



Obverse of 1808 medallion in Professor Roland Paxton's possession.

**Built
By the most noble
John Duke of Atholl
Expense above £30,000
Founded 24th June 1805
And open'd the
7th Novr. 1808.**

Foreword

As author of a new biographical assessment of Telford* and instigator of the joint lecture of the Institutions of Civil and Structural Engineers which acted as the catalyst for this book, I am delighted to herald its appearance. The lecture was delivered on 14 March 2001 at James Clerk Maxwell House, Edinburgh, to a general audience and earned its author, Christopher R. Ford, the Sir Arnold Waters 2001 medal of the Institution of Structural Engineers.

I have known Chris Ford for many years and have always admired his professionalism as one of Scotland's leading bridge engineers. I was truly delighted when he ventured into the history of bridge-building at Dunkeld. Practising engineers, even when retired, rarely take to writing such histories but, when they do, their efforts usually have a commendable authority, relevance and thoroughness. These attributes abound in the following pages, particularly respecting the sixteenth century bridge and Telford's masterpiece.

My own interest in Telford's finest Highland bridge stems from 1964 when I first marvelled at its proportions from the cathedral grounds, not least, the gentle sweep of its parapet on the arc of an immense circle. In 1984, through the good offices of Tayside Region engineers, I inspected the bridge's interior, then resplendent with thousands of stalactites! In 1995, on my mentioning Dunkeld at a dinner party in Ross-shire, Dr. Ellen Macnamara made a special journey to show me Heriot's instructive watercolour record of the bridge being built. She has kindly allowed his view to be reproduced in the book.

I feel sure that I speak for everyone wishing to be informed about the creation and use of Dunkeld's river crossings, in expressing our indebtedness to Chris Ford, those who have assisted him, and the publishers, for this well-illustrated and informative book. It adds significantly to what has already appeared in print and is a fitting aperitif to the commemorations now being planned for the 250th anniversary of Telford's birth.

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