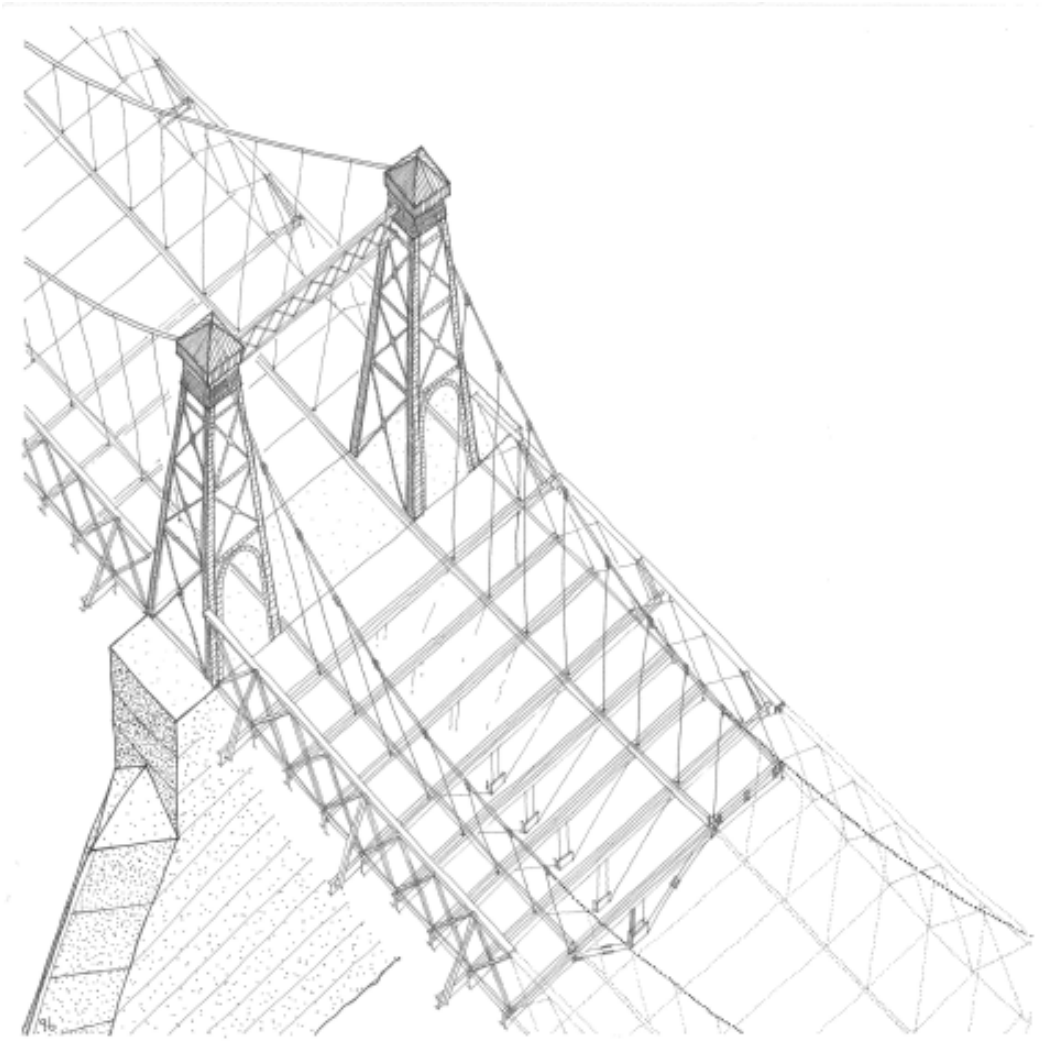


John A. Roebling Sons Company Suspension Bridge - Riegelsville, PA



Artist: Eugene P. Berg, Jr., AIA

The suspension bridge crossing the Delaware River stands at the same site as an 1835 covered bridge. Both bridge structures were built as toll bridges for profit by the "Riegelsville Delaware Bridge Company", incorporated in Pennsylvania and New Jersey on November 6, 1835. The original covered wooden bridge, built in 1835, remained in service until the entire superstructure was swept away by the flood of October 10, 1903. After the flood, the covered bridge was replaced with a 3-span cable suspension structure with stiffening trusses, in 1904, at a cost of \$30,767. This amount included raising the piers and repairing damaged masonry. This bridge still stands today.

The suspension type superstructure was constructed by John A. Roebling's Sons Company of New York. The superstructure was originally supported by only two 2-5/8-inch diameter cables. Controversy arose in 1904 as to the adequacy of the design of the bridge. Reports prepared by Professor J.M. Porter to Mr. Howard Riegel of the Riegelsville Delaware Bridge Co. and Mr. Wilhelm Hildenbrand to the Roebling Co. came to opposite conclusions. Subsequently, two 1-3/4 inch diameter cables were added, clamped above the original cables, to provide additional support for the superstructure. Today, the posted capacity of the bridge is 2 1/2 tons. The bridge was purchased by the States on January 4, 1923 for \$50,000 and freed of tolls. The span lengths, starting from the Pennsylvania side, are 200'-1", 191'-2", and 185'-7", respectively. The bridge has been repaired, maintained, improved, and stiffened many times from 1930 to present, and Riegelsville recently celebrated the bridge's 100th anniversary in 2004.