

Chapter 1 : Non-stop job of painting Forth Bridge to end - Telegraph

be like painting the Forth Bridge (British English) if a job is like painting the Forth Bridge, it is so big that by the time you get to the end you have to start at the beginning again: Cleaning a house this size is a bit like painting the Forth Bridge.

Wikimedia Commons has media related to Construction of the Forth Bridge. The Bill for the construction of the bridge was passed on 19 May after an eight-day enquiry, the only objections being from rival railway companies. Following advances in furnace design by the Siemens brothers and improvements by the Martin brothers, the process of manufacture enabled high quality steel to be produced very quickly. Reginald Middleton, to establish the exact position of the bridge and allow the permanent construction work to commence. Since the foundations were required to be constructed at or below sea level, they were excavated with the assistance of caissons and cofferdams. Cofferdams were used where rock was nearer to the surface, and it was possible to work in low tide. Arrol, before being dismantled and transported to South Queensferry. Two trains, each consisting of three heavy locomotives and 50 wagons loaded with coal, totalling 1, tons in weight, were driven slowly from South Queensferry to the middle of the north cantilever, stopping frequently to measure the deflection of the bridge. This represented more than twice the design load of the bridge: The first complete crossing took place on 24 February, when a train consisting of two carriages carrying the chairmen of the various railway companies involved made several crossings. The bridge was opened on 4 March by the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII , who drove home the last rivet, which was gold plated and suitably inscribed. When it opened it had the longest single cantilever bridge span in the world, [62] until when the Quebec Bridge in Canada was completed. Forth Bridge approach railways To make the fullest use of the bridge, several new railway connections were built, bringing main line routes to the bridge. The construction of some of these lines was only completed on 2 June , delaying the implementation of a full express train service over the bridge until that date. Even then, there was considerable congestion at Edinburgh Waverley station with remarshalling of the portions of the new, more intensive train service. Wilhelm Westhofen recorded in that 57 lives were lost. In the Forth Bridge Memorial Committee was set up to erect a monument to those lost, and a team of local historians set out to name all those who died. This reached a climax in with sensational daily press reports about the " Race to the North ". Although known as the "Forth Bridge Raid", the bridge was not the target and not damaged. Sixteen Royal Navy crew died and a further 44 were wounded, although this information was not made public at the time. After the War it was learned that a third bomber had come down in the Netherlands as a result of damage inflicted during the raid. Later in the month, a reconnaissance Heinkel crashed near Humbie in East Lothian and photographs of this crashed plane were, and still are, used erroneously to illustrate the raid of 16 October, thus sowing confusion as to whether a third aircraft had been brought down. Two bodies were recovered from the Crail wreckage and, after a full military funeral with firing party, were interred in Portobello cemetery, Edinburgh. The body of the gunner was never found. The only alternative route between Edinburgh and Fife involved the ferry at Queensferry, which was purchased by the NBR in This body undertook to construct and maintain the bridge.

Chapter 2 : Forth Bridge painting completed - BBC News

The Forth Bridge is a cantilever railway bridge across the Firth of Forth in the east of Scotland, 9 miles (14 kilometres) west of Edinburgh City Centre. It is considered as a symbol of Scotland (having been voted Scotland's greatest man-made wonder in), and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

News for free thinkers Email address: Checked his bedside clock. The first trains of the day were usually on time unless the weather was bad, it was the later ones that slipped, work on the line or technical faults. He lay in bed and listened to the whoosh of the approach resolving into the click-clack of wheels on rails as the train headed away. Looked at the clock. Were the sounds already reaching his ears from the other direction but too quiet to hear? At what point could you say that you heard something? Then he was sure. He thought about the people on those trains, each with their own life, heading into a new day. Suddenly being confronted by all those people could be shocking. But that was going to change today. He pulled back the covers and placed his feet on the cold laminate. It was a big day. When you waited for something for so long, it was hard to believe when it finally arrived. He squinted as he turned onto Battery Road and took in the view. The Albert Hotel to his right and beyond it the two road bridges, the new one almost built, suspension cables like a spray of needles slicing the sky. Already the traffic on the nearer road bridge was thrumming, a calm sound in the distance, almost indistinguishable from the shush of waves on the stony beach in front of him. But looming over everything here was the Forth Bridge to his left, the colossal, blood-red lattice of struts and supports, cantilevers and spans. He loved the vocabulary of the bridge, had learned it when he was on one of the painting crews a few years back. People used it as shorthand for a thankless, never-ending task, but it was never true that they started at one end as soon as they finished the other. In reality, some areas needed more patching up than others. Actually, that was a better metaphor for life. He walked down the road as it curved under the bridge, gulls cawing overhead, briny air stinging his nose. The monstrous tubular supports were overwhelming from underneath, the sun blinking through riveted steel girders and panels. Opened in , this is no relic – with trains crossing the Forth each day, the rail bridge still fulfils its original purpose by connecting the north and south of the country. A rumble overhead, heading south. He checked his watch. Annie would be on her way to school in Abbeyhill now. He pictured her in the navy blue uniform, her multi-coloured backpack, swinging her lunchbox. He pictured her walking round the back of Meadowbank, crossing London Road with her mum, heading to school. But then he thought about Carol, and Derek, and the flat the three of them shared on Marionville, and he shook his head. He stopped at the Private Road sign and looked at the Network Rail portacabins. A couple of workers in orange hi-vis suits and white helmets were smoking outside on the dirt track, about to begin their maintenance shift up top. They got up there by a discrete scaffolding staircase hidden round the side of the stone support for the northern approach viaduct, either that or the rusty old hoist on the leg of the north span, depending where they were needed. These guys were real engineers, not like him, just a handyman. Of course that had been the start of all the trouble. He came out of his dwam and checked his watch. There was no chapel left, just a tiny, padlocked graveyard with half a dozen ramshackle stones. He saw the block in the crumbling wall with the carved message: He imagined a place called North Fearie. He began up The Brae, six minutes to the train station at the top of the hill. The road zigzagged past an ancient spring with an old plaque and he stopped before the bend to take in the view. The three giant cantilevers and suspended spans were like squatting Buddhas holding hands, his own wee flat on Helen Place in amongst the jumble of old and new roofs cowering below. The bridge created a communal spirit in North Queensferry, they all lived in its shadow and felt pride towards it, as if they were its guardians. An icy wind swept down the platform. It reminded him of being on the painting crew, the 50 mph gales hurling down the Forth at them, whole work days lost to the weather. He looked past the other platform to the playground of North Queensferry Primary, a square Victorian building with a good reputation. Annie would love it. The kids were lining up waiting to go in, flashes of maroon jumpers and cardigans among the winter coats. He would need to sort uniform for Annie, but she could wear whatever she had for now. He walked to the end of the platform nearest the bridge. There were four warning signs pinned to a board, no access, safety

briefings needed and so on. Passengers must not cross the line. Do not trespass on the Railway. He looked at the concrete by his feet. There was no line to cross. A long intercity came thudding from that direction, the sun behind making him shield his eyes. The train powered through the station without stopping, heading for Perth and beyond. Just as the train disappeared into the tunnel to the north, his own train trundled out and eased to a stop. He shoved his hands in his pockets, scuttled down the platform and got on. He was too agitated to enjoy the view from the bridge, buzzed about what was coming. He stared at the island of Inchgarvie between the flicker of the bridge struts, the tanker terminal beyond, a woman walking her dog on the sand at Whitehouse Bay. Three minutes and they were already slowing down for Dalmeny. It was never long enough. After Dalmeny they ran through fields and passed a tree nursery, saplings stiffened by supports. He thought of when Annie was born, holding her in his arms at the hospital, a full head of hair already, blinking at him, red-faced and wrinkled. The track skirted the back of the airport. A Flybe twin-prop swung in low from left to right. For a moment it looked as if it was on a collision course with the front carriage, but it was just an optical illusion. He heard the roar as the plane disappeared above the train then re -appeared, wobbling as the wheels touched tarmac. He thought about the people on board, where they came from, where they were going. He breathed deeply and got his phone out. Checked the time as they came into Edinburgh Gateway. Scrolled through and called Carol. He had his phone set so that his number was withheld. She would work it out, but by then it would hopefully be too late. Her not answering was perfect. Past the Jenners Depository and the alien mothership of Murrayfield then into Haymarket, the train busier now. They slipped into the tunnel and waited under the rock of the city for a signal. Looked at his watch. Twenty-four minutes since he got on at North Queensferry. He strode out the Market Street exit and onto the Royal Mile, heading east down Canongate through the tourists. This walk should take twenty minutes but he had to weave onto the road around a gang of teenage Italians with backpacks, then a Nordic family in water-proofs and headbands. This would be slower on the way back with Annie. Maybe best to get a taxi if he could, just in case. Past Holyrood Palace and round Abbeyhill, the garage on the left and the railway over a barbed wire fence to his right. It always amazed him about Edinburgh, two minutes round the corner from a palace and you were surrounded by rundown flats and a crappy concrete playground for a crumbling school. No fit place for his daughter. The knot in his chest tightened. He swallowed twice, his mouth dry, kept walking. Be positive and confident and others will go along with you no matter what. Annie would be in class, still a while until morning Break. He pushed the button on the old door, put on a smile, breathed. He was buzzed in and strode to reception as if he knew what he was doing. An obese woman wearing a home-knitted cardigan and a Help For Heroes badge frowned at him. She held his gaze for a long time. He was smiling but had been holding it so long it felt like a grimace. I thought it was arranged. He resisted the temptation to look at his watch.

Chapter 3 : Painting the Forth Bridge - Anita Murphy Art

Noun 1. Firth of Forth - a large firth on the east coast of Scotland and the estuary of the Forth River; location of Edinburgh Scotland - one of the four countries that make up the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; located on the northern part of the island of Great Britain.

Share via Email Forth bridge painter Bob Muir: Murdo Macleod The old bridge sighs as you creep inside it. What is it thinking of? The men who built it, or the metaphor they forged? The rhubarb cobweb is a double monument to work: People tend to take bridges for granted. What goes up can come down, though. Since the second world war, 29 British bridges have collapsed, two of them "in Wales and Hampshire" because of corrosion. Since the structure carrying trains a day over the Forth estuary has been the subject of an intense first aid exercise, due to finish by Muir joined this project 12 years ago. The bulldog chin springs forward. But first we go through safety regulations. Brown reads from a long tick-list: Depending on whose figures you believe, the construction phase claimed anything from 57 to 98 victims, including several painters. Balfour Beatty, which manages the site for Network Rail, is proud of the fact that since it has registered only one recordable accident "and that a twisted ankle" over 3. Techniques deployed to counter gravity and bad luck include inertia-reel harnesses, lectures on the dangers of alpha sleep or daydreaming, not recommended when using ladders and brain capacity limits. Washroom mirrors are inscribed, disconcertingly: Some men, and a squirrel, have survived plunges, but most do not. Access to the site is via a walkway slung underneath the railway line. It is mildly disorientating to have trains rumbling inches above your head while pigeons flit below your toes. The walkway turns into scaffolded track that winds into the bowels of what William Morris uncharitably dismissed as "the supreme specimen of ugliness". A century on, an awesome sense of concentrated energy is supplemented by an awesome sense of concentrated frenzy: The whole caboodle, stood on its end, would stretch ft higher than Ben Nevis. For Muir, following behind, the bridge itself is not directly an aesthetic experience. He has, for example, not seen films of The 39 Steps, that feature Robert Donat and Kenneth More leaping about his workplace, in defiance of health and safety. His core pleasure comes from doing a difficult job very well: The tricky bits, he tells me, are the struts and the tubes. They hunch inside white plastic tents, like industrial Bedouin. If the stiff estuary breeze hits 45mph, the bridge is cleared. Muir has been shaped physically by the work, biceps swollen by wrestling with the pneumatic hoses of the psi blasters: All this is happening storeys in the air. It sounds like a rather manic high-wire act. We sidle up to an elderly length of angle iron. Muir jabs a no-nonsense finger into the blistered paint. Crispy cinnamon flakes float down through the air to the water coiling round the bridge base ft below. I grip the handrail a little tighter. Corrosion is what happens when steel, an inherently unstable alloy, reverts to weaker iron oxide aka rust through exposure to humidity and oxygen. Despite being barely the thickness of a credit card, the epoxy skin is expected to survive at least 25 years, which might raise a philosophical issue in Oxford. An orange figure with a glinting earstud bounds along the metal ledge. It is not surprising that families congregate round employment nodes, even potentially lethal ones, but sometimes this is too great a temptation for fate. A current employee lost his brother and father to bridge falls in and A more up-to-date casualty list is mysteriously hard to track down. That was more than a month ago. Muir, who has three stepchildren and a year-old daughter, views the odds phlegmatically. Of course, conditions have improved. The precipitate ladders, for example, are all but redundant. Serious vertical journeys are now completed in creaking cages which shudder up the flanks of the giant cantilevers and stop with an alarming jolt. I ask Bob about the views. He is absolutely right. I can report there is still an awful lot of bridge to paint. Possible overtime on Fridays and Saturdays. Work-life balance "No problems. We are given 30 minutes to eat in a cabin on the shore.

Chapter 4 : Painting the Forth Bridge - a short story by Doug Johnstone

The painting of the Forth Bridge was often referred to as a job that had never ended since it opened in However, the latest decade-long repair and repainting project has finished and it will.

I like things to be straight. It was the same when I had a busy job. To ensure that nothing got overlooked, I had tidy piles of paper dotted around my desk so that at any moment I could see what was still awaiting my attention. This was how I maintained the illusion of control for myself. My boss had a room that looked like a bomb had gone off in it. I used to hyper-ventilate just standing on its threshold. Paper was piled upon paper so that it was impossible to find a flat surface on which to work. He had control in his chaos "his brain was clearly bigger and with better wiring than mine. Unfortunately, being anal about tidiness does not always sit happily in a house with four children. They fail to understand how important to my mental well being a tidy house is and I cannot comprehend how they can walk into an ordered room and destroy it in a matter of seconds without even a nod to its former pristine state. I do have some understanding though. Too much stuff, not enough space and no interest in achieving more than the merest modicum of tidiness to get my mum off my back. And, it appears, is them. The others need attention but hers was the worst. We tackle it storage unit by storage unit. The desk, the bedside table, the vanity unit and finally the wardrobe. We do it together. She is good at throwing away and we fill bag after bag of clutter in a satisfyingly Cathartic manner. The result is impressive. A place for everything and everything in its place. There were even clear spaces waiting ready to be filled. I feel calm and she is pleased. It lasted less than a day. Fresh ironing hidden rather than hung up. Toiletries left on the side rather than in their newly allocated spot. Bags, scarves, clothes, magazines all not where they were supposed to be. There is nothing that I can do about it. At least my square metre is straight!

Chapter 5 : Forth Bridge painting 'is coming to an end' - BBC News

- *Unique pictures - the first ever taken - of painting the Forth Bridge.* L/S of the Forth Bridge, a steam train is seen travelling across it. Various shots of workmen climbing up ladders on Bridge.

A new long-lasting paint for the famous span means the once-endless job no longer is. Painting the Victorian-era wonder takes forever. Or so the story goes. Since it opened in 1890, the massive steel structure over the Firth of Forth estuary has been both blessing and curse. For train travelers, it was a boon, allowing them to speed across the swirling water from Edinburgh to points north. To the men charged with keeping the bridge looking red and cheerful, though, it was a boondoggle, a never-ending endeavor that became the stuff of legend. Like Sisyphus of ancient Greek myth, condemned by the gods to push a boulder up a hill only to have it roll right back down again, painters would no sooner reach one end of the span than they reputedly had to return to the beginning and start over, their efforts erased by the mischievous Scottish weather. It was such a famously fruitless and repetitive exercise that, even now, the phrase "like painting the Forth Bridge" is common British parlance for an exasperating, seemingly endless task that must be performed over and over. But technology has finally overtaken metaphor. For Shane Davidson, a member of the crew that put on that last lick, it was a moment of mixed emotions: Through it all, the bridge was a comforting constant, its great bulk stretching across the Firth of Forth, looking a little like three brontosaurus standing nose to tail in the icy water. The original plan by Thomas Bouch, in 1843, called for a suspension bridge similar to the one he had built across the Firth of Tay, north of here. That structure collapsed in 1879, killing dozens and causing officials to ditch his design for the Forth Bridge. Bouch was so disgraced that, folks here are fond of saying, his name became synonymous with a poorly executed task; a "Bouch job" eventually gave us the phrase "botch job" or "botched job. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word "botch," or some version of it, has been around for centuries. Regardless, maintenance of the 1. The bridge afforded passengers an unbroken train journey from London to Aberdeen for the first time. Wind, fog and rain immediately attacked every fresh coat of paint, forcing workers to keep at it constantly. The unlucky men assigned to the top of the bridge often had little in the way of safety measures to prevent them from plunging feet. Until recently, painting the bridge from end to end generally took three to five years, said Ian W. Heigh, a project manager with Network Rail, the company that now looks after the bridge it calls "the Forth Wonder of the World. Andrew of Balfour Beatty. Plus, the span was "still a working structure The trains [had] to continue running," about a day.

Chapter 6 : PAINTING THE FORTH BRIDGE | Imogen Clark

4 September: On this day in 1890, the Forth Bridge opened. From QI Series F, Episode 9 - 'The Future' With Rob Brydon, Sean Lock, Ben Miller and Alan Davies.

Chapter 7 : Painting the Forth Bridge â€“ BAP

The painting of the Forth Bridge has finally been completed and the structure is now scaffold-free for the first time in a decade. The repair and repainting project to paint the rail bridge took.

Chapter 8 : 'Never ending' Forth Bridge painting finishes - BBC News

The phrase 'painting the Forth Bridge' is used to describe a neverending task. It is based on the idea that by the time work on the bridge is ever completed, it is time to start again from the.

Chapter 9 : A working life: The Forth bridge painter | Money | The Guardian

I am amazed that I cannot find any French idiom equivalent to "painting the Forth Bridge" - that is, a task which never

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ends, because once the owners have finished painting the giant, metal, Forth Railway Bridge on Scotland, it is time to start again.