

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Virginian Railway Underpass
other names/site number 60-571502573

2. Location

street & number VA Rt. 723 at Norfolk Southern Railroad immediately
city, town New Ellett south of the village of New Ellett
state Virginia code VA county Montgomery code 121 sip code 24073

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public-State/Federal and building(s)/district/site/object. Includes a table for contributing/noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: Prehistoric and Historic Resources of Montgomery County
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: Virginia Department of Historic Resources. State or Federal agency and bureau.

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
TRANSPORTATION: road-related (vehicular)
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
TRANSPORTATION: road-related (vehicular)
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: concrete horseshoe-arch underpass

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____
walls _____
roof _____
other CONCRETE

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Virginian Railway Underpass is located in the North Fork Valley at the point where the valley's principal road, VA Route 723, meets the railway bed (now the Norfolk Southern Railroad) at the village of New Ellett. The road is at this point twelve feet in width. The underpass at ground level is 14' 6" in width with a total head room of 12' 9". The single circular barrel underpass is constructed of poured concrete. At the springing point of the arch and below, the side walls turn inward forming a horseshoe shape. A metal date plate embedded in the concrete wall gives the construction date as 1906 and the builder as Bates and Rogers Construction Company. The single-lane underpass is fifteen feet in length, and each arch is supported by angled concrete abutments.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

ENGINEERING

1906

1906

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bates and Rogers Construction Company

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The underpass at the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks at VA Route 723 is eligible under criterion C as the most prominent of several horseshoe-form concrete bridges unique to Montgomery County the only such arch bridges in the state. It is identified in Virginia Highway Research Council Survey Files and analyzed by Paula Spero for that agency in a study titled Criteria for Preservation and Adaptive Use of Historic Highway Structures Final Report. The underpass received 21 points out of a possible 35 maximum score in a rating of 136 concrete bridges considered of potential historic value in the state. Application of the criteria resulted in ratings ranging from 0 - 31. Seven per cent of the concrete arch bridges reviewed received better than a 24 point rating, indicating a high level of significance; 24% received between 17 and 23 points, indicating a need for further study on a case-by-case basis of the historic potential of the bridges; the remaining 69% received less than 15 points and were considered of low potential significance. This bridge received the highest marks in the twelve-county Salem district other than three elaborate bridges in the cities of Bedford and Roanoke. It was given high marks for its integrity, history, documented builder, early date, material, and unusual form. No masonry bridge received higher than 25 points in the district.

Early arch bridges in the United States were built of stone. By 1900 zealous proponents of concrete insured the material's predominance for the construction of highway bridges and short railway spans throughout the early twentieth century. Concrete easily assumes an arch allowing longer spans than masonry arches. Bridge construction in concrete appeared first with plain concrete structures in the 1870s, but quickly progressed to the composite use of concrete and steel. The first application of reinforced concrete occurred in the early 1890s. Within the next few years, a large number of bridges of that material were built. By the end of the nineteenth century, the concrete culvert shaped like the traditional masonry barrel was a well established form. The majority of the arch bridges surveyed in Virginia were of concrete construction. Out of a total of 166, 136 were concrete. Most of the arch bridges are undocumented with respect to designer or builder. Several railroad underpasses in Montgomery County were built in horseshoe arch forms, a shape not seen elsewhere in the state. It is not without precedent, however, as a discussion on railroad arch

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Spero, Paula A. C. A Survey and Photographic Inventory of Concrete and Masonry Arch Bridges in Virginia. Charlottesville, Va.: Virginia Highway & Transportation Research Council, May 1984.

Spero, Paula A. C. Criteria for Preservation and Adaptive Use of Historic Highway Structures Final Report. Charlottesville, Va.: Virginia Highway and Transportation Research Council, 1984.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre.

UTM References

A

1	7	5	6	4	2	0	4	1	1	6	9	8	0
Zone		Easting					Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone		Easting					Northing						

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Beginning at point A , 15 feet northwest of Va Rt 723 and 40 feet southwest of the RR, proceeding north 93 feet along an imaginary line to point B, thence east 40 feet along an imaginary line to point C, thence south 93 feet along an imaginary line to point D, thence west 40 feet along an imaginary line to the point of origin.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries were chosen to include the structure and the space immediately surrounding it.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gibson Worsham
organization Gibson Worsham, Architect date February 1988
street & number Yellow Sulphur Springs, Route 2 telephone (703) 552-4730
city or town Christiansburg state Virginia zip code 24073

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

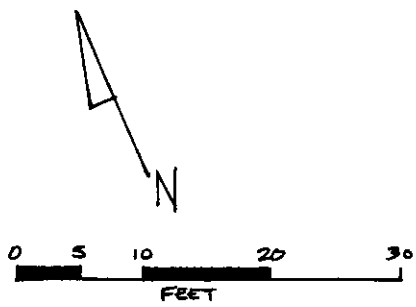
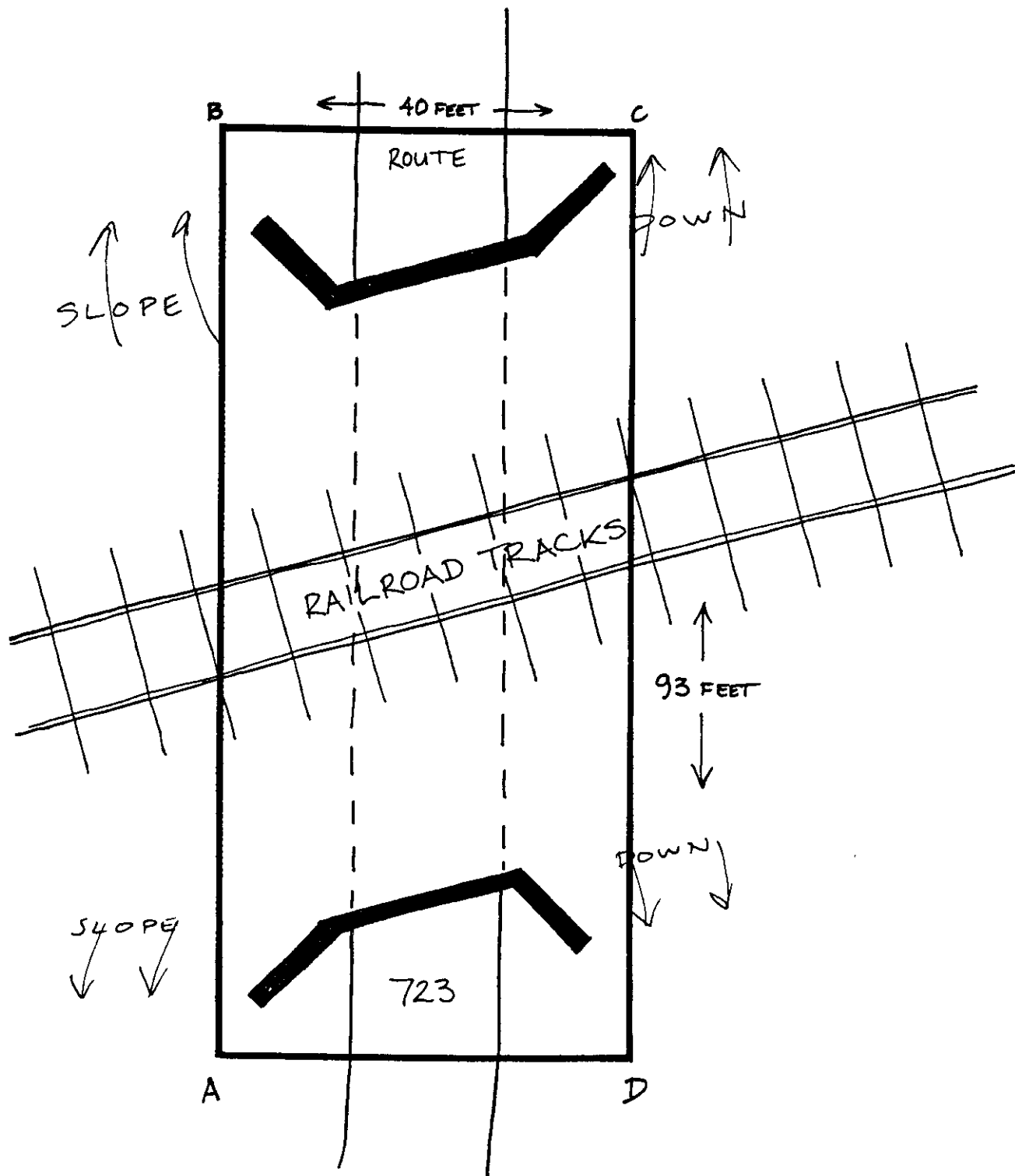
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Prehistoric and
Historic Resources of Montgomery County
Virginian Railway Underpass
60-573

8. Statement of Significance (continued):

and box culverts in a 1903 American Society of Concrete Engineers transactions paper cites a preference for arches with battered 1/2" to 1 foot barrel walls. In Virginia, its occurrence is isolated in Montgomery County. The underpass illustrates the regional diversity found in Virginia arch types.



SITE PLAN
 VIRGINIAN RAILWAY
 UNDERPASS
 MONTGOMERY CO., VIRGINIA
 G. WORSHAM, K. MARTIN MARCH 1988

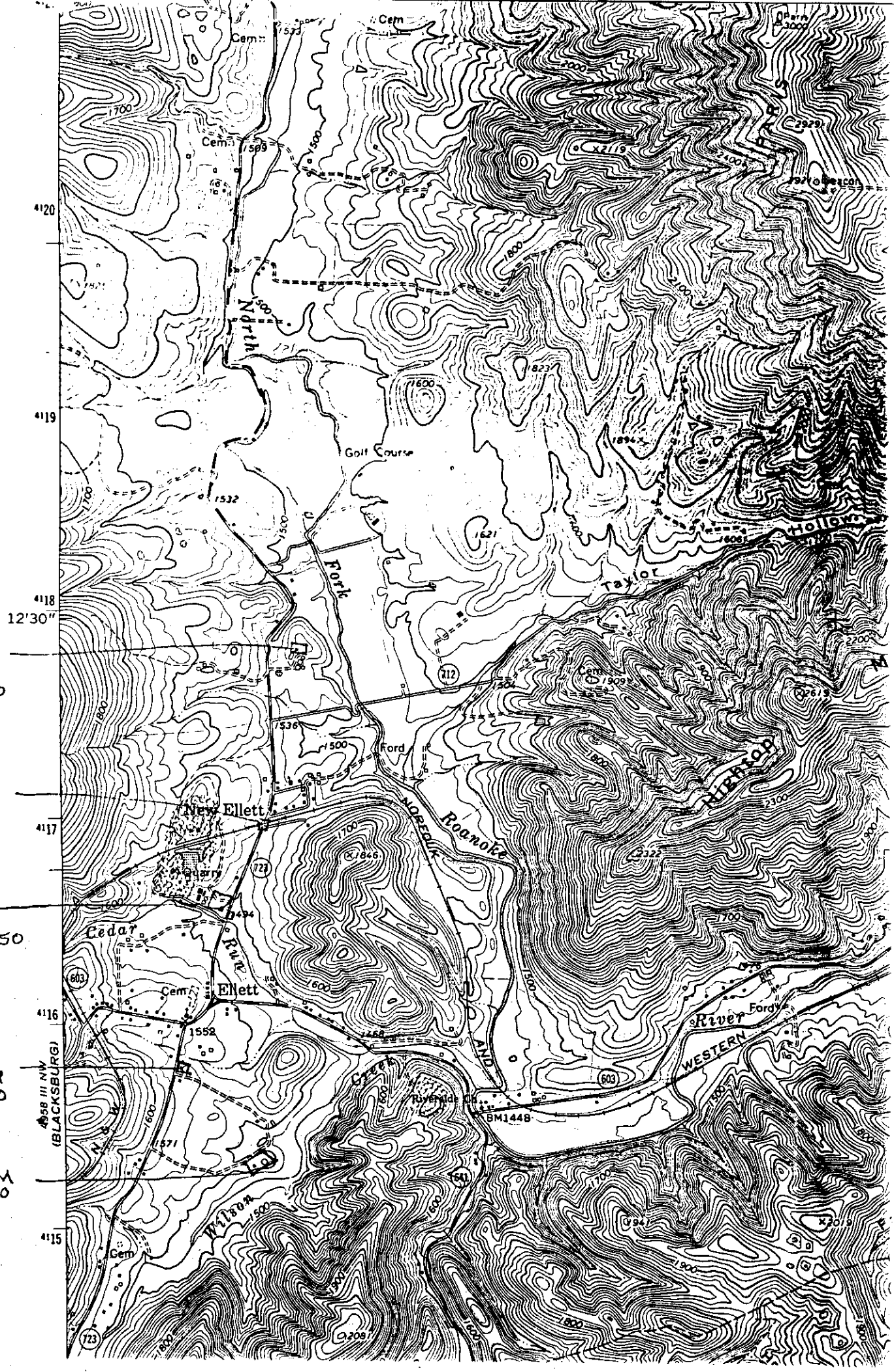
GEORGE EARHART HOUSE
17 556590 4117810

VIRGINIAN RAILWAY UNDER-PASS
17 556395 4116980

EARHART HOUSE
17 556236 4116550

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
17 556060 4115760

BLANKENSHIP FARM
17 556430 4115310



4120
4119
4118
12'30"
4117
4116
458 III NW (BLACKSBURG)
4115

Cem
Cem
North

Golf Course

Taylor

Hollow

New Ellett

Roanoke

Cedar

Ellett

River Ford

WESTERN

Wilson

Roanoke