

# USA OLDEST BRIDGE

## The Frankford Avenue Bridge Oldest in USA

The Frankford Avenue Bridge, also known as the Pennypack Creek Bridge, the Pennypack Bridge, the Holmesburg Bridge, and the King's Highway Bridge, erected in 1697 in the Holmesburg section of Northeast Philadelphia, in the U.S. state of Pennsylvania, is the oldest surviving roadway bridge in the United States. The three-span, 73-foot-long (22 m) twin stone arch bridge carries Frankford Avenue (U.S. Route 13), just north of Solly Avenue, over Pennypack Creek in Pennypack Park.[2] The bridge was designated a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers in 1970. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.



## HISTORY

The bridge, built at the request of William Penn to connect his mansion with the new city of Philadelphia, was an important link on the King's Highway that linked Philadelphia with cities to the north (Trenton, New York, and Boston). On March 10, 1683, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed a law requiring the building of bridges across all of the rivers and creeks along all of the King's Highway in Pennsylvania, from the Falls of the Delaware (at Trenton, N.J.) to the southernmost ports of Sussex County (now part of the state of Delaware). The bridges, which were to be completed within 18 months, were to be ten feet wide and include railings along each side. The areas on either side of the bridges were to be cleared to facilitate horse and cart traffic. Each bridge was to be built by male inhabitants of the surrounding area; those who failed to appear were to be fined 20 shillings. In 1970, the bridge earned an award by the American Society of Civil Engineers, Philadelphia Section, as an outstanding engineering achievement and a historic civil engineering landmark. A bronze plaque was placed on the western parapet in commemoration.[3]

