

The Bridge Between Hill and Sanbornton



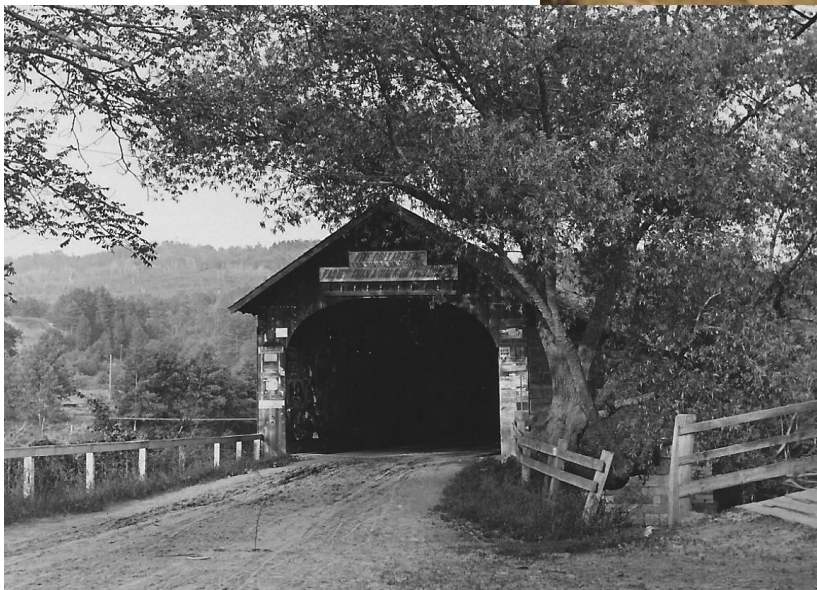
“You ustta be able to get the-ah from he-ah”

One hot day in September, HHS members John Hayward and Lucy Natkiel hiked with several groups of students down to the old bridge abutments of the former bridge spanning the Pemigewasset River between Hill and Sanbornton.

Tilton Bennet began a ferry business across the river as early as 1796. Business was good, so it was decided to build a bridge. (NOTE that the bridge was built on the river across from what is Bennett Brook Road.)

With photos and stories, the students learned that a covered bridge was built (150 feet long and 30 feet wide) in 1824. (actually replacing an earlier bridge that was destroyed in a Spring storm.)

A sign on that bridge cautioned people not to drive faster than a person could walk... or pay a fine of \$5.



these photos are from the archives of the Hill Historical Society



Look CAREFULLY to see the intact bridge sliding downstream.



The covered bridge connecting Hill and Sanbornton survived a couple of ice jams over the years... but in 1913, ice built up enough to lift the whole bridge off its abutments and carry it down the river. It's reported that Frank Woodward was in the process of installing electric lights on the bridge; when he saw the big structure starting to drift downstream, he climbed up to rescue those electric lights. In order to protect other dams and bridges further down the river, the whole covered bridge was burned



Almost immediately, a new bridge was erected—built of steel on higher abutments. This connection with our neighbors across the river outlasted the Old Village. In 1953, the bridge was sold for scrap.

Today, we depend on cars and the winding roads to make the trip just across the river.

Our communities find new and different ways to remain connected.

