The mortar all is ground within a mill;
The only labour is the hods to fill;
One horse and boy for twenty men provide
With cement better made, more cheap beside.
The arms of Bridge are built of stone or wood,
But iron, cast, would furnish twice the good;
Its extra beauty and its lesser weight
Confound the pride and ignorance of the great.
Combining levers stretch from shore to shore,
And span the foaming flood ne’er span’d before;
By logs of timber plac’d at angles right
The bold formation is made strong and tight;
Each semi are is built from off the top,
Without the help of scaffold, pier, or prop;
By skids and cranes each part is lower’d down,
And on the timber’s end-grain rests so sound,
That all the force of weight can ne’er divide
Each tabled timber from its partner’s side:
And, lest the end-grain should not stand the test,
A sheet of iron ’s plac’d between each rest,
That no compression or indentation can
Make an impression to defeat the plan.

The usual mode of building house or ships,
Of framing Bridges, tables, purlins, hips,
’Tis end to side-grain by the ancients plann’d,
On which their ponderous loads were made to stand;
And all the Bridges that were ever built
Repos’d their weight on ceintre, pier, or stilt.