

TIMELINE FOR HIGH BRIDGE, CLAREMONT, NEW HAMPSHIRE

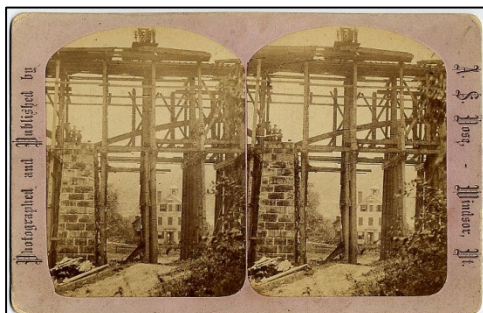
- 1847-8** The Sullivan Railroad, extending 26 miles from Bellows Falls north to Windsor, Vermont, was constructed, using one of the first steam shovels to be put in operation. The steam shovel was patented by William S. Otis of Philadelphia, and the first working machines were manufactured in Boston by Jabez Conry.
- 1849, Feb. 5** The railroad opened for traffic, connecting to the Vermont Central Railroad at Windsor, Vermont.

The granite piers for the original High Bridge have been attributed to the Massachusetts railroad engineer George Washington Whistler (1800-1849). Whistler left the United States to work on the first major railroad in Russia in 1842, so possibly could have designed High Bridge but could not have superintended its construction. Whistler died in Russia of typhoid fever. In an article on the Sullivan Railroad and the High Bridge, George Baxter Upham stated that the granite for the piers was quarried on the southeastern side of Mount Ascutney.

The original wooden superstructure of the bridge was a covered deck truss. From Upham's description, it appears that the truss was probably a Town lattice, comparable to the original high bridge in Greenville, N. H. of a similar date of construction.



Above: The original High Bridge of c.1848.



1889 The original wooden High Bridge was replaced by an iron lattice deck truss, placed on the original granite piers.

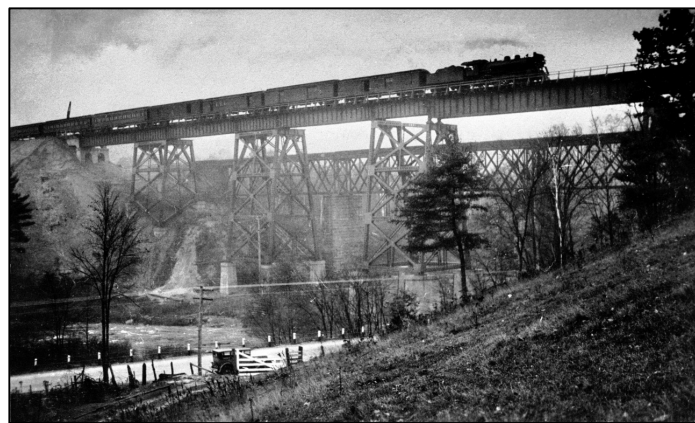
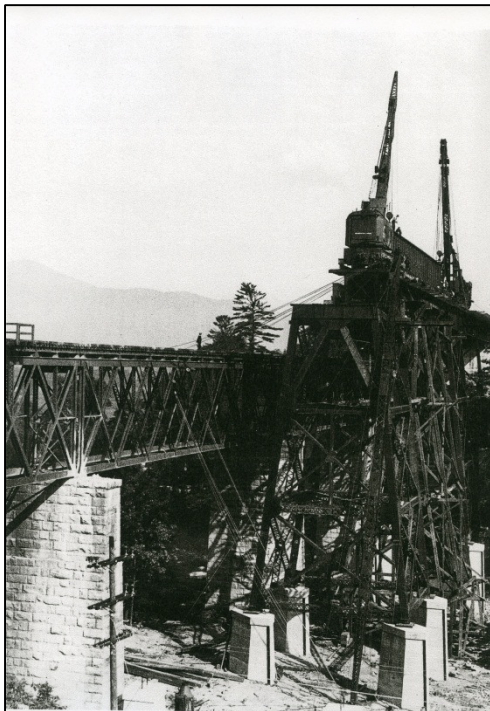
Left: A stereoscopic slide of 1889 showing the dismantling of the original wooden High Bridge in preparation for its replacement by the riveted iron deck truss.



Left: The riveted iron lattice deck truss bridge that replaced the original wooden superstructure in 1889. The riveted lattice truss, the first widely popular metal railroad truss type, was widely employed on American railroads in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

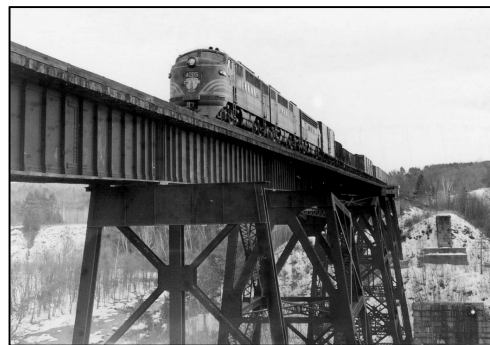
1929-30

The present High Bridge, a deck plate girder span, was built on steel trestles just east of the original bridge. The first regular train crossed the new bridge on October 29, 1930. For an undetermined time, the old and new bridges carried traffic, but the old superstructure was eventually removed and two of its three original stone piers were dismantled, leaving one pier and the original granite abutments of c. 1848.



Above: The two bridges in simultaneous use, early 1930s.

Left: The new deck plate girder bridge being constructed next to the lattice girder bridge, 1930. The piers of the new bridge were designed for double tracks, never installed.



Left: The deck plate girder bridge in use, 1957. The single remaining pier and the southern abutment of the original bridge are visible at the right of the photograph.

Photographs courtesy of Scott J. Whitney, author of "High Bridge," *Boston & Maine Bulletin* 15 (1988).