American Flyer Girder Bridges

Gilbert first produced a #581diecast girder bridge with the Lackawanna RR stamped on the girders in 1939. The base of the bridges were stamped painted black steel. The girders were painted black. There were typically a Blue-Yellow-Red American Flyer decal on the upper base at one end of a bridge. The bridge was made every following year until 1942 when Gilbert began to support needed manufacturing for WWII.

In 1946 the Lackawanna black girder bridge reappeared in the S gauge catalog. In 1951 and 1953 the Lackawanna black bridges were painted silver with black lettering. Oddly in 1950, 1952, and 1954 the girder bridges were painted silver with American Flyer stamped in black on them. For 1955 and 1956 the #581 girder bridges were painted black with white American Flyer Lines in small letters. At each end of the girders were stamped 581.

1957 brought about the new IBM five digit numbering system. #581 bridge overstock were put into red & white boxes marked 23581. Later production in the 1960's the box was brown cardboard with a red and white stick on label. The bridges retained the diecast girders through final production in 1964.

O gauge prewar Lackawanna girder bridges have been reported painted red with white lettering but they were only cataloged with black paint.

Gilbert began making diecast girder bridges #254 in HO gauge in 1939. They were similar to the O gauge versions but had a less tall girder and more narrow steel base. They were painted black with silver Lackawanna stamped on them and in 1950 painted silver with black lettering. The same girder bridge has been reported painted red in 1939 with white lettering but not cataloged. They were painted black in 1946 for postwar HO production with white lettering. Note the differences in the lettering of the two bridges below. Reliable data on production of HO girder bridges after 1950 are almost nonexistent and what has been uncovered is very difficult to verify.