

**CONNECTICUT RIVER BRIDGE
021 LITTLETON-WATERFORD**

NH Bridge ID: Littleton 109/134

CARRYING: NH 18

PRESENT NAME: Route 18 Bridge

DATE BUILT: 1934

LAT/LONG: 44.342711,-71.888888

CROSSING CHRONOLOGY

- 1803 First timber toll bridge constructed
- 1890 Second bridge, covered, date of original construction unknown, destroyed in flood
- c.1891 Third bridge, iron truss toll bridge
- 1906 Toll lifted
- 1934 Truss bridge closed; steel plate girder deck bridge built
- 1936 Truss bridge swept away in Flood
- 1980 Plate girder (present bridge) rehabilitated

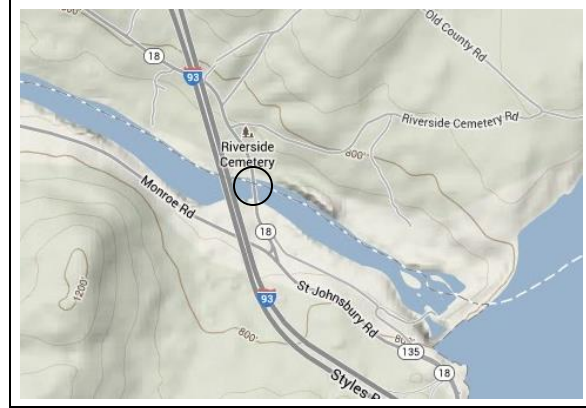


FIGURE 1: Route 18 Bridge, built 1934. Downstream side from New Hampshire (Historic Documentation Co. Inc. 2012)

CROSSING HISTORY

First bridge: The Littleton Bridge Corporation obtained a charter from the New Hampshire legislature in 1802. In the following year the company constructed the first toll bridge, a 265-foot timber structure. The location of the first three bridges spanning the Connecticut at the town of Littleton was situated about one mile above the present bridge site. The fate of the first bridge is not known.

Second bridge: At some time during the 19th century the corporation built a covered bridge. In 1890 “a tremendous ice jam and 60-foot-long logs took away part of the old covered bridge,” in the words of local historian Gordon Hopper.

Third bridge: Soon after destruction of the covered bridge, the Littleton Bridge Corporation built a single-span iron Pratt truss bridge to replace it. In 1906, the company sold its bridge and rights to the towns of Littleton and Waterford and the toll requirement was lifted. This bridge, already weakened by damage from the great flood of 1927, was reduced to single-lane traffic in 1931, and then closed altogether on December 30, 1934. Ice floes ruined the structure completely in the flood of March 1936. Hopper reports that the force of the ice and the current was so powerful that the heavy iron bridge “went downstream about half a mile and was sold to the Dolgin salvage yard in St. Johnsbury. Workers cut up the sections and removed the river from the bridge as junk.” The former bridge site is now covered by the waters of Moore Reservoir.

Fourth bridge: In 1934, the states of New Hampshire and Vermont constructed the present bridge at a crossing located about one mile downstream from the former bridge location. This project was an element in a larger program to reroute the area’s state highway (today Route 18), “to take care of conditions that will arise with future water power development on the Connecticut River,” i.e., the creation of Moore Reservoir. The cost of the bridge, \$124,280, was shared by both states and the US government. It was opened to traffic on January 1, 1935. The bridge is a five-span steel plate girder bridge, 530 feet in length and resting on abutments and piers of reinforced concrete. The bridge underwent rehabilitation in 1980.

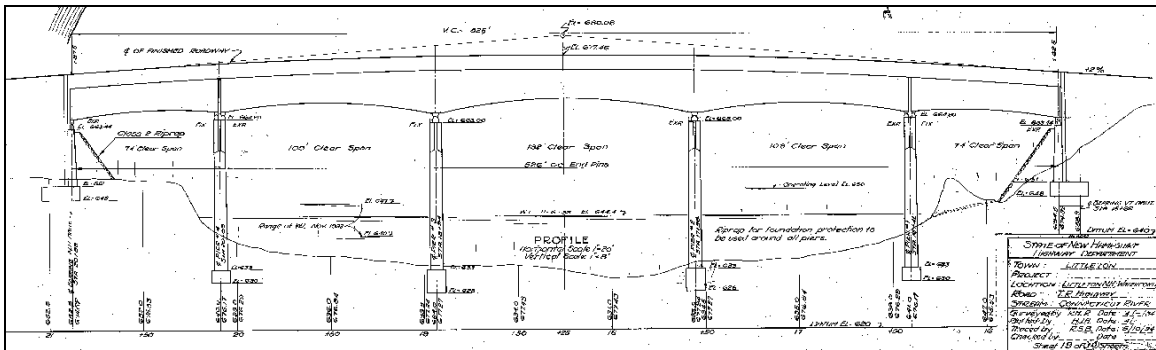


FIGURE 2: Elevation drawing from original bridge plans, Sheet 19 of 30, May 1934 (NHDOT 1934).

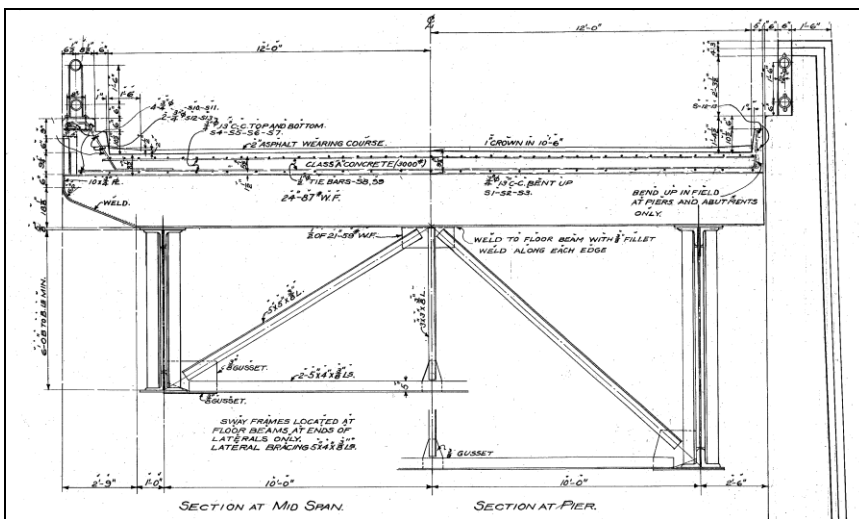


FIGURE 3: Section drawing from plans, Sheet 21 of 30, May 1934 (NHDOT 1934).



FIGURE 4: Route 18 Bridge, built 1934. Closer view of downstream side from New Hampshire (Historic Documentation Co. Inc. 2012)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Flood Waters, New Hampshire, 1936. Manchester: Lew A. Cummings, 1936.

Garvin, James. Mss on Connecticut River bridges. Filed at New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord.

Hopper, Gordon E. *Upper Waterford: A Village Lost to Progress.* Published privately, 1990.

NHDOT Bridge Card (1940) & Plans (1934), Littleton 109/134, Plan File 4-12-4-1. Filed at NHDOT, Concord.

New Hampshire Highway Department. *Twelfth Annual Report.* Concord: State of New Hampshire, 1935.

Report of the Bridge Commissioners of the State of New Hampshire. Concord: State of New Hampshire, 1906.