



Bridge of the Month No21 September 2012 Hubberholme



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Hubberholme is a joyous memory from student days, right at the top of Langstrothdale. It is famous for its church but for us, the bridge is more significant. Find it at <http://goo.gl/maps/3jKp2> and in streetview (<http://goo.gl/maps/nfKUZ>) .



This general style of construction is not particularly common, I know of one in Stirling and one in Manchester at least. I sent the pics to my friend Fraser Smith when I came across them yesterday and his first question was "how thick do you think the ring is?" My guess would be to take the line of the first joint in these voussoirs but with an arch of this shape there will certainly be backing too.

What really causes a double take is a closer look:



First of all, this transition from arch to abutment is quite ill defined. The curve definitely seems to change at the thick course here, but does it?



This view perhaps shows it better and suggests that the curve changes to something close to a straight line. Can that really be true.

Look even closer, though, and the quality of the masonry is really striking.



That is an old 10 pence piece but it is no more than 1mm thick and will not go into the joint.



In either direction!!



The soffit shows a change in colouring at what must be the top of the backing.



This looks like an expressed keystone, but it is surely not in the centre of the span. The top edge has a distinct slope. Looking back at the first picture leaves me wondering whether this is a mason's joke!