10. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

State Bridge 257

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

65A:3-18

65A:3

12. SOURCES

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 Com, 1947).

Delaware State Program. Delaware State Highways; The Story of Roads in Delaware [Wilmington, Del.: 1919].

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

Plans on file at Delaware DOT: Contract #401, 78-099-12

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 257

2. LOCATION
S.R. 7 over Christiana River
Christiana, New Castle County, Delaware

3. DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION
1937

4. USE (ORIGINAL/CURRENT)
Vehicular

5. RATING
SG

6. CONDITION
Fair: Rusted beams need painting. Calcium deposits under stone fascias. Scour along waterline.

7. DESCRIPTION

State Bridge 257 is a single-span steel girder bridge with a span length of 99'-0". In elevation, the bridge appears to be a stone arch bridge. The structure consists of nine rolled steel I-beams supported on concrete abutments. The uncoursed ashlar wing walls are U-shaped. The deck is 28'-0" wide and carries two lanes of vehicular traffic. The wing walls are capped with horizontal stone bands which are slightly thickened and curved at the ends. The spandrel wall is capped with a balustrade type parapet wall made of stone. Other decorative features include voussoirs and a keystone on the decorative stone arch.

8. HISTORICAL DATA

Delaware Department of Transportation records state that Bridge 257 was built in 1937. Original drawings on file at the Delaware Department of Transportation dated January and April 1935 indicate that Bridge 257 replaced a pony truss swing bridge at the same location. The previous bridge comprised two spans with an overall length of 65'-2", and had a timber deck measuring 16'-8" wide. It pivoted on a center bearing atop a rubble masonry pier; the abutments and flared wing walls were also of rubble masonry construction. Specifications for the present bridge allowed for the re-use of stone from the previous structure, providing that it was cleaned free of all mortar. Drawing notes cite "examples of rubble masonry bridges" including Bridge 543 for the contractor's reference. A section drawing of the fascia beam reveals the method of securing the rubble stone veneer using galvanized metal clips within poured concrete. Handwritten notes chronicle the progress of the project from the removal of the old superstructure on 9/11/36 to the pouring of the fascia beam on 2/12/37.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

This unusual bridge is designed as a highly embellished execution of a common structural type, the steel girder bridge. It was built to imitate a late nineteenth to early twentieth century stone arch. Survey results indicate that this masonry articulation of the girder bridge type was built only in New Castle County. Bridge 257 features rock-face ashlar details and good craftsmanship, and it is an exceptional example of this type.