

10. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

State Bridge Number 118

11. PHOTOS (W/ FILM ROLL & FRAME NO.) AND SKETCH MAP OF LOCATION

44A:32-36

45A:3-22



44A:32

Mack, Warren W. "A History of Motor Highways in Delaware", in Reed, Henry Clay, Delaware: A History of the First State, vol.2, pp.535-550 (NY: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1947).

Delaware State Program. Delaware State Highways; The Story of Roads in Delaware... [Newark, Delaware: Press of Kells, 1919].

Federal Writers' Project. Delaware: A Guide to the First State. (New York: Viking Press, 1938).

Delaware State Archives. New Castle County Levy Court Records. Specifications, Proposals, Contract and Bond files.

Delaware State Archives. New Castle County Road Commissioners Records, 1750-1940.

Delaware DOT records: Annual Reports; contract files.

Plans on file at Delaware DOT: Contract #76-020-04

12. SOURCES

13. INVENTORIED BY:

AFFILIATION

DATE

P.A.C. Spero & Company with Kidde Consultants for Delaware DOT

April-November 1988

HABS/HAER INVENTORY

See "HABS/HAER Inventory Guidelines" before filling out this card.

1. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

State Bridge Number 118
Ashland Covered Bridge

2. LOCATION

Wooddale Drive over Red Clay Creek
Ashland, New Castle County, Delaware

3. DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION

1850-1880/1982

4. USE (ORIGINAL/CURRENT)

Vehicular

5. RATING

TB

6. CONDITION

Good: Some deteriorated and loose deck planks. Bottoms of sheathing on upstream side are damaged from impact.

State Highway Bridge 118 is a covered timber bridge measuring 51'-9" long. It carries one lane of vehicular traffic on a 14'-6" deck. The bridge originally consisted of a Town Lattice truss constructed with oak timbers connected together with hardwood tapered dowels ("trunnels"). The abutments were constructed of semi-coursed rubble; flared uncoursed rubble wing walls are topped with sloped concrete capstones. The portals of the bridge are ornamented by pilasters with flared capitals reminiscent of classical columns. The bridge underwent a major alteration in 1982, when rolled steel I-beams were installed under the deck to support the bridge structurally. The bridge height is 5'-6" above water level.

Delaware Department of Transportation records for Bridge 118 exist for the 1982 alteration. Although only two remain, records indicate that there were over thirty-five covered bridges in Delaware. By 1937, there were five remaining: Smith's Bridge across the Brandywine; Yeatman's Bridge across White Clay Creek; and three across the Red Clay Creek. Two of the covered bridges built to cross Red Clay Creek are still standing, the Wooddale and Ashland Bridges.

Bridge 118 was built perhaps as early as the mid-nineteenth century and is one of only two remaining covered bridges in the State. These bridges are Town trusses, patented by Ithiel Town of New Haven, Connecticut in 1820. Town, an architect, designed his truss for ease of construction by a good carpenter. He advertised and marketed it for roadways and later, for railroad use, meeting with widespread adoption over the next thirty years. From New England to Virginia to as far west as Ohio, Town's timber bridges were used for both highway and railway spans. The Ashland Bridge is thought to have been built by the same craftsmen that constructed its twin, the Wooddale covered bridge some two miles away. Both structures were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.