Prior to the first bridge(s) the Sacandaga River had to be forded to accommodate transportation to other communities and farm lands. The first bridge in the town of Northampton was in the hamlet of Fish House (then named, Northampton). The inhabitants of Fish House petitioned the legislature for funds to build a bridge. They were given $5,000, and $500. was added by subscription from the local people. The bridge was a huge 2 lane covered bridge designed by Daniel Stewart.

THE FIRST BRIDGE
Was at (Northampton) Fish House 1818

Just a reminder: If you find any errors about information I put in this paper, please let me know. I try to research the material and report it as best I can with the information I find.
The hamlet of Osborn’s Bridge was a small settlement that attracted a number of families because of its fertile land. It was located between Fish House and Northville. Calvin Osborn and Abram Denton were among the first settlers there. They each wanted to name the settlement after their family name. Apparently Osborn won out but there was another settlement on the other side of the bridge that was named Denton’s Corner. When the Conklinville Dam was built and the Sacandaga Reservoir flooded the valley, the hamlet of Osborn’s Bridge was totally inundated as was Denton’s Corner. When the water is low old tree stumps, cellar foundations, and stone walls can be seen as well some bricks and other remnants left behind.

VLAIE COVERED BRIDGE

This area was often called the Sacandaga Vlaie. Sir William Johnson built his Summer House near the mouth of the Vlaie Creek where he entertained many of his friends who took advantage of the great fishing there.

The Vlaie Bridge was built in 1835, it burned in 1883. It was replaced that same year. It was still in use up until the flooding of the valley when it was torn down, probably burned.

The second Vlaie bridge built at the cost of $883.87
In 1788 Samuel Olmstead made his way north up the Sacandaga River and finding the area a suitable place to bring his family, he built the first dwelling place on the west side of the river. He forded the river (Spier’s Ford) over to the area we now call the village of Northville near the high school’s soccer field.

In 1794 beginning at the old fording place, a road was laid out easterly and crossed at what is now Main Street, about where the Methodist Church stands today. It originally was named Grove Street and was later changed to Washington Street. The same year, (1794) a road was laid out on the hill east of the village which is now Ridge Road.

In 1797 another road was surveyed and laid out running north and south and paralleled the 1794 road, which is our present Main Street.

Hunter’s Creek divided the area south of main street from access to the village other than to ford the creek. A stone arched bridge was built to accommodate horse and buggies. I haven’t found the year it was built but records show that it gave way in 1859. Another bridge at the same place was built the same year. This area was and still is called “Hog Back”.

When the Sacandaga Reservoir (Great Sacandaga Lake) was formed, Hunter’s Creek was dammed up with a bridge or spillway which is there today. It regulates the flow of Hunter’s Creek/Little Lake into the Sacandaga Lake. An article about the spillway, written by Peter Betz our County Historian, was in our local paper just recently. (see picture on first page)
One of the first attempts to gain daily contact with the outside world was the Chase and Jackson Stage Coach to Gloversville. This vehicle had to cross the river at Spiers Ford. Fording the stream/river was easy in the summer, difficult to impossible the remainder of the year. To make possible a daily contact the year around, the Northville covered bridge was built in 1860. (Info from Carlton Nellis articles)

Each of our local historians over the years have been unsuccessful in locating a picture of this first bridge, which was a wooden lattice covered bridge. “The History of Fulton County” written in 1892 by Washington Frothingham, states that the bridge cost $2,500 to build. In March of 1882 it was carried away with it’s piers and abutments by high water and ice.

This past year when some items were donated to our historical archives such as pictures, advertisements, etc I realized that one of the papers was an account labeled “A List of Expenditures for the River Bridge at Northville”. Upon reading it over, checking names of contractors, and building materials used, it had to be a wooden lattice covered bridge. I had several people look it over and came to the same conclusion. The dates of the people mentioned were the ages that they would have been working on such a project.

It’s almost for certain this has to be the 1860 wooden bridge..now let’s hope someone finds a picture of it hidden somewhere in their grandparent’s attic.
The Iron Bridge was built the summer of 1882 the same year that the wooden lattice bridge was destroyed. The cost to build was $11,100. One of the adornments on the corners of this bridge is on display in our museum.

In 1930 a contract was awarded to Herman Snyder and Son for the construction of a steel truss bridge over the Sacandaga Reservoir consisting of three spans of 180 feet each. This bridge had a walkway on the north side that many of us remember riding bikes, walking and some even jumped off the railing. I don’t remember what year they painted it blue but from then on it was always affectionately called “The Blue Bridge”

The Blue Bridge began to show it’s wear as many cars, buses, and heavy log trucks traversed over it for over 50 years. It was repaired over and over again until it became unsafe and probably too costly to keep repairing it. In 1989 a new bridge was built on the south side of the Blue Bridge. A huge celebration took place the day it was officially opened to local travel. There were speeches, the Northville Band played and marched across both bridges. A 1930 car was driven across the old bridge.

Oh no, I’ve run out of space and I have so much more I want to share about the bridges I have more pictures and stories. I will be making a poster about the bridges for the museum, so you’ll see them there.

New Bridge today.. it opened in 1989