

# **The Pulpit Harbor Bridges**

## **First Bridge**

**There are only two bridges on North Haven and both of them connect portions of the land around Pulpit Harbor to the main portion of the island.**

**Originally, Pulpit Harbor and the stream we now call the "Mill Stream" were both referred to as the "North Harbor". It was the "Narrows" of North Harbor in 1850 that the first of our two bridges was constructed, about 100 feet east of the present bridge. Enos Cooper and Co. built the wooden bridge at a total cost of \$300. By 1857, a new bridge was needed; William and James Frye built the replacement bridge for \$600. Local history suggests that the bridge could not withstand the severe tidal and icing conditions and was in constant need of repair. Later, granite piers prolonged the life of the bridge.**

**By 1881, yet another bridge was voted in existence at a Special Town Meeting. This was a much sturdier bridge built on stone piers, except for 40 feet at the center which was wood. Two thousand dollars was set aside by the town for this third bridge, [a pattern of rising costs is perhaps emerging?] which was located at the site of the current bridge. Subsequently, the town connected the Town Roads with the bridge.**

**The wooden portion of this bridge was called the "draw" and consisted of planks laid lengthwise and crosswise, and which could be removed by hand to allow the passage of vessels between the mains Harbor and the "Mill Stream" where Charles Brown's boat shop was located. The planks were taken up and replaced by hand at least 100 times between 1884 and 1909.**

**Early in the 20th century a new draw that could be raised by gears was installed. In 1916, the first water pipe was laid across the bridge, permanently eliminating the draw and bringing town water to summer residents.**

**A further reconfiguration of the area occurred in 1921 when the town dynamited the ledge from in front of what was then Gordon Peters home to widen the approach to the bridge.**

**The bridge was traditionally one-way only, but with increased automobile traffic, the town eventually voted to install a new, two-lane steel and concrete bridge in 1955-1956. Finally, yet another new bridge has recently been completed in time for summer traffic in 2017. By now, the State of Maine has assumed costs for bridge construction and repair.**

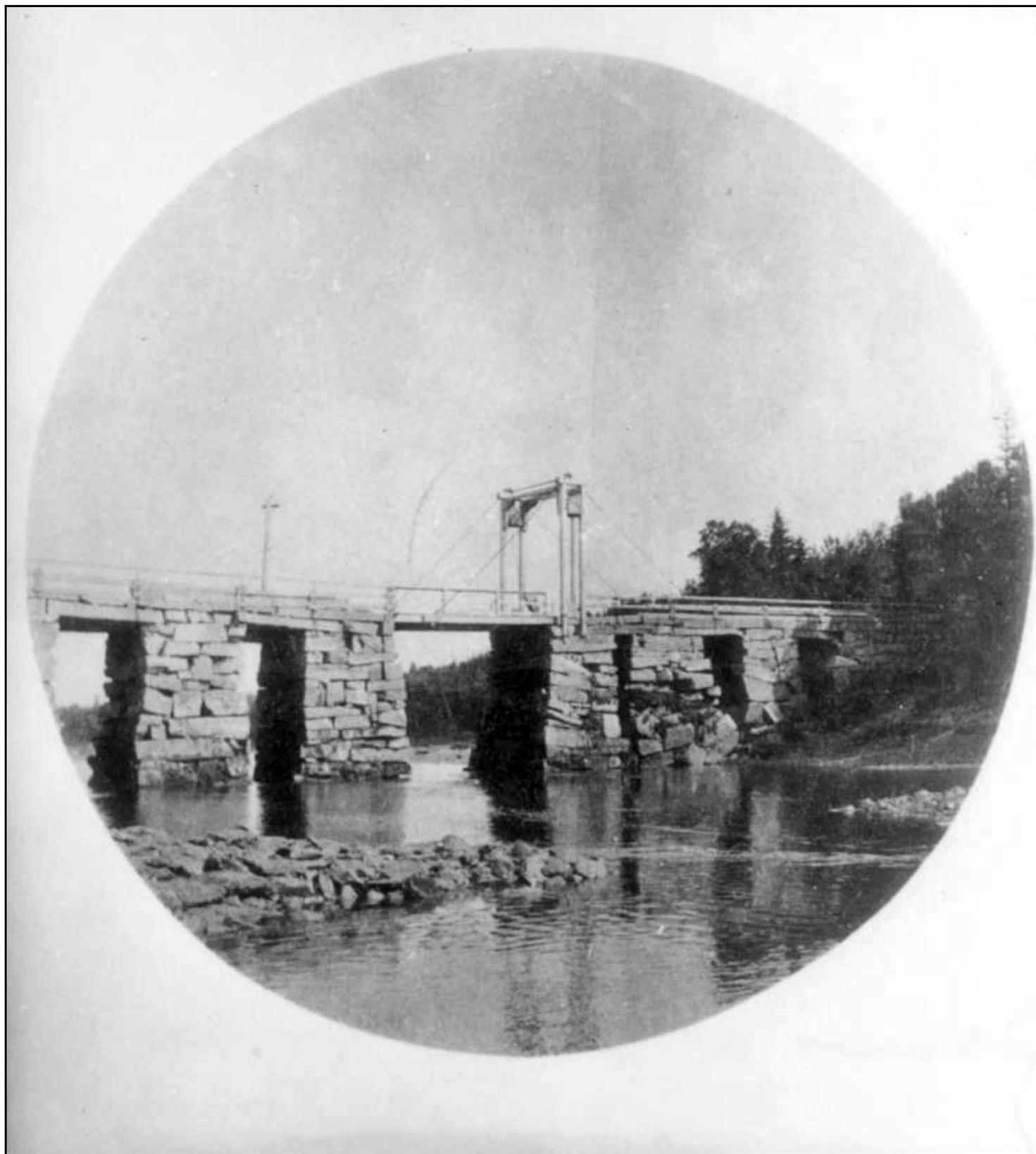
## **Beach Bridge or Second Bridge**

**The history of North Haven's second bridge begins in 1883 when the town approved \$250 to be paid to Alvin G. Beverage to construct a wooden bridge connecting "Blue Point" with "Beverage Point" at the beach where the Beverage store was located. Before the existence of Beach Bridge, residents and customers would go all the way around the cove to reach the far side. Recycled wood from the nearly-always-in-repair First Bridge was used in construction.**

**By 1945, the bridge, often repaired, was in sorry condition and had deteriorated to the**

**granite bridge was constructed for \$25, 996. Our current bridge replaced the 1949 version in 2015.**

**The construction and repair of these two bridges speaks to the significant year-round population originally settled around Pulpit Harbor and also to the 20th century increase in summer residents in that area.**



**A very early photograph of First Bridge with mechanical Draw installed.**

# Taking Up The Draw

When I was seven or eight years old  
I thought it quite a chore  
to walk to the Pulpit Harbor school  
Seemed like a mile or more.  
The conveyance was our own two legs  
No matter what the weather  
But when the teacher rang the bell  
We quickly got together.  
If we were tempted to complain  
I think we had a reason  
For we had plenty of dust and mud  
And ice and snow in season.  
Crossing the old stone Mill Bridge  
Was always such a thrill  
I was tempted there to linger  
And watch the water spill  
As it came rushing down the Mill Stream  
Along the rock bound shore  
Into sheltered Pulpit Harbor  
So near the Babbidge Store.  
I still recall the fear I felt  
The first time that I saw

The men at work at what I learned  
Was taking up the draw.  
The middle of the bridge was gone  
And when I ventured near  
I saw the waves beneath my feet  
As they dashed against the pier.  
The crew at Charles Brown's boat shop  
Which was on the Mill Stream side  
Had built a sloop with tall mast set  
And on the early morning tide  
She was being towed through the drawbridge  
And would soon be on her way  
Whether for work or pleasure  
Sailing on Penobscot Bay.  
As she was towed along the harbor  
She sure was a pretty sight  
With her deck a shining varnish  
And her hull a gleaming white.  
With the bridge put back together  
I too was on my way  
But my thoughts were all at sea  
And school was just another day.

Lucy Hopkins, 1974



**First Bridge:** The center section was made of crossed boards that were pulled by hand when a masted ship needed to go through.



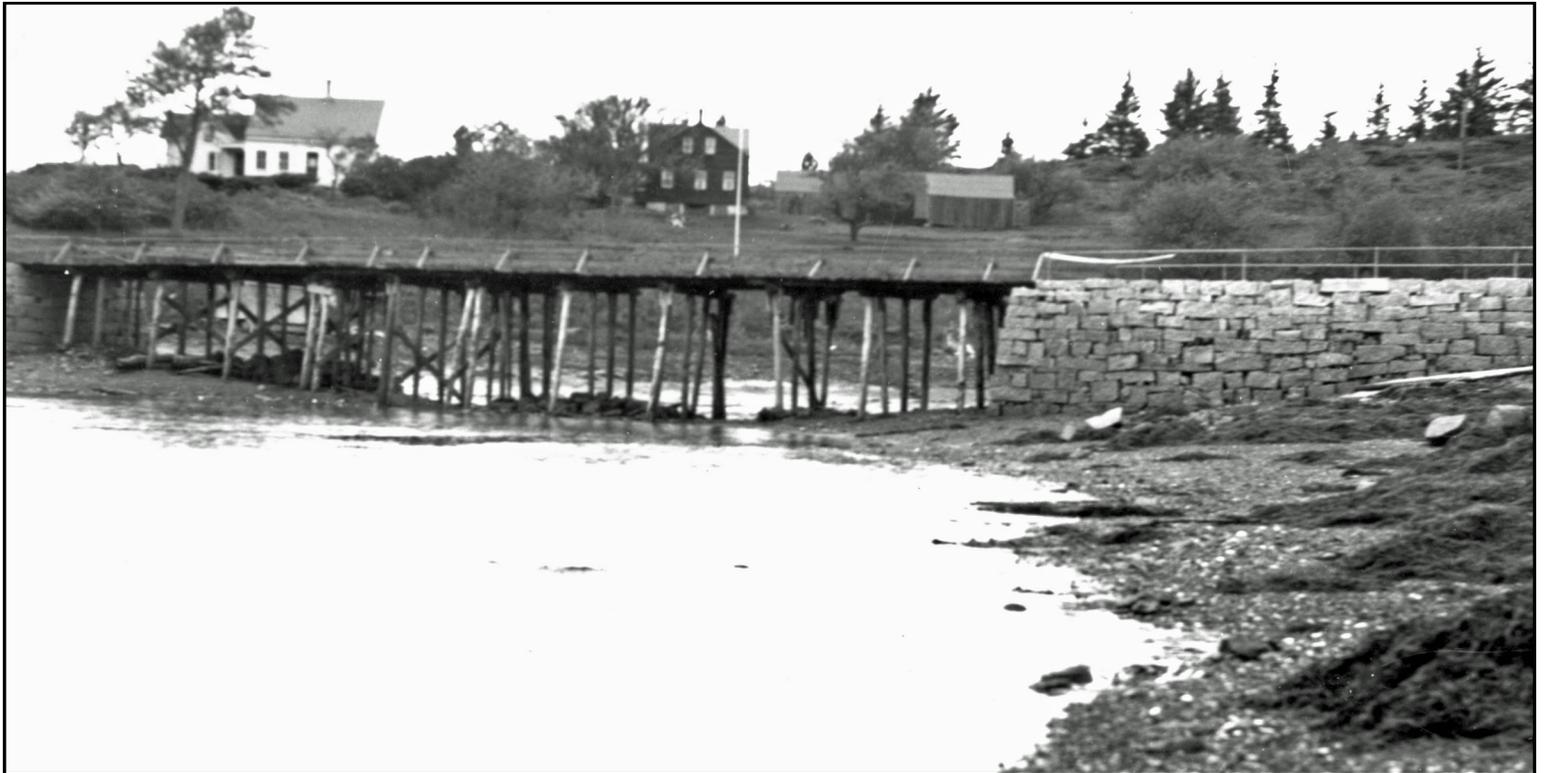
**Beach Bridge as built by Alvin Beverage in 1883.  
The Bridge connected his land on both sides of a small cove.**



**Old Beach Bridge at Pulpit Harbor.  
Taken before 1947 when the bridge was replaced by a steel and concrete bridge.**



**1934 wooden abutments**



**1946 granite abutments**



**High tide at Beach Bridge!**



# Farewell to the Island

The beauty of the sea  
Means so very much to me,  
Even in the rain and clouds  
That wrap the boats in velvet shrouds.

The wake of the ferry  
Spreads down its carpets, smooth and pale,  
Edged in frothy lace of a phantom wedding veil.  
An ethereal bride floats down the misty aisle  
Toward the altar of golden hue  
In the vast cathedral of sea and sky  
On the horizon on infinite blue.

The light-house stood old and gray  
Like an old sea-man remembering a better day  
When folks from the mainland came to fish,  
And stay to talk of races and rescues from this,  
The old light-house on the breakwater.

Buffeted by gales and storms  
'Til the calmer sea of the harbor brought no more qualms,  
The ferry docked at the pier;  
Passengers scattering far and near  
To meet again another year.

*Celestine L. Sager, (Mrs. Lawrence Sager), 1971*



This agreement, made this eighteenth day of April, A. D. 1883 by and between Alvin G. Beverage, of North Haven, County of Knox & State of Maine, of the first part and the inhabitants of the town of North Haven in the County and State aforesaid, of the second part, witnesseth: - that the said Alvin G. Beverage in consideration of the covenants on the part of the second part hereinafter contained, doth covenant and agree to & with said inhabitants of North Haven to build a wooden bridge across the Cove connecting land of said Beverage on both sides and to give the right of way <sup>through his own land</sup> to and from said bridge to ~~and~~ the main road. The plan and specifications of said bridge to be as follows: to be 14 ft at the bottom and 12 ft at the top - 60 ft at each end to be commenced at the bottom with logs and <sup>be</sup> built to a medium high water, then to be covered with rocks & dirt to the top of the bridge. between the shore butments <sup>for</sup> 110 feet or thereabouts to be built with 3 piers not to be less than than 20 x 14 ft at bottom and 20 x 12 ft at top and of sufficient height to be above the ice - said piers <sup>to be covered</sup> with plank on stringers sufficient to give ~~suff~~ necessary strength. said bridge to be railed and properly spiced; to be built as located by the selectmen and to be completed by the first day of Jan. 1884; the work to be subject to the Approval of the selectmen of North Haven

**Contact between Alvin Beverage and the town of North Haven to build the first version of Beach Bridge. 1883**

1890 Town of North Haven Dr  
To Alvin G. Beverage  
Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> " 23<sup>hours</sup> work on Bridge  
at 15 cts per hour \$ 3.45

**The Town of North Haven pays Alvin Beverage at the rate of 15 cents per hour  
for his work on Beach Bridge.**

North Haven, Maine, January 30, 1906  
Town of North Haven, Hrs.  
To R. L. Whitmore for  
material and for service on  
committee to repair Beach  
bridge in 1902. \$ 5.00

**1906**

**The town of North Haven pays R. L. Whitmore \$5.00 for materials  
and his work to repair Beach Bridge**