

# Hooff's Run Bridge

The bridge is one of the last remnants of Alexandria's first railroad, the Orange & Alexandria. The "O&ARR," as it was commonly called, opened in 1851 and had 148 miles of track by 1860. The bridge was constructed in 1856 to span Hooff's Run, the first waterway crossed by the railroad as it went from Alexandria's Potomac River wharves to the roundhouse at Duke and Wolfe streets, and then west to Manassas Junction, Orange, Gordonsville, and finally to Lynchburg, Virginia. The O&ARR made Alexandria a regional commercial center in the mid-nineteenth century. During the Civil War (1861-1865), the railroad was seized by the U.S. Military Railroads and used to transport troops and supplies west and south. Thousands of wounded Union soldiers were also brought from the battlefields to the more than 30 U.S. military hospitals operating in Alexandria.

The Hooff family has had a continuing presence in Alexandria since the eighteenth century. Family members have been involved in farming, butchering, banking, and real estate.



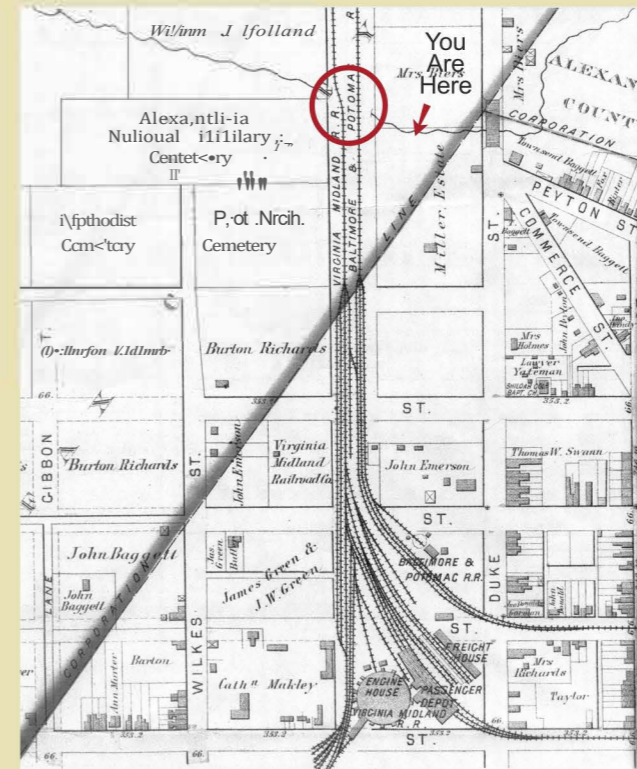
The southern addition to Hooffs Run Bridge constructed of red Seneca Sandstone has an arch composed of 33 rock-face ashlar voussoirs and a larger keystone. The east wing wall descends on top of the Alexandria National Cemetery wall, which is made of similar stone. Alexandria Archaeology Museum



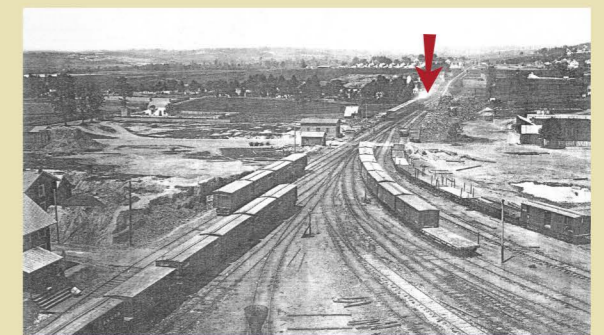
The brick barrel vaults of both the original stone bridge and the southern addition are laid in all-stretcher bond; the semicircular arch spans 21 feet 1 1/2 inches and rises 10 feet 6 inches. Alexandria Archaeology Museum



The north face of the original stone bridge is in smooth and rock-faced gray sandstone laid in random-range ashlar; the stone may have come from the Little Falls of the Potomac. Alexandria Archaeology Museum



Detail of map showing the railroad tracks crossing Hooff's Run, 1877. Red circle marks the bridge location at west. 1877 Hopkins City Atlas of Alexandria, Virginia



Civil War view from the roundhouse looking west over the fortified U.S. Military Railroads compound, circa 1863. Red arrow marks the location of the Hooffs Run Bridge. National Archives



The railroad car used to take President Abraham Lincoln's body to Illinois for burial, as seen with the W.H. Whiton engine, January 1865, was made at the U.S. Military Railroads yard east of the bridge. National Archives

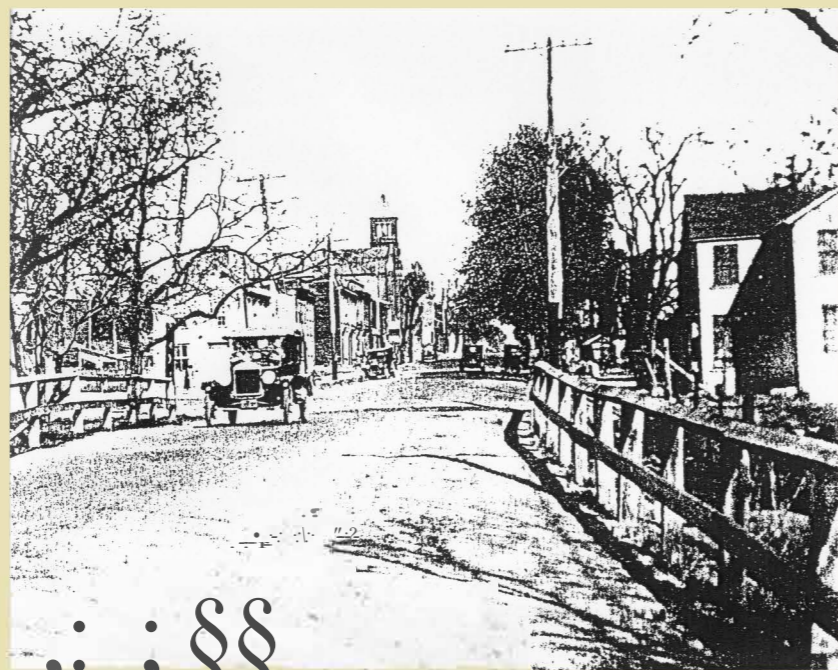


The first Lawrence Hooff moved here to sell Conestoga wagons to General Braddock for the French and Indian War; son Lawrence (above) was pallbearer at George Washington's funeral.

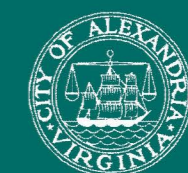
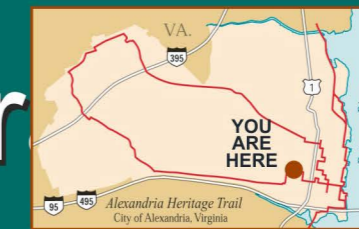
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Cars traveling on Duke Street once had to cross over Hooffs Run on a stone bridge. In this 1923 view, the Hooff's Run Bridge is farther downstream to the right; Old Town is in the background.

Alexandria Library, Special Collections



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