

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY
NOMINATION FORM

Continuation Sheet

Item Number

Page

Name Historic Gervais Street Bridge Location Gervais Street at the
Common Congaree River
Classification Structure

Owner State of South Carolina
c/o Mr. Paul W. Cobb
S.C. Department of Highways and Public Transportation
P.O. Box 191, Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Representation in Existing Surveys

Description Begun in February 1926 and completed in June 1928, the 1415 foot reinforced concrete bridge was constructed by Hardaway Contracting Company of Columbus, Georgia. It cost \$597,167 to construct. The bridge was designed by Joseph W. Barnwell of Charleston, SC, bridge engineer for the State Highway Department.

The bridge has a closed spandrel rounded arch at each end with nine open spandrel segmented arches between. Piers of reinforced concrete were founded in the rock in the Congaree River, located at the state's "fall line". Thirty-six feet wide, the bridge has four lanes and two cantilevered sidewalks each six feet wide. Above the flanking balustrades are cast iron light fixtures. Decorative fixtures have the letter C and a palmetto on the bases, a vine pattern on the eight-sided post, and a acanthus leaf design on the necking.

No alterations have been made to the bridge except for removal and repaving of asphalt.

Significance One of four open spandrel arch bridges of reinforced concrete in South Carolina, the Gervais Street bridge spans the Congaree River and links Columbia to the western and southern parts of the state. At the time of its construction this bridge had the widest roadway in the state (two feet wider than the Ashley River bridge in Charleston, SC). From 1928 until 1953, the Gervais Street bridge was the only Columbia Congaree River bridge and is presently the earliest and most decorative of the three bridges across the river.

The site has historically served bridges and ferries. Ferry service was first replaced about 1791 by a toll bridge. A subsequent wooden bridge completed about 1827 was burned in 1865 to delay Sherman's army. The rebuilt bridge was privately owned until 1912 when it was purchased by Richland County in cooperation with Lexington County.

Acreage 2.4

Verbal Boundary Description The boundary of the Gervais Street Bridge nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying Richland County tax map No. 4, which is drawn at an approximate scale of 100 feet to the inch, and on the accompanying Lexington County tax map No. 04660.

UTM Reference Point
A. 17/495505/3761565
B. 17/495090/3761400

Other Information