

Central Park Bridges, Bow Bridge
(Central Park Bridges, Bridge No. 5)
Spanning the Lake, connecting the
Ramble with the Bethesda Fountain area
Central Park
New York
New York County
New York

HAER No. NY-195

HAER
NY,
31-NEXO,
153A -

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL DATA

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

HABS
NY,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

CENTRAL PARK BRIDGES, BOW BRIDGE
(Central Park Bridges, Bridge No. 5)

HAER NY-195

Location: Spanning the Lake, connecting the Ramble with Bethesda Fountain area, Central Park, New York City, New York

Date of Construction: 1859

Present Owner: City of New York

Present Use: pedestrian bridge

Significance and Description: Designed by Calvert Vaux, the Bow Bridge is one of the most prominently located and visible cast iron bridges in Central Park. It is 87 feet, four inches long. This and other cast iron bridges in Central Park are among the very first built of that material in America. The J.B. and W.W. Cornell Foundry was the contractor. Restored in 1974 with funds provided by Lila A. Wallace and Lucy G. Moses, this graceful arch has been described by New York Times architecture critic Paul Goldberger as seeming "to pour over the water."

Sources:

Delony, Eric. Prospectus: Central and Prospect Parks Bridge Recording Project. Summer 1981.

Goldberger, Paul. The City Observed, New York. (New York: Vintage Books) 1979.

Mipaas, Esther. Cast Iron Bridges in Central Park. (brochure prepared by Friends of Cast Iron Architecture).

Prepared by: Holly K. Chamberlain, HABS/HAER historian, for transmittal to the Library of Congress in April, 1988.