

# The Royal Albert Bridge



The railway below the bridge is now known as the Tamar Valley Line. It formed part of the 'withered arm' from London to Padstow.

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On the Devon shore there is a remnant of the original D-day slipway.

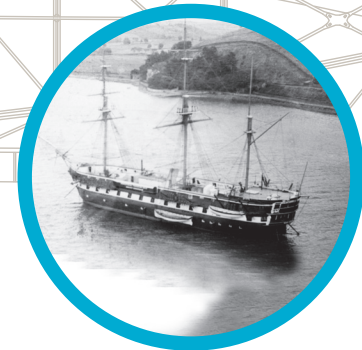


Workshops for the construction of the bridge were on what is now the Devon foreshore. The main spans were floated out on pontoons and jacked up as the masonry was built beneath them.

The Royal Albert Bridge survived two World Wars, however, in the early 1950s the Royal Navy's HMS Roberts struck the bridge.



The training ship Mount Edgcombe was moored just north of the Royal Albert Bridge for many years. The ship provided a home for destitute and homeless boys up to the age of 14.



Brunel designed 'The Great Cylinder' in order to construct the central pillar. The top was sealed and air pumped in, increasing pressure enough to keep the water out. Men initially worked 7-hour shifts, however, this gave workers the 'bends' (decompression sickness).

The hollow tubes of each main span are large enough for a person to comfortably walk through.



The Saltash Ferry ran from under the Royal Albert Bridge to a point downstream on the Devon shore.



The pub with the flag on it is called the Union. The street at the back is called Tamar Street and the top of the ferry slipway is where JMW Turner painted his 'Saltash with the Water ferry'.



The Saltash station building would have been to Brunel's design although the station was added to and rebuilt in the late 1800s.

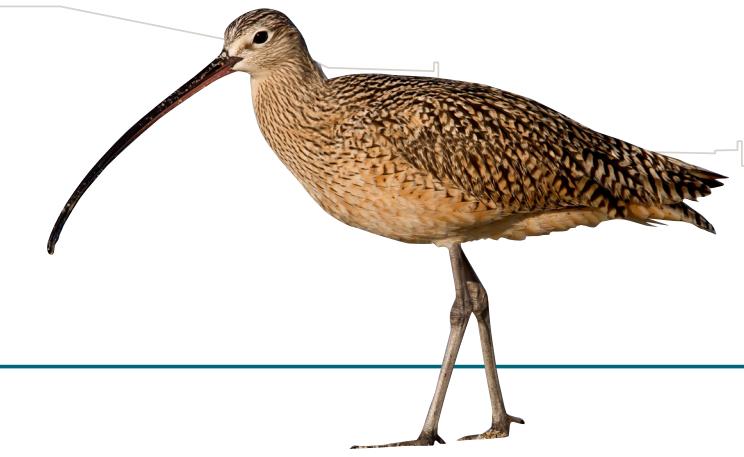
Saltash →

# The Tamar Bridge



The distinctive canopy over the toll booths on the bridge was influenced by the shape of the Royal Albert Bridge.

The River Tamar is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is a salmon river and otters are resident along the banks. Along the tidal sections it is possible to see dolphins, porpoise and seals. The river is navigable as far as Gunnislake New Bridge.



Legend has it that the River Tamar was formed from the earth nymph Tamara who left her parents home to explore the moors. Her father was so angry he turned Tamara into a river of water that always flowed to the sea.



The Admiralty use the river upstream of the bridges. In the 1940s, 50s and 60s many warships were moored here.

The Royal Navy Armaments depot at Ernesettle has been on the Devon bank since 1925 and is still operational.



Today the border between Devon and Cornwall follows the Tamar for most of its length.



It is 61 miles long from source to sea and rises 3.7 miles from the North Cornish coast near Bude.



The bridge has one expansion joint at each end, the main one is adjacent to Saltash Tower. The expansion joints allow for movement of the bridge.



The Celtic Cross sculpture signifies the gateway to Cornwall. It weighs 2 tonnes and is made of carbon fibre, covered with copper impregnated resin.



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