

BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY,
ENTRANCE GATE & FOOTBRIDGE
(Bethlehem Steel Corporation,
Gate No. 9 and Footbridge)
Cambria Iron Works
Lower Works
Johnstown
Cambria County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-313-C

HAER
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY, ENTRANCE GATE AND FOOTBRIDGE
(Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Gate No. 9 and Footbridge)

HAER No. PA-313-C

Location: Lower Works, Johnstown, Cambria
County, Pennsylvania

Quad: Johnstown, Pennsylvania

UTM: 17 E.676400 N.4467020

Date of Construction: ca. 1930

Fabricator: unknown

Present Owner: Bethlehem Steel Corporation

Present Use: entrance gate to lower works

Significance: A crossing of the Conemaugh River
at or near the site of this
entrance gate and footbridge has
existed since the 1850s when the
Cambria Iron Works was originally
established.

Historian: Gray Fitzsimons

Project Information: The results of the study of Cambria
County were published in 1990:
Fitzsimons, Gray, editor, Blair
County and Cambria County,
Pennsylvania: An Inventory of
Historic Engineering and Industrial
Sites (Washington, D.C.: America's
Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP)
and HABS/HAER, National Park
Service). The contents of the
publication were transmitted to the
Library of Congress as individual
reports. Research notes, field
photos and copies of historic
photos collected during the project
were transmitted to the AIHP
Collection, Special Collections,
Stapleton Library, Indiana
University of Pennsylvania,
Indiana, PA 15705.

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HISTORY

The gatehouse that stands on the east side of the Conemaugh River, adjacent to a footbridge, was constructed in the 1930s. It is a one-story building with a flat roof, double-hung sash windows, and a concrete foundation. A one-story brick addition to the gatehouse was probably built in the 1950s as was the steel-constructed turnstile. The footbridge contains two spans each approximately 75' in length. The easternmost span was built about 1930 and contains a riveted Warren through truss. The westernmost span was rebuilt after it was destroyed in Johnstown's severe flood of 1977; it is a steel half-deck truss. Both spans rest on concrete piers.

Since the 1850s, a number of railroad, wagon, and vehicular bridges have spanned the Conemaugh River at or near the site of this gatehouse and footbridge. As early as 1853 a spur of the Pennsylvania Railroad extended into the Cambria Iron Works near the gatehouse. By 1897 a wagon bridge built by the city of Johnstown stood near the footbridge. At this time the older railroad bridge, replaced by a steel trestle, carried rail cars loaded with coal from the mines below Westmont. By the late 1930s both of these crossings had been removed, possibly carried away by the flood in 1936. Bethlehem Steel erected in their place a two-span pedestrian span, the easternmost section of which survives today. As a result of the company's massive layoffs in the late 1970s and early 1980s, very few steelworkers now use this once busy footbridge and gatehouse.

Sources

Beer, D.G., Goodhue, J.H., and Roe, F.B., "Cambria County, Pennsylvania," Philadelphia: A. Pomeroy, 1867.

"Key Plan, Johnstown Plants: February 16, 1923, revised January 26, 1927, March 29, 1930, and February 13, 1939," (copy of this plan available at the Canal Museum, Center for Canal History and Technology, Easton, Pennsylvania).

Sanborn Map Company. Johnstown, Pennsylvania. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1891 and 1911.