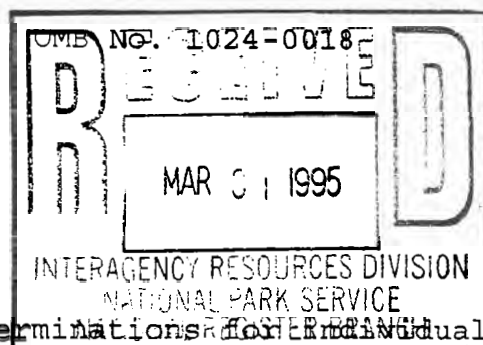


VLR-10/18/95 NRHP-3/1/96

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Francis Scott Key Bridge

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number U.S. Route 29 (over the Potomac River)city or town spans between District of Columbia and Arlington County, VAvicinity N/A not for publication N/Astate District of Columbia code DC county N/A code 001 zip code 20007state Virginia code VA county Arlington code 013 zip code 22209

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally X statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

MAR 30 1995

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

12-19-95
Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

=====

4. National Park Service Certification

=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

_____ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
(See continuation sheet).		
_____ determined eligible for the	_____	_____
National Register		
(See continuation sheet).		
_____ determined not eligible for the	_____	_____
National Register		
_____ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
_____ other (explain): _____		

_____	_____	_____
	Signature of Keeper	Date
		of Action

=====

5. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

_____ private
_____ public-local
 X public-State
_____ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

_____ building(s)
_____ district
_____ site
 X structure
_____ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
_____	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
<u> 1 </u>	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>TRANSPORTATION</u>	Sub: <u>Road-Related</u>
<u></u>	<u>Rail-Related</u>
<u></u>	<u>Pedestrian-Related</u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>TRANSPORTATION</u>	Sub: <u>Road-Related</u>
<u></u>	<u>Pedestrian-Related</u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

20th CENTURY REVIVAL:

Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>CONCRETE</u>
roof	<u></u>
walls	<u></u>
other	<u>CONCRETE: Superstructure and piers</u>
	<u>STEEL: Railings and lampposts</u>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

=====

8. Statement of Significance

=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- _____ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- _____ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- _____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- _____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- _____ B removed from its original location.
- _____ C a birthplace or a grave.
- _____ D a cemetery.
- _____ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- _____ F a commemorative property.
- _____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance 1917-1939

Significant Dates 1917-23

1938-39

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Nathan C. Wyeth, Architect

Max C. Tyler, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository: D.C. Department of Public Works

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.679 acres (3.266 in D.C.; 0.413 in Virginia)

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>18</u>	<u>320480</u>	<u>4307760</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u> See continuation sheet.						

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====

11. Form Prepared By

=====

name/title Stephen Callcott, Architectural Historian

organization D.C. Historic Preservation Division date March 28, 1995

street & number 614 H Street, N.W., Suite 305 telephone (202) 727-7360

city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20001

=====

Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====

Property Owner

=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Government of the District of Columbia

street & number 441 4th Street, N.W. telephone _____

city or town Washington state DC zip code 20001

=====

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
County and State

=====

The Francis Scott Key Bridge spans the Potomac River connecting Georgetown in Washington, D.C. to Rosslyn in Arlington County, Virginia. The bridge is oriented in a generally north-south direction. The Classically inspired structure is comprised of reinforced concrete, with eight arches. Five of the arches span over the river, while the other three span land features. The original structure, designed in 1916 and constructed between 1917-1923, included seven arches. The eighth arch was added in 1938-39 in order to span over the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Virginia. The superstructure was altered in 1955 and 1987. The bridge is in excellent condition.

The bridge is 1,791'6" long from the northern edge of the Georgetown approach to the southern edge of the Rosslyn approach. Of the five arches over the Potomac River, the central arch is 208' long, the two adjacent arches have 204' spans, and these are flanked by 187' long arches. The arches over the land include an 152' arch over the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Virginia and an 180' span over K Street and an 82' arch over the C & O Canal on the District side. The central arch rises 72' above the river, while the foundations extend 25' from the water's surface to the bedrock (when the water is low).

The arches are tripartite in form. Each arch is comprised of three steel arches which are connected to the concrete foundations. The middle arch is 22' wide and is flanked by smaller 11' wide arches on each side. Wood formwork was laid over the steel for the concrete. The spandrels above each arch were punctured by two, three, or four small arches. The spandrell arches lightened the load carried by the large arches and formed a truss system. The concrete piers have superimposed large Doric pilasters which rise to the bottom of the superstructure of the road deck. The proportions of the arches and the Doric pilasters establish the Classical elements and style.

The original 1923 road deck was 70' wide. It included two 16' wide traffic lanes, a center lane for trolley tracks, and two 8' wide sidewalks. The original superstructure had a cornice which projected 2' on each side and supported a 4' high, 12" thick concrete parapet with 6' long recessed panels on each side. On top of the parapet, at approximately 40' intervals were cast iron light standards. These standards were 7'1" high with a griffin leg and winged shield motif at the base.

The eighth arch was added in 1938-39 in order to span over the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Virginia.

In 1955, the trolley tracks were eliminated, and the deck was widened from 70' to 80'. The roadway was expanded to 66' wide and the sidewalk was reduced to 5'3" on each side, excluding the vehicular barrier which was also added at that time. At this time, the concrete parapet and light standards were removed and a new 4' high, cast aluminum railing was installed at the edge of the new deck. A 2' high

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
County and State

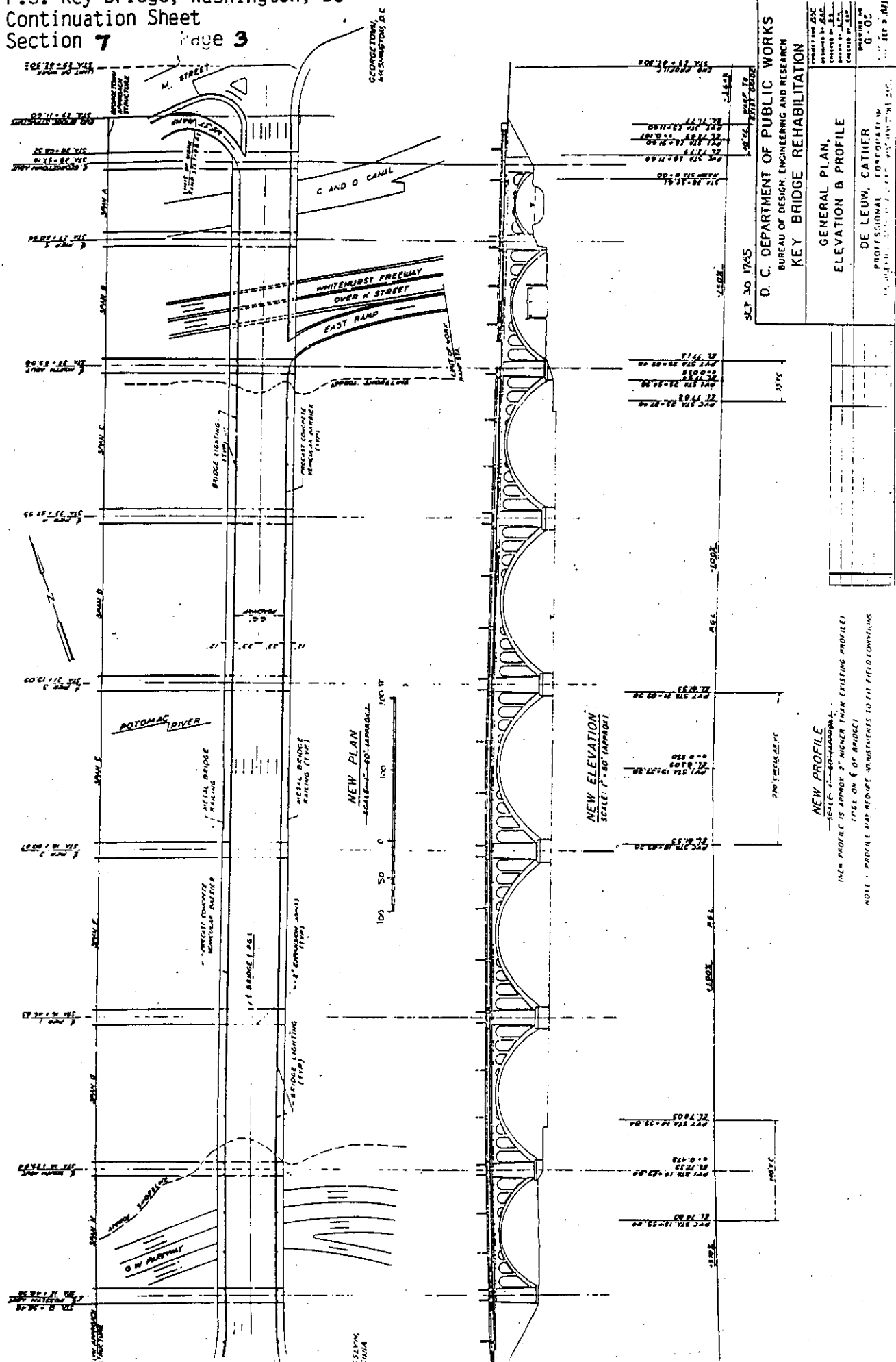
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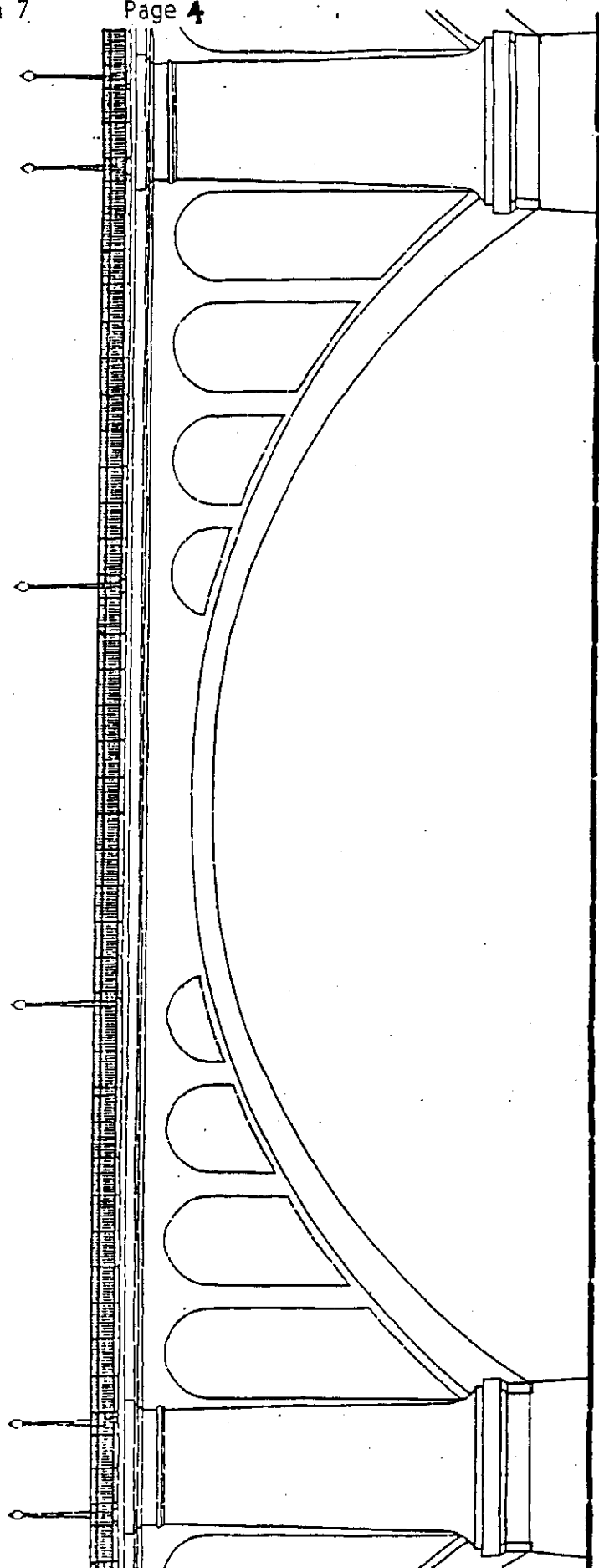
vehicular barrier was also installed at the edge of the roadway. The light standards were replaced with "cobra arm" light posts, approximately 30' high at 120' intervals.

In 1987, a new post-tension deck was installed, which increased the total width from 80' to 90'. The roadway was maintained at 66' wide, while the sidewalks were widened to 9'10." At this time, the 1955 alterations were removed, and a new 5' high protective steel railing was installed at the outside edge of the deck. The railing has 3/4" bars at 4" intervals, which curve outward at the top. A precast concrete wall was installed at the edge of the roadway to resemble the original 1923 parapet. The new parapet is 2'8" high with 6' long recessed panels. The light fixtures, attached to the top of concrete pedestals, are 14' high and have fluted cast iron posts with acorn light globes. The lampposts are placed above the apex of the arches and at the center of the piers.

Despite the widening of the deck, the bridge retains its original design integrity.

F.S. Key Bridge, Washington, DC
Continuation Sheet
Section 7 Page 3





ELEVATION

SCALE IN FEET
0 10 20

1987
KEY BRIDGE, TYPICAL ARCH ELEVATION

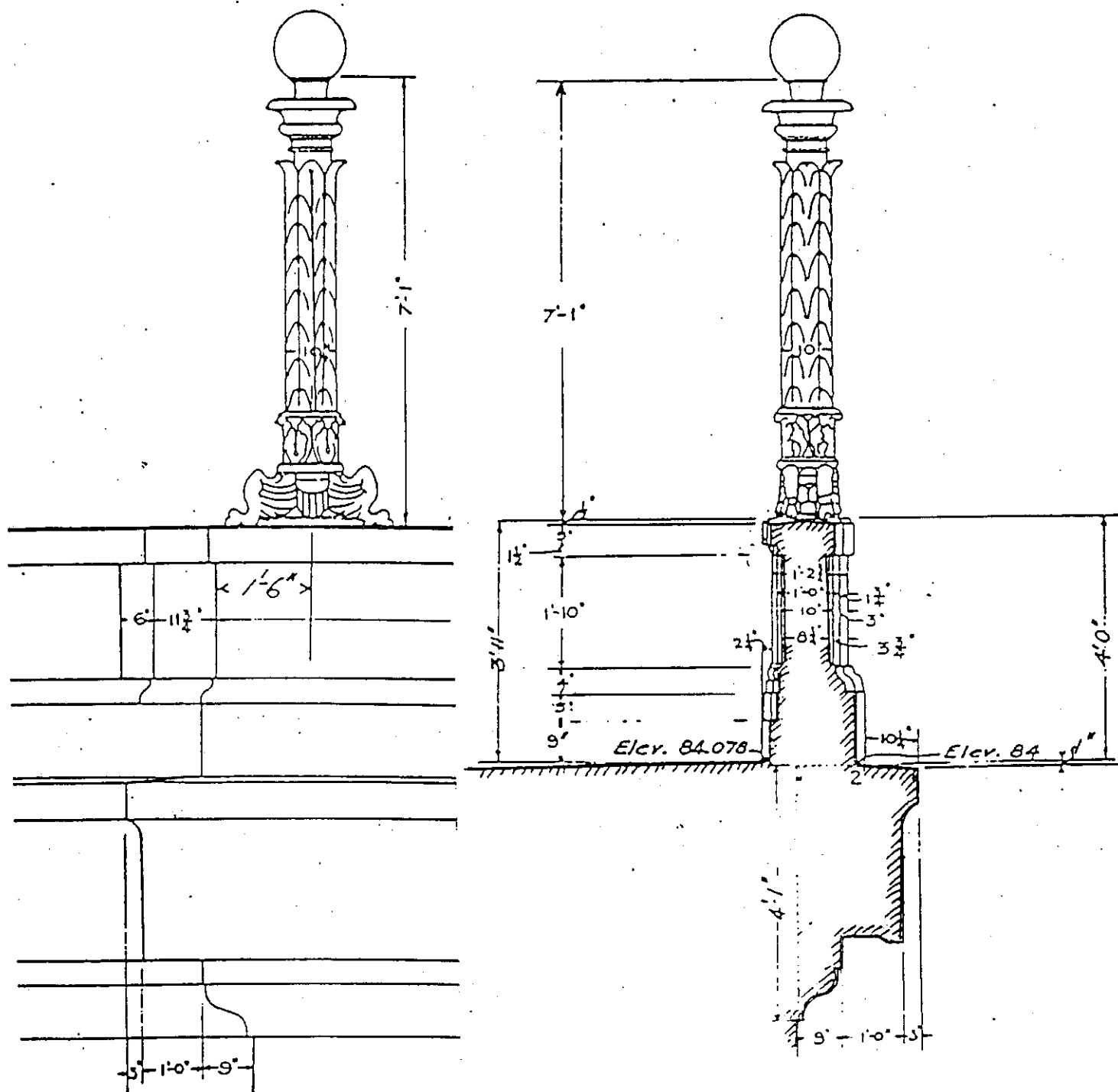
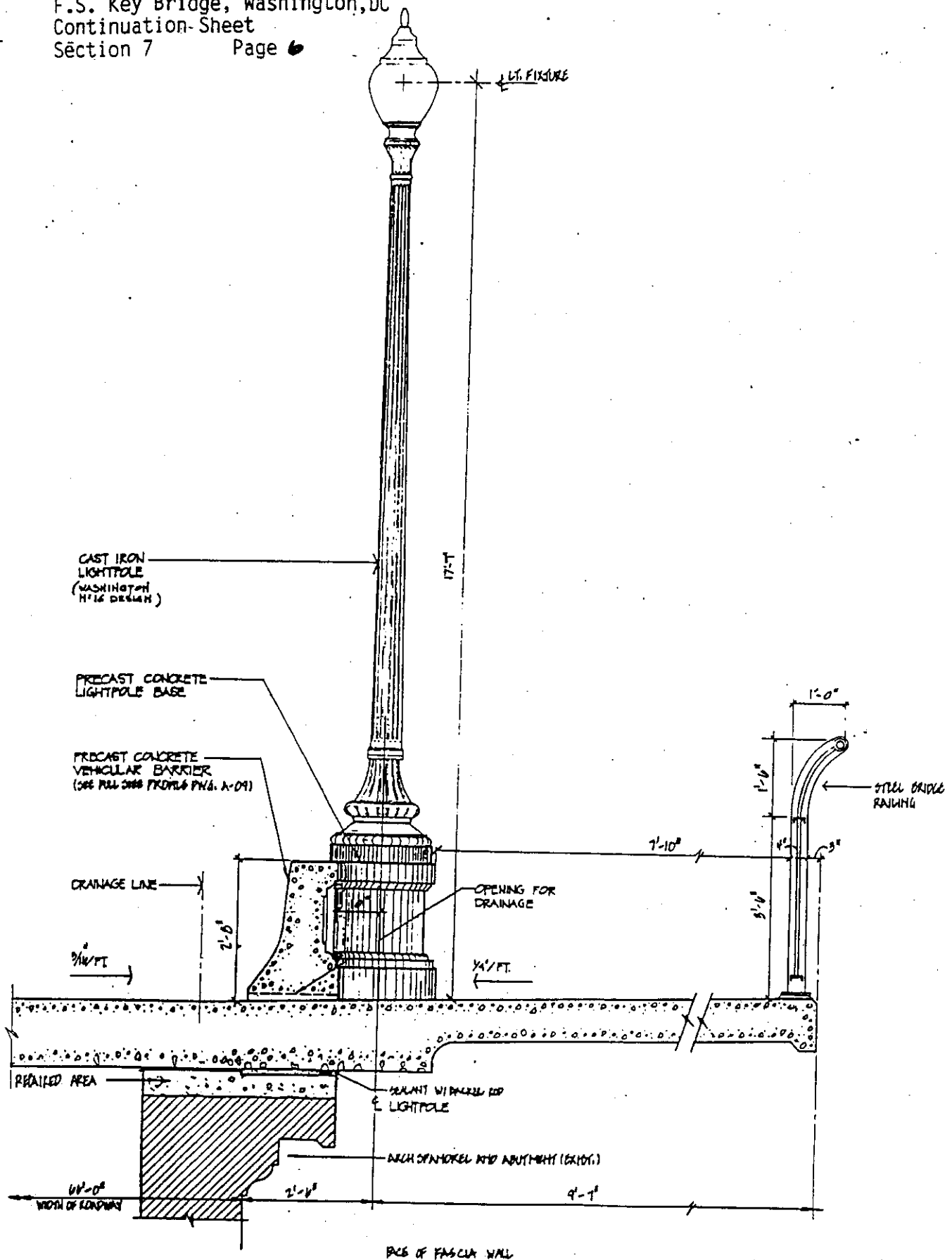


Figure # 1 from: U.S. Engineer Office, File # 10-17; Sheet # 5, dated Nov. 2, 1917

KEY BRIDGE, WASHINGTON, DC
LIGHT STANDARD 1923

removed in 1955



SECTION THRU CONCRETE WALKWAY (TYPICAL)

1987



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
County and State

=====

The Francis Scott Key Bridge, spanning the Potomac River between Washington, D.C. and Arlington, Virginia, is a skillfully designed reinforced concrete arch bridge. Originally constructed to provide automotive, trolley, and pedestrian transit, the bridge has served as an important link between Washington and northern Virginia. Nathan C. Wyeth designed the bridge in 1916 and construction was completed in 1923. The structure is noteworthy for its elegant and simple Classical design. The Francis Scott Key Bridge meets National Register criteria C in the area of engineering and because it was designed by an important local architect Nathan C. Wyeth.

Design and Construction

The Francis Scott Key Bridge illustrates architect Nathan Wyeth's skill at applying Classical design principals to a bridge constructed with the modern material of reinforced concrete. In 1916, reinforced concrete was still a relatively new building material for bridges. The Key Bridge represents a transitional work in the evolution of the structural system.

The structural design for the Key Bridge incorporates the system of reinforcement developed by Austrian Joseph Melan in the late 19th century. Melan's system included the use of parallel metal "I" beams embedded in concrete along the line of the arch's intrados (or underside). While regarded as an early form of reinforced concrete, technically, the amount and use of steel required for this type of design resulted in a composite structure, best described as a metal arch with concrete covering. Melan's system was first introduced in America in 1893 for a 30 foot bridge in Rock Rapids, Iowa. The "twisted bar" system developed by Melan's British contemporary, Ernest Ransome, would become the universally accepted standard for reinforced concrete bridges. Swiss, French, and Scandinavian designers were at the forefront of the new structural system, with Robert Maillart of Switzerland generally regarded as the first master of reinforced concrete bridges. Maillart's graceful, unornamented designs were built to span the ravines in the Alps between 1900 and 1940. His elegant designs remain influential today. Maillart's contemporary American architects and engineers tended to favor designs with more ornament. Moreover, in the early 20th century, the Melan system was far more popular in America due to its relative safety during construction.

While there is no documentary evidence, it is probable that Wyeth was influenced by the design for the William Howard Taft Bridge, constructed between 1897-1907, spanning Rock Creek Park at Connecticut Avenue. The Taft Bridge was designed by engineer George S. Morison. Like the Key Bridge, it has large arches with secondary arches in its spandrels. When Taft was constructed, it was one of the first and largest unreinforced concrete bridges in the world, and was highly regarded for both its engineering and aesthetic qualities. The similarities between Taft and Key may have also stemmed from the role of the Commission of Fine Arts, which reviewed bridge designs within the city. The Commission's policy

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
County and State

=====

toward bridges has always been to advocate designs comprised of arches. Thus, Wyeth may have been specifically encouraged to look at the Taft Bridge as an appropriate model. As opposed to Taft's overt presentation of Classicism with quoins and modillions, Wyeth's design for the Key Bridge presents Classicism through its proportions and large Doric pilasters on its piers. The minimalism of the Key Bridge design foreshadow the stripped Classical aesthetic of the 1920s and 1930s.

In a 1970 interview for the Washington Star, Wyeth's widow, Dorothy Lawson Wyeth, recalled how her husband had designed a far more elaborate, two-level bridge "with beautiful approaches." However, wartime economics forced the government to abandon Wyeth's initial proposal in favor of a less-costly single-level version. The decision to severely alter the original design "dashed the hopes of the young architect." Despite Wyeth's disappointment at the modified design, the structure conveys his original design intent.

The construction of the Key Bridge was necessitated by the dilapidated condition of the Aqueduct Bridge which formerly stood on roughly the same site. The earlier bridge was constructed between 1833 and 1843 of stone (gneiss) piers with a superstructure of queen-post trusses with a weatherproofed timber trough. The bridge carried boats from the C & O Canal over the Potomac River to a canal in Virginia. This seven mile long canal which lead to Alexandria was constructed by the Alexandria Canal Company as a means of competing with the port of Georgetown, it was also built between 1833 and 1843. The superstructure was modified several times over the 19th century to accommodate changing modes of transportation. By 1915, Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison wrote in a condition report of the bridge, "The present superstructure of the Aqueduct Bridge is a rather light iron truss which was erected in 1888. The vibrations under heavy loads appear to me excessive."

Recognizing the need to have a stable, reliable bridge on the site to provide access to and from the burgeoning Virginia suburbs, Congress authorized the demolition of the existing bridge after a new one "not to exceed one million dollars" was built. Congress passed the bill on May 18, 1916, and it was soon signed by President Woodrow Wilson. Work commenced in 1917, however, due to its excessive cost and the war effort, Wyeth's double deck design was eliminated in favor of a single deck. The construction was carried out by the District Engineer Corps under the direction of Major Max C. Tyler, and utilized day laborers rather than private contractors.

Construction required the erection of two concrete mixing plants. One plant was locate on shore and served the project by a cableway. Another was floated into position and sunk down to the riverbed for pouring the concrete piers. The large steel ribs were constructed on shore and floated into place on scows, whereupon the concrete was poured over them. The open spandrel rib structure was awkward and dangerous and work hinged on the weather and river condition. Progress on the bridge proved to be slow and more expensive than anticipated; in 1920, Chief Engineer Tyler appeared before Congress to ask for an additional \$1.1 million.

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
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The sum was granted, however an additional \$400,000 appropriation was required to complete the structure, bringing the total cost to \$2.5 million.

The Francis Scott Key Bridge was opened on January 17, 1923. On November 15, 1924, the U.S. Government turned over responsibility of its care to the District of Columbia. A plaque next to the northern approach honoring the structure's namesake was donated by the Daughters of the War of 1812 on April 21, 1924. Francis Scott Key had lived near the Georgetown end of the bridge at 3518 M Street. His house was later demolished for a ramp of the Whitehurst Freeway. The plaque reads:

Built by the Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, 1917-1923, Francis Scott Key Bridge. This bridge is named in honor of Francis Scott Key, author of the Star Spangled Banner, September 14, 1814, "Then conquer we must for our cause is just, and this be our motto, in God is our trust." Erected by the National Society, United States Daughters of 1812, April 21, 1924.

The Aqueduct Bridge was used until Key Bridge was opened in 1923. In 1933, the superstructure of the former bridge was removed. The Committee on Military Affairs removed the piers from the riverbed in 1962; the north abutment remains.

Upon its completion, the Key Bridge provided greater and improved access to Washington from the growing suburbs of northern Virginia. The importance of the bridge is indicated by its 1955 and 1987 alterations to its roadway and sidewalks.

The Architect: Nathan C. Wyeth

Nathan Wyeth (1870-1963) was among 20th century Washington's most prominent architects. Born in Chicago, he graduated in 1889 from New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art school, receiving first prize in architecture. He continued his education at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, graduating first in his class in 1899. Wyeth moved to Washington in 1900, and worked as an architectural engineer with the Treasury Department between 1901-04, and then as chief designer for the Architect of the Capitol in the Interior Department between 1904-05.

In 1905, Wyeth established his firm. One of his first projects was the design for the West Executive Office of the White House during the Taft administration (1905). This project led to his commission for the Oval Office, a design solution which successfully linked the existing and new offices of the White House. Thereafter, he designed the Key and Tidal Basin Bridges, the Battleship Maine Monument in Arlington Cemetery, and the residences that later became the Chilean Embassy (2305 Massachusetts Avenue; 1908), the Russian Embassy (Pullman House, 1125 16th Street; 1909), the Chinese Embassy (originally known as the Fahrenstock residence, now the Haitian Embassy, 2311 Massachusetts Avenue; 1909), the Mexican Embassy (2829 16th Street; 1910), and the Glover residence (4200 Massachusetts Avenue; demolished). His designs illustrate his Beaux-Arts education and exhibit the many styles popular among society architects at the beginning of the twentieth century.

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
County and State

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Wyeth was a member of numerous organizations, including the Cosmos Club, the Metropolitan Club, the Chevy Chase Club, and the Alpine Club; his club memberships no doubt helped him gain important society contacts and commissions. Wyeth was also active in the American Institute of Architects, and was named a fellow in 1914. Among his activities with the AIA was participation in a group called the "allied architects" which was responsible for the design of the House of Representatives Office Building.

At the outbreak of World War I, Wyeth was asked to join the Army as a Major and work in the Army's Construction Division. During the war, he designed hospitals and military installations. His designs for the Columbia Hospital for Women and (Old) Emergency Hospital, both in Washington, were done during this time. However, by the end of the war, Wyeth was overworked and exhausted. He moved to Switzerland where he spent several years recuperating. Around 1923, he returned to Washington and began a practice with Francis Sullivan. Throughout the 1920s, the team designed numerous mansions throughout the area, including at least five houses in the Sheridan-Kalorama neighborhood. According to his partner, "It took him six years to get his practice back. Just as he was going 'great guns' with embassy and private commissions, the stock market crashed." Among the important commissions Wyeth received during this period was the Duncan Phillips residence (2101 Foxhall Road; 1929, demolished) and the Hospital for Sick Children (1731 Bunker Hill Road, N.E.; 1929).

With the collapse of private building during the Depression, Wyeth closed his practice with Sullivan and took the job of Municipal Architect for the District of Columbia. He held the position from 1934 until his retirement in 1946 at the age of 76. During this time he designed the city's Municipal Center, Administration Building, the Recorder of Deeds Building, the Georgetown Branch Library, National Guard Armory, and the Woodrow Wilson and Thomas Jefferson High Schools.

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
County and State

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Section 9 Page 2

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
County and State

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

Francis Scott Key Bridge
Name of Property
Washington, D.C./Arlington Co., VA
County and State

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The Francis Scott Key Bridge spans the Potomac River between Georgetown in Washington, D.C. and Rosslyn in Arlington County, Virginia. The bridge comprises the roadway of U.S. Route 29. The bridge's northern approach is on axis with 35th Street, NW and begins at M Street in Washington. In addition to Route 29 (Lee Highway), the bridge's southern approach can be reached by Interstate Route 66 and the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The boundary of the nomination is the bridge structure itself.

