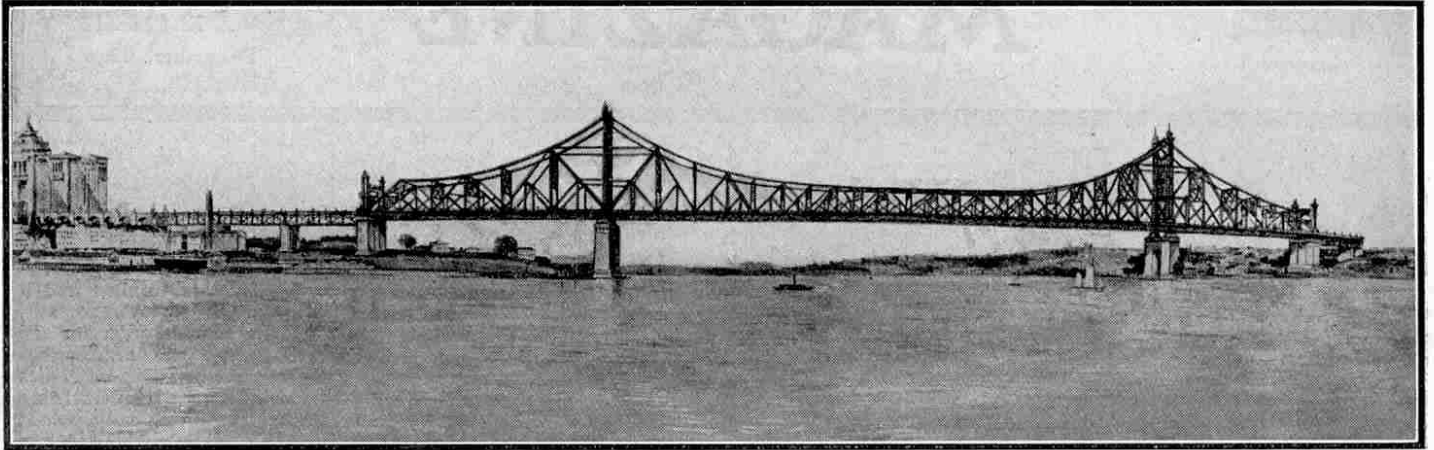


Largest Arch Bridge in the World

Over 50,000 Tons of Steel to Span Sydney Harbour



As it would have been with the original design for a cantilever bridge

THE suggestion to bridge Sydney Harbour seems to have been made first in 1815—the year of Waterloo—when Francis H. Greenway, then Government Architect, brought a scheme before the notice of Governor Macquarie. Some years later, in a letter to the press, Greenway wrote:—“ . . . in the event of the bridge being thrown across from Dawes’ Battery to the North Shore, a town would be built on that shore, and would have formed with these buildings a grand whole that would have indeed surprised anyone on entering the harbour, and have given an idea of strength and magnificence that would have reflected credit and glory on the Colony and the Mother Country.”

It is evident that the idea was the subject of a good deal of discussion even in those early days, for there is preserved in the Government Records at Sydney a minute of 1875 in which the Under Secretary for Works expresses the opinion that “No doubt the bridge would soon be an accomplished fact.” Obviously this gentleman was an optimist!

Many times since then politicians and statesmen have not only hoped that the bridge would soon be an “accomplished fact,” but in their election speeches have even gone to the extent of

promising their supporters its immediate construction!

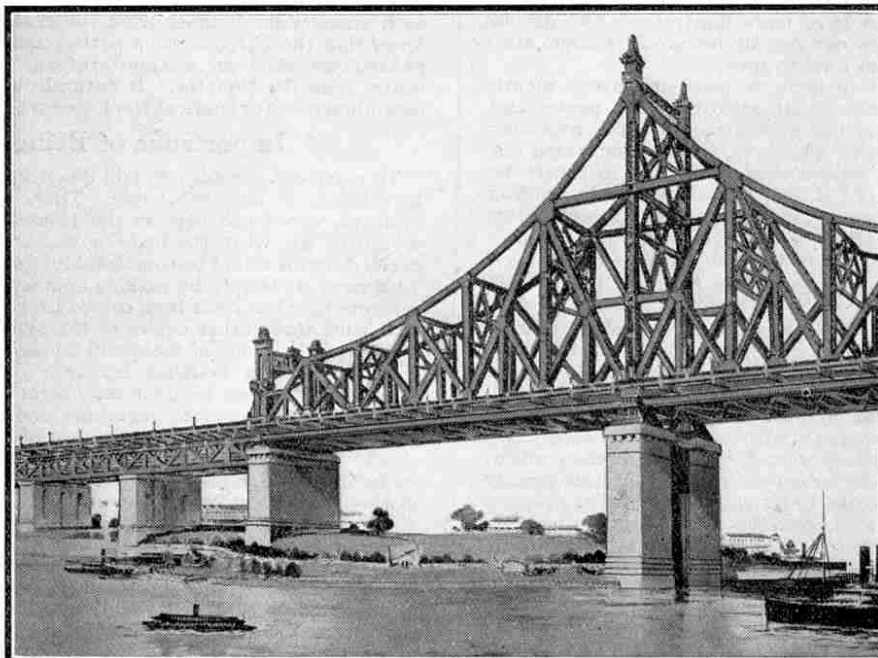
The first recorded design seems to have been prepared in 1857 by one Peter Henderson and at a more favourable time it is possible that his bridge might have been built. His scheme could not survive the local opposition, however, based upon the fear that if two bullock wagons happened to meet in the centre the structure might collapse!

Shall it be a Bridge or a Tunnel?

The question of a bridge was brought up repeatedly at intervals as the years went on, but always without practical result. From time to time engineers were consulted and architects prepared drawings, but the

actual bridge remained as far off as ever. Year by year the city of Sydney was developing at an enormous rate and the necessity of doing something in regard to improving cross-harbour communication became increasingly evident.

In 1912 a Public Works Committee was appointed to consider the whole question of connecting the two shores either by bridge or tunnel, and to ascertain the estimated cost of whichever undertaking they decided to be the best. The idea of a tunnel or sub-



As it would have been with the cantilever bridge. The south approach, showing piers and abutments