

LITTLE HUNTER'S BEACH BROOK BRIDGE

(Little Hunter's Brook Bridge)

Acadia National Park Roads & Bridges

Spanning Little Hunter's Beach Brook on Park Loop Road

Seal Harbor Vicinity

Hancock County

Maine

HAER  
ME  
S-SEHA.V,  
9-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

LITTLE HUNTERS BEACH BROOK BRIDGE  
[Little Hunters Brook Bridge]  
Acadia National Park  
HAER No. ME-21

HAER  
ME  
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9-

LOCATION: Spanning Little Hunters Beach Brook on Park Loop Road, 1 mile east of Seal Harbor, Seal Harbor vicinity, Acadia National Park, Mount Desert Island, Hancock County, Maine  
Quad: Seal Harbor, ME  
UTM: 19/562825/4905125

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1938

DESIGN: Bureau of Public Roads, U.S. Department of Commerce

ENGINEER: Leo Grossman, Associate Highway Engineer, Public Roads Administration, Structural Engineer  
  
Philip Mabel, Junior Highway Engineer, Public Roads Administration, Resident Structural Engineer

CONTRACTOR: W. H. Hinman, Inc., North Anson, Maine

STRUCTURE TYPE: Stone-faced reinforced arched culvert

FHWA STRUCTURE NO.: 1700-008P

OWNER: Acadia National Park, National Park Service

SIGNIFICANCE: The Little Hunters Beach Brook Bridge carries the Park Loop Road over its namesake stream in the Black Woods section of the park. Wooden steps lead down from the bridge to the cobbled beach.

PROJECT INFORMATION: Documentation of the Little Hunters Beach Brook Bridge is part of the Acadia National Park Roads and Bridges Recording Project, conducted in 1994-95 by the Historic American Engineering Record.  
  
Neil Maher, Historian, 1995  
Richard Quin, HAER Historian, 1996

This is one in a series of reports prepared for the Acadia National Park Roads and Bridges Recording Project. HAER No. ME-11, ACADIA NATIONAL PARK ROADS AND BRIDGES, contains an overview history of the park road systems.

#### HISTORY

The Little Hunters Beach Brook Bridge was constructed to carry the Day Mountain Road segment of the Park Loop Road over its namesake stream in the Black Woods section of Acadia National Park. While Mount Desert Island, on which Acadia National park is located, has an extensive road system, the Park Loop Road was designed as a self-contained closed-loop system separated from local roads by parallel routes or grade separation structures. The intent was to separate park visitor travel from the commercial and residential traffic on the island.

The bridge was constructed as part of Day Mountain Road Project 9A1 of the Park Loop Road, which also included grading, subgrade reinforcement, installation of drainage structures, and bituminous gravel surfacing of a road connecting the Stanley Brook section and the Otter Cliffs section of the Park Loop Road.<sup>1</sup> The work was carried out under the supervision of the Public Roads Administration, the Depression-era successor to the Bureau of Public Roads. The Bureau of Public Roads became responsible for major road construction and reconstruction projects in the national parks under a 1926 agreement with the National Park Service.

Surveys for the project were begun by the Bureau of Public Roads in March 1937 and conducted until August 1939. Several alternate routes were investigated, and the final location was decided upon by Harold J. Spelman, District Engineer of the Public Roads Administration, Thomas, C. Vint, Chief of the Branch of Plans and Design for the National Park Service, and John D. Rockefeller Jr, who financed much of the construction of the Park Loop Road.<sup>2</sup>

Bids were opened in the Public Road's Administration's Albany, New York district office on 24 August 1939. Work began on the project on 18 September and was completed by May 1941. The Public Roads Administration assigned Associate Highway Engineer

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<sup>1</sup>Leo Grossman, Associate Highway Engineer, Federal Works Agency, Public Roads Administration, District No. 9, "Final Construction Report, 1939-1941, Acadia National Park, Day Mountain Road, Hancock County, Maine, Project No. 9A1, Account No. 5663" (Albany, New York: Federal Works Agency, Public Roads Administration), 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 11.

Leo Grossman, who was resident engineer for most of the road work at Acadia National Park, as supervising engineer. Assistant Highway Engineer Philip Mabel was resident engineer for the bridge construction. The contractor for the construction was W. H. Hinman, Inc., of North Anson, Maine.<sup>3</sup> The bridge was completed in 1938.<sup>4</sup>

The Little Hunters Beach Brook Bridge is actually a reinforced concrete box culvert surmounted by a high retaining wall carrying the roadway. The structure is 78' long and rises 23' above the stream. It has a deck width of 32'6" and carries a two-lane road which is 23'. The culvert is 6'2" wide and 5' tall. The stone faced parapet walls on the Little Hunters Beach Brook Bridge extend 1'9" above the deck. A series of wooden steps, constructed by the Youth Conservation Corps in the 1970s, leads down to Little Hunters Beach.

A 1990 inspection by the Federal Highway Administration determined that the bridge was "deficient or functionally obsolete" and in need of rehabilitation. The bridge safety inspection report recommended an expenditure of \$300 in order to clear trees and other vegetation from the abutment and wingwall areas, and another \$4,500 to seal cracks in the culvert's underside, repoint mortar in the bridge's stone masonry, and repair channel erosion on the upstream and downstream sides of the structure.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Grossman, 19.

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, "Bridge Safety Inspection Report, Park Loop Road Over Little Hunters Brook, Acadia National Park, Str. No. 1700-008P, Inspected: June 26, 1990" (Sterling, Virginia: Federal Highway Administration, Eastern District Federal Division), 3.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 11.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Grossman, Leo, Associate Highway Engineer, United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Public Roads. "Final Construction Report, 1939-1941, Acadia National Park, Day Mountain Road, Hancock County, Maine, Project No. 9A1, Account No. 5663." Albany, NY: Federal Works Agency, Public Roads Administration, District No. 9.
- U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. "Bridge Safety Inspection Report, Park Loop Road Over Little Hunters Brook, Acadia National Park, Str. No. 1700-008P, Inspected: June 26, 1990." Sterling, Virginia: Federal Highway Administration, Eastern District Federal Division.

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HAER No. ME-21

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Park Loop Road, spanning Hunters Brook

Acadia National Park Roads and Bridges

Seal Harbor Vicinity

Hancock County

Maine

JET LOWE, PHOTOGRAPHER, SEPTEMBER 1994

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LITTLE HUNTERS BEACH BROOK BRIDGE FACING NORTH

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