# How the collaboration between Sir Horace Jones and Sir John Wolfe Barry shaped Tower Bridge's legacy



Tower Bridge, an iconic symbol of London often mistaken for its neighbour London Bridge, was constructed to meet the pressing demands of a rapidly expanding city in the 19th century. By the latter half of the 1800s, London’s commercial trade was flourishing, drawing an estimated one million people to live and work east of London Bridge. Yet, the journey into central London was arduous, taking up to two hours on foot or requiring a ferry crossing. Recognising this challenge, the city sought a new crossing to better connect London’s industrial east with the rest of the Thames.

In 1876, a Special Bridge Committee was established to address this issue, initiating a public competition that attracted over 50 design submissions. However, the competition was ultimately abandoned in favour of a redesigned proposal by the city architect, Sir Horace Jones. Jones, who was also the surveyor to the City of London and had prior architectural acclaim for projects such as Smithfield Market and Leadenhall Market, collaborated with the civil engineer Sir John Wolfe Barry to realise the design. The partnership blended Jones’s architectural vision with Barry’s engineering expertise, producing plans that combined suspension and bascule bridge elements. These plans were approved in 1884.

Construction of the towered bascule bridge commenced in 1886 and took eight years to complete, a complex endeavour involving multiple contractors and labourers. Tragically, Sir Horace Jones died in 1887, seven years before the bridge's opening, leaving Sir John Wolfe Barry to oversee the final stages and completion of the project. Barry, a highly respected engineer also known for his work on the Cannon Street and Blackfriars Railway Bridges, ensured that the bridge met high standards of both functionality and aesthetics. He later received a knighthood in 1897 in recognition of his contributions to engineering and this landmark structure.

The completed Tower Bridge officially opened in 1894 and has since become a testament to Victorian engineering and architectural ingenuity. Its unique design allowed for the passage of ships into the Port of London while facilitating road traffic across the river. Today, Tower Bridge not only serves as a critical piece of infrastructure but also stands as a historical monument, preserving the legacy of the collaborative effort between two visionary men in response to London's industrial growth and urban challenges.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.ice.org.uk/what-is-civil-engineering/infrastructure-projects/tower-bridge), [[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_Bridge), [[7]](https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/it/discover/history)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.ice.org.uk/what-is-civil-engineering/infrastructure-projects/tower-bridge), [[2]](https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/about-us/history/sir-horace-jones), [[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_Bridge), [[6]](https://towerbridge.me.uk/history/), [[7]](https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/it/discover/history)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.ice.org.uk/what-is-civil-engineering/infrastructure-projects/tower-bridge), [[3]](https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/discover/people/sir-john-wolfe-barry), [[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_Bridge), [[6]](https://towerbridge.me.uk/history/), [[7]](https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/it/discover/history)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.ice.org.uk/what-is-civil-engineering/infrastructure-projects/tower-bridge), [[3]](https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/discover/people/sir-john-wolfe-barry), [[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_Bridge), [[7]](https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/it/discover/history)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.ice.org.uk/what-is-civil-engineering/infrastructure-projects/tower-bridge> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/about-us/history/sir-horace-jones> - This article provides an in-depth look at Sir Horace Jones, the English architect and surveyor to the City of London, renowned for designing Tower Bridge. It details his early life, architectural career, and significant projects, including Smithfield Market and Leadenhall Market. The piece also highlights his role in the construction of Tower Bridge, his collaboration with Sir John Wolfe Barry, and his untimely death in 1887 before the bridge's completion.
3. <https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/discover/people/sir-john-wolfe-barry> - This article explores the life and achievements of Sir John Wolfe Barry, the civil engineer who played a pivotal role in the completion of Tower Bridge after Sir Horace Jones's death. It covers his early education, partnership with Henry Marc Brunel, and notable projects such as the Cannon Street Railway Bridge and Blackfriars Railway Bridge. The piece also discusses his contributions to the development of engineering standards and his knighthood in 1897.
4. <https://www.thetowerbridge.info/people/sir-horace-jones.html> - This resource offers a comprehensive biography of Sir Horace Jones, detailing his architectural career, significant projects like Smithfield Market and Leadenhall Market, and his tenure as President of the Royal Institute of British Architects. It also covers his design for Tower Bridge, his collaboration with Sir John Wolfe Barry, and his death in 1887 before the bridge's completion.
5. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_Bridge> - This Wikipedia article provides a detailed history of Tower Bridge, including its construction, design, and the roles of Sir Horace Jones and Sir John Wolfe Barry. It discusses the challenges faced during construction, the bridge's opening in 1894, and its significance as an iconic symbol of London. The article also covers the bridge's structural design, including the combination of suspension and bascule elements.
6. <https://towerbridge.me.uk/history/> - This article delves into the history of Tower Bridge, focusing on the design and construction phases. It discusses the initial competition for the bridge's design, the selection of Sir Horace Jones and Sir John Wolfe Barry's design, and the detailed design work that occupied the team for four years. The piece also highlights the challenges faced during construction and the innovative techniques employed.
7. <https://www.towerbridge.org.uk/it/discover/history> - This article provides an overview of the historical events leading to the construction of Tower Bridge. It covers the formation of the Special Bridge or Subway Committee in 1876, the public competition for the bridge's design, and the selection of Sir Horace Jones and Sir John Wolfe Barry's design. The piece also discusses the construction process, including the involvement of multiple contractors and workers over eight years.