

The Dingle Woodland - a Hidden Oasis

The need for a new bridge

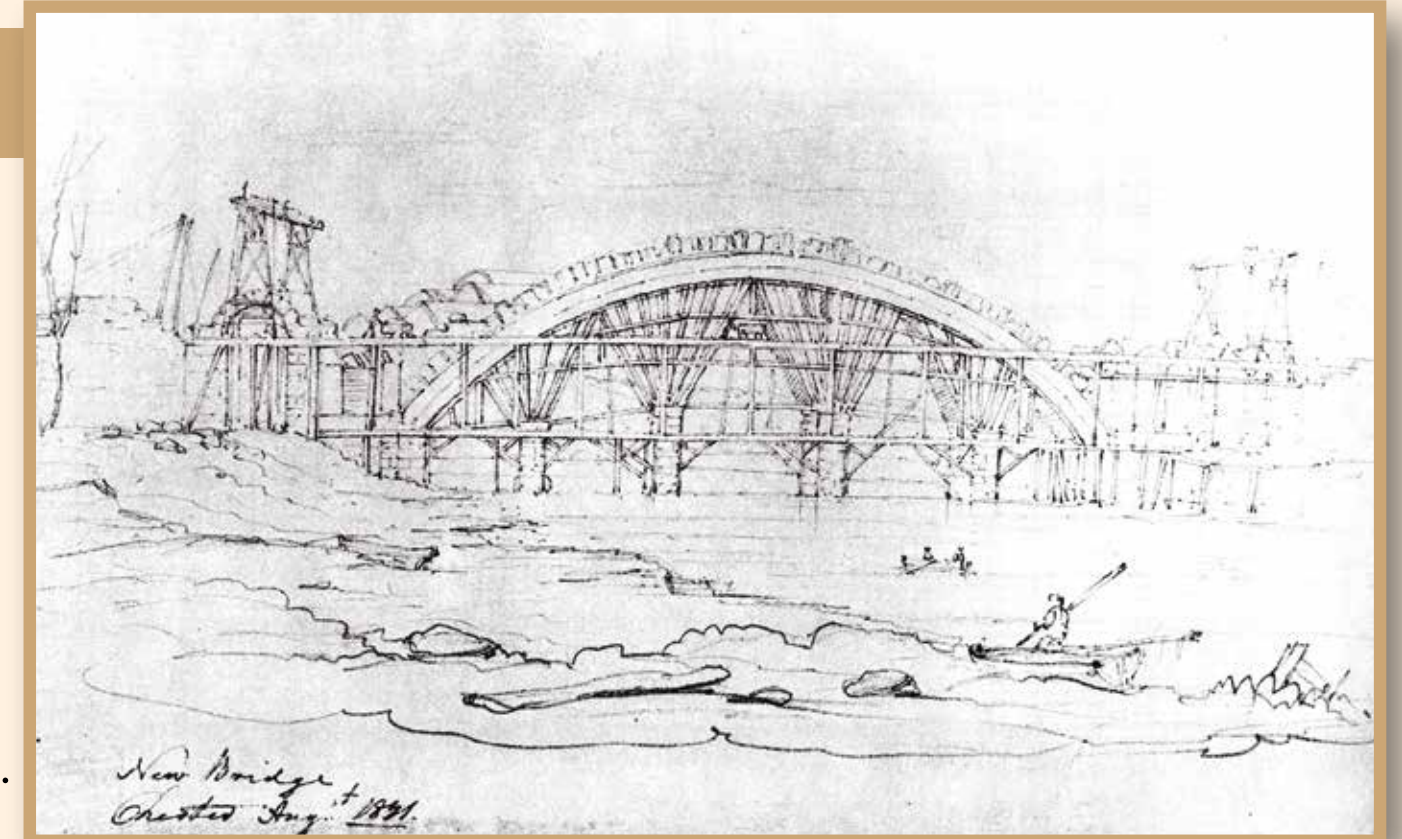
At the start of the 19th Century the only river crossing in Chester was the Old Dee Bridge. Due to fears of Chester losing important trade from the Irish ferries, a committee was appointed in 1818, and Thomas Harrison (1744-1829) was requested to supply plans for a new bridge.



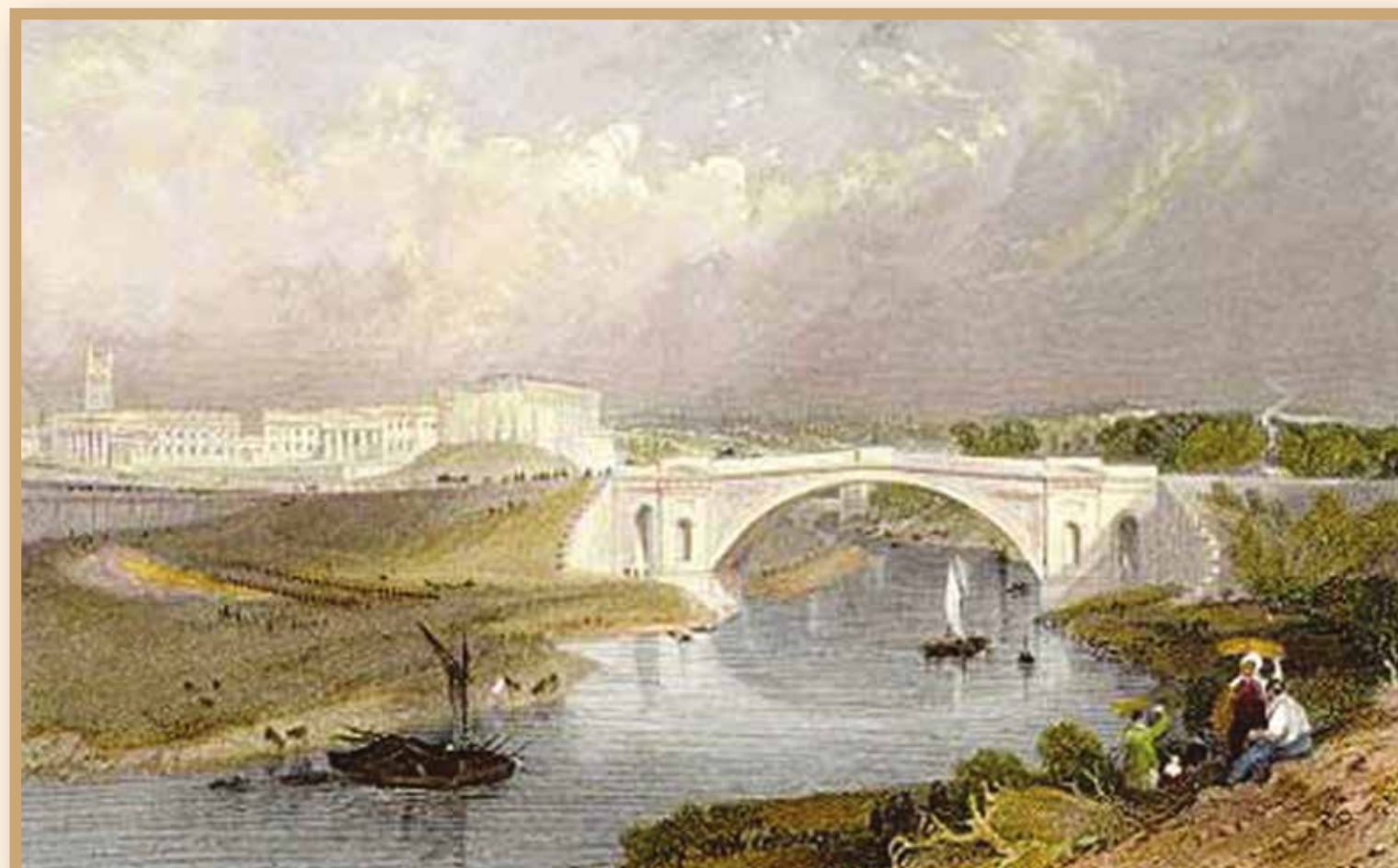
Chester Archive CALS M5.2

Grosvenor Bridge

The foundation stone was laid by the 2nd Earl Grosvenor in 1827. The abutments, founded on rock, were completed in 1829, and the massive centre ring was erected in 1830. With a span of 200ft (61m) and a height of 60ft (18m) to accommodate the height of the ships being built in Chester. It was the largest arch in the world at the time of its construction, and it remains the longest masonry span in Great Britain.

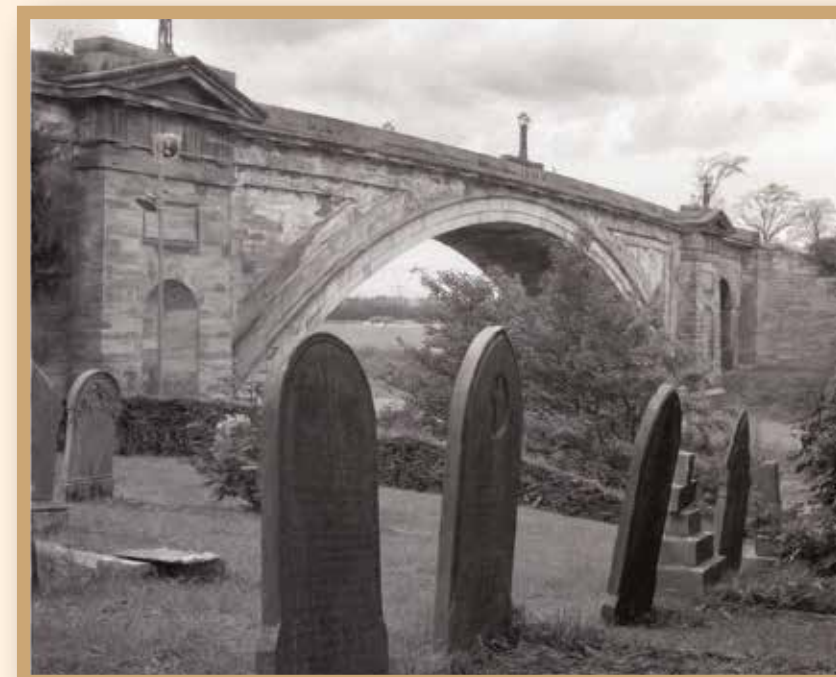


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Thomas Allom 1836

The outer courses of the arch are of Anglesey limestone, while the rest of the bridge is encased in Peckforton sandstone. The unfinished bridge was formally opened by Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld and her daughter, Princess Alexandrina Victoria of Kent (later Queen Victoria) in October 1832 and completed in 1833.



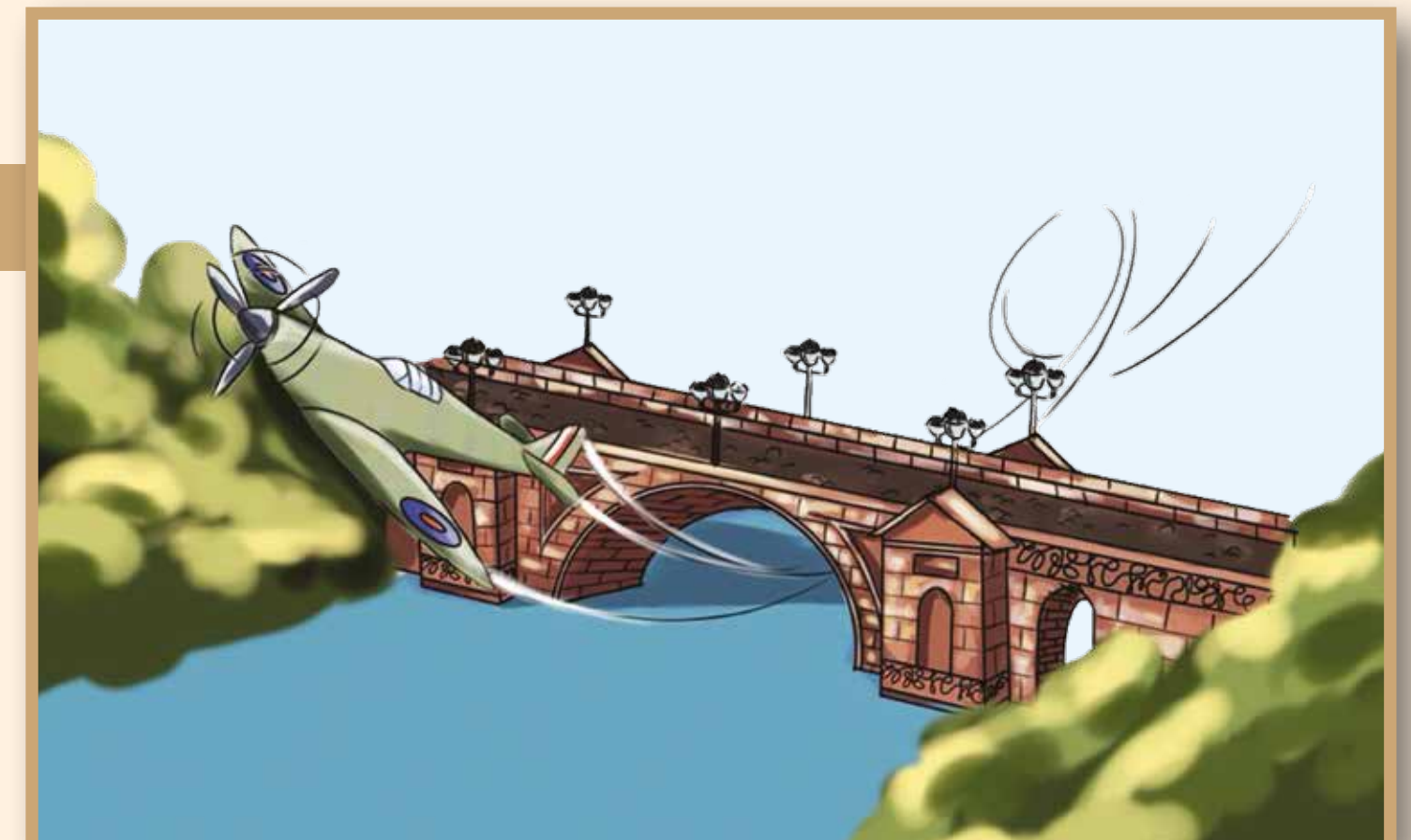
Grosvenor Bridge from Overleigh Cemetery by Steve Howe

Road to NOWHERE

As you leave the Dingle passing under Grosvenor Bridge, spare a thought for Mary Jonas, at rest in the Overleigh Cemetery on your right. Mary was judged by Tit-bits, a popular magazine of the day, as having contributed most to the population of The British Empire by giving birth to 33 children, including 15 sets of twins. (Mary passed away in 1899 at the age of 85).

"I did it because it was there"

In 1940, local fighter pilot James Storrar, aged 18, stunned residents on a quiet Sunday morning by flying his Hawker Hurricane fighter aircraft under Grosvenor Bridge. He said, in 1994, "I made the flight at 10:30am on Sunday morning as I was on my way back to Croydon from RAF Sealand after spending a weekend at home."



Courtesy of Chester Art College

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed and assisted us in achieving our aim regarding our Dingle Project, we (CPRA) are extremely grateful.

