

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM  
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

500-20177  
DATE ENTERED NOV 25 1977

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES - COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**NAME**

HISTORIC

Yosemite Valley Bridges

AND/OR COMMON

Yosemite Valley Bridges

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Yosemite Valley 8 bridges over former river

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Yosemite National Park

VICINITY OF Yosemite

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

California

CODE

06

COUNTY

Mariposa

CODE

043

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES RESTRICTED

YES UNRESTRICTED

NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER

**AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS (If applicable)

National Park Service, Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

STATE

California 94102

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

STREET & NUMBER

National Park Service

CITY, TOWN

P. O. Box 577

STATE

Yosemite National Park

California

**REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL COUNTY LOCAL

SURVEY NUMBER

STATE

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

There are 8 granite-faced, concrete arch road bridges on the Valley floor in Yosemite National Park. They were constructed between 1921 and 1933, with five built in 1928. The bridges are similar in design, but vary in size and configuration. All bridges are constructed of reinforced concrete in the form of a semi elliptical or 3-centered arch. The concrete is veneered with rough quarried, rock-faced granite which is laid in an uncoursed rubble bond. The bridges feature finely cut, rock-faced voussoirs and keystones.

All bridges span the Merced River except for the Yosemite Creek Bridge, which crosses Yosemite Creek, and the Tenaya Creek Bridge, which crosses Tenaya Creek.

Yosemite Creek Bridge:

Built - 1922  
 Designer - NPS  
 Type - Reinforced concrete arch veneered with native granite  
 Length - 52'  
 Span - 1 - 50'  
 Skew - 0°  
 Width - 24', no sidewalks  
 Traffic lanes - 2  
 Surfacing - asphaltic concrete  
 Original cost - \$32,000.09  
 The bridge is crowned transversely at the center point of the span. The parapets parallel the sloping grade of the roadway. The wing walls and buttresses are skewed slightly, and the buttresses were originally topped with small lanterns. Granite coping stones overhang the parapet walls. This is the oldest of the eight bridges, and original drawings exist in NPS files.

Ahwahnee Bridge:

Built - 1928  
 Designer - NPS  
 Type - Reinforced concrete arches, veneered with native granite  
 Length - 122'  
 Span - 3: 1-42', 2-39' each  
 Skew - 0°  
 Width - Total 39'; roadway 27', one sidewalk 5', one bridal path 7'  
 Traffic Lanes - 2  
 Surfacing - asphaltic concrete  
 Original cost - \$59,513.03  
 This bridge differs from the others with its triple arched span.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY & A
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ETHNOGRAPHY
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION & SETTL.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INVESTIGATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> PROMOTION

SPECIFIC DATES 1922 - Present BUILDING

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The eight highway bridges in Yosemite the category of "Architecture" as one or "rustic" architectural design. The Service field landscape architects did damage done by new roads. They sought in the case of these particular structures whose material and texture harmonized the environment.

During the road construction program it was necessary to construct a number of highway standards of construction, but upon the natural scene. Strictly functional would not meet the need. Therefore, the structures which were in essence rustic these were masked with rustic stone and concrete vault. Finally, the concrete was graded. The result was a trouble-free masonry appearance. The masonry fitted with the natural setting. The rough harmony with the granite walls of Yosemite structures.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

**CHECK ONE**  
 PREPARED BY: ORIGINAL SITE  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHAEOLOGY HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<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 type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" 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			

**FORMER PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**  
 and bridges on the Valley floor  
 constructed between 1921 and 1933,  
 similar in design, but vary in  
 constructed of reinforced concrete  
 masonry arch. The concrete is  
 granite which is laid in an uncoursed  
 pattern, rock-faced voussoirs and

or the Yosemite Creek Bridge,  
 Yosemite Creek Bridge, which crosses

with native granite

center point of the span. The  
 roadway. The wing walls and  
 buttresses were originally topped  
 with overhang the parapet walls.  
 and original drawings exist in

with native granite

walk 5', one bridal path 7'

with triple arched span.

**SPECIFIC DATES** 1922 - Present  
**BUILDER-ARCHITECT** National Park Service

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The eight highway bridges in Yosemite Valley are of local significance in the category of "architecture" as outstanding examples of "non-intrusive" or "rustic" architectural design. They were designed by National Park Service field landscape architects charged with minimizing the landscape damage done by new roads. They sought through the use of native materials in the case of these particular structures, stone--to design a structure whose material and texture harmonized as much as possible with the natural environment.

During the road construction program conducted during the early 1920's, it was necessary to construct a number of bridges which met the minimum highway standards of construction, but which intruded as little as possible upon the natural scene. Strictly functional bridges of concrete and steel would not meet the need. Therefore, the NPS landscape architects designed structures which were in essence reinforced concrete vault bridges, but these were masked with rustic stone walls erected on the sides of the concrete vault. Finally, the concrete vault would be filled with earth and graded. The result was a trouble-free modern bridge with a traditional masonry appearance. The masonry facades achieved a great degree of harmony with the natural setting. The rough boulders of native granite were in harmony with the granite walls of Yosemite Valley, and are an excellent example of the application of "rustic" architectural style to engineering structures.

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RECEIVED AUG 29 1977

DATE ENTERED NOV 25 1977

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Clark Bridge:

Built - 1928

Designer - NPS

Type - Reinforced concrete arch, veneered with native granite

Length - 126'

Span - 1 - 75'7"; two equestrian subways, 7' x 11' through abutments

Skew - 20°

Width - Total 39': roadway 27', one sidewalk 5', one bridal path 7'

Traffic lanes - 2

Surfacing - asphaltic concrete

Original cost - \$40,061.22

The semi elliptical arch which spans the Merced River is flanked by two round arched equestrian tunnels in the wing walls. The roadway of this bridge and the following six bridges is crowned in the center, along the axis of the bridge; the roadway and parapet walls are horizontal.

Pohono Bridge:

Built - 1928

Designer - NPS

Type - Reinforced concrete arch veneered with native granite

Length - 82'

Span - 1 - 80'

Skew - 0°

Width - Total 32': roadway 27', one bridal path 5'

Traffic lanes - 2

Surfacing - asphaltic concrete

Original cost - \$29,081.55

Sugar Pine:

Built - 1928

Designer - NPS

Type - Reinforced concrete arch veneered with native granite

Length - 108'

Span - 1 - 106'

Skew - 5°

Width - Total 39': roadway 27', one sidewalk 5', one bridal path 7'

Traffic lanes - 2

Surfacing - asphaltic concrete

Original cost - \$73,507.44

This is the longest single span of all eight bridges.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

Tenaya Creek Bridge:

Built - 1928

Designer - NPS

Type - Reinforced concrete arch veneered with native granite

Length - 58'

Span - 1 - 56'9"

Skew - 25°

Width - Total 39'; roadway 27', one sidewalk 5', one bridal path 7'

Traffic lanes - 2

Surfacing - asphaltic concrete

Original cost - \$37,749.16

Happy Isles Bridge:

Built - 1929

Designer - NPS

Type - Reinforced concrete arch veneered with native granite

Length - 126'

Span - 1 - 75', 2 equestrian subways 7' x 11' on abutments

Skew - 20°

Width - Total 37'; roadway 27', 2 sidewalks 5' each

Traffic lanes - 2

Surfacing - asphaltic concrete

Original cost - \$41,673.03

This bridge is nearly identical to the Clark Bridge in all dimensions.

Stoneman Bridge:

Built - 1933

Designer - NPS

Type - Reinforced concrete arch veneered with native granite

Length - 153'

Span - 1 - 72', 2 equestrian subways 8'6" x 11' through abutments

Skew - 0°

Width - Total 39'; roadway 27', 2 sidewalks 6' each

Traffic lanes - 2

Surfacing - asphaltic concrete

Original cost - \$71,675.08

The latest to be built, this bridge is similar to the Happy Isles and Clark Bridges, but the equestrian tunnels are built out from the face of the wing walls, for decorative emphasis.

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Yosemite Valley Bridges

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITM reference pt.

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10

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Yosemite Creek Bridge	11/271480/4180540
Ahwahnee Bridge	11/273410/4180350
Clark's Bridge	11/274120/4179830
Pohono Bridge	11/265140/4177525
Sugar Pine Bridge	11/273710/4180360
Tennaya Bridge	11/274740/4180080
Happy Isles Bridge	11/274670/4179020
Stoneman Bridge	11/273360/4179955

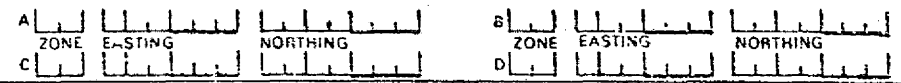
ONLY  
 AUG 29 1977  
 NOV 25 1977

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

- American Buildings, Carl W. Condit
- Park Structures and Facilities, National Park Service
- National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942, by Wm. C. Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere, and Henry C. Law, esp. pp. 102-104 in draft edition

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY N/A  
 UTM REFERENCES See attached sheet.



**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Yosemite Creek Bridge: 52' x 24', crosses Yosemite Creek on North Road. Ahwahnee Bridge: 122' x 39', crosses Merced River on Mirror Lake Road. Clark Bridge: 126' x 39', crosses Merced River on Curry Stables Road. Pohono Bridge: 82' x 32', crosses Merced River at beginning of El Portal Road. Sugar Pine Bridge: 108' x 39', crosses Merced River on Mirror Lake Road. Tenaya Creek Bridge: 58' x 39', crosses Tenaya Creek on Happy Isles-Mirror Lake Road. Happy Isles Bridge: 126' x 37', crosses Merced River on Happy Isles Road. Stoneman Bridge: 155' x 39', crosses Merced River at Camp Curry intersection.

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OF COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME - TITLE  
Merrill Ann Wilson, Historical Architect

ORGANIZATION  
National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER  
655 Parfet St., P. O. Box 25287

CITY OR TOWN  
Denver

DATE  
9/76

TELEPHONE  
303-234-5545

STATE  
Colorado 80225

**CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION**

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES  NO

NOTE  
*Helen Phoenix*  
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

JUN 23 1977

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is State National  State  Local

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE *[Signature]*

TITLE Deputy Assistant Secretary

DATE AUG 19 1977

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

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

*Robert B. Pettis* DATE 11/25/77

ATTEST: *[Signature]* DATE 11-23-77





Yosemite Valley Bridges - Mariposa County, CA

Yosemite Creek Bridge

Yosemite Nat'l Park, California

Photographer: Dean Shenk/NPS

Date: March 1976

Negative located: Denver Service  
Center/NPS/TWE

Direction: View to ~~east~~<sup>WEST</sup> shows  
North facade of bridge.

Photo # 1 of 8

AUG 29 1977

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Yosemite Valley Bridges - Mariposa Co., CA

Ahwahnee Bridge

Yosemite Nat'l Park, California  
photographer: Dean Shenk

Date: March 1976

Negative located: Denver Service  
Center/NPS/TWE

Direction: View to ~~east~~<sup>west</sup> shows  
North facade of bridge

Photo # 298

AUG 29 1977

NOV 25 1977





Yosemite Valley Bridges - Mariposa County, CA

Clark's Bridge

Yosemite National Park, CA

Photographer: Dean Shenk/NPS

Date: March 1976

Negative located: Denver Service  
Center/NPS/TWE

Direction: View to North shows <sup>South</sup> East  
facade of bridge w/ Royal Arches  
and Washinton Column in bkgd.

Photo # 3 *078*

NOV 25 1977

AUG 29 1977





Yosemite Valley Bridges - Mariposa County, CA

Pohono Bridge

Yosemite National Park, California

Photographer: Dean Shenk/NPS

Date: March 1976

Negative located: Denver Service

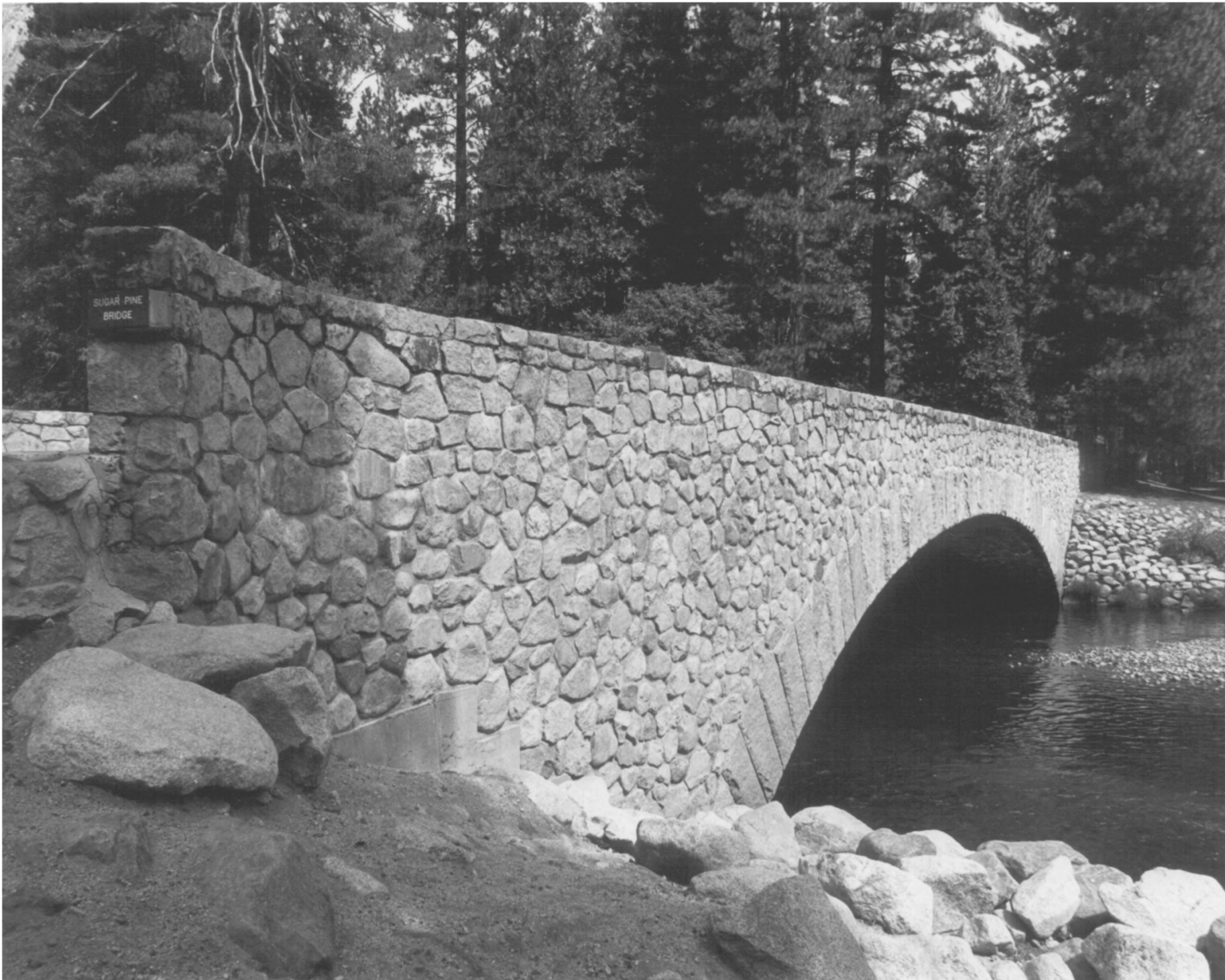
Center/NPS/Twe

Direction: View to Northeast shows

East facade of bridge

Photo #4 48

NOV 25 1977 AUG 29 1977



SUGAR PINE  
BRIDGE



Yosemite Valley Bridges - Mariposa County, CA

Sugar Pine Bridge

Yosemite National Park, California

Photographer: Dean Shenk

Negative located: Denver Service  
Center/NPS/TWE

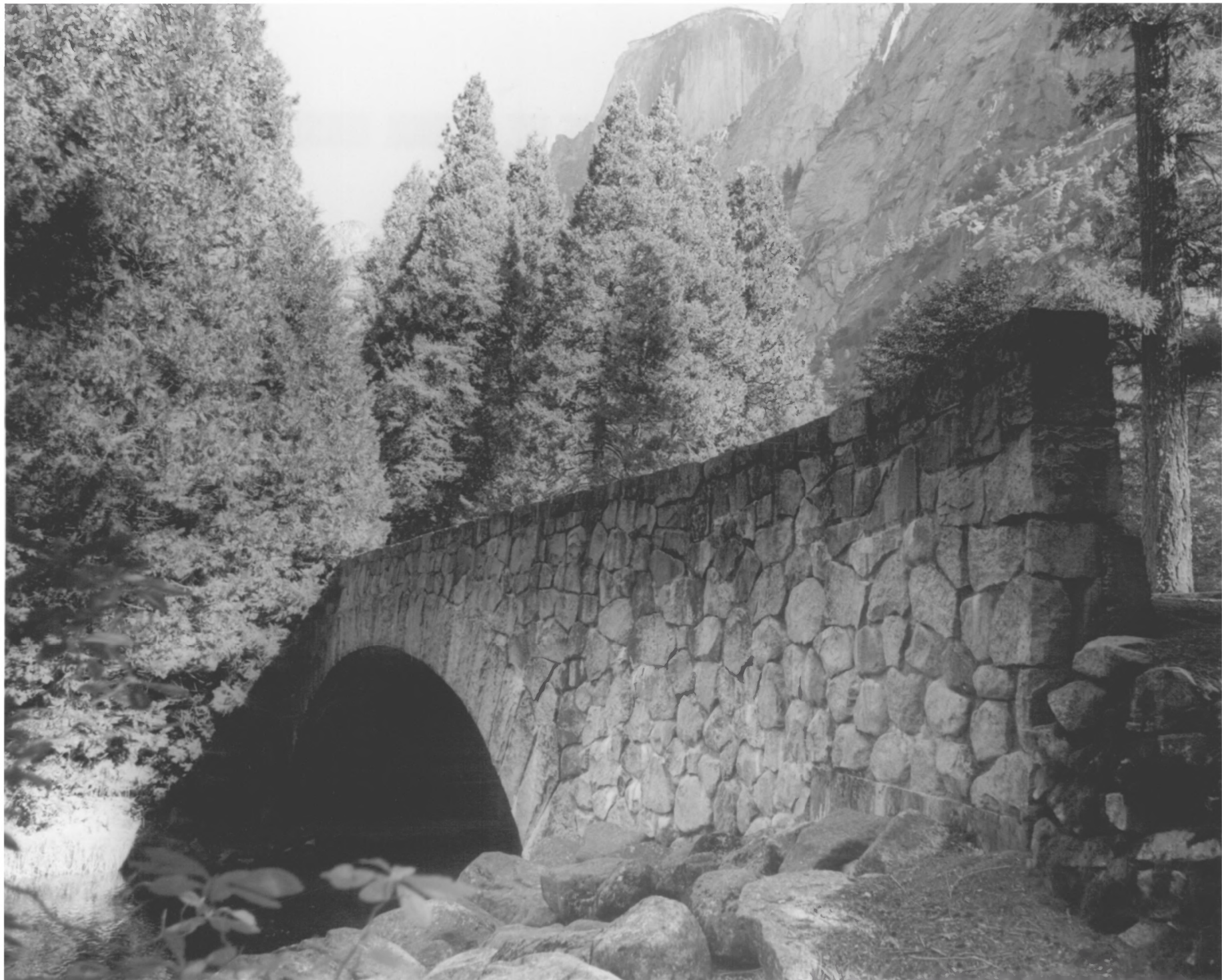
Direction: View to North shows

East facade of bridge

Photo #5078

AUG 29 1977

NOV 25 1977



Yosemite Valley Bridges - Mariposa County, CA

#698

Tenaya Bridge

Yosemite National Park, California

Photographer: Dean Shenk/NPS

Date: March 1976

Negative filed: Denver Service  
Center/NPS/TWE

Direction: View to North shows

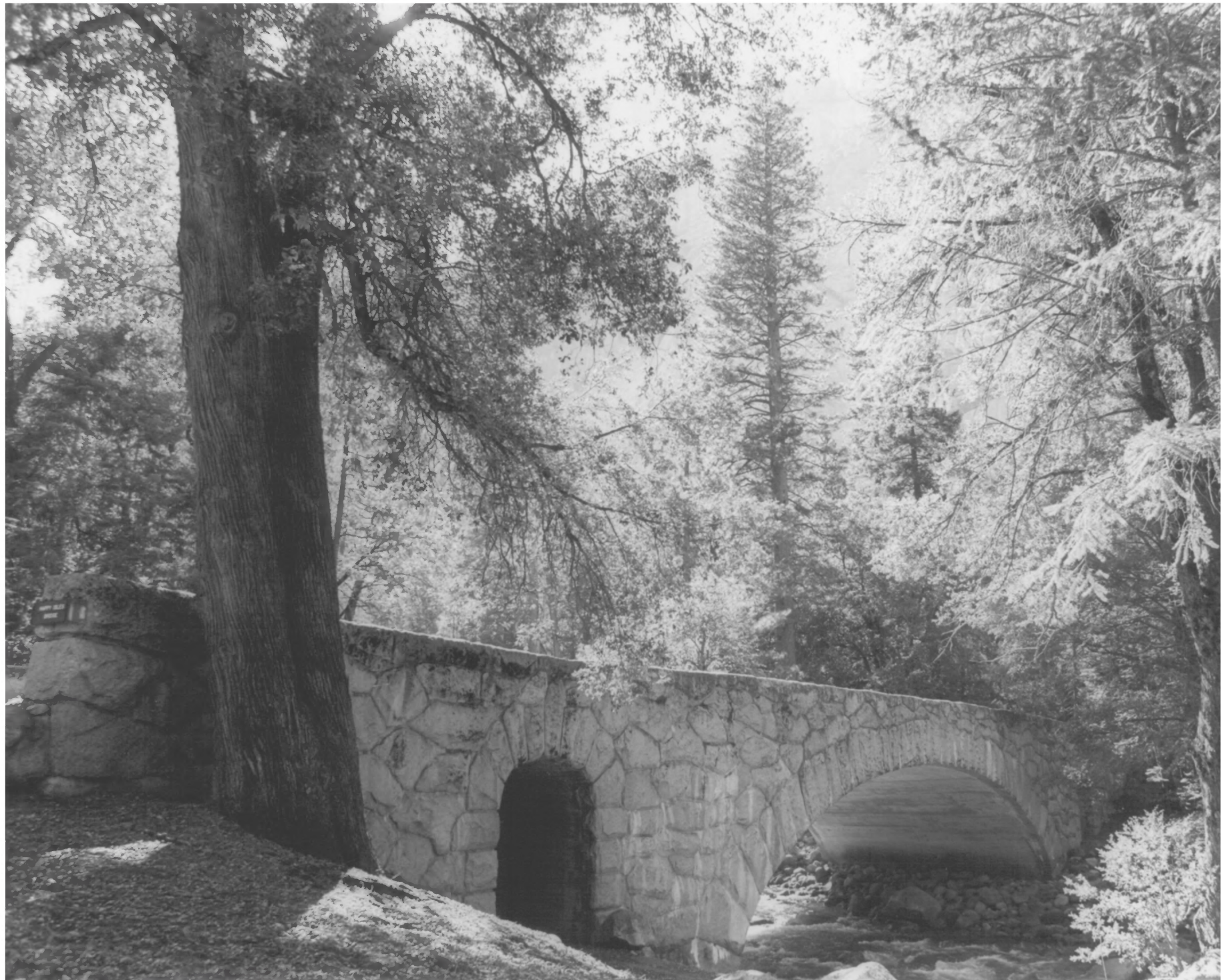
West facade of bridge with  
Half Dome in bkgd.

Photo # 8

NOV 25 1977

AUG 29 1977





Yosemite Valley Bridges - Mariposa County, CA

Happy Isles Bridge

Yosemite National Park, California

Photographer: Dean Shenk/NPS

Date: March 1976

Negative located: Denver Service  
Center/NPS/ TWE

Direction: View to Northwest show

<sup>South</sup>  
~~East~~ facade of bridge

Photo # 708

AUG 29 1977

NOV 25 1977





Yosemite Valley Bridge - Mariposa County, CA

Stoneman Bridge

Yosemite National Park, CA

Photographer: Dean Shenk/NPS

Date: March 1976

Negative located: Denver Service  
Center/NPS/TWE

Direction: View to Northwest show  
east facade of bridge

Photo # 8 of 8

NOV 25 1977

AUG 29 1977