

PH0666467

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Hampshire
COUNTY: Cheshire
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE: NOV 11 1978

1. NAME

COMMON:
Sawyers Crossing Covered Bridge

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Sawyers Crossing, or Cresson Bridge

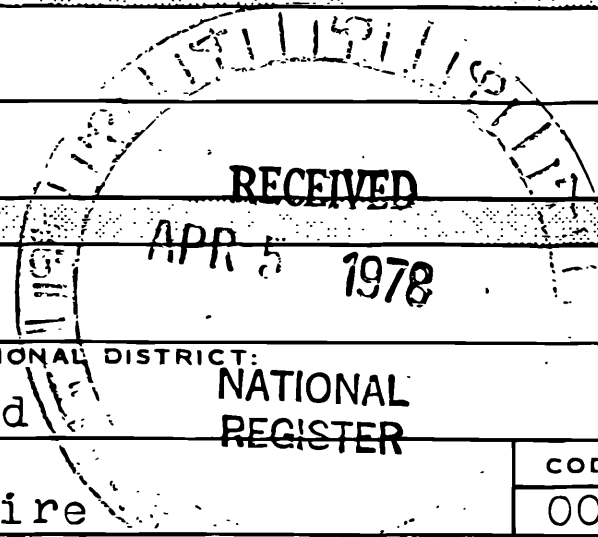
2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1/4 mile north of N. H. Route 32

CITY OR TOWN:
Swanzy

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Second

STATE: New Hampshire CODE: 33 COUNTY: Cheshire CODE: 005



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted No: <input type="checkbox"/> Limit 4 1/2 tons
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Town of Swanzy

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Swanzy

STATE:
New Hampshire

CODE:
33

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Cheshire County Registry of Deeds, Cheshire Co. Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
12 Court Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Keene,

STATE:
New Hampshire

CODE:
03431

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
New Hampshire's Historic Preservation Plan

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
State of New Hampshire
Department of Resources and Economic Development

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 856 State House Annex
25 Capitol Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Concord,

STATE:
New Hampshire

CODE:
03301

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: New Hampshire

COUNTY: Cheshire

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Spanning the Ashuelot River in the Sand Bank section of Swanzey near the site of an ancient Indian village, this double-span bridge with center pier was rebuilt in 1859 on the site of an earlier bridge erected in 1771, at a cost of \$1,735.94. It is named for its location and also Thomas Cresson, an early Swanzey pioneer. National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges World Guide to Covered Bridges number 29-03-05. N. H. Department of Public Works and Highways number 136/143. N. H. Department of Resources and Economic Development number 6.

This bridge of pleasing proportions with fully sheathed walls has arched portals painted red and white and is some 159 feet long and 17 feet wide. Although its sheathing is worn and parts are missing, the structure is a good example of the popular Ithiel Town Truss construction designed and patented by the New Haven architect in 1820. The abutments and center pier are of split granite; tie rods aid in its support, a tin roof and bolts are evidences of continued maintenance; additional work, including new flooring, was undertaken in June of 1974.

The Sawyers Crossing Covered Bridge retains much of its original appearance and has been quite well maintained; tradition tells us that upon completion of the structure in 1859 the event was celebrated by an all-night dance held in the bridge.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1859

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Engineering:

America's wooden covered bridges form a significant chapter in the history of engineering in the United States. The Sawyers Crossing Covered Bridge very well illustrates this country's first truly native bridge design, the Town Truss, characterized by a web of light planks crisscrossed at an angle of 45 degrees to 60 degrees, like a lattice, and fastened together with wooden pins or trunnels at each intersection. This bridge is located in a picturesque part of the town of Swanzey, N. H., and is among the region's most popular photographic and artistic subjects. It received national acclaim in 1953 as Arthur Godfrey's romantic "kissing bridge," a publicity tie-in with the Christmas carton of Chesterfield cigarettes of that year.

Transportation:

The Sawyers Crossing Covered Bridge remains an important part of the transportation system of the town of Swanzey. Located on the state secondary system, its use is mainly by residents of this part of the town as it is not far from the Keene line where many Swanzey citizens are employed. Little commercial traffic passes this way, but suburban and commuter use is substantial over the Sawyers Crossing Bridge which remains an active and valued part of the Swanzey road system.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Allen, Richard Sanders. Covered Bridges of the Northeast. rev. ed. (Brattleboro, Vt., Stephen Greene Press, 1974).

Avery, Floyd L. Report of Covered Bridges in New Hampshire. rev. October 1965. (Concord, N. H., N. H. Department of Public Works and Highways, 1965).

Kenyon, Thedia Cox. New Hampshire's Covered Bridges. rev. ed., with appendix ... (n.p., Wake-Brook House, n.d.)
(Cont.)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		N	W	LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		42° 53' 8"	72° 17' 0"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: *less than 10*

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
David R. Proper, Curator

ORGANIZATION: Historical Society of Cheshire County DATE: June 20, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
51 So. Lincoln Street

CITY OR TOWN: Keene, STATE: New Hampshire 03431 CODE: 33

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: *[Signature]*
Title: Commissioner, NH Dept. Resources & Economic Development
NH State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: July 7, 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
for **KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

Date: *11-14-78*

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date: *11-9-78*

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE New Hampshire	
COUNTY Cheshire	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries) 6 (Cont.)

U.S. Dept. of the Interior. National Parks Service. Historic American Engineering Record. New England; An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites. (Wash., D. C., 1974).

8 (Cont.)

Keyworth, William Gordon. The Covered Bridges of New Hampshire. (n.p., 1972?).

National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc. World Guide to Covered Bridges, ed. by Oscar F. Lane, rev. April 1, 1972. (n.p., 1972).

N. H. Division of Economic Development. The Covered Bridges of New Hampshire. (Concord, N. H., 1973).

Read, Benjamin. The History of Swanzey, New Hampshire, From 1734 to 1890. (Salem, Mass., Salem Press Publishing and Printing Co., 1892).

Smith, Marjorie W. "Swanzey's Covered Bridges," Granite State Vacationer, Aug. 17-23, 1973, pp. 27-28.

White, W. Edward. Covered Bridges of New Hampshire (Plymouth, N. H., n.d.)

