

# Stone Arches

*by Bob Boucher Jan. 2011*

The Roman Arch that had its say  
one thousand years is now passé.  
Good fenestration it did lack.  
The rooms inside were almost black.

Romans built with brick and mortar.  
Stone veneer, on every quarter.  
Most failed to last two thousand years  
which verified their builder's fears.

The Normans built with solid stone.  
With finest Granite they did clone.  
The same arches as found in Rome,  
For stout Castles that they called home.

The granite gave them better height  
more fenestration and more light.  
Both Castles and Forts had more light,  
but their Cathedrals needed height.

Norman Kings and their French cousins  
built Cathedrals by the dozens.  
The Roman Arch was now transformed  
Pointed, called Gothic we're informed.

Fenestration doubled in height  
and so admitted much more light.  
At fifty meters we now know  
outward buckling began to show.

The Flying Buttress when well done,  
stopped the buckling, let in the sun.  
But when the Buttress misplaced did lay  
an iron chain could save the day.

Ye Engineers living today  
listen to what the old stones say.  
No tensile members here to see.  
Just stone compressed by gravity.