

Viaducts an Outgrowth of Commercial Necessity



VIADUCT AS A PLAYGROUND FOR THE CHILDREN OF LITTLE ITALY—Photo by a Staff Artist.

EVER since the day some centuries ago when the bold Sir William Wallace of Scottish legend and fiction bore his Lady Helen safely across a raging torrent on a slender slippery elm log that spanned the chasm, leaving a band of lawless ruffians standing baffled at the other end of the uncertain aerial pathway, the high standing of bridges as conservers of the public benefit and guardians of the common weal has been a matter of general concession. That the noble Sir William, however, thought of his fallen tree trunk in the light of a vast artery for the conduct of the flood of general traffic is to be doubted. But be that as it may, the fact remains that since the day when primeval man first learned that stepping across a ditch was easier than climbing down in it and up the other side and applied this knowledge to larger deeper and wider chasms, the value and diversity of the overhead hanging pathway have been matters of mere progressive development.

So from the rude tree trunk crossway that was doubtless the first form in which this expression of a new principle appeared, the world of men has advanced to a stage bridge building at which the labor has become an art to him who understands it and a profound mystery or yet a miracle to the one unversed in details of engineering.

But easily the most marvelous feature of this wonderful institution, bridges, is the viaduct branch of the subject. Bridges cross gulches, rivers, canyons and mountain torrents in deep ravines, thus carrying people easily over obstacles that would otherwise be of the gravest nature. But the viaduct leads men over men, traffic over traffic and by this disposition of humanity and its accompanying commodities at different localities what would otherwise be hopeless interference resulting in the per-

manent congestion of traffic is completely avoided.

Again, a bridge reaches out span after span, with great empty arched openings beneath each, and the reason why it is not built solidly from the bottom up all its length is because it is impossible to cross the obstacle contemplated in such a manner. A viaduct, on the other hand, is open below solely for the benefit of the traffic passing underneath, as otherwise, as far as topography is concerned, it could be built up as a highroad from end to end.

In the United States has occurred the most extensive expression in practice of this sentiment toward the expedition of traffic. The wholesale use of viaducts in this country can be duplicated nowhere in the world in similar proportion. They are omnipresent. Every large city has them and most of the small ones, and there is not a railroad center in the land, large or small, that has not its quota of viaducts. Omaha itself is by no means scantily supplied. In fact, it has more viaducts than the average city of its size, and this is easily explained.

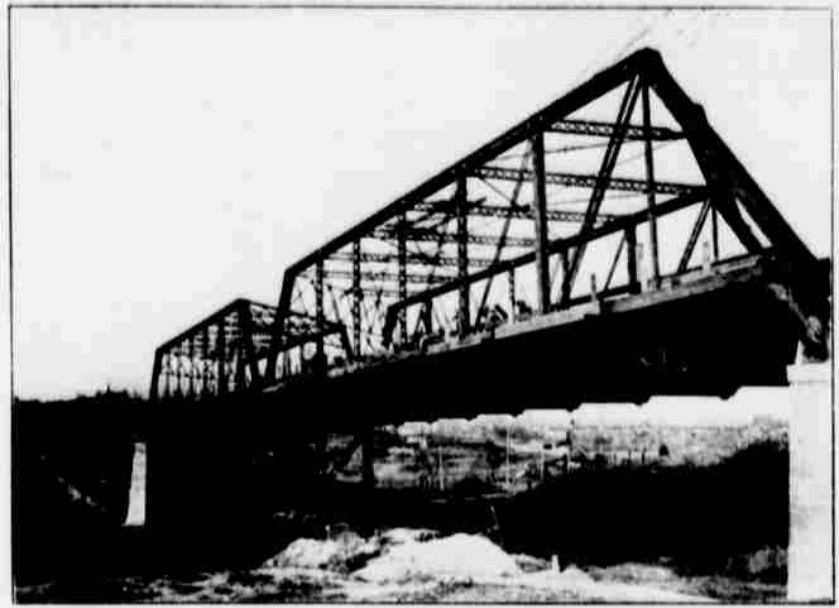
The viaduct is an institution which from its very nature follows railroads. It is, in short, born of them. Wherever there is any great concentration of railroad traffic near a like colligation of population a viaduct becomes an essential feature. Its necessity, however, depends directly upon the latter element of the combination. A small number of people may be contingent to a great expanse of railroad trackage and no viaduct will be needed, because the amount of traffic over those tracks will not be sufficient to delay either the trains or the people. In the same way a great mass of humanity will require a viaduct to cross even one track, for the traffic will be so constant that either the trains or the people would be compelled to cease movement at that point altogether without it.

Omaha is a railroad center and its situation with respect to both the tracks and its outlying and adjoining districts is such that many viaducts are needed. Railroad tracks not only surround this conflux of life but also etch it back and forth and in and out and across. So all the conduits of trade are intercepted at least once and viaducts are necessary at those points as well as at others where the railroads themselves cross. Despite this, the railroads have demurred to a greater or less degree on every proposition advanced by the city for a viaduct in the course of its progress, and this fact alone makes interesting the history of the big bridges in Omaha.

It was in 1886 that, after due municipal finesse had been exercised and moral support on the part of citizens demonstrated, Omaha secured its first viaduct, the old wooden structure on Sixteenth street that



TWENTY-FOURTH STREET VIADUCT—TAKEN MAY 24, 1901—Photo by a Staff Artist.



TWENTY-FOURTH STREET VIADUCT—OPENED FOR TRAFFIC NOVEMBER 1, 1901—Photo by a Staff Artist.

was replaced by a new one a year ago. This initial attempt was an up and down affair, conforming to the general undulations of the ground beneath it, instead of being built on one level. There are no longer viaducts in Omaha with rolling surfaces, however.

This Sixteenth street viaduct is still the longest in the city, some 1,500 feet. The first one had only a twenty-foot roadway, with six-foot walks on either side. The present bridge has a roadway thirty-five and a half feet in width, with sidewalks five feet wide.

The next year another viaduct was built, also of wood. This is on Eleventh street and still stands. It is of the twenty-foot width.

Nothing more was done until 1899, when the Tenth street viaduct was constructed. This is easily the most extensive affair of them all and the most expensive in construction. It is eighty feet in width over all, having a sixty-foot roadway and ten-foot walks. It is little more than 1,000 feet long, but the cost was about \$100,000.

After that the replacing of the Sixteenth street viaduct in 1900 was the only extensive work of the kind done till the present year, when the Twenty-fourth street viaduct was built. This is of the thirty-five-foot width and is 1,659 feet long. Of the four big bridges the one on Sixteenth street is the nearest perfectly level, there being a slope of only six inches to 100 feet.

But in addition to these large viaducts there are a great many smaller ones that have been constructed at different times since 1889. The longest is the one of mixed wood and iron construction which crosses the tracks in the south part of Omaha on the boulevard near the Krug brewery. This is 600 feet in extent, beginning at about Twenty-seventh street and running west.

A little way northwest at Thirty-seventh and Center streets is another overhead viaduct, crossing the Missouri Pacific tracks

east and west on Center street. The last in this class is along Hamilton street at Forty-second, crossing the same railway.

Then there are several in which the wagon road runs underneath and the train overhead. The handsomest one of these is the one of solid masonry abutments away out north on Sherman avenue, where the main track of the Missouri Pacific railway goes over. A simpler one, of iron, may be found at the point where the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley track crosses Thirtieth street, near Grand avenue.

Coming down to the heart of the city there are four of these underneath crossings within eight blocks of each other and two of the big viaducts are in the same territory, making almost a crossing for every block. These smaller ones are located at Sixth, Seventh, Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets down in the main yards of the Union Pacific and Burlington roads.

The next viaduct contemplated will be of the overhead variety, crossing the Burlington and Union Pacific tracks on Bancroft street, just six blocks north of the Center street bridge. This viaduct will extend from near Twenty-sixth street to a point between Twenty-seventh and Twenty-eighth streets.

In the case of one of the big bridges, at least, a double purpose is served. The brief life of the Twenty-fourth street viaduct has been sufficient to demonstrate that it is not only a thoroughfare. It is also the playground for children. This structure crosses directly over the Italian district and any warm day will find the swartly little children playing upon the roadway in numbers ranging from 200 up. The youngsters are so expert at taking care of themselves that it will not be necessary to forbid them the bridge for the sake of their own safety, nor at all unless they get so numerous that they block traffic.

Episodes and Incidents in the Lives of Noted People

RALPH D. BLUMENFELD, London correspondent of the Brooklyn Eagle, writes as follows: "Hero worship is a capricious thing. Here is poor General Baden-Powell back from the triumphs of Mafeking, where his deeds electrified the nation and made him the most popular man in England since the time of Waterloo. He goes about London practically unnoticed. If he had come home a year ago he would have been mobbed and hugged and feted by delirious crowds of admirers. Baden-Powellism was a fever, an epidemic. It has completely burnt itself out, and not only is the gallant general a mere memory with the public, but he has also been made to taste the bitterness of official and royal displeasure. The War Office was not overjoyed at what they called his theatrical defense of Mafeking. Public opinion, however, forced them into making him a major general. Then the public, ever eager to load its favorites with honors and glory, looked to the queen to confer upon him the well-deserved knighthood, but it did not come. And the reason of it was that Baden-Powell had usurped a royal prerogative in having substituted his portrait on the Mafeking siege stamps for that of the sovereign. The late queen never forgave him the presumption and so when B.-P. came home the other day and called, naturally enough, at Marlborough house to pay his respects to the king, the hero of Mafeking was turned away!"

The late James G. Blaine frequently excited wonder by the way in which he apparently remembered faces. Joseph Chamberlain, the English politician, shows similar facility, gained perhaps by means which Blaine is alleged to have used. He was passing the lobby in the House of Commons once and cordially greeted a member whom he had not seen for a long time. "Wonderful memory for names he has," said the member to a friend. "Yes," was the chilly answer, "he asked me yesterday who you were."

The ameer of Afghanistan was one of the shrewdest and strongest men of his time. When the amount of the British sub-

sidy was being fixed with him it was explained that he must do this and that and the other. "You remind me," said the ameer, "of a Persian tale. A certain man took a piece of cloth to a tailor and said: 'Make me a morning dress out of it and an evening dress—and, while I think of it, a working coat.' The tailor did his best and brought them all as he was told. But they were of doll's size. What more could he do with the cloth?" The ameer was not a great admirer of the British system of government. On one occasion a very high personage was conferring with him and said in relation to some matter: "That is a very grave question and I must refer it to her majesty's government." The ameer, who did not clearly distinguish the parts of the British constitution, replied: "When you ask me a question I am able to answer it at once; when I ask you one you say you must first consult 700 other gentlemen. I prefer our Afghan way of doing business."

In connection with the fact that Booker T. Washington recently dined with the president, it is recalled that during Mr. Cleveland's first administration the late Frederick Douglass was invited to one of the congressional receptions, together with his Caucasian wife, then his bride. And John C. Brown, the democratic governor of Tennessee, as far back as 1873, when he gave a banquet at the Maxwell house, Nashville, had among the invited guests on that occasion Sampson Keeble, a negro representative from Davidson county, who not only attended the banquet, but responded to a toast.

John Uri Lloyd, chemist by profession and author by avocation, recently told of an incident by which he was enabled to bring together two sisters, separated by the civil war, who believed each other dead.

In "Stringtown on the Pike" he reproduces a scene where, a mere lad, he stood by the pikeside and watched a troop of Morgan's raiders gallop by, singing as they went, "The Girl of the Homespun Dress."

In the book the author used the first copy of the song that was at hand. Immediately

he was flooded with letters saying that he had misquoted it. Wishing to be accurate, he published a statement to the effect that he would pay \$100 for the true copy of the song. This only created more trouble, as there are many variations of it.

Among those sending what proved to be the original verses were two sisters, one of Philadelphia and one of Atlanta, Ga., who stated that their dead sister, Clara Belle St. Clair of Atlanta, had written the song. In answering one of them Mr. Lloyd mentioned the other sister. He at once received a reply from her to whom he had written, stating that she thought the other sister dead and asking him to send the address. Mr. Lloyd did this and lately learned that they had been reunited after thirty-five years of separation.

Leopold Sonneman, one of the best known public men in Germany and for thirty years the leader of the German democracy, celebrated his seventieth birthday on October 20 at Frankfurt-on-the-Main. He is the founder and editor of the "Frankfurter Zeitung" and was for more than twenty years a member of the Reichstag, in which body he was one of the most earnest and successful advocates of progressive ideas. The adoption of the gold standard in Germany was largely due to his efforts in the German parliament. He is well known as a philanthropist and as a liberal friend of science and the fine arts.

The young queen of Holland is a total abstainer and ostentatiously refuses on all occasions to take wine. Her most intimate friend, Princess Pauline of Wurtemberg, was by her won over to the ranks of the teetotalers. She is said to be the only teetotaler among reigning monarchs, except the Sultan of Turkey.

Cleveland Moffett tells in Ladies' Home Journal how the greatest of all singing evangelists, Ira D. Sankey, came to give the world a hymn that will live long after his voice is stilled. It was during Moody and Sankey's first visit to Great Britain. As they were entering the train in Glasgow Mr. Sankey bought a copy of a penny re-

ligious paper called the Christian Age. Looking over it, his eyes fell on some verses, the first two lines of which read thus:

There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold.

"Mr. Moody," exclaimed Mr. Sankey, "I have found the hymn that I've been looking for for years."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Moody.

"It's about a lost sheep."

Two days later, in Edinburgh, they held a great meeting in the Free Assembly hall. As Dr. Bonar finished Mr. Moody leaped over the pulpit and asked the singer if he had not a solo for the occasion. The thought of the verses he had read in the penny paper came to Mr. Sankey's mind and, opening his scrapbook, in which he had pasted the clipping, he placed it before him on the organ and after a moment of silent supplication struck a full chord and began to sing. And note by note came the new famous song. He composed it as he went along. What he sang was the joy that swelled in his own soul, hope that was born, the love for those who needed help. Thus he finished the first stanza.

Then, as he paused and played a few chords waiting to begin again, the thought came to him: "Can I sing the second stanza as I did the first? Can I remember the notes?" And concentrating his mind once more for the effort he began to sing. So he went on through for five stanzas and after the services he put the melody in music.

Lieutenant Thomas M. Bains, Jr., whose quick wit and bravery prevented the surprise and destruction of the American garrison at Samar, is a Philadelphia boy. He was born in Philadelphia in 1877 and was educated in the Friends' Central school. After he was graduated he went to Cornell university. At the outbreak of the Spanish war he enlisted in the Sixth artillery and with his battery was sent to Tampa, Fla. Later he was ordered to the Philippines and made quartermaster sergeant of the battery. On July 25, 1899, Bains was made a second lieutenant and assigned to the Ninth infantry. He joined his regiment

at Peking and saw much of the work done there.

General John S. Mosby, the famous guerrilla, relates an incident of his visit to Washington during the war. He went there with the intention of trapping President Lincoln, but his plans were circumvented at the last moment. General Mosby had reached the confines of the capital and had halted on a hill overlooking the city, when he met an old German woman who was going in with her morning's marketing. She displayed a pair of shears hanging from her apron. Their presence suggested a happy thought to the rebel leader. Requesting their use for a moment he carefully sheared off a lock of his abundant hair, and, placing it in a sealed envelope, asked her to see that the package was delivered in person to the president. Consent was easy and, strange to say, the messenger carried out her pledge, handing the envelope to Lincoln, who, on opening it, read: "Here's a lock of my hair. I hope in a few days to have the privilege of carrying away your entire head."

Lincoln was equal to the emergency, for with the same shears he detached a lock of his own and several days later succeeded in delivering it to his elusive correspondent. The answer accompanying it was: "Thank you for your kind intentions, but I take pleasure in sparing you the trouble."

General Mosby has carefully preserved the epigrammatic reply, which he cherishes today as the most precious souvenir of the war. He declares the story has never been told, but vouches for its accuracy.

Contrary to a popular belief created by long years of newspaper misrepresentation, Russell Sage is not only quite particular about what he eats, but is a valiant trencherman and a good authority on matters of the cuisine. New York papers, in spite of this fact, periodically describe his midday meal as consisting of a cracker, an apple and a glass of water. As a matter of fact, he generally lunches in the Western Union building with such men as the Goulds, General Eckert and other officials of the Gould interests.