

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

|                   |
|-------------------|
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| date entered      |

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic ST. MARY'S OR SHADE GAP COVERED BRIDGE

and/or common Bridge #8

**2. Location**

street & number 4.5 miles south of Orbisonia on T358 \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Cromwell Township \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 9

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Huntingdon code 061

**3. Classification**

|   |  |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Category</b>                               | <b>Ownership</b>                           | <b>Status</b>   | <b>Present Use</b>                     |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> district             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied          | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture   | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s)          | <input type="checkbox"/> private           | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                   | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial    | <input type="checkbox"/> park                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both              | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress             | <input type="checkbox"/> educational   | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                 | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                  | <b>Accessible</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> religious                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object               | <input type="checkbox"/> in process        | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted              | <input type="checkbox"/> government    | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> no                           | <input type="checkbox"/> military      | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                    |

**4. Owner of Property**

name Huntingdon County

street & number Huntingdon County Courthouse, 223 Penn Street

city, town Huntingdon \_\_\_ vicinity of state Pennsylvania

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Huntingdon County Courthouse

street & number 223 Penn Street

city, town Huntingdon state Pennsylvania

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

# 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The St. Mary's or Shade Gap covered bridge crosses Shade Creek on township route #358, just east of U.S. Route 552. This bridge is in excellent condition and was repaired and painted in 1974. Its gable roof is tin covered. The Howe trussing system of this one span 65 $\frac{1}{4}$ " long, 16'6" wide bridge is partially covered by enclosing side walls. The exterior walls have vertical siding while the interior walls are laid horizontally. The open trussing system above the walls is similar to the regional characteristics of the area as seen in the Bedford County bridges. The bridge is supported by cut stone abutments. The load capacity is 2 tons.

## 8. Significance

| Period  | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric          | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning     | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic    | <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 type="checkbox"/> architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input type="checkbox"/> social/                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> art                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music                  | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy             | <input type="checkbox"/> theater                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900–                | <input type="checkbox"/> communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)           |

Specific dates 1889

Builder/Architect

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The St. Mary's or Shade Gap bridge is the only remaining covered bridge in Huntingdon County. This later but unusual bridge is one of only four Howe truss covered bridges left in Pennsylvania. The others are the McConnell's Mill Bridge in Lawrence County and the Kintersburg and Thomas Ford bridges of Indiana County.

The Howe truss was patented in 1840 by William Howe of Massachusetts. This trussing system substituted iron rods for the wooden post as tension members, thus eliminating one heavy timber. Howe sold the rights to build bridges on his patented design. He divided the country into territories and apportioned exclusive franchises among his relatives and friends. Howe's brother-in-law, Daniel Stone, was awarded Pennsylvania's patent rights. In 1848, Stone began the mammoth 3,670 feet railroad bridge over the Susquehanna at Rockville. This bridge was used until 1876. The Howe system was more commonly used for railroad bridges. Stone was responsible for contracts with the Union Army during the Civil War. Stone died in 1863.

The remaining Pennsylvania Howe truss covered bridge post date Stones death so probably cannot be attributed to his control of the patent. By the 1880 most covered bridges being built in the western U.S. employed the Howe truss however, this was not the case in Pennsylvania. The Howe truss appears not to have ever been a popular system for covered bridges which makes the remaining four very unusual.

McConnell's Mill, 1874  
Kintersburg, 1877  
Thomas Ford, 1879  
St. Mary's or Shade Gap, 1889

## 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Allen, Richard S., Covered Bridges of the Middle Atlantic States. Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Greene Press, 1959, pp. 26-27.  
Wilson, Ray, E., Twenty Different Ways to Build a Covered Bridge, p. 134-35.  
Huntingdon County Historic Sites Survey, 1978-79.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .05

Quadrangle name Orbisonia, Pa.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

|   |           |               |                |   |      |         |          |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | <u>18</u> | <u>255030</u> | <u>4454360</u> | B |      |         |          |
|   | Zone      | Easting       | Northing       |   | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| C |           |               |                | D |      |         |          |
| E |           |               |                | F |      |         |          |
| G |           |               |                | H |      |         |          |

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Acreage and boundaries are calculated by adding 20 feet to the length and 10 feet to the width to include the abutments.  $(65'4" + 20') \times (17'6" + 10') = 85.33 \times 27.5 = 2346.57 \times .05 = .05$

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|       |      |        |      |
|       |      |        |      |

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan M. Zacher

organization PHMC

date

street & number Box 1026

telephone

city or town Harrisburg

state Pennsylvania

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

ED WEINTRAUB, Director

title Office of Historic Preservation

date 12-10-79

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



4452 (SHADE GAP) 5464 III NE

4453

4454

12.30"

4455

St. Mary's or Shade Gap Covered  
 Bridge (38-31-01)  
 Huntington County  
 Zone 18 E255030 N4454360