

02. August 2023

City history

City history: The bridge construction at the Ravarditor

Bocholt city archive presents the historical "Photo of the Month"

113 years ago, work began in Bocholt on a bridge that was significant for the city's transport development. The city museum is now commemorating this in its monthly series.

At the city council meeting on 11 May 1909, Mayor Clemens Wesemann presented a development plan concerning the previously undeveloped area between Hohenzollernstraße and Westend. In particular, this involved the construction of a new road - today's Meckenemstraße - and the construction of a bridge with a span of 18 metres over the River Aa at the Ravarditor.


Connecting the western and southern parts of the city with a bridge had become necessary in order to take the pressure off Ravardistrasse. Previously, all passenger and vehicle traffic coming from the west had been channelled through the city to the railway station via this route.

The city had the construction work officially put out to tender in January 1910, even though the bridge construction had not yet been discussed in a public council meeting. In a presentation on 7 June 1910, city planning officer Hermann Kraatz finally presented the bridge construction project he had designed to the city councillors. According to this, the river crossing was also to be used by the Bocholt-Aalten light railway.

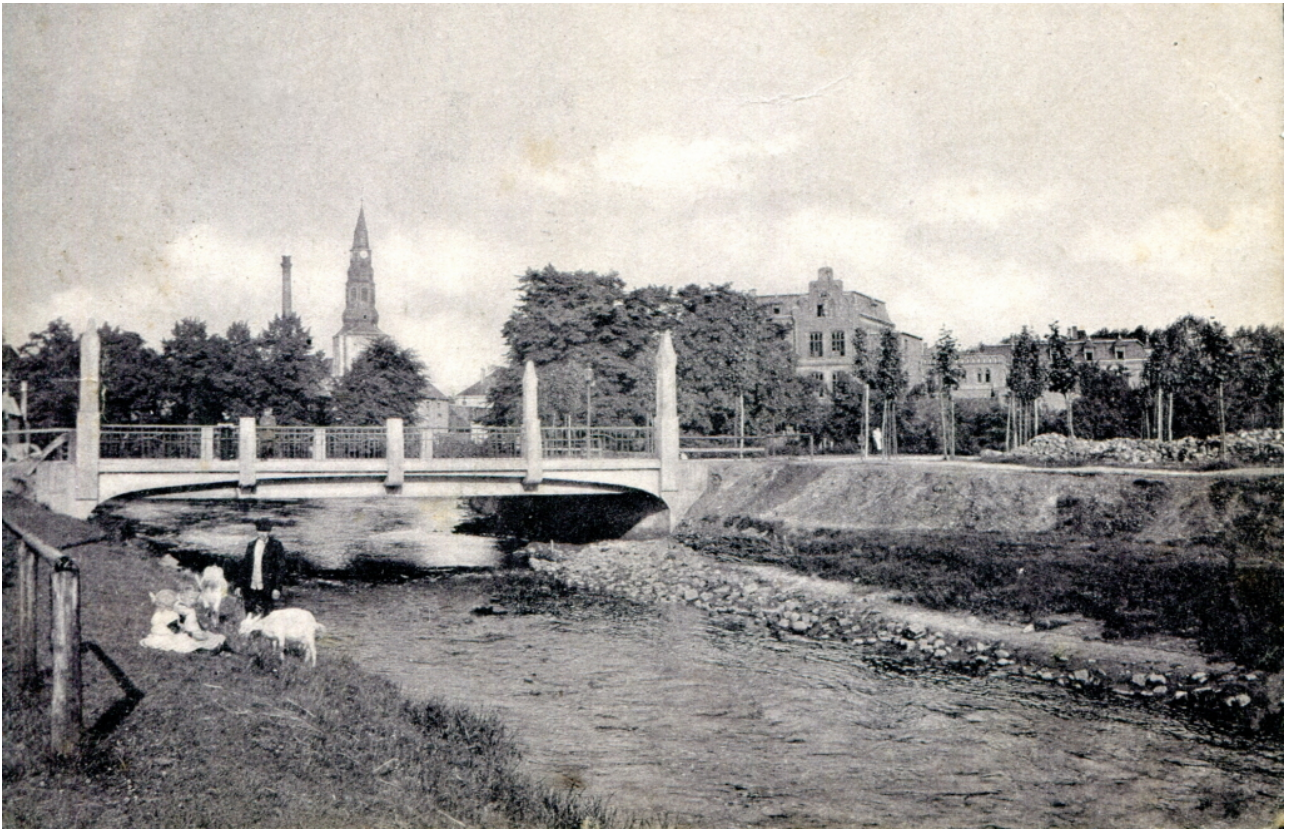
The company "Beton- und Eisenbetonbau Union" from Hanover took on the construction, with the construction costs including those for the artistic design totalling 30,900 marks. Construction work began on 12 August 1910. In the spring of 1911, the bridge was completed to such an extent that it could be test loaded with weights totalling 72.5 tonnes. On 7 March, iron girders and sand weighing more than 50 tonnes were initially placed on the centre of the bridge and a further 20 tonnes on the ends of the bridge and on the trottoire. This corresponded to a load of approx. 500 kilograms per square metre. The result was satisfactory, as the load on the bridge led to a deflection of only 1.5 millimetres. Before the bridge was approved, the sculptor Schröder from the company Heid & Münckeberg in Hanover designed the concrete pillars and obelisks with artistic ornamentation. Among other things, the stelae were decorated with the Bocholt city coat of arms.

The photo shows a view of the Aa Bridge from the west shortly after its completion. Passers-by with pets can be seen on the unpaved riverbank. The tower of St George's Church can be seen in the background and the Marienlyzeum behind the trees. The bridge remained undamaged during the last world war. However, it was completely renovated and widened in the spring of 1962.

Follow more

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The photo shows a view of the Aa bridge at the Ravarditor from the west shortly after its completion. Passers-by are walking their pets along the unpaved riverbank. The tower of St George's Church can be seen in the background and the Marienlyzeum behind the trees.