Veresk, the Bridge of Victory

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Introduction:

The train north comes down from the mountain and turns toward Veresk station. The passengers rush to windows to watch the 72-year-old legend and take pictures. Nobody wants to lose the chance to take photos.

Passengers who choose Firoozkooh road to Mazandaran province prefer to stop at Veresk station and watch the beautiful railway bridge. Most people believe the bridge's name is governed by a German engineer who designed the bridge. To vouch for the proper bridge design, this engineer and his family were stranded under the bridge while the first train was passing on the bridge. This fiction story is acceptable to everyone. However, in the cemetery behind Veresk station, an Austrian name, 'Walter Aigner', is written on the tomb and is recognized as the bridge's designer.

Tomb of Walter Aigner, Ing. (an Austrian National), Located close to Veresk Bridge

Fa.wikipedia.org indicates that:

"**Veresk**" is taken from an engineer from Böhmen in Germany who has participated in the bridge's construction. His name was "**Vevesk**". Since his name, Vevesk, was difficult for Iranians to pronounce, Veresk's name became famous."

But the end of this interesting legendary story was the report from a journalist which was published on April 25, 1936:

"I saw another person who was so happy about the bridge inauguration. His thoughtful face indicated that he was an engineer who conducted several works for the Mazandaran railway system. Among other engineers, he was famous for being the champion of tunneling. He is so skillful in tunneling and bridge construction. An important bridge on Veresk Valley, one of the masterpiece works of railway engineering in the north of Iran constructed between two mountains at a height of 100 m from the bottom of the valley, was built by the engineer mentioned above, Mr. Rabcevisc."

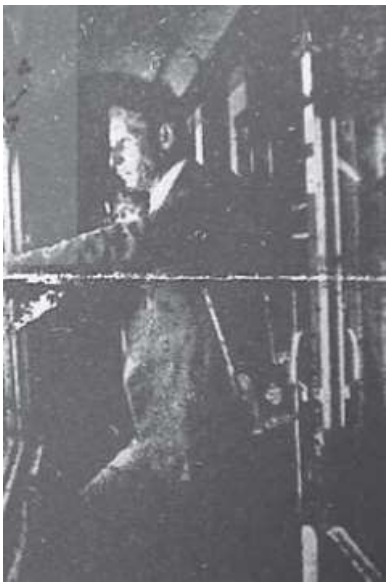
Rabcevisc said, "The model for the bridge's construction amazed other engineers. They believe this project is one of the important projects in engineering. Today, everybody admires me and my colleagues. They recognize this bridge as one of the most beautiful works of an engineering masterpiece."

But who was Rabcevisc?

His name is on the Kampsax Company archive. He is from Austria, and his role was 'Chief Supervision of the Bridge.' The head supervisor of engineers who conducted calculations for the bridge was Hans Otto Nater from Switzerland.

Although there were several longer and taller bridges in Iran and worldwide, why is this bridge still in Iran's memory?

This importance is revealed when we know that the allies during the Second World War transferred their military help to Russia through Shahpour harbor in the Persian Gulf. Then, the military help was transferred with 75 trains and 1368 wagons to Shah Harbor to be received by Russians. It means that every 25 minutes, a train passed on the bridge, and finally, 5 million tons of ammunition was transferred, and then Iran was named the bridge of victory to Germany. The Ministry of Transportation also recommended that the Veresk Bridge should be named the Bridge of Victory.



Mr Rabcevisc, the champion of tunneling and designer of Veresk Bridge.

Properties of Veresk Bridge:

This bridge was built by a Danish consortium named Kampsax in 1936, costing 81000 $. But how was constructing a bridge with a height of 110 from the bottom of the valley and a 66 m span possible? And what is the secret behind the concrete falsework located precisely under the bridge? The following pictures are from the Kampsax archive:

Photo 1: Explosion operation is conducted to provide enough space to install falsework. The cable connected to each side of the valley and used to transfer materials is shown.

Photo 2: Transferring of materials and tools using two connected cables

Photo 3: Construction of wooden falsework

Photo 4: Development of construction operation for the falsework. The concrete structure is built in the falsework.

Photo 5: Development of construction operation for the falsework. The concrete structure is built in the falsework.

Photo 6: Concrete forming for the construction of underground tunnel is shown.

Photo 7: Workers are working on the taller stand of scaffold and increasing its height.

Photo 8: Another view of the stand construction

Photo 9: Another view of the stand construction

Photo 10: A view of two stands

Photo 11: The height of shorter stand is sufficient. The hole on the mountain is the tunnel opening.

Photo 12: The upper concrete structure is noticeable due to its different color.

Photo 13: A Closer view of concrete structure that is a constraint for the curved concrete slab

Photo 14: The taller concrete structure is under construction.

Photo 15: Operation that is to connect the two columns and construction of the curved slab are started.

Photo 16: The concrete forming for the ceiling of underground tunnel is under construction.

Photo 17: Transferring of materials and pre-cast elements using the cable.

Photo 18: Transferring of materials and pre-cast elements using the cable.

Photo 19: A view of 5 transferring cables

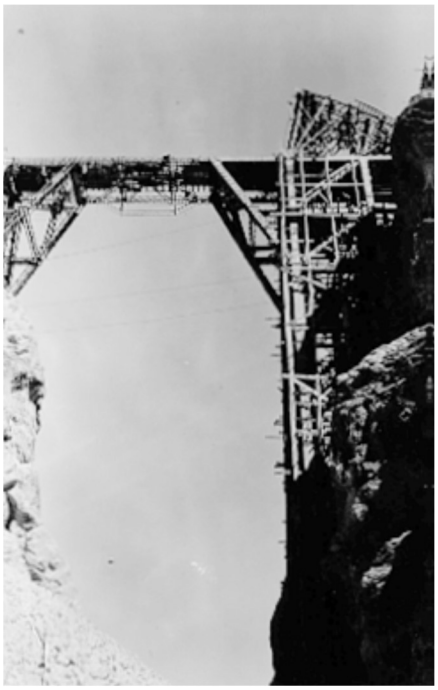


Photo 20: Two stands of scaffolds are connected to each other.

Photo 21: Workers are completing the forming of curved slab.

Photo 22: Another view of curved slab casting.

Photo 23: Two parts of curved slab are connecting to each other.

Photo 24: A view of two parts of a curved slab and the opening and ending of the tunnel

Photo 25: The completion of curved slab forming

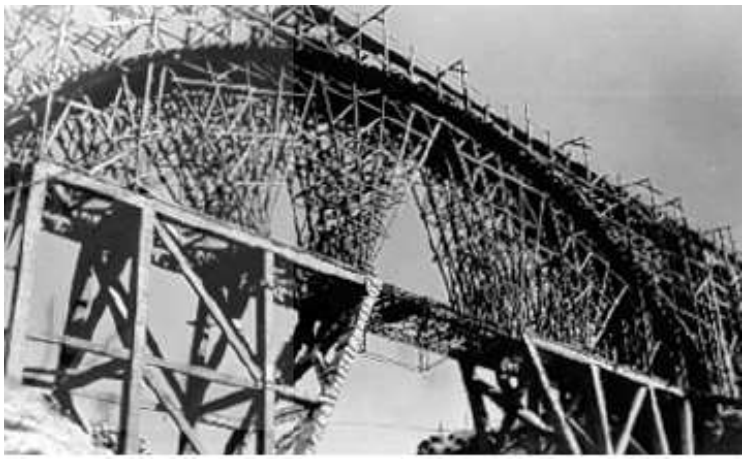


Photo 26: Six series of structures to hold the curved slab forming is shown.

Photo 27: A view of the formed bridge.

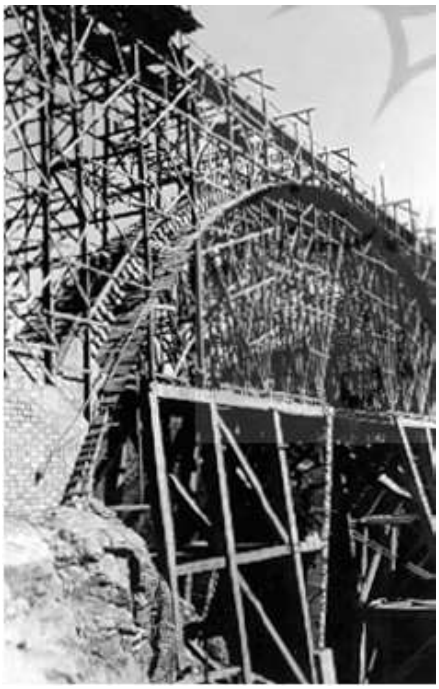


Photo 28: A view of the formed bridge.

Photo 29: A view of Veresk Bridge and the upper pass railway bridge of Firoozkooh road.

Photo 30: Last stages of the underground tunnel construction and water channel

Photo 31: Completion of the underground tunnel

Photo 32: Completion of the underground tunnel

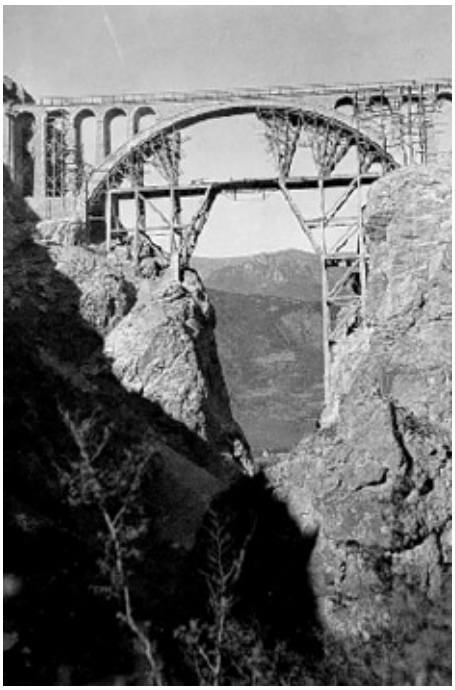


Photo 33: Construction of the brick bridge

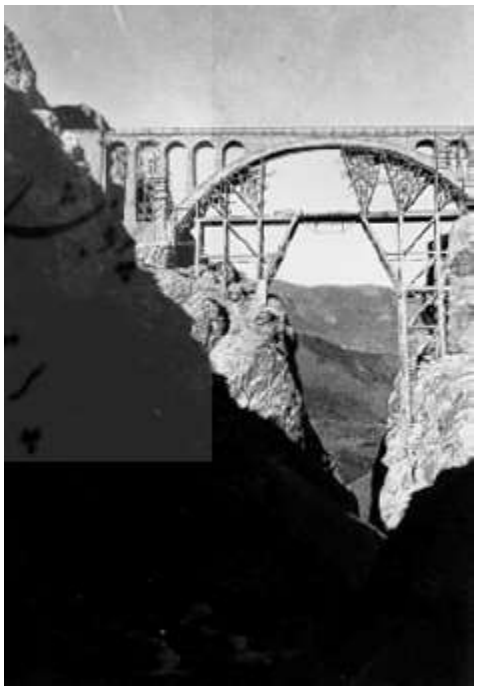


Photo 34: Construction of the brick bridge

Photo 35: Temporary railing to facilitate the ongoing traffic on the bridge

Photo 36: A view of the bridge and Damavand peak

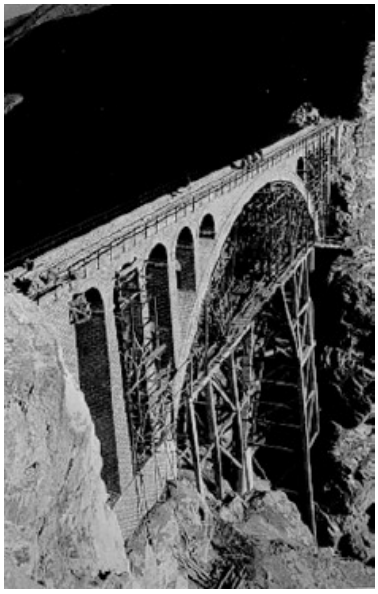


Photo 37: Another view of the bridge

Photo 38: Veresk Bridge in Winter 1315 (1936 Geregorian Calendar)

Photo 39: Preparation of the bridge to install ties

Photo 40: Installing ties and rails

Photo 41: Installing ties and rails

Photo 42: Passing the train on the bridge

Photo 43: Passing the train on the bridge

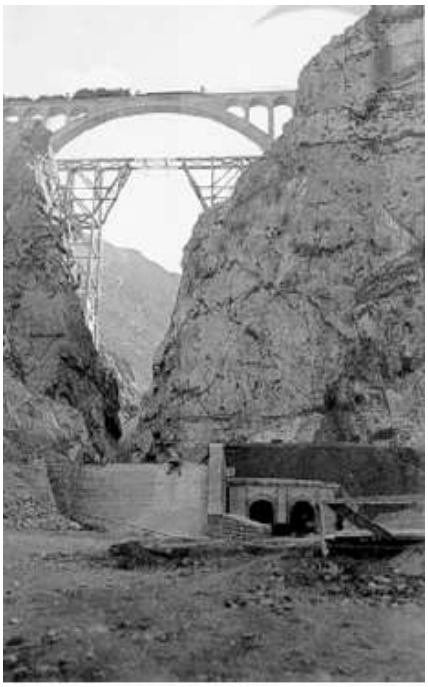


Photo 44: A view of the bridge, underground tunnel and water channel

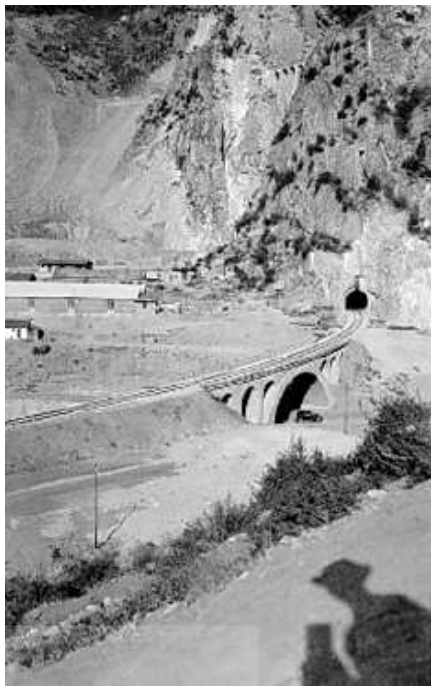


Photo 45: A section of Veresk Bridge is shown at the top right of the picture. The train enters the tunnel and passes the bridge. It passes the bottom of Veresk Valley and comes out from the tunnel. Finally, it passes the upper pass Firoozkooh Bridge and enters the station.

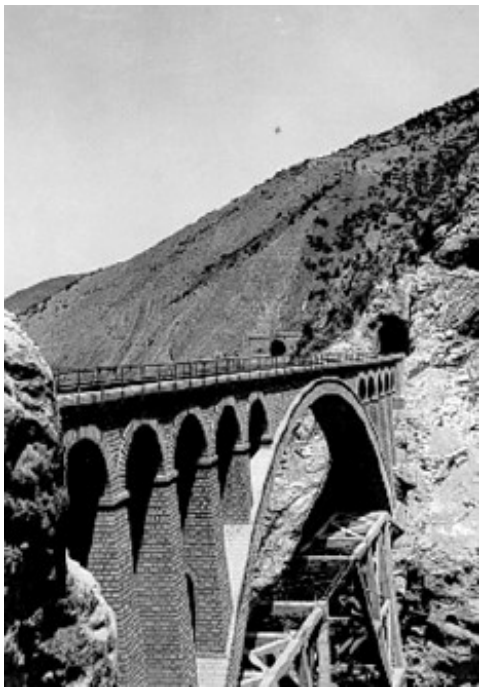


Photo 46: A view of the brick bridge is shown.

Underground Veresk Tunnel:

Most people walking on the bottom of the valley and watching the bridge do not know what is under their feet. They do not know that they walk on the ceiling of a tunnel. Former photos showed a structure similar to the slide built under the Veresk Bridge and the valley's surface. This structure prevents the water flow from the upper ceiling. In fact, after the bridge, the train passed the bottom of the valley and entered the station.

Lay mines in the bridge:

Another exciting story is about the lay mines on the bridge [this has been mentioned by Dr. Mohamad Sadjadi, (The Minster of Transportation from 1317-10-11 to 1320-9-13 (1938 to 1941 Gregorian Calender) during an interview with Donya Annual Magazin Vol. 6, Year 1349 (1970 Gregorian Calender), page 134.

The lay mines of Veresk Bridge and other essential railway bridges were ordered after battles in Russia, which were conducted secretly. But after the occupation of Iran by the Allies, there was no order for the explosion, and the Allies found the exact location of the bombs.

Sources:

1-Life of Reza Shah, written by Eskandar Delaram
2-Etelaat Newapaser, 1315-2-5 (1936 Gregorian Calendar)
3-History of New Era Companies, written by Dr. Hossain Mahbobi Ardakani
4- Kampsax Company Archives

Note: All dates are written in the Iranian Solar Calendar, and the approximate equivalent year is written in the Gregorian Calander