no longer open to traffic, originally carried the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike, the National Pike, across the Conococheague Creek seven miles west of Hagerstown. The five-arched structure, the longest of the county's stone bridges, is 210 feet in length and is constructed of coursed local limestone. The bridge appears symmetrical with the largest of its five segmental arches being at the center of the structure. The arches are lined with carefully cut voussoirs and are supported by piers terminating with rounded projections.

A tablet set in the north wall of the bridge indicates that the bridge was erected in 1819 by Silas Harry, who had built similar bridges in Pennsylvania. Wilson's Bridge remained open to traffic until June of 1972 when it was damaged by floods which occurred during tropical storm Agnes.

Architecturally, this bridge is highly significant as an example of the type of bridges extensively used in Washington County. It is the oldest known stone bridge in the county and as the first, appears to have set a trend in stone bridge building which continued during the next thirty years. Until it was closed in 1972, this bridge accomodated traffic of a much greater volume than it was designed to carry. It is also important as an example of the engineering capabilities of early 19th century builders. Wilson's bridge is one of six historic stone bridges--part of Maryland's state road system in Washington County, and one of 10 historic stone bridges throughout the entire state road network--identified by the Maryland Historical Trust for the Maryland Department of Transportation in a jointly conducted survey which took place during 1980-81.

Easements

WA-V-001

United States Department of the Interior
 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

For HCRS use only

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

55

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
 Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Conococheague Bridge, The Creek Bridge

and or common Wilson's Bridge (PREFERRED), Wilson Bridge

2. Location

street & number Old U. S. 40, over Conococheague Creek not for publication

city, town Wilson - vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Maryland code 24 county Washington County code 043

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 type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Not in use

4. Owner of Property

name Board of County Commissioners of Washington County

street & number Washington County Courthouse

city, town Hagerstown vicinity of state Maryland 21740

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Courthouse

street & number West Washington Street

city, town Hagerstown state Maryland 21740

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

date Washington County Historic Sites Survey

has this property been determined eligible? yes nodate 1973-1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Annapolis, state Maryland 21401

7. Description

WA-V-001

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Wilson Bridge which is no longer open to traffic, carried the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike over the Conococheague Creek, 7 miles west of Hagerstown near the village of Wilson in Washington County. It is located on a section of highway which linked the National Road with Baltimore. The 5-arch span built in 1819 is the largest and oldest of the 25 stone bridges remaining in Washington County. It is 210 feet long and constructed of coursed local limestone. A date tablet in the north wall records the builder as Silas Harry. The bridge appears symmetrical with the largest of its 5 segmental arches being at the center of the structure. The arches are lined with cut stone voussoirs and are supported by piers terminating with rounded projections. The bridge has received few alterations. Changes to the original structure include only some modern repointing, resurfacing of the 19th century road, and replacement of its original wooden coping with concrete. The bridge was bypassed by the present U. S. Route 40 when a newer span was built downstream circa 1935. Wilson's Bridge remained open to local traffic until June 1972, when it was damaged during hurricane Agnes. The bridge has experienced increased deterioration in recent years.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These boundaries were selected as the minimum land necessary to protect the bridge.

8. Significance

WA- V-001

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				

Specific dates 1819 Builder/Architect Silas Harry, builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: A and C

SIGNIFICANCE

Wilson's Bridge is important for its architecture, its role in commerce and transportation and its contribution to knowledge of 19th century engineering. Architecturally the bridge is significant as the oldest and largest of 25 remaining stone arched spans in Washington County. Although it is not the only example of its type, it was the first and served as a pattern for other similar bridges in the area. While stone bridge construction was used elsewhere in the United States, there was a particular concentration of it in Western Maryland and Southern Pennsylvania. Built of limestone, the bridge is enhanced by the fact that the original builder's contract with construction and payment specifications is recorded among the County Land Records. Thus, the original appearance of the bridge is known. The bridge played an important role in commerce and transportation by aiding travel along the highway linking the famous National Pike with Baltimore. Also, it reflects the level of engineering skill at the time it was built. Having carried vehicles for more than 150 years and the heavy traffic of a major road for well over a century, Wilson's Bridge remains as a monument to the engineering capabilities of Silas Harry, bridge builder.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

An agreement recorded in Liber CC, Folio 394, among the Washington County Land Records, was made on December 31, 1817, between the President and Managers of the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company and Silas Harry, David Fullerton and Joseph Culbertson of Franklin County, Pennsylvania for the construction of a bridge across the Conococheague Creek. According to the document, ". . . the said Silas Harry for the consideration hereafter mentioned, hath agreed to build and complete in a workman like manner, a stone bridge over the Conococheague Creek on the Hagerstown Turnpike Road near Witmer's Mill, of the width of twenty-four feet from out to out to consist of five arches of a size sufficient to answer the creek; and with sufficient wing and curtain walls - the curtain walls to be two feet thick above the bed of the road - the distance between the abutments to be two hundred and ten feet - the bridge walls to be covered over the good pine boards or shingles and to be painted in a complete manner with two coats of Spanish brown. Said Harry agrees to fill between the arches ready for turnpiking and to turnpike the road across the bridge in a workmanlike manner." The Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company agreed to pay Silas Harry \$9,100.00 for the work which has to have been completed on or before December 1, 1818. On June 18, 1819, Maryland Governor Charles Goldsborough commissioned Henry Shafer, William Gabby and Thomas Heller to examine the new bridge and report their findings. The examiners found the bridge to be adequate as recorded in Liber EE, Folio 343 of the Washington County

United States Department of the Interior
 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
 National Register of Historic Places
 Inventory—Nomination Form

WA-V-001

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8 and 9

Page

1

Wilson's Bridge
 Washington County, Maryland

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (Continued)

Land Records. The Governor then licensed the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company to erect toll gates at the bridge. Printed in the January 7, 1818 issue of the Maryland Herald and Hagerstown Weekly Advertiser, is a statement signed by "a stockholder" of the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company, "The bridge is to be built of stone by Mr. Silas Harry of Chambersburg, who has built many bridges of the kind in Pennsylvania and has given general satisfaction. There is no doubt that the bridge will be built in a style of workmanship not inferior to any on this continent. Thus we shall have a turnpike road of seven miles and a stone bridge completed in two years, and the people from the westward will be enabled to travel to Baltimore on a good turnpike road by way of Harman's Gap, in a shorter distance than any route near the Potomac."

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sword, Gerald T., Unpublished report on Wilson's Bridge, January, 1972.

Includes extensive bibliography

Washington County Land Records.

Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Survey: Washington County (WA-V-001).
 Paula Stone Reed, surveyor, 1981, Annapolis, Maryland.

Mish, Mary Vernon and David T. Cottingham. Bridges: Our Legacy in Stone.
 n.p.: published for the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, 1965.

9. Major Bibliographical References

WA-V-001

THE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Mason-Dixon Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	1 8	2 5 5 6 5 0	4 3 9 3 4 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property includes only the land on which the bridge, its piers, and abutments rest. See boundary justification under #7 description.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paula Stoner Reed, Architectural Historian

organization Preservation Associates date March 1981

street & number 109 West Main Street, Box 202 telephone 301-432-5466

city or town Sharpsburg, state Maryland 21782

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

For HCRS use only

date

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

Easement

WA-V-001

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**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
Wilson's Bridge

AND/OR COMMON
Conococheague Bridge, The Creek Bridge

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Conococheague Creek and old U.S. 40

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN
Wilson (7 mi. West of Hagerstown) VICINITY OF

STATE
Maryland

CODE

COUNTY
Washington

CODE

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input 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: Not in use

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Board of County Commissioners of Washington County

STREET & NUMBER
Washington County Court House

CITY, TOWN

Hagerstown

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Washington County Court House

STREET & NUMBER
West Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Hagerstown

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Wilson's Bridge, which is no longer open to traffic, carried the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike, the National Pike, across the Conococheague Creek seven miles west of Hagerstown near the village of Wilson in Washington County, Maryland.

The five-arched span, the longest of the County's stone bridges, is 210 feet in length and is constructed of coursed local limestone. A tablet set in the north wall of the bridge indicates that the bridge was built in 1819 by Silas Harry. The bridge appears symmetrical with the largest of its five segmental arches being at the center of the structure. The arches are lined with carefully cut voussoirs and are supported by piers terminating with rounded projections. An agreement recorded in Liber CC, Folio 394, among the Washington County Land Records, was made on Dec. 31, 1817 between the President and Managers of the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company and Silas Harry, David Fullerton and Joseph Culbertson of Franklin County, Pennsylvania for the construction of a bridge across the Conococheague Creek. According to the document, "...the said Silas Harry for the consideration hereafter mentioned, hath agreed to build and complete in a workman like manner, a stone bridge over the Conococheague Creek on the Hagerstown Turnpike Road near Witmer's Mill, of the width of twenty-four feet from out to out to consist of five arches of a size sufficient to answer the creek; and with sufficient wing and curtain walls -- the curtain walls to be two feet thick above the bed of the road -- the distance between the abutments to be two hundred and ten feet -- the bridge walls to be covered over the good pine boards or shingles and to be painted in a complete manner with two coats of Spanish brown. Said Harry agrees to fill between the arches ready for turnpiking and to turnpike the road across the bridge in a workmanlike manner." The Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company agreed to pay Silas Harry \$9,100.00 for the work which has to have been completed on or before December 1, 1818. On June 18, 1819, Maryland Governor Charles Goldsborough commissioned Henry Shafer, William Gabby and Thomas Heller to examine the new bridge and report their findings. The examiners found the bridge to be adequate as recorded in Liber EE, Folio 343 of Washington County Land Records. The Governor then licensed the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company to erect toll gates at the bridge.

Wilson's Bridge appears to have received few alterations. Changes to the original structure include some modern repointing, the resurfacing of the original road and the replacement of its wooden coping with concrete ledges.

The bridge was bypassed by U.S. Route 40, when a triple arched bridge of reinforced concrete was constructed just downstream, ca. 1935. Wilson's Bridge remained open to local traffic until June of 1972 when it was damaged by floods which occurred during tropical storm Agnes. The structure was closed to vehicular traffic because the three center arches were split along a line parallel to the centerline of the bridge. Although the damage has not been repaired, the bridge appears to be in fair condition.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

WA-V-001

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
REHISTORIC	<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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input 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	1819	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Silas Harry
----------------	------	-------------------	-------------

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Wilson's Bridge is significant for its contribution to commerce and transportation both locally and nationally, and as an example of the engineering skills of its builder.

Architecturally, the Wilson Bridge is an example of nearly thirty stone arched bridges and culverts in Washington County. Built in 1819, it is the oldest known bridge in the County. As the first of the County's stone bridges, it appears to have set a trend in stone bridge building which continued during the next thirty years. Indeed, stone was used extensively as a building material during the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century in the Cumberland Valley. It appears that the use of stone bridges was well known in Southern Pennsylvania.

Wilson's Bridge is also significant for its contribution to commerce and transportation at the local and national levels. In addition to facilitating the movement of local traffic along the turnpike, the construction of this bridge at a time when westward expansion in the United States was accelerating, the bridge played an important role in aiding travel along the famous National Pike as well as serving to promote trade and commerce between newly opened lands in the West and the established East Coast trade centers. This bridge, along with the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike with which it was constructed served to link the "Bank Road" from the Conococheague Creek to Cumberland to the then partially completed turnpike from Baltimore to Hagerstown. By the mid 1820's, a completed turnpike road becoming the National Pike lead through Washington County allowing comfortable travel from Baltimore to Cumberland.

Wilson's Bridge is also significant as an example of the engineering skills of its builder Silas Harry. Built in 1819, the bridge was the first stone arched span known to have been built in Washington County and appears to have served as a pattern for some thirty bridges which followed within the next three decades. Having stood since 1819, carrying heavy daily traffic until it was closed in 1972, the bridge remains as a monument to the engineering capabilities of Silas Harry. Printed in the January 7, 1818 issue of the Maryland Herald and Hagerstown Weekly Advertiser, is a statement signed by "a stockholder" of the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company, "The bridge is to be built of stone by Mr. Silas Harry of Chambersburg, who has built many bridges of the kind in Pennsylvania and has given general satisfaction. There is no doubt that the bridge will be built in a style of workmanship not inferior to any on this continent. Thus we shall have a turnpike road of seven miles and a stone bridge completed in two years, and the people from the westward will be enabled to travel to Baltimore on a good turnpike road by way of Harman's Gap, in a shorter distance than any route near the Potomac."¹

¹Gerald I. Sword, Report on Wilson's Bridge, January, 1972, as quoted from The Maryland and Weekly Advertiser, January 8, 1818.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

WA-V-001

Sword, Gerald T., unpublished report on Wilson's Bridge, January, 1972, includes extensive bibliography.
Washington County Land Records.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	2 5 9 6 5 0	4 3 9 3 3 7 0	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

Paula Stoner Dickey, Consultant

May, 1975

ORGANIZATION

Washington County Historical Sites Survey

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Court House Annex

TELEPHONE

(301) 731-0110 Ext. 237

CITY OR TOWN

Hagerstown

STATE

Maryland

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM for the NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME							
COMMON: Wilson's Bridge							
AND/OR HISTORIC: The Creek Bridge, Conococheague Bridge							
2. LOCATION							
STREET AND NUMBER: 7 miles west of Hagerstown, 200 feet north of U.S. 40							
CITY OR TOWN: Spanning the Conococheague Creek at Wilson's							
STATE Maryland			COUNTY: Washington				
3. CLASSIFICATION							
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC		
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)							
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments			
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____				
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____				
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY							
OWNER'S NAME: Board of County Commissioners of Washington County							
STREET AND NUMBER: Court House Annex							
CITY OR TOWN: Hagerstown			STATE: Maryland				
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION							
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Washington County Court House							
STREET AND NUMBER: West Washington Street							
CITY OR TOWN: Hagerstown			STATE: Maryland				
Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #): EE/343							
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS							
TITLE OF SURVEY: Maryland Historical Trust Survey							
DATE OF SURVEY: January, 1972 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local							
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:							
STREET AND NUMBER:							
CITY OR TOWN:			STATE:				

7. DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	<p style="text-align: center;">(Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">(Check One)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site</p>	
<p>DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(See attached description by Gerald T. Sword.)</p>	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1819

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

(See attached statement by Gerald T. Sword.)

Since Gerald T. Sword's report on Wilson's Bridge for the Maryland Historical Trust was completed in January of 1972, the bridge was severely damaged by floods which occurred during tropical storm Agnes in June, 1972. The structure has been closed to vehicular traffic because the three center arches were split along a line parallel to the centerline of the bridge. Although there has been some talk of turning the bridge into a park area, the damage has not been repaired and the bridge is threatened with further deterioration.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Blank area for Major Bibliographical References.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **3.1 acres**

Acreage Justification:

Quadrangle Name: Mason Dixon, Maryland
 Quadrangle Scale: 1: 24,000
 UTM References: 13.255650.4393370 (John Hnedak additions, 1980)

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

STATE:	COUNTY:

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Paula Stoner Dickey, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: **Washington County Historic Sites Survey** DATE: **June, 1973**

STREET AND NUMBER:
Court House Annex

CITY OR TOWN: **Hagerstown** STATE: **Maryland**

12. State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:
 National State Local

 Signature

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

No. 7: DESCRIPTION:

This bridge, now owned by the Washington County Commissioners, is in sound condition, still used by unrestricted local traffic and is virtually unchanged from its original appearance. The only changes being the substitution of concrete for the original painted wood work which topped the stone bridge walls. The other change being the covering of the original turnpiking with present day black asphalt. In addition to these changes only tuck-pointing of the stone work has been required.

The native limestone bridge which spans the Conococheague Creek at Wilson's seven (7) miles West of Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland, was constructed between December 31, 1817 and June 20, 1819. The marble builder's stone placed in the North parapet at the center of the bridge fronting the roadway identifies the builder as Silas Harry and the construction date as 1819.

On December 31, 1817, the managers of the Hagers-Town and Conococheague Turnpike Road Company, the company which financed the bridge, entered into an Agreement Contract with Silas Harry, the bridge builder. The contract stated in part as follows: "that the said Silas Harry for the consideration hereafter mentioned, hath agreed to build and complete in a workman like manner, a stone bridge over the Conococheague Creek, on the Hagers-Town turnpike road near Witmers Mill, of the width of twenty-four feet from out to out, to consist of five arches of a size sufficient to answer the Creek (none of the arches exceeded forty (40) feet); and with sufficient wing and curtain walls - the curtain walls to be two feet thick above the bed of the road the distance between theabutments to be two hundred and ten feet - the

WA-V-001

bridge walls to be covered over with good pine boards or shingles, and to be painted in a complete manner with two coats of Spanish brown - The said Harry agrees to fill between the arches ready for turnpiking, and to turnpike the road across the bridge in a workman like manner ..."

Between June 18 and June 20, 1819, three commissioners appointed by the State Governor inspected the work and reported it "completed and executed in a masterly and workman like manner". The governor on the 28th day of July 1819, licensed the Hagers-Town and Conococheague Turnpike Road Company to erect "gates" and "to collect the tolls and duties granted by law".

The 3.1 acres of land included within this nominated site are privately owned except for the Bridge and the 50' road right of way which is held by the County Commissioners of Washington County. Private land owners are: Conococheague Amusement Park, Inc., approximately 1.25 acres on the North side, legal description 364/182, location: Clerk of the Court, Washington County Court House, Hagerstown, Maryland, and William H. Chaney, approximately 1.25 acres on the South side, legal description 229/309, location: Clerk of the Court, Washington County Court House, Hagerstown, Maryland.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The national significance of this bridge is that it provided the connecting link between the "Bank Road" portion of the National Road (US Route 40) and the roads which led to the eastern seaport cities of Baltimore, Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The bridge is a fine almost unaltered example of the art of bridge building at the time when the westward expansion of the United States was reaching unprecedented heights. The construction of this bridge over the sometimes turbulent Conococheague Creek facilitated the flow of emigration and commerce between the mid-Atlantic coast cities and the west from 1819 until approximately 1937 when US Route 40 was

relocated approximately two hundred (200) feet down stream from the WA-V-001
subject bridge. The bridge is still in sound condition and is used
daily by unrestricted local traffic. The Wilson bridge was the first
stone bridge to be built in Washington County, Maryland, and served as
an example for the thirty (30) or more stone bridges of various sizes
which subsequently appeared throughout the county. It is the longest
stone bridge and also the western most such bridge in Washington
County. Of the two (2) stone bridges which carried the National Road
(US Route 40) across the creeks of Washington County, the Wilson bridge
survives as least altered. The other bridge which spans the Antietam
at Funkstown has been greatly altered by the addition of contiguous
concrete arches.

Soon after the organization of the Hagers-Town and Conococheague Turnpike
Road Company, advertising appeared in the area papers requesting bids
for construction of the turnpike road and for erecting the bridge
across the nearly two hundred (200) feet wide Conococheague Creek
seven (7) miles west of the "market space" in Hagerstown. The MARYLAND
HERALD AND HAGERSTOWN WEEKLY ADVERTISER carried the advertisement be-
ginning in November 1817 and concluding in December of the same year.
The advertisement, authorized by the company managers, simply stated,
"will receive proposals for building a stone bridge over the Conoco-
cheague Creek, to be erected by the Hagers-Town and Conococheague
Turnpike Company, near Witmers Mill, width of Creek about 200 feet.
I will also receive proposals for building the stone piers and abut-
ments for a wooden bridge over the same place. The proposals to include
the whole expense of quarrying and hauling the stone, finding lime,
scaffold poles and every other material for finishing the mason work...
...proposals for the above must be left with the President of the

Company on or before the 25th day of December next. I will also receive proposals for making the turnpike road from the market space in Hagers-Town to the Conococheague Creek, a distance of seven miles --either for the whole, or in sections of one quarter, one half, or one mile." The January 7, 1818, issue of the same newspaper contained two articles of interest concerning the subject bridge. The company's treasurer had authorized the following: "The President and Managers of the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Company having entered into contracts for turnpiking the whole road and for building a stone bridge over Conococheague Creek: The stockholders who have not yet paid up the first installment, are requested to make payment, as money must be had immediately. Those who neglect this notice must not be surprised if they find legal measures resorted to in a short time." The second item is signed "A Stockholder", and states, "The bridge is to be built of stone, by Mr. Silas Harry of Chambersburg, who has built many bridges of the kind in Pennsylvania, and has given general satisfaction. There is no doubt that the bridge will be built in a style of workmanship not inferior to any on this continent. Thus, we shall have a turnpike road of seven miles, and a stone bridge completed, in two years, and the people from the westward will be enabled to travel to Baltimore on a good turnpike road by way of Harman's Gap, in a shorter distance than any route near the Potomac."

The managers of the turnpike company had entered into an agreement with Silas Harry on December 31, 1817, to build the bridge for \$9,100. The bridge was to be twenty-four feet in width, the curtain walls to be two feet thick above the road bed, the abutments to be two hundred and ten feet apart and the bridge to have five arches of sufficient size to "answer the Creek". The contract continued that the parapets were to

WA-V-001.

be covered with good pine boards or shingles, and to be painted with two coats of Spanish Brown and that Harry would fill between the arches and to turnpike the road across the bridge. Silas Harry also had "to warrant and defend the same from accidents by freshets or otherwise for the term of five years", from the time it was "accepted and received from his hands by the Board of Managers."

On June 18, 1819, Governor Charles Goldsborough, of Maryland, commissioned Henry Shafer, William Gabby and Thomas Heller to "examine and report in writing to the Governor of Maryland whether the Hagerstown and Conococheague Turnpike Road is completed and executed in a masterly and workman like manner agreeable to the provisions of the several Acts of Assembly thereto relating". The written report was returned on June 20, 1819, stating that the commissioners "had viewed and examined the said roads and that the same is completed and executed in a masterly and workman like manner agreeably to the provisions of said laws". Based on this report the governor then issued a license to the President and managers of the company to "erect and fix such and so many gates" to "collect the tolls and duties granted by law to to the said company from all persons traveling on the same with horses, cattle, waggons, carts and carriages". The license was granted on July 18, 1819.

For the next ninety-two (92) years the turnpike company operated their system. In 1910/1911 the Maryland State Roads Commission (now Maryland State Highway Administration) acquired the company's holdings for \$23,090.04 plus \$766.90 for Administrative, Legal and Engineering fees. Although a considerable sum of money was spent by the State Roads Commission to resurface the newly acquired system no money was then spent for maintenance on the said bridge. By 1937, the Wilson bridge had been replaced by a three hundred and seventy (370) foot,

triple span, open spandrel, reinforced concrete arch bridge two hundred (200) feet down stream at the cost of approximately \$100,000. The State Roads Commission's report published in Baltimore, Maryland, on March 4, 1937, stated that the new bridge "relegates to the past the old bridge which had a very dangerous approach from the west, and the doing away with such an approach is certainly building safety into the highway".

The old stone bridge was shortly thereafter made the responsibility of the Washington County Commissioners and integrated into the county roads system. Now under county ownership the bridge still is in sound condition and is used daily by unrestricted traffic.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL:

1. Bridges - Our Legacy in Stone, Exhibition by the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, Hagerstown, Maryland, August - September 1965.
2. Highway Magazine, Vol. 48, September 1957, "Maryland's Stone Arch Bridges" by James L. Creasy.
3. Report on the Highways of Maryland by Maryland Geological Survey 1899.
4. Report of the State Roads Commission to the Maryland General Assembly for 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, Baltimore, Maryland, January 1916.
5. Report of the State Roads Commission "Operating Reports 1925 - 36" and Financial Report for Fiscal Year 1936", Baltimore, Maryland, March 4, 1937.
6. Report of the State Roads Commission for 1937 - 1938, Baltimore, Maryland.
7. History of Road Building in Maryland.
8. Minutes and Proceedings of the November Term 1817, Washington County,

Page 24, Washington Couty Court House.

9. The Maryland Herald and Hagerstown Weekly Advertiser, Hagerstown, Md., December 3, 1817; December 29, 1817, January 7, 1818; January 14, 1818.
10. The Odd Fellow, Boonsboro, Maryland, May 22, 1849.
11. The Baltimore Sun, Baltimore, Maryland, April 13, 1928.
12. The Morning Herald, Hagerstown, Maryland, August 25, 1955.
13. Washington County Land Records, Washington County Court House, Hagerstown, Maryland:
 - Liber CC, Folio 367, Date 1817
 - Liber CC, Folio 394, Date 1818
 - Liber CC, Folio 446, Date 1818
 - Liber EE, Folio 343, Date 1820
14. Maryland State Roads Commission Plats, Clerk of the Court's Office, Washington County Court House, Hagerstown, Maryland:
 - Plat No. 2261, Date February 18, 1936
 - Plat No. 2623, Date April 30, 1936



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

WA-V-001

In Reply Refer To

0725-EAER

January 31, 1983

RECEIVED

FEB 1 1983

MARYLAND HISTORICAL
TRUST

Mr. Barry A. Teach, Administrator
Board of County Commissioners
Court House Annex
Eagerstown, Maryland 21740

Dear Mr. Teach:

We are extremely pleased to accept the two sheets of drawings of the Old National Road: Wilson Bridge (1819) over Conocodleague Creek in Washington County. It is a notable structure that deserves the concern and interest of the citizens of Washington County. Though it is regrettable that the bridge has to be demolished, there is some comfort in knowing that a permanent record of its existence will be available for posterity in the Historic American Engineering Record (EAER) collection at the Library of Congress.

The project to record Wilson Bridge by Washington County and the Montgomery C. Meigs Original Chapter of the Society for Industrial Archeology (SIA) exemplifies the volunteerism of concerned citizens during these times of economic adversity when federal agencies cannot respond to every request for its services. EAER can provide standards, guidelines and limited cooperative assistance to those in the private sector who are willing to assume primary responsibility. Mr. Glenn Dull of your Engineering Department, your local historical society, and the chapter members of the SIA addressed the needs of a threatened historic structure. In that the drawings donated admirably meet the standards of the Historic American Engineering Record, the concepts of voluntarism, and cooperation between local, State and federal governments speak for themselves.

The staff of the Historic American Engineering Record enjoyed working with the people of Washington County and gratefully accept this donation of drawings.

Sincerely yours,

Robert J. Kapsch

Robert J. Kapsch
Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey/
Historic American Engineering Record

cc: Mr. Glenn L. Dull, PE
County Engineer
County Office Building
33 West Washington Street
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Mr. Sam Hooper, President
Montgomery C. Meigs Original Chapter
Society for Industrial Archeology
1229 Summerfield Drive
Herndon, VA

Ms. Betty Jane Eupp, Director
Washington County Tourism
Court House Annex
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Mr. William Edmund Barrett
Box 1111
Centreville, VA 22020

Mr. Mark Edwards
Deputy State Historic Preservation
Officer
21 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

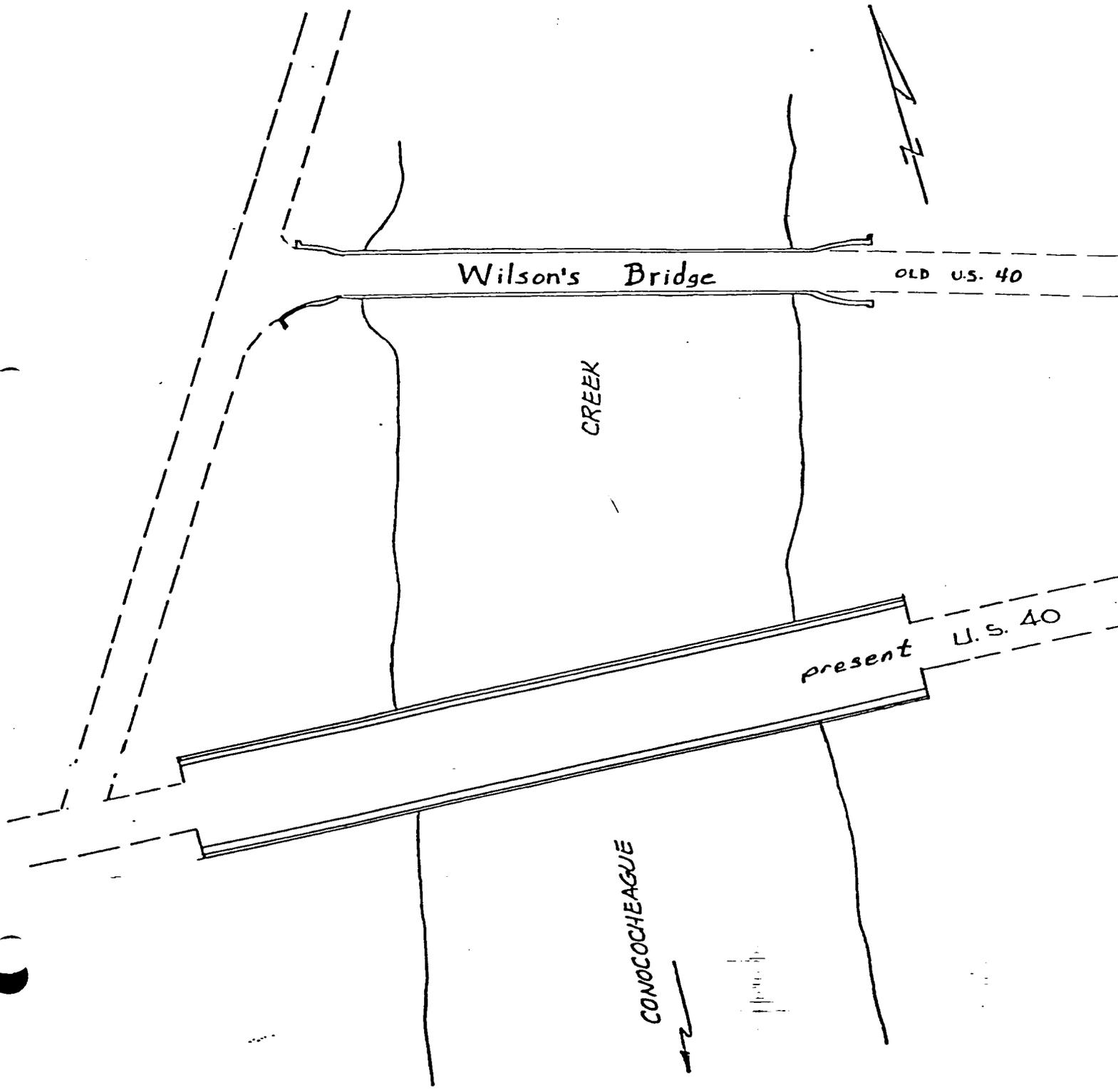
Mrs. Adele Donnelly
Sunshine Hill
Hancock, MD 21750

Mr. David Shayt
Division of Mechanical & Civil
Engineering
National Museum of American History
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560

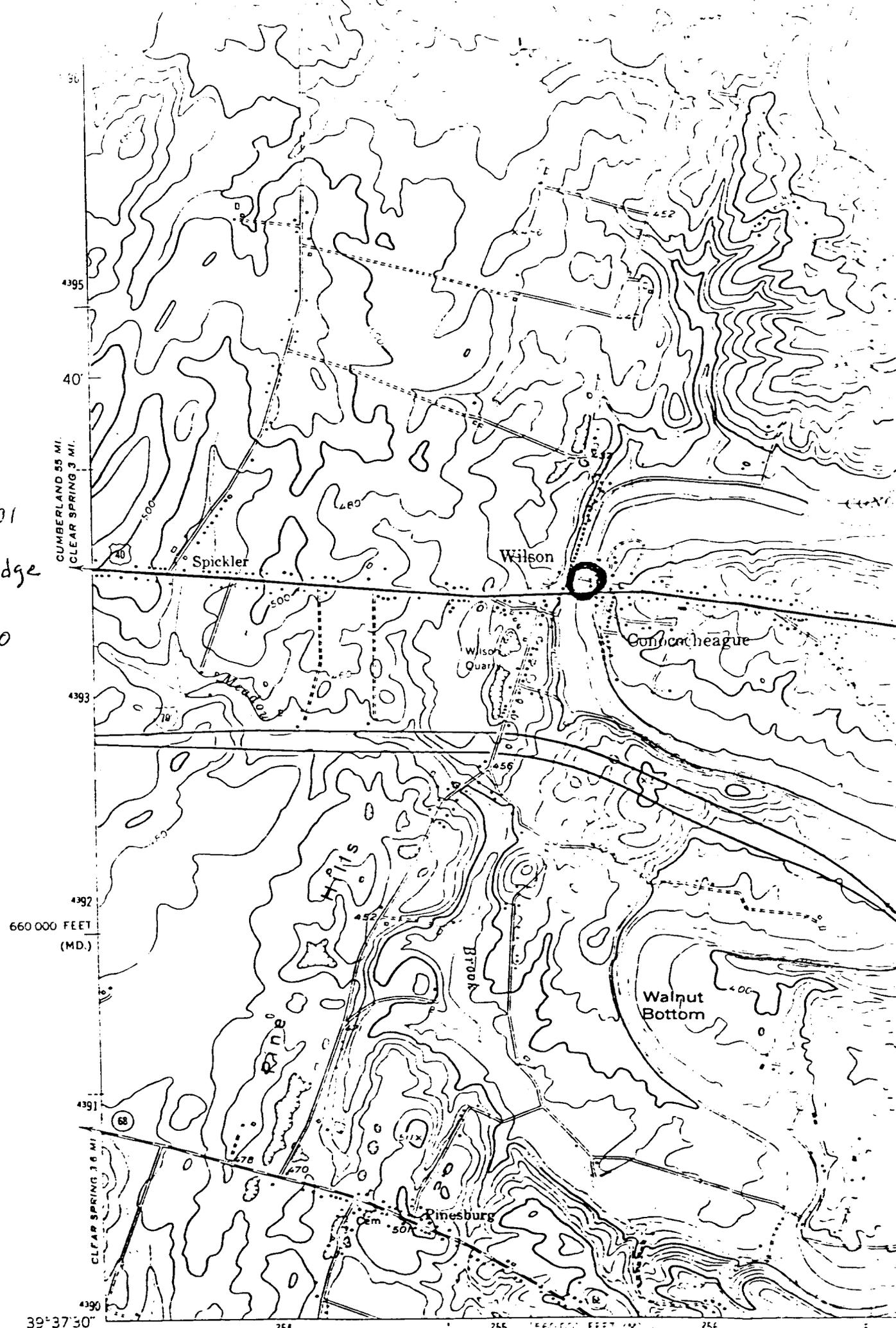
WA-V-001

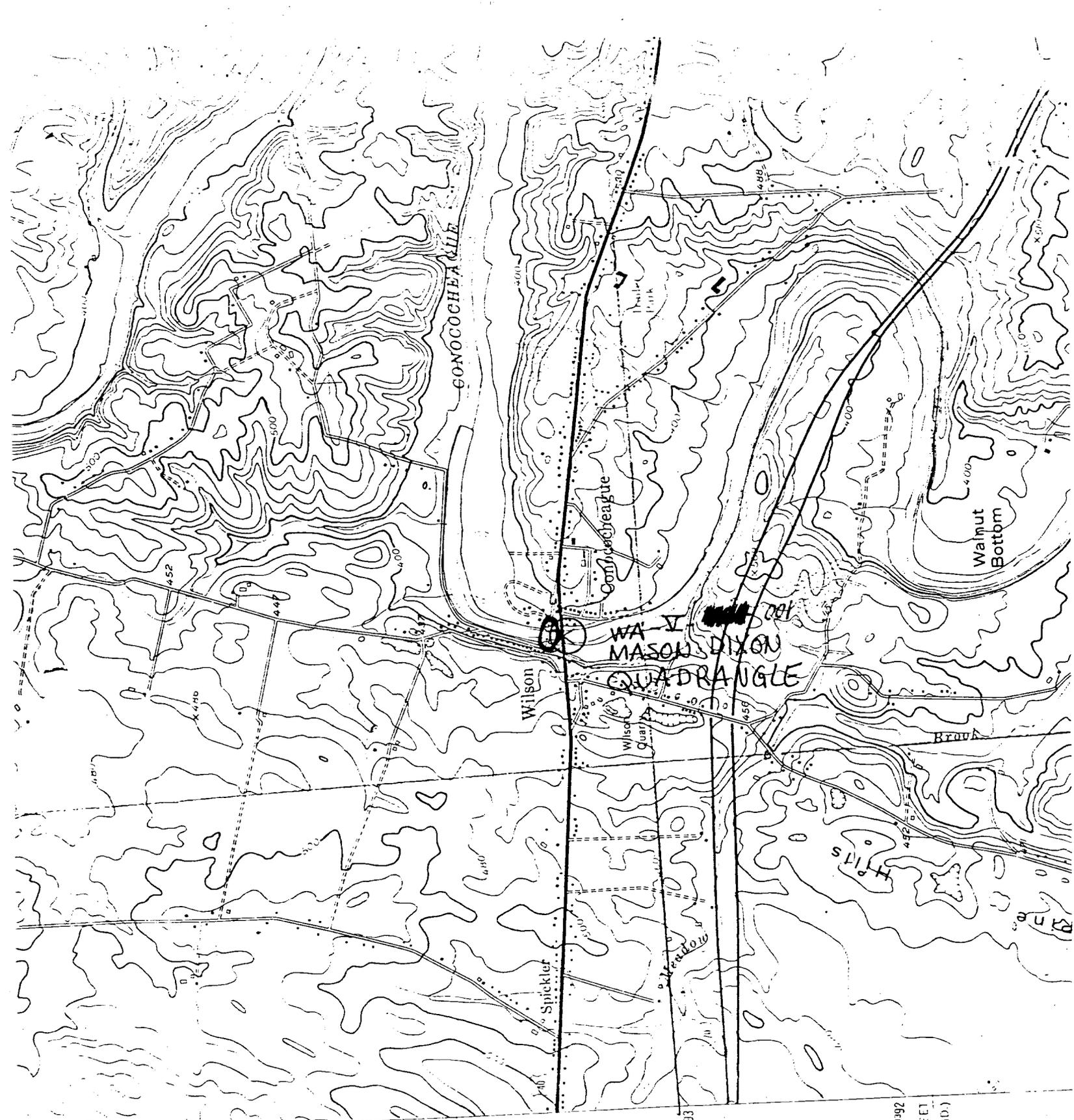
Wilson's Bridge
Washington County
Maryland

SKETCH MAP April 1981
scale: approx. 1"=100'



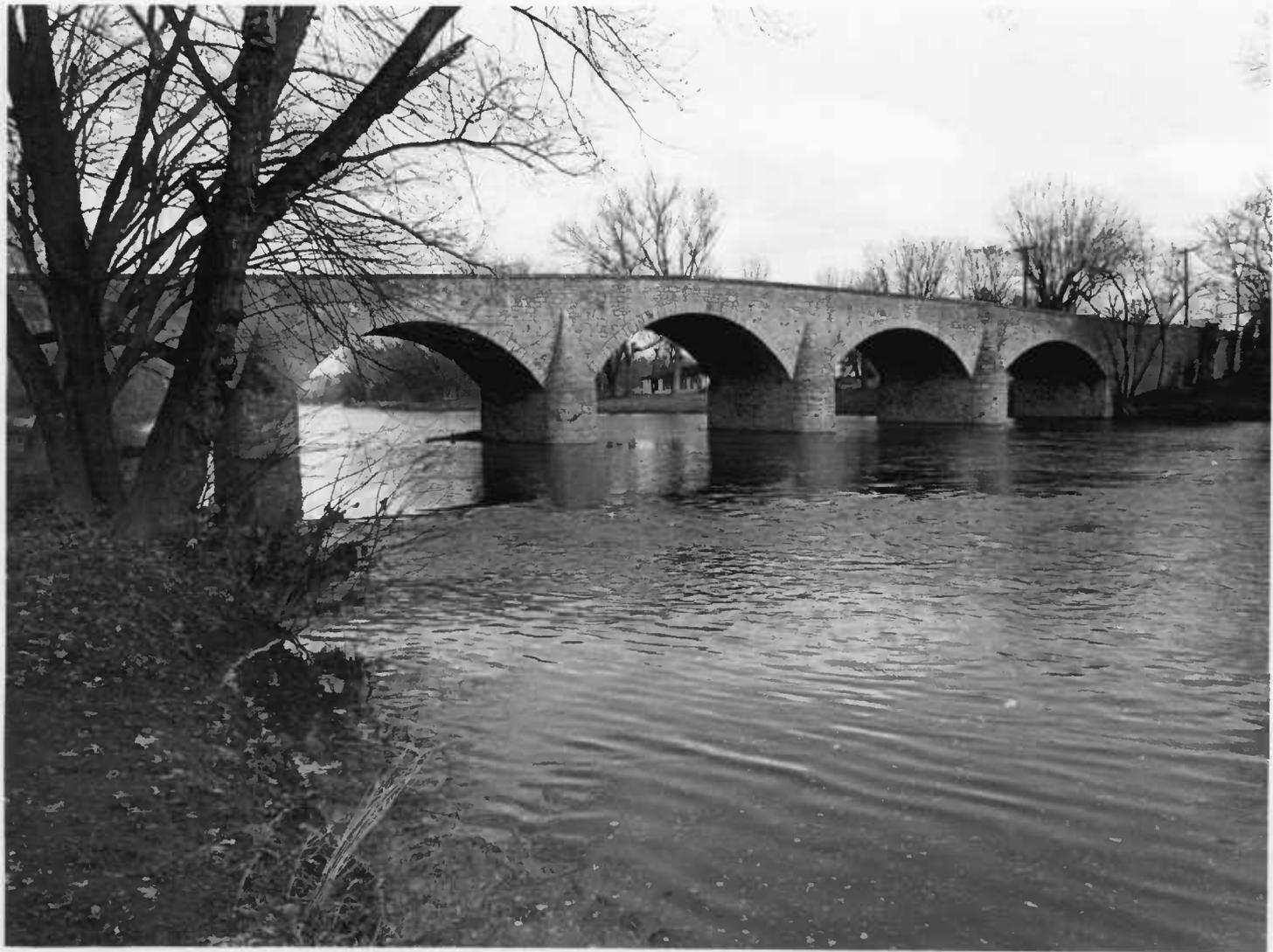
WA-V-001
Wilson Bridge
A 1B/255650
-1393420





491
492
493
494

492
1:250,000 FEET
(M.D.)



WILSON BRIDGE

WA - V - 001

NF