

“THE MIGHTY TASK IS DONE”

ON MAY 27, 1937, the Golden Gate Bridge officially opened with a pedestrian-only day and several local celebrations. Less than one mile southeast of the bridge on the San Francisco side, hundreds of people gathered throughout the day at Crissy Field to hear marching bands and speakers. The bridge’s chief engineer, Joseph Strauss, attended the festivities at Crissy Field to read the following poem he had written for the occasion, entitled “The Mighty Task Is Done.”

At last the mighty task is done;
Resplendent in the western sun
The Bridge looms mountain high;
Its titan piers grip ocean floor,
Its great steel arms link shore with shore,
Its towers pierce the sky.

On its broad decks in rightful pride,
The world in swift parade shall ride,
Throughout all time to be;
Beneath, fleet ships from every port,
Vast landlocked bay, historic fort,
And dwarfing all—the sea.

To north, the Redwood Empire’s gates;
To south, a happy playground waits,
In Rapturous appeal;
Here nature, free since time began,
Yields to the restless moods of man,
Accepts his bonds of steel.

Launched midst a thousand hopes and fears,
Damned by a thousand hostile sneers,
Yet ne’er its course was stayed,
But ask of those who met the foe
Who stood alone when faith was low,
Ask them the price they paid.

Ask of the steel, each strut and wire,
Ask of the searching, purging fire,
That marked their natal hour;
Ask of the mind, the hand, the heart,
Ask of each single, stalwart part,
What gave it force and power.

An Honored cause and nobly fought
And that which they so bravely wrought,
Now glorifies their deed,
No selfish urge shall stain its life,
Nor envy, greed, intrigue, nor strife,
Nor false, ignoble creed.

High overhead its lights shall gleam,
Far, far below life’s restless stream,
Unceasingly shall flow;
For this was spun its lithe fine form,
To fear not war, nor time, nor storm,
For Fate had meant it so.