

10. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE

State Bridge Number 494

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

5B:12-18



5B:16

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).

Carter, Dick. The History of Sussex County. Georgetown, Delaware: Community Newspaper Corp., 1976.

Hancock, Harold Bell. The History of Sussex County, Delaware. [s.l. : s.n.] 1976.

12. SOURCES

Delaware State Archives. Sussex County Road Papers 1875-1940.

Delaware DOT records: contract files.

Plans on file at Delaware DOT: DuPont 844, 8207306

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 494

2. LOCATION

Road 395 over Waterway
Fenwick Island, Sussex County, Delaware

3. DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION

1930

4. USE (ORIGINAL/CURRENT)

Vehicular

5. RATING

TB

6. CONDITION

Fair

State Highway Bridge Number 494 is a 10'-6" timber girder span, carrying two lanes of traffic with a deck width of 23'-0". It rests on timber bents comprised of 15" diameter pilings supporting a 12" x 12" beam. The straight wing walls are constructed of 4" x 10" planks. The deck consists of 4" x 10" planks secured to 6" x 14" girders. The parapet comprises a simple wooden rail, with posts at each portal and mid-span, horizontal rails in between, and capped with a flat board. The bridge retains much of its original fabric.

According to Delaware Department of Transportation records, Bridge Number 494 was built in 1930. Original drawings are no longer available for this bridge.

State Bridge 494 is considered significant as a typical southern Delaware timber bridge which appears to retain much of its original fabric. The majority of bridges surveyed on secondary roads in southern Delaware are simple timber bridges, mostly single spans, consisting of timber stringers on pile bents with wood decks and railings. Most commonly employed across the numerous small waterways of southern Delaware, the timber bridge type was also amenable to light-duty use at railroad crossings. Their structural configuration is simple and represents the continued use of one of the most primitive types of early bridges. Most of the bridges surveyed in Delaware date to the 1930s, although some are attributed earlier dates by the Department. Historic photographs illustrate that the type was built widely prior to the 1920s; it continued to be built in the 1940s. These bridges represent a specific engineering response to conditions characteristic of the region: they present a low-cost solution to the need for short spans crossing the numerous small waterways of southern Delaware. The structural simplicity of the type, the use of readily available materials, and the speed of erection also made it an ideal choice for use as a replacement bridge in emergency situations, such as after the disastrous floods of September 1935 when approximately 100 bridges were destroyed in Delaware.