

## Honjo Castle Town Explanation board 10

### Owatari and Three states of Yuri Bridge

There was no bridge between the Honjo Castle Town and Kameda Ryo Ishiwaki on the opposite bank during the Edo period, and people had to travel back and forth the Koyoshi River by boat. This ferry port was called “Owatari” and the boat fare per adult was 15 mon during the 12th year of Bunsei period (1829). The place where the boats from Ishiwaki arrived had a wooden door, as shown in the illustration, and was called “Owatari-guchi”, where the “gobansho” (guardhouse) and “satsu” (kosatsuba: official bulletin board) were located together. On 15th August during the 10th year of Meiji period (1877), a bridge called “Hanryo Bridge” was opened at Owatariguchi. The bridge was named after its shape, which closely resembles the curling of a dragon (the undulating back of a dragon). The bridge is 3 ken wide and 63 ken long, and its structure consists of 15 small boats with beams, girders, and thick planks to carry people and horses. The construction cost was 1,630 yen, and a charge of 5 rin per person and 1 sen per cart and carriage was collected from passers-by to reimburse the cost of building the bridge. Hanryo bridge was washed away 4 times in 13 years, and in May during the 23rd year of the Meiji period (1890), construction of a wooden bridge started during the Sakata Road renovation, which was completed on 14th of September in the same year and renamed the “Yuri Bridge”. The bridge was 3 ken wide and 90 ken long, with a construction cost of 3,845yen 38sen 6rin. Later, the wooden bridge, “Yuri Bridge” was destroyed by a fire during the 24th year of Meiji period (1891), with the southernmost 20 ken of the bridge burning down, followed by a major flood during the 27th year of Meiji period (1894). Besides, the bridge was also washed away and collapsed partially due to the flood and drift ice during the 4th year of Showa period (1929). This bridge was commonly called as “Owatari bridge” until the early Showa period.

In the early Showa period, National Road No.10 (No.7 since the 27th year of Showa period, 1952) from Kajimachi to Yuri Bridge had many curves, and it was replaced by a direct route from Okeyamachi to the new road. The bridge was replaced by an iron bridge and completed on the 2nd of June during the 6th year of the Showa period (1931). The bridge was 175.54m long, 6.5m effective width and the construction cost was 214,000 yen. The day of the opening of the iron bridge “Yuri Bridge” was crowded day and night with flag parades, firework displays, boat races, etc. When the bridge was opened, the Yuri Bridge, which closely resembled the Eitai Bridge in Tokyo and other bridges, was the most modern bridge in Akita prefecture and for the next 82 years, together with Koyoshi River, the distinctive modern architectural feature was an impressive landscape.

The construction of the current Yuri Bridge began in August during the 22nd year of Heisei period (2010), with a bridge length of 190.5m, a width of 19.0m and the total project cost 4.4 billion yen. The first crossing was on the 29th of January during the 25th year of Heisei period (2013). The main tower of the prefecture’s first cable-stayed bridge’s nickname (50 m from the bridge face) is “Yuri Tower” and creates a fantastic sight at night when it is lit up.

Operating expenses are listed at the prices prevailing at the time.

1 ken is approximately 181 cm long.

This explanation board is was founded by the East Japan Railway Culture Foundation for local cultural activities.