

DE PONTIBUS

A Pocket – Book for Bridge Engineers

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J.A.L. Waddell

Aesthetics in Design, pg 52

“Architectural effect in bridge-building seldom derives much aid from paint, for the reason that it is generally best, on account of both convenience and good taste, to use but one color in painting a bridge. A proper choice of color, however, is a material advantage; and it is correct to vary the color in certain accessory portions of the structure, such as machinery-houses, the lettering on name-plates, etc. Some engineers have advocated painting the tension and compression members of different colors, but this would get one into difficulties in spans where certain strictly tension-members are made stiff. Ornamental figures should be painted of the same color as the rest of the bridge. In general, it may be stated that for ordinary conditions of landscape the heavier the structure the lighter should be the color of the paint used, for reason that if a bridge has a appearance inclining toward clumsiness this objectionable effect can be lessened by reducing the prominence of its members; while, on the other hand, a bridge which is of such an extremely light and airy design as to produce an appearance of weakness can be made to look stronger by adopting a paint of dark color, and thus bringing its members into greater relief in respect to surrounding objects. With very dark backgrounds, however, it will often be advisable to use a light-colored paint even for slight structures, so as to give the bridge a definite outline.”