

THE BEAUTY OF MARIBOR

Old Bridge over the River Drava in Maribor

Formation of city of Maribor had been closely connected with crossing over river Drava. Most probably the first bridge in Maribor had built Romans, because Rome road went from Betnava (today at the edge of Maribor) to Flavia Solva (today Leibnitz in Austria) across Maribor down-town. Bridge had been made from wood so no rests were found. Roman's bridge renewed by Bernhard Spanheim, in the year 1124. By the bridge colony was built, which was mentioned in 1209 as borough - forum Marchpurch. Under the written data in the year 1222 bridge toll was collected.

Settlement developed on terraces on left bank and at 4th December 1254 first time mentioned as town - civitatem Marpurg. Because of increased traffic, bridge had been renewed comprehensive in 1450 and had been in use with different .

During the years 1720 to 1730 road Wien – Trieste had been renewed and in 1775 the new wooden bridge was built. It served 150 years; in 1925 was pulled down.

Slovene name of the town Maribor proposed by poet Stanko Vraz in 1836, came into force only in 1861, but to the end of WWI and during WWII German name Marburg or Marburg and der Drau was mainly in use.

In 1909 along to wooden bridge the new bridge from steel on pillars built of stone start constructing. It was finished and handed over to the traffic on August 24th 1913. In that time was **proclaimed as the most beautiful bridge in the Monarchy.**

Bridge had different names through the time. After construction should had the name by emperor Franz Joseph, but this was never realise. To the WWII called it State Bridge (Reichbrücke), also Drava Bridge. After the WWII II became the Main Bridge to December 1963 when the new bridge from concrete was built. From that time, it is the Old Bridge.

Plan

1. Precursors

- 1.1 Wooden bridges before 1775
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2. Steel Bridge

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- 2.3 Bridge and its surroundings

3. Changes

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- 3.2 The Main and The Old bridge

Literature:

- Jože Curk, Urbano-gradbena in komunalna zgodovina Maribora, Časopis za slovensko krajevno zgodovino št. 31/1983 (str. 148-157).
- Bojan Bračič, Mariborski mostovi / Maribor Bridges, Katalog / Catalogue Maribofila 2012.

1.1 Wooden bridges before 1775

Coper engraving by G. M. Vischer from 1681. On bridge from 1450 is tollhouse and bascule. Down left is fort Tabor, which protected access to the bridge on right river Drava bank.



Publisher Umetniški kabinet Primož Premzl, 1988. Printed in offset by Dinocolor.

Wooden bridge from 1710 with bigger tollhouse but without bascule.



*Publisher Verlag v. S. Katk. Machen, Maribor. Year of printing not indicated.
Sent from Maribor 4/ 8/1899. Typography.*

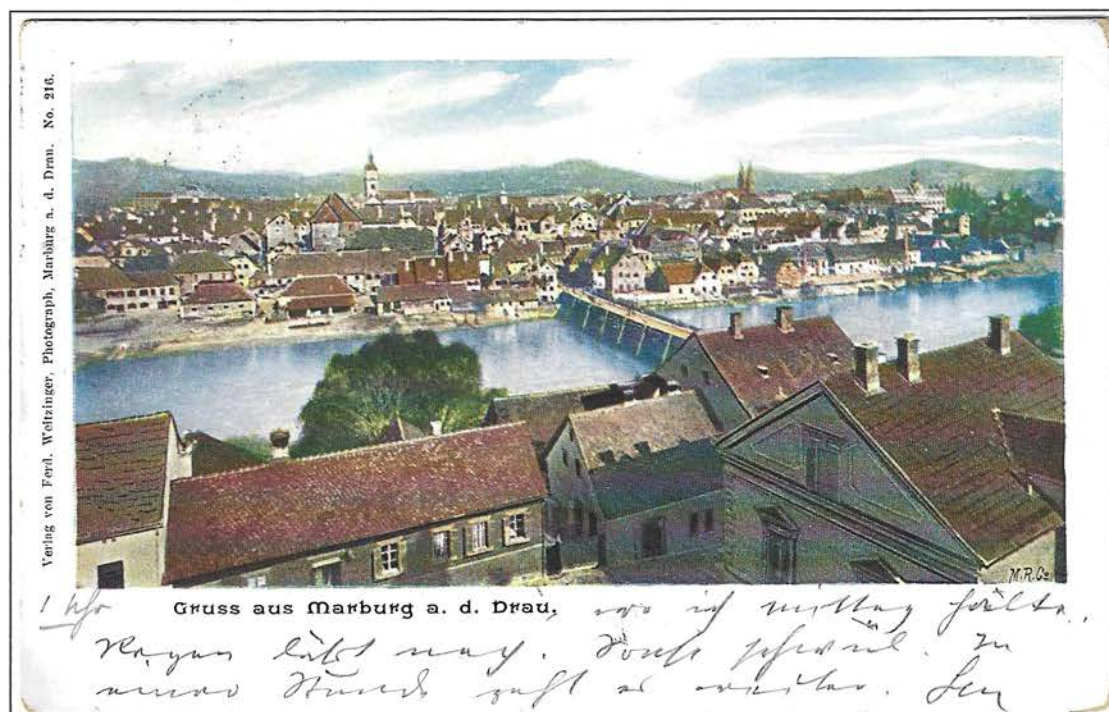
1. 2 Wooden bridge from 1775 to 1925

At 1775 new wooden bridge had been built at the same place. It was in use for 150 years; it was demolished at 1925. Bridge from first half of 19 century had not tollhouse any more.



*Published by Primož Premzl after steel engraving of unknown author. Photo Bogo Čerin.
Offset print by Tomo Tomovič.*

Look on the bridge from right bank. In front among houses is road to the bridge.



Published by F. Weltzinger, Maribor. Auto-Chrom print. Sent 18/8/1899 from Maribor.

1. 2 Wooden bridge from 1775 to 1925

Entrance to the bridge from river's right bank.



Published by Purger & Co., Munich in 1887. Printed in Photochromic technique.

Look on the city from right Drava bank. Behind is steel railway bridge.
In front of the house in second row from the river, **old wine** is visible.



Published by A. Schlauer, Graz, 13/10/1903. Painted collotype technique

1. 2 Wooden bridge from 1775 to 1925

Look from right Drava bank to northwest. Wooden girders and construction of the bridge are well visible.



Published by A. Schlauer, Graz, 9/5/1907. Printed in offset technique. Under the decree from 23/11/1904 on front side is also place for message, so picture covers whole back side.

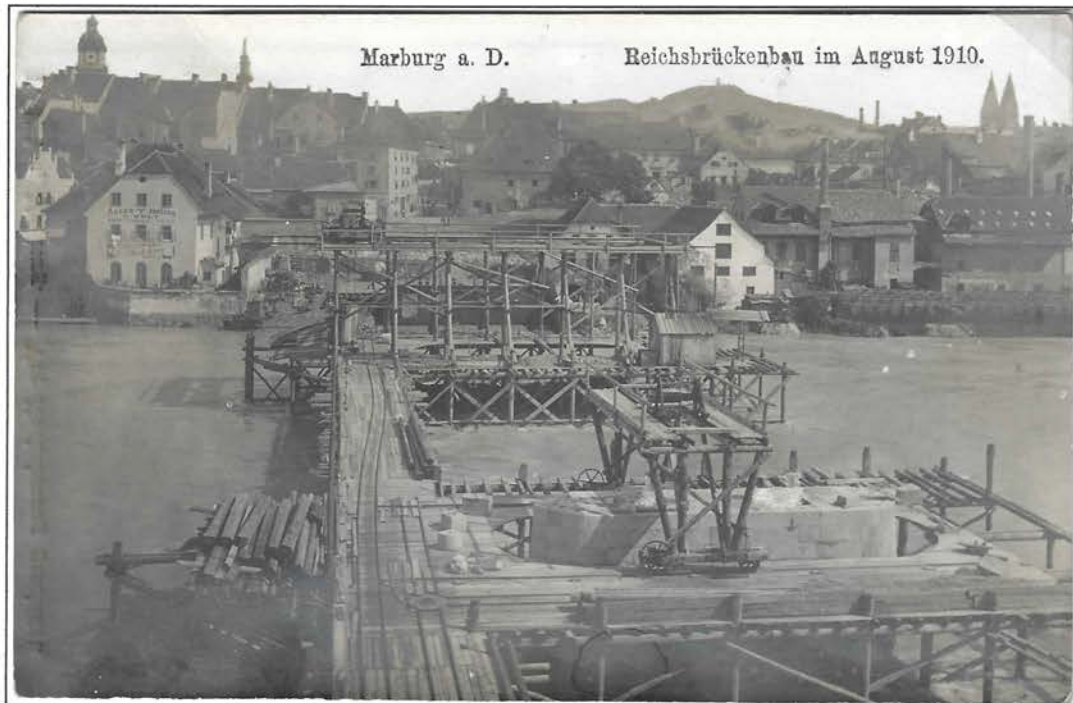
On the bridge. Look toward northwest bank. On west side of the bridge is only railing, no pavement.



Published by Pokrajinski arhiv v Mariboru, 2012. Printed in offset technique.

2. 1 Construction of the bridge

In 1906 had started with construction of new steel bridge on concrete pillars at east side of old wooden bridge. At August 1910 construction of pillars went to the end.



Published by F. Erben, Maribor, in 1910. Picture postcard made by photo technique, inscription added by typography.

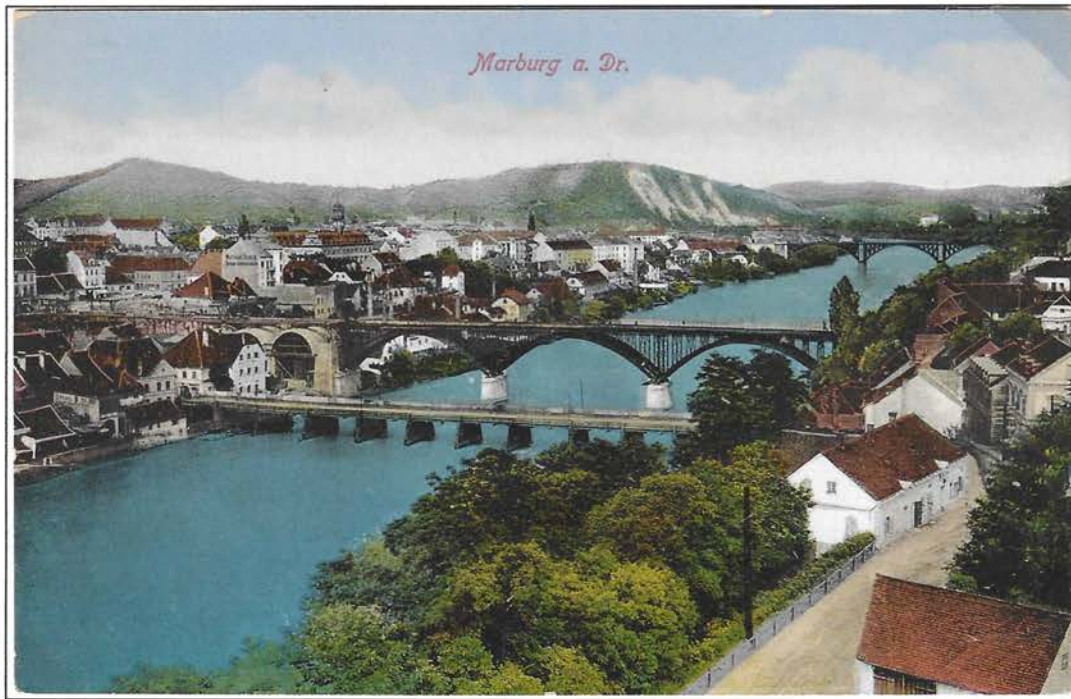
On May 1912 steel construction was nearly finished. Behind is wooden bridge, which is 13 m lower. Look from right bank toward northwest.



Published by F. Erben, Slovenska Bistrica, 1912. Printed in offset, inscription added by typography.

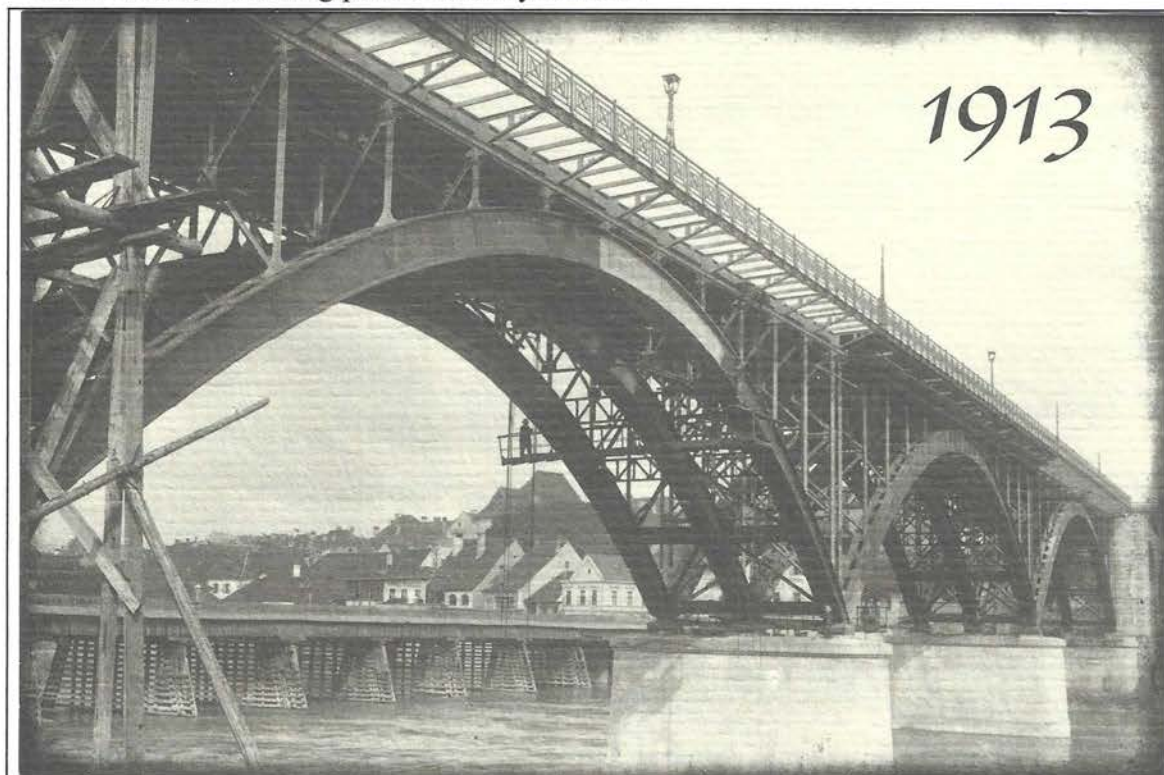
2. 1 Construction of the bridge

On the left side is visible building connection with bank. Evidently is difference in levels between bridges. Wooden bridge connects banks, meanwhile new steel bridge connects upper terraces.



Published in 1912 by Franz Knollmüller, Graz, Printed in Chromo-collotype technique.

Final works, mounting paved footway in 1913.



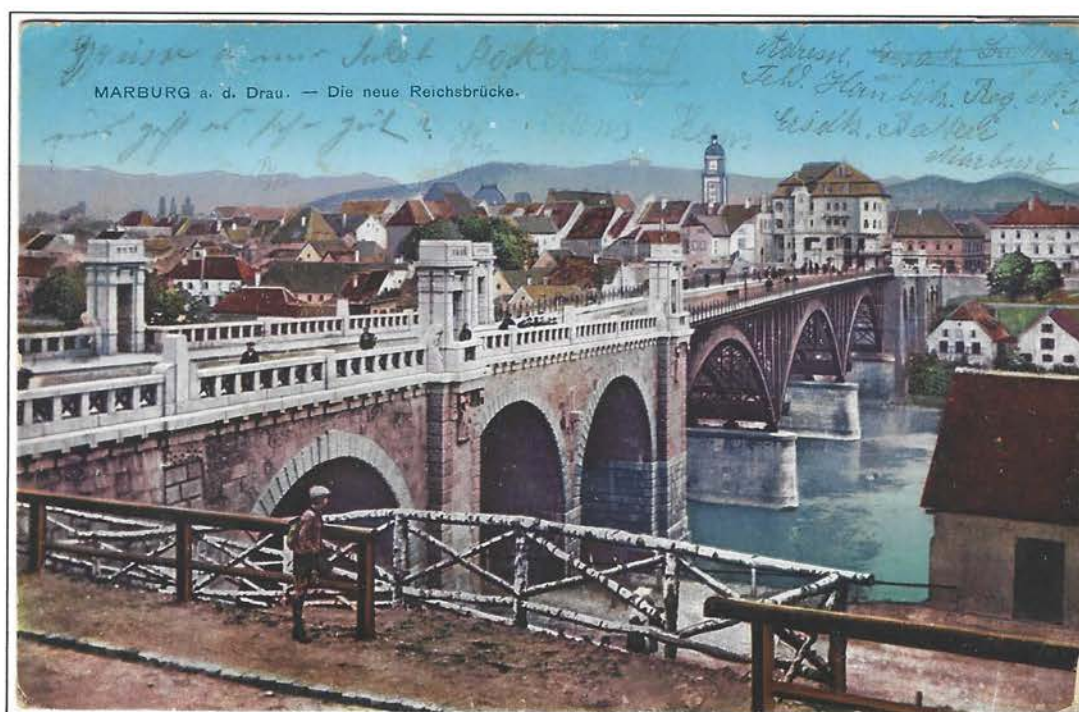
Published by Pokrajinski arhiv v Mariboru, 2013. Printing in offset technique.

2. 2 The Beauty of Maribor

After construction the bridge was proclaimed as the most beautiful in Monarchy. It should had name after emperor Francis Joseph but nobody used it ever. From the beginning it had name State bridge (Reichsbrücke). Look from east side on right bank to the bridge and left bank.



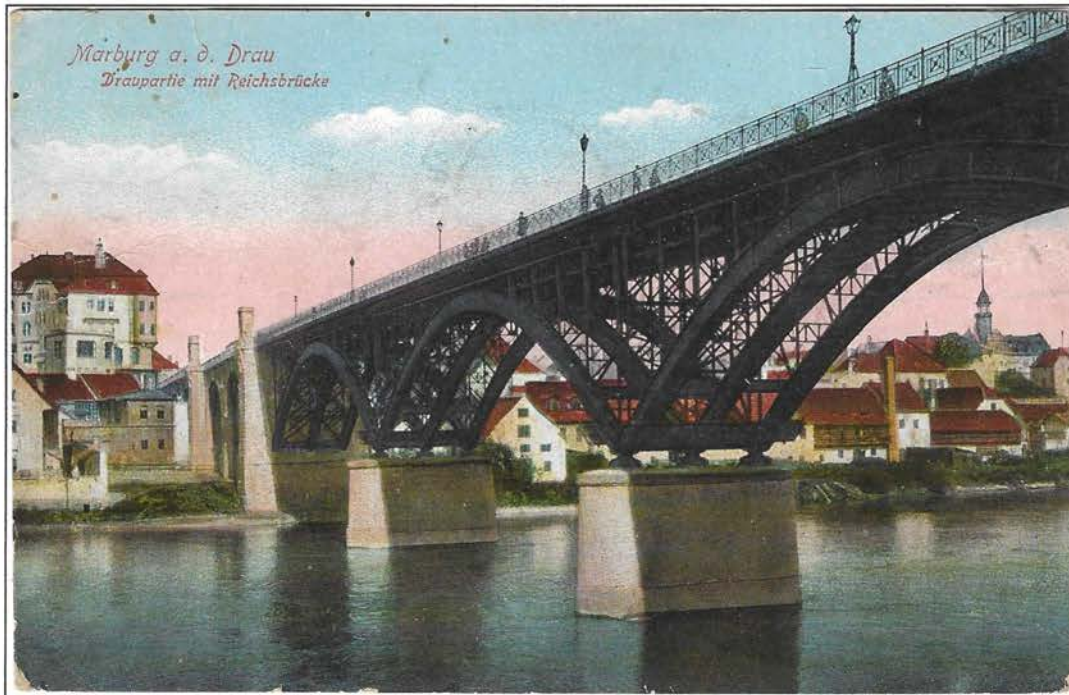
Photographer is Adolf Skušek from Maribor, who could be also a publisher. No date of publishing. According the inscription it was in 1913. After the postage paid for domestic picture postcard, it was sent before 1/10/1916 (postage raised). Single colour raster gravure printing.



Publisher and date of publishing not known. Sent from Maribor 5/8/1914. Offset printing.

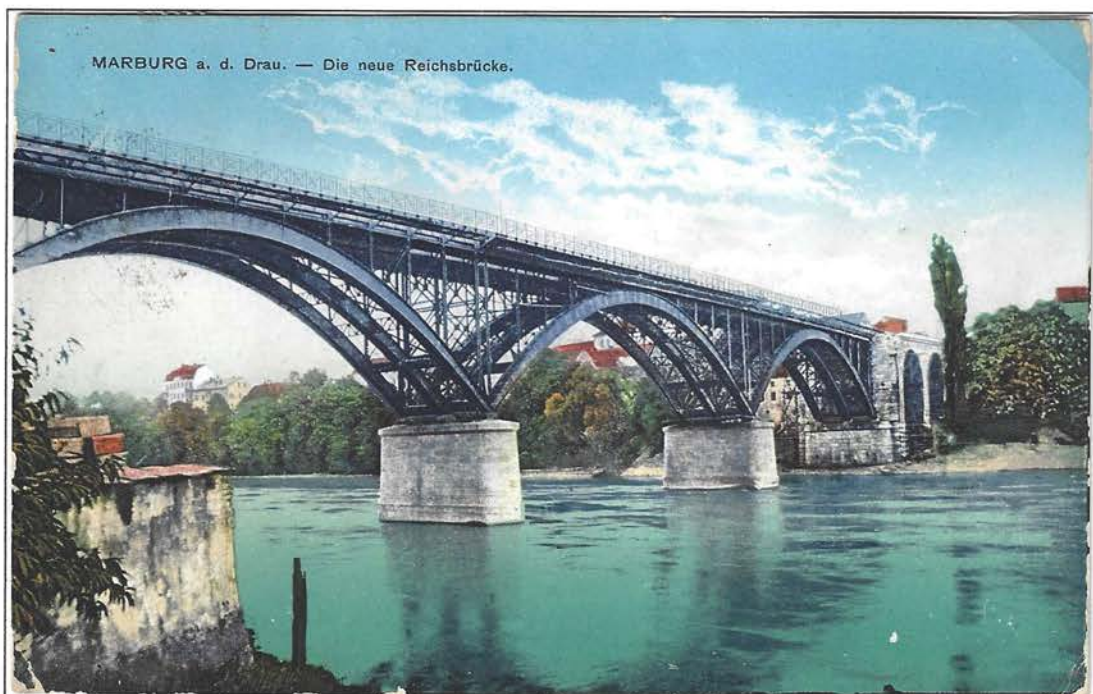
2. 2 The Beauty of Maribor

Look from right bank towards northwest. On left side is good visible building called Theresa's Manor (Theresienhof), built by German citizens the same time as the bridge.



Publisher and date of publishing is not stated. Picture postcard was sent from Maribor 10/5/1918. Printed in combined technique: collotype (surroundings) and offset (bridge).

Look from left bank towards southwest. The right bank is more abrupt and sparsely populated as the left one with gentle slope and terraced.



*Publisher was stationer's shop Rudolf Gaisser, Maribor. Date of issue not indicated.
Sent from Maribor 31/10/1918. Printed in offset technique.*

2. 2 The bridge and its surroundings

Look from right bank towards northeast. At left side of the bridge lumber rafts which stopped at Pristan (Port) are visible. The old wooden bridge still served the purpose.



*Published in 1917 by Franz Knollmüller, Graz. Slovene name Maribor added latter.
Printed in single colour offset; inscription added by typography.*

Four Maribor bridges of that time. The closer (left side; east) is Studenci footbridge, then old wooden and new steel (Beauty of Maribor) road bridges and steel railway bridge.



*Published in 1919 by Franz Knollmüller, Graz. Printed in combined technique:
upper side («sky») collotype, other part offset.*

2. 2 The bridge and its surroundings

Direct look across the bridge from right to left bank towards the Main square and Therese manor. Bridge has pavements and lights on both sides of roadway.



*Published by F. Erben, Slovenska Bistrica. Date not marked. Sent from Maribor 6/5/1918.
Produced by photo technique, inscription by typography.*

On the left bank, bridge entered the Main Square, which served in that time as market and fair place. Exit from square to the bridge is in front of Therese Manor the highest building in Maribor in that time.



*Published in 1919 by Franz Knollmüller, Graz. Printed in combine technique:
collotype (upper side – "the sky") and offset (lower side and cloud).*

2. 2 The bridge and its surroundings

Look across the bridge to suburb Magdalena on right side of the river Drava. The rest (the bank pillar) of old wooden bridge, which was destroyed on 1925, is visible at the right side.



Published by Amalija Ivanuš, Maribor. Date of issue not marked. As there is no wooden bridge any more, picture was taken after 1925. Printed in chromo-collotype.

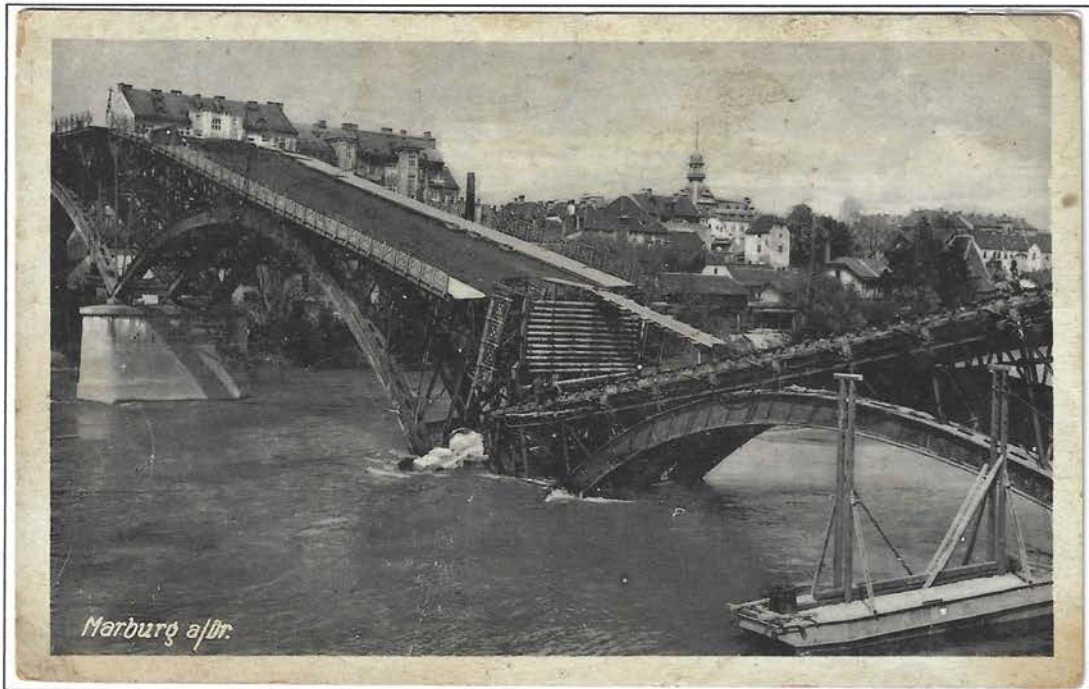
The bridge entered on right bank to the King Peter square (today it named Revolution square) from where main road (Trieste road) went from Maribor to the south.



Published by Založba Feliks Novak, Maribor 1/5/1939. Made in photo technique.

3.1 Destroy and repair

Jugoslav army at retreat before occupier on afternoon April 7th 1941 (on picture postcard is wrong date April 6th) destroyed all three bridges over river Drava in Maribor. The stage bridge was the most damaged among all, right pillar was blow up. Look from right bank.



Published by H. Sax, Maribor in 1941. Made in photo technique.

Look from left bank of the river Drava.

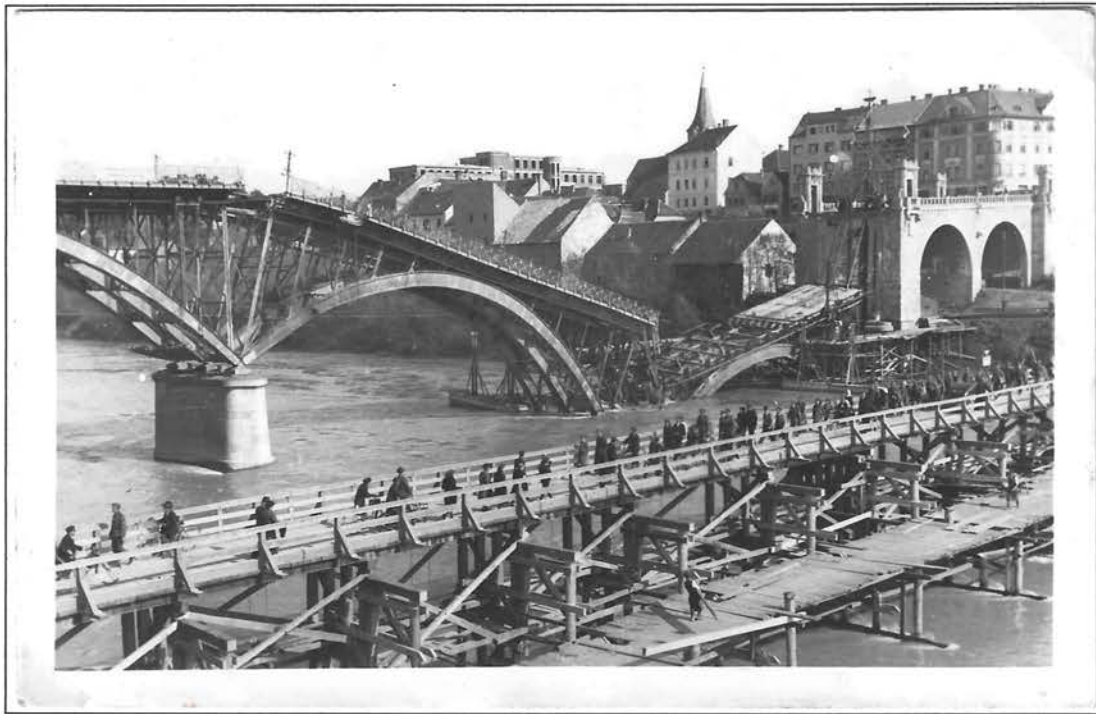


Marburg. Drau-Brücke, von dem Feinde gesprengt am 6. 4. 1941

Published by Friedrich Krobath, Wildon in 1941. Made in photo technique.

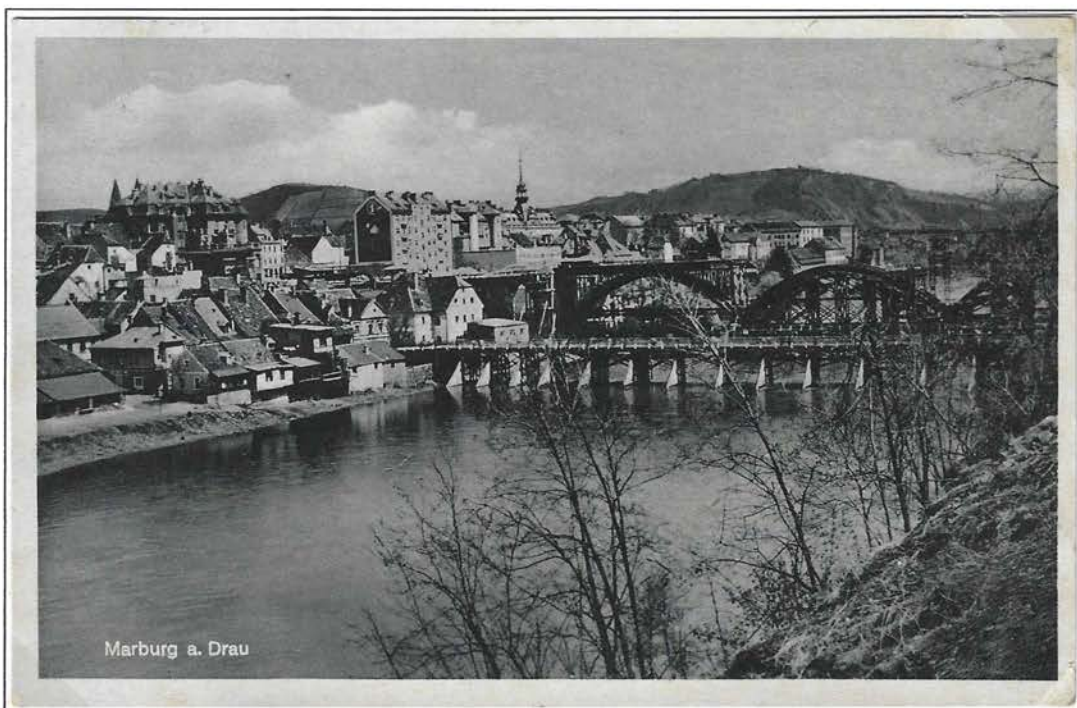
3.1 Destroy and repair

Germans built immediately substitutional wooden bridge and started with reparation steel bridge, as Hitler on his visit at April 26th 1941 demanded quick reparation. Roadway on right side of steel bridge already removed.



Published by GLZ Pfil-Photo-Papir. Made in photo technique.

Reparation went on very quick. Middle arch is already on position, still missing roadway. In front is substitutional wooden bridge.



Published by Friedrich Krobath, Wildon. Data of issue not marked. Sent from Maribor 28/10/1942. Made in photo technique.

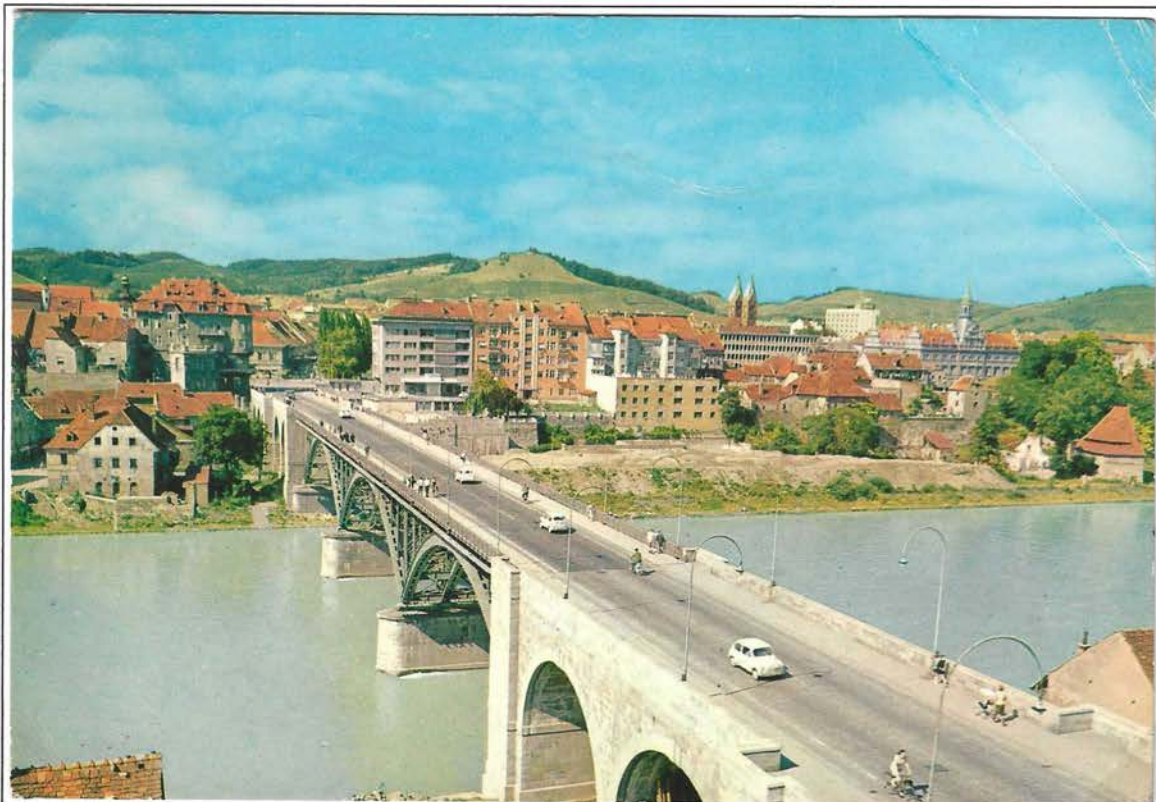
3. 2 The Main and the Old bridge

At the end of WWII Maribor had three road bridges. Studenci footbridge, wooden bridge in Melje (built during WWII) and steel bridge which became the **Main bridge**. Look from right bank. Bridge has new electrical lights, but is without decorative columns on stone part.



*Published by RVJ FOTO Zagreb. Date of issue not marked. Sent from Maribor 18/7/1952.
Made in photo technique.*

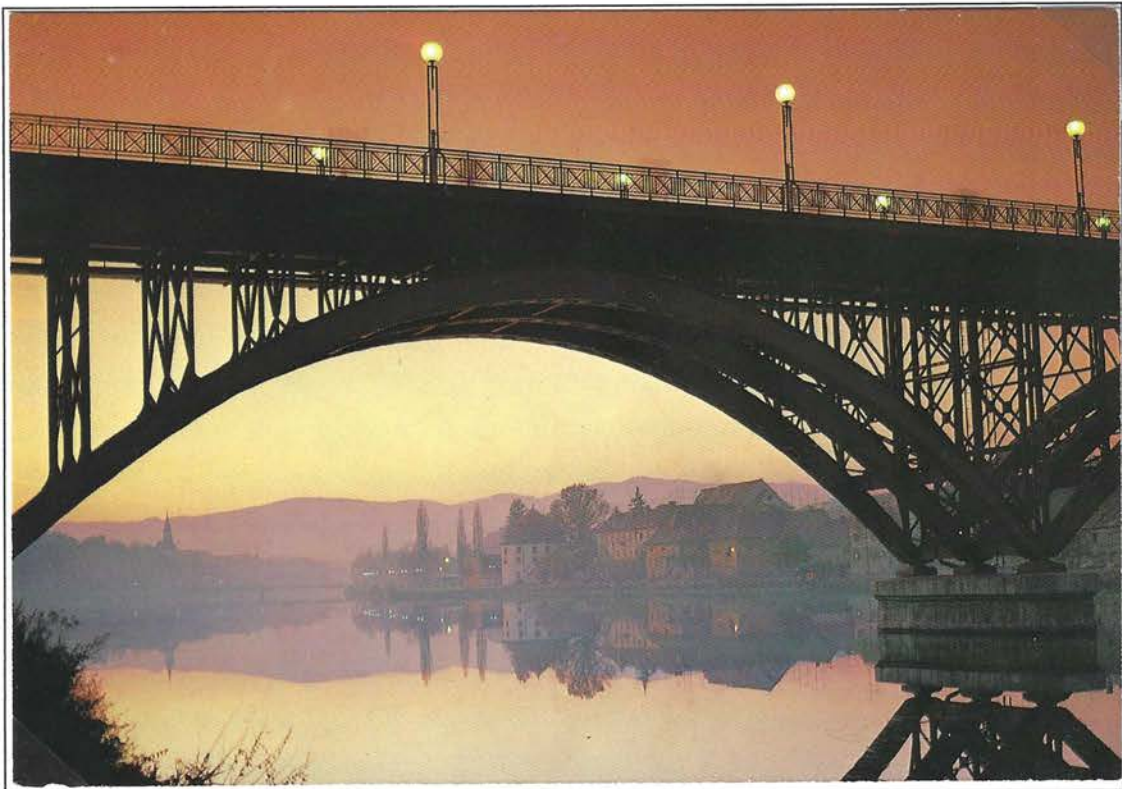
On November 1963 Maribor got new concrete bridge and steel bridge got new name, the **Old bridge**. Look from right bank towards the centre of the city.



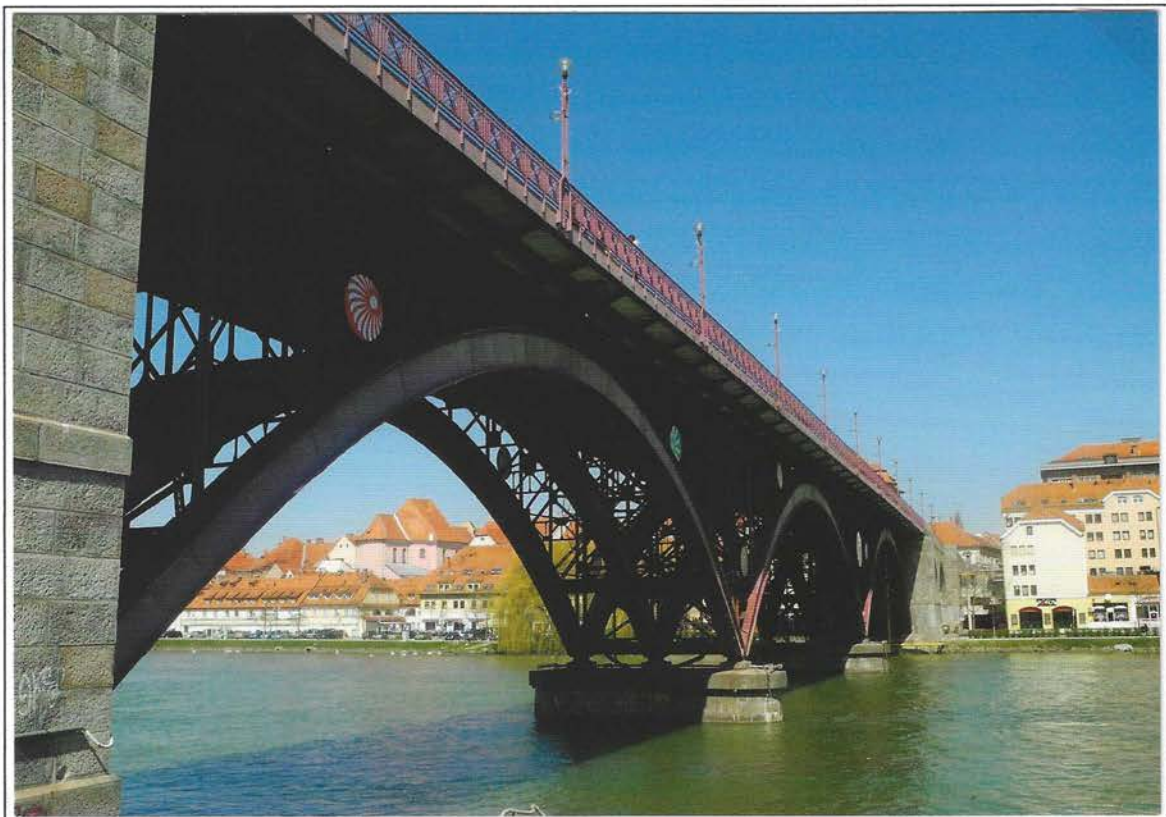
Published by Fotolik Celje. Date of issue not marked. Sent from Maribor 14/4/1967. Printed in offset.

3.2 The Main and the Old bridge

Bridge had been renovated in 1996. Beside renovated roadway, bridge got new pavements and railings. Visible higher level of river Drava is consequence of new dam in east part of Maribor, suburb Melje, built for hydro power plant Zlatoličje.



Published by Fotolik Celje, photographer M. Gal. Date of issue not marked. Printed in offset.



Published by FD Maribor, Maj 2013, photographer Bojan Bračič. Printed in offset.