



The Brooklyn Bridge: The History of New York City's Most Famous Bridge

Charles River Editors

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*Includes descriptions of the bridge's construction by workers and officials

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“Spring and fall in New York are the best seasons here to get out and about. I like the little park in Dumbo between the Manhattan and Brooklyn bridge. I like Prospect Park..” – Paul Dano

New York City has countless landmarks and tourist spots, but few are as old or as associated with the city as the Brooklyn Bridge, the giant suspension bridge that spans nearly 1,600 feet as it connects lower Manhattan to Brooklyn. Indeed, the bridge is so old that Manhattan and Brooklyn represented the largest and third largest cities in America at the time of its construction, and the East River posed a formidable enough challenge that taking a ferry across could be dangerous.

Originally known as the New York and Brooklyn Bridge and then later as the East River Bridge, the iconic bridge wasn't formally dubbed the Brooklyn Bridge until about 30 years after it was completed in the early 1880s. As the first steel suspension bridge built in America, it represented an enormous engineering feat that claimed the lives of several workers, including its original designer, but by the time it was finished, the Brooklyn Bridge towered nearly 300 feet above the water at over 80 feet wide. With those dimensions, it was over 50% larger than any suspension bridge to date.

From its inception, the Brooklyn Bridge has been celebrated as one of the things that makes New York City unique. President Chester Arthur attended its opening, and P.T. Barnum famously walked Jumbo the Elephant across the bridge as a publicity stunt. Yet despite its age and the fact that so many contemporary bridges have fallen into disrepair or were destroyed, the Brooklyn Bridge continues to be not just an instantly identifiable landmark in New York City but also a crucially valuable one that is still used by thousands of people a day.

The Brooklyn Bridge chronicles the story of how one of America's most famous bridges was built. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about the Brooklyn Bridge like never before, in no time at all.

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