

**CONNECTICUT RIVER BRIDGE  
029 – COLEBROOK – LEMINGTON**

**NH Bridge ID: Colebrook 039/107**

**CARRYING:** NH 26, Bridge Street  
**PRESENT NAME:** Colebrook - Lemington Bridge  
**DATE BUILT:** 1953  
**LAT/LONG:** 44.899021,-71.507671

**CROSSING CHRONOLOGY**

- 1854 First toll bridge erected, Long truss covered bridge
- 1879 Local citizens, angered by tolls, build free pontoon bridge to compete
- 1881 Toll bridge sold to town of Colebrook, becomes free crossing
- 1947 Bridge demolished, temporary war surplus Bailey bridge erected
- 1953 Steel stringer bridge completed

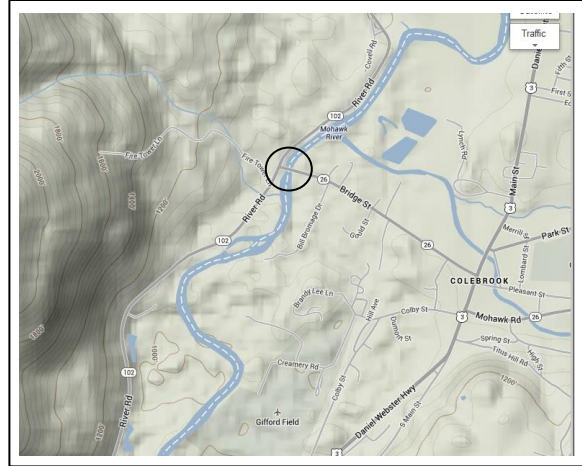


FIGURE 1: Colebrook – Lemington Bridge, upstream side from Vermont (Historic Documentation Co. Inc. 2013).

## CROSSING HISTORY

**First bridge:** Local investors obtained a charter from the New Hampshire legislature to found the Colebrook Bridge Company in 1848, but it took those involved until 1854 to raise the resources for construction. In that year they erected a covered bridge of the Long truss design, 160 feet in length, supported on wooden abutments. The Frizzell brothers, Addison, Eugene and Amassa, handled the construction. The bridge served until 1947, when it was demolished due to decrepit condition, “blown up” as stated by local historian William Gifford. Colebrook provided the setting for one of the liveliest controversies over bridge tolls, which it seems were always unpopular throughout the region. In 1879 local inhabitants mounted an unusually active anti-toll protest by constructing their own bridge. They cut down trees and sawed them into lumber in Canaan, VT, built pontoons, and erected a timber pontoon bridge, siting the New Hampshire end of the insurrectionary span on the farm property that as of 1993 was owned by Irving Gadwah. The bridge company sought to suppress use of the “people’s bridge;” the citizens petitioned the New Hampshire legislature to allow use of their bridge but in 1881 the legislature decided in favor of the company. The local people responded by advertising for bids to build a more permanent bridge at a different location. The company, faced with this intransigent attitude on the part of patrons whose custom was essential to sustain profitable operation, conceded defeat, surrendering their charter and the bridge and its land in return for \$1,700. A public subscription raised the money to purchase the bridge to be a free public resource, in 1881.

**Second bridge:** From 1947 to 1952, the crossing was served by a war surplus Bailey bridge, a 150-foot prefabricated steel structure such as the Allied military had used to make temporary spans all over Italy, France, and Germany in World War II. Bailey bridges were made in small sections that could be assembled to make as big a structure as needed.

**Third bridge:** The present bridge was built during 1952-1953 for the New Hampshire Highway Department. 164 feet in length, it is a two-span stringer bridge constructed of steel I-beams bearing a slab deck of reinforced concrete, with a substructure consisting of reinforced concrete abutments and pier. NHDOT carried out a rehabilitation of the bridge in 1991.



FIGURE 2: Colebrook Bridge Company covered bridge built 1854. Photo dated October 3, 1922, showing downstream side from New Hampshire (Storrs).

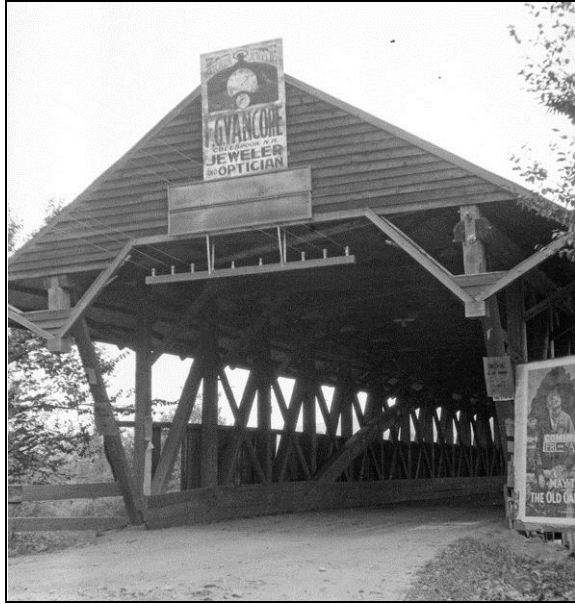


FIGURE 3: Colebrook Bridge Company covered bridge built 1854. Photo dated October 3, 1922, showing New Hampshire end (Storrs).

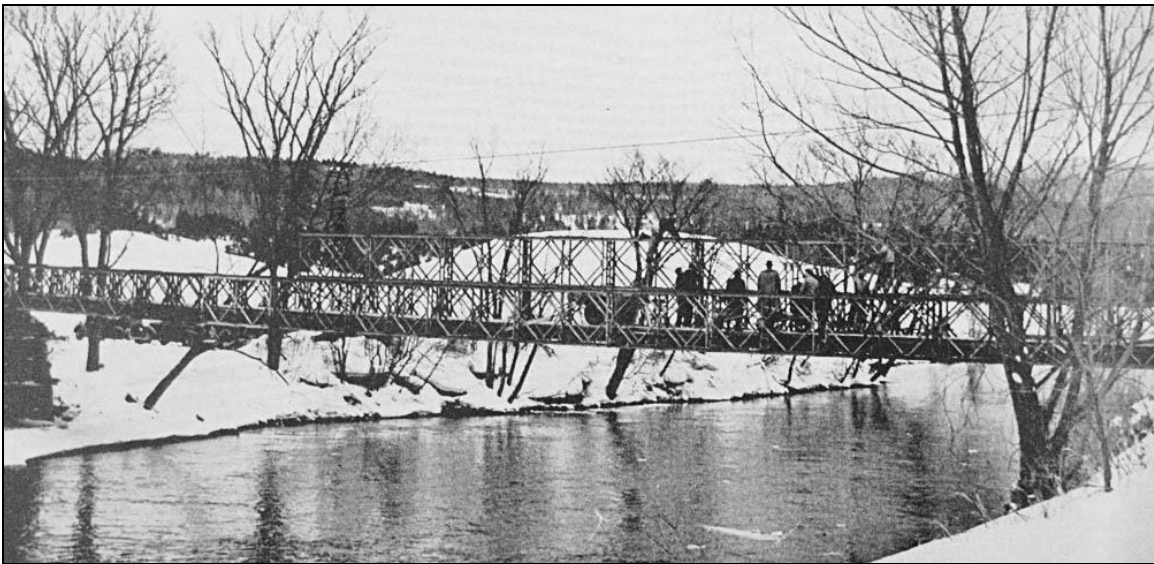


FIGURE 4: Temporary 150'-long war surplus Bailey bridge erected 1947 (*New Hampshire Highways* 1947).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bailey Bridge at Colebrook. *New Hampshire Highways*, April 1947.

Gifford, William H. *Colebrook: "A Place Up Back of New Hampshire."* Colebrook: The News and Sentinel, Inc., 1993.

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NHDOT Bridge Card, Colebrook 039/107, 1954. On file at NHDOT, Concord.