

A 3 ft chain bar from the Scottish Tower



Friends' Patron Roland Paxton and Secretary Edward Cawthorn with 202-year-old 3ft bar from Union Bridge Photo: Adele Paxton

The Friends are the delighted recipients of a hand-forged 3ft long, wrought iron eye-bar of 1820, removed from the top of the Scottish tower during the restoration works and - although not re-used - restored and repainted by Spencers, the Bridge contractors.

The bar, designed and made under the direction of the Bridge's engineer, Capt. Samuel Brown RN, weighs 20kg (3 stones), is 2.2in (55mm) in diameter and a fascinating survivor of short length dictated by the Bridge's then innovative and unique tower top saddle arrangement. It is one of a small number of bars in the Bridge shorter than the standard 15ft bars, and was made to enable a chain to pass over the hidden saddle near the top of the Scottish tower. The drawings below show the configuration of the chains as they crossed the saddle, with a reminder of the abandoned 1902 wire rope shown running above them in Fig 2.

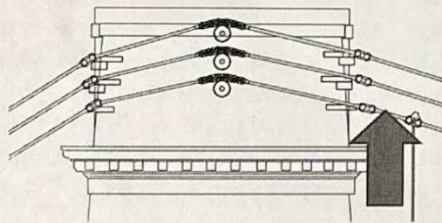


Fig 1 Section through the Scottish tower

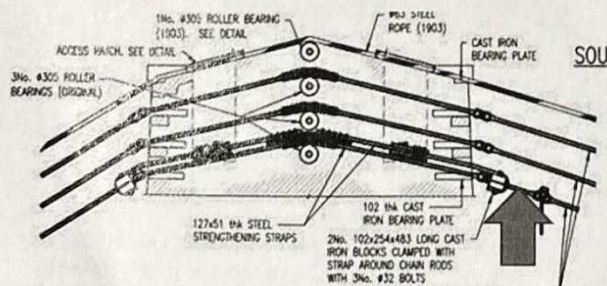


Fig 2 Detail showing the placement of the 3ft bars, with the 1902 chain along the top.