New Licking Bridge Stands On the Foundations of Its Predecessors

"I Was Your Faithful Servant of Yesteryear"

"My Sinews of Steel Are Dedicated To Your Progress"

The above photograph shows a view of the old covered bridge, as it appeared from "The Point" at the foot of Main Street. The picture was taken a number of years ago, and forms a part of an interesting collection of landscape scenes, belonging to Geo. B. Held, of the C. F. Held Company, of this city. At the time the photo was taken, the bridge was in a good state of repair. It had deteriorated somewhat at the time the structure burned, and a number of boards had fallen off the sides. Mr. Held loaned the Outlook this photo for use in connection with our story of the bridge.

This picture shows the new steel bridge, taken from the roof of the old Gosbeck Creamery building, in Shoemakertown. It was snapped by an Outlook photographer. The reader will observe a part of the ferry showing at the left of the picture. When the picture was taken, the workmen had not removed all the floor forms on the Falmouth side of the river. The concrete slab which forms the floor may be seen running the entire length of the bridge. The concrete piers of the old bridge are also visible, as are the two towers and the trusses which may be seen in the background of the picture.

It is finished!

The wonderful new steel bridge across Licking River is a reality, a dream come true. A great mass of metal and concrete, it will be a beautiful piece of architecture, with all of its thousands of parts fitting together in exact unity. A great structure, weighing thousands of tons; capable of holding up other thousands of tons of the burden of humanity and its various trappings; adequate to withstand the ravages of time.

The winds of many a winter will beat their erratic blows against its mighty beams and trusses, hurricanes may sweep by and level every other structure in the city. Yet the bridge will stand.

There is a mountain peak in the West called El Capitan. It may be seen for many miles around. This great peak has become something of a deity to those who live near it. It is a type of permanence.

So it is with our bridge. Our generation built it, but in the great scheme of things, the present generation will derive only a small part of its manifold benefits. Succeeding generations will travel over this bridge. It will become an integral part of the life of Falmouth and of the county, and as the years go by, people will merely take it for granted.

The man who helped to build it will pass on and other men will come to take their places. As the seasons come and go, the recollection of this great engineering project will become dimmer and dimmer. There will come a time when only a few can say, "I remember when that bridge was built; I saw it put together, piece by piece; I heard the sharp clamorous of the river as as the remainder of it was driven into the steel to stay."

Time Will Blot Out All Memory.

Yes, time will erase all recollection of that great project; but the bridge will remain, an everlasting monument to its builders; a permanent benefit to humanity.

To make this story complete, we shall divide it into three sections, in other words, we shall endeavor to give an account of the three bridges that have spanned the Licking, in the present and in the past.

We shall first attempt a description of our new bridge, with a story of its building. The second section of our story shall be devoted to the old wooden bridge which was burned. The third and last section shall be to describe the first bridge across the Licking at Falmouth—the old cable suspension bridge.

Covered Bridge Destroyed.

The old covered bridge was destroyed by fire on September 23, 1926. It was the second day of the Fair, a beautiful, bright autumn day. A brisk wind was blowing from the southwest. For many years people had been in the habit of dumping trash near the abutment of the bridge on the Falmouth side, just below the site of the old kitchen garden. The dump was fire, probably from spontaneous combustion. The rubbish had been burning for several days, but as was paid particular attention to it. The dump had been on fire many times before, but had always smothered itself out without damage.

There had been no rain for several weeks prior to that date, and the rubbish had dried out, and the fire gained more headway than usual. It flared up and set fire to a large pile of brush, which had been dumped over the abutment of the bridge. The rubbish burst into flame, and a spark caught in the wooden structure of the bridge.

A few minutes past noon the fire alarm was sounded, but the old bridge was doomed, even before the Fire Department could attach the hose to the water-plugs. The fire swept through the bridge, ignited by the brisk wind that blew from the southwest. As he rode, effort was made to save the bridge. The fire-fighters carried the battle nearly to the center of the structure, and while a dozen or more men were on the burning structure, a beam gave way and the west span began to sink. The firemen dropped the hose and ran for their lives. Just as the last man had gained the safety of the street, the west section fell into the river.

Nothing could then be done to save the other span. From the time the fire alarm was sounded until the last span fell into the river, exactly twenty-five minutes elapsed.

Excitement Ran High.

With the city full of people attending the Fair, excitement ran high. Many people had crossed the bridge in the morning, and the question of how they would get back home was the first thing one. Many of them went by way of Butler. Others went by way of Mt. Kimmeyhay. A number of families who came to attend the Fair had crossed the river at the foot of Main street.

The people of Falmouth instantly realized the magnitude of the catastrophe to the bridge. With characteristic zeal, the Falmouth Lions Club immediately called a special meeting, and the next day plans were on foot to build a ferry boat and establish a free ferry service. Committees were designated to President, to solicit data in re-building the bridge.

Free Ferry Service Started.

The ferry was built and launched about a month after the bridge was destroyed. The business men of Falmouth built a road to the ferry on the Falmouth side, while the Pleasant Valley Club built the road on the east side of the river. When the funds of the Industrial Club were exhausted, the Pleasant Valley Club came to the rescue and they have paid the ferryman and kept the boat in operation. The city of Falmouth has installed electric current for the motor which drives the ferry. It is said that the ferry is the only one in the country that is operated by electric motor from an overhead trolley. The ferry is now the same as that of the operation at Street City.

Jesse Field, the ferryman, recently computed the distance which the boat has traveled since it was launched, and found that he had propelled the little craft a distance that probably has traveled once around the world—25,000 miles. An average of 500 people a day have crossed the river. Many days the ferryman has taken across several hundred machines. The service has been kept in operation without interruption, except in times of extreme high water, and for short intervals when the boat was out of commission. Without the ferry, Falmouth would have been isolated from the rest of the news, and in inconvenience to its citizens and to the people in the country who must cross the river. In time of sickness or death in the rural districts, the Pleasantville Bridge Company and other concerns.

In an interview with the Outlook, recently, Mr. Fountain said that during his twenty-eight years' experience in bridge-building, he never heard a sale never to have had a non-killed. The work of building bridges is accompanied by dangers, and workmen take many chances in handling the heavy steel. Since Mr. Fountain's guidance, the Falmouth project was accomplished without serious injury to a single workman. One of his men fell from the bridge four feet the river below, where, fortunately, he was not seriously injured.

Those who watched the building of the bridge, thought the project could have been completed without the loss of a single man, especially when it is considered that many of the workmen were inexperienced in this line of work.

Never Get Excited.

As a superintendent, Mr. Fountain was highly popular with the men who worked under him. He went about his work in a quiet way, never seemed to get excited, never gave a kick, and yet when an emergency came, never got out of patience with the crowd of slight-minded men that have got so ten in the way many, many times.

There were times during the progress of the work when had diplomacy was necessary on the part of the superintendent. Differences were between Highway Commission engineers and the bridge company, which a number of times threatened to tie up the work. People who wanted the bridge completed became impatient; but Mr. Fountain's men stood by him loyally, through thick and thin, and he completed the bridge. One result lost at this magnificent structure without serious injury to any of the gigantic task is to be seen, and the responsibility that rested upon the shoulders of the superintendent in building it.

Mr. Fountain cheerfully gave the Outlook a lengthy interview, from which we are able to present the full of materials that were used in building the superstructure.

Specifications of Bridge.

The Falmouth bridge is known as a riveted type bridge, through truss truss with inclined top cords. Mr. Fountain said this type used to be known as camel-back construction.

There are 186,220 pounds of structural steel in the bridge; 1,200 pounds of rust; 220 pounds of structure; 400 pounds of cast iron; 1,000 pounds. The total weight of all the metal used in the bridge is 188,700 pounds.

Approximately 11,000 rivets were used in the construction of the bridge. These rivets were driven by two rivet-ing machines by air pressure. With ten Type, a Falmouth man, drive a large portion of the rivets, although he had never had any experience in riveting before.

Nine hundred and sixty bags of cement were used in the floor of the bridge; 1,600,000 pounds of sand and gravel; 16,500 pounds of reinforcing steel also were used. There are 1,600 cubic yards of concrete construction in the floor. The weight of the floor is 1,200,000 pounds.

The weight of the concrete superstructure is 331,700 pounds.

The width of the bridge from center to center of the trusses is 22 feet, 6 inches. The width of the driveway is 20 feet, and the 4 building capacity of four lanes of living traffic.

The length of the two spans is 305 feet, and there are eight bents in each span. The height of the bridge from the floor to the highest point of the overhead work is 26 feet, 3 inches.

The bridge will support approximately 1546 pounds per foot, live load. The dead load capacity is 2968 pounds per foot.

A peculiarity of all steel bridges is that they are subject to some pathetic changes; in other words, the structure will contract and expand as the weather requires but or cold. This contraction and expansion is taken care of by the rockers by flexible rockers on both the abutments and the pier. These rockers are of heavy steel, and support the entire weight of the bridge. The two spans are separate and distinct units, and are not joined in each other in any way, yet the floor is constructed in such a way as to make the superstructure appear from one span to another practically inseparable.

The Vincennes Bridge Company employed about 35 men on an average, each working day during the period of construction. The company paid out to labor, up to February 18, 1928, $6,500.00. Practically all of this money remains in Falmouth.

How the Work Proceeded.

To those who did not watch the construction of the bridge in its various stages, it might be interesting to relate just how the work proceeded.

The first operation was the cutting of a hundred or more long cypresses poles on Murphy's island. These poles were used in building a sort of frame work support, which was set up beneath the bridge. The long timbers were removed from underneath, and set up on the east side of the pier, and the same operations were used in building the second, or east, span.

With practically all the steel in place, the work of riveting was started. The bolts, which were placed in the holes temporarily, were removed, and rivets driven in the holes and hammered.

As soon as the riveting was completed, the work of laying forms for the floor was started.

Construction of Floor.

The roadbed was cold when the riveting was finished, and for a while it was believed that the concrete floor could not be laid until next summer. However, the members of the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce, headed by some of Falmouth's county officials, made a strong appeal to the company, and such a boost that the Highway Commission ordered the floor completed at once.

Wood blocks were built to hold the concrete, and the re-inforcing material was set in place.

Large turpentine were hauled from the sides of the bridge like curtains, while vats of turpine oils were placed on scaffolds underneath the structure, to keep the mixture from freezing until it should have time to set. Large tanks were placed in hot water, and the sand and gravel were also heated. The city steam pipes were used to heat the water, sand and gravel. The actual pouring of the concrete took only a few days' time, and the bridge was thrown open to foot traffic about the middle of November. With the forms removed, the bridge was a completed structure, and the first traffic effort to the new high-to-developed art of advertising. If you would know some of the early history of Falmouth, you can easily have found much of it carved on the beams and boards of the bridge. The beams and boards of the old bridge were in vinegar there in the long age. It was a favorite place for spooners and someone or other—why is it?—couples to have an irresistible inclination for carving their initials on trees, and stones, and other public places.

The old bridge therefore was the favorite meeting place for horse-jockeys on court days, albeit bootleggers and other men of shady calling found the bridge a most suitable place to pip their trade.

The old wooden bridge was a homey structure, when viewed from a material standpoint. Modern steel and concrete bridges are more serviceable and more pleasing to the eye. The scenery of a wooden bridge has long doomed the old-fashioned covered bridge to oblivion. Yet, there was something of an artless grace about the old covered bridge that filled it admirably into its surroundings landscape.

Bridge now a Memory.

The covered bridge is now a memory. The few timbers which the flame failed to fall into the river, have disappeared. A few of them were used in the construction of the ferry boat, while others formed supports for the bridge across the creek leading to the ferry. Still others—all that were left—were purchased out to Falmouth people who used them for kindling wood. There is absolutely no trace of the covered bridge left on the site, where it once stood. Even the abutments and pier which supported it have been hidden under a thick shell of concrete. The covered bridge has vanished forever.

The Suspension Bridge.

There are few people now living who remember the first bridge across the Licking at Falmouth—the old suspension bridge. It was opened about the year 1853, and did service until 1888, when it was torn down to make way for a bridge which was operated by the late Jefferson Collins, father of J. V. Collins.

Prior to the year 1853, this was a backwoods country. There was no bridge at Falmouth. Travelers had to cross the rough wagon roads through the state in dry weather, when the roads were passable; but when the ground was soft, travel was next to impossible.

The principal wagon road of the county led from Falmouth to Foster's ferry, which was at Ohio River, which was an important shipping point at that time. Many people lived between these points, and people went there to take boats to Cincinnati, Louisville, and other points.

A New Era.

The building of the suspension bridge was a great event in the history of Falmouth. Temple spires had now pierced the leafy canopy of the forests, supplanting the wooden spires of the of the overdecreasing numbers of children. Perhaps there was a little of the pretense that, would accrue from tolls collected on the bridge. Surely, there was a pretense on the part of the folk in the outlying settlements for more frequent and convenient access to the county seat.

After much wrangling on the part of county officials and the people, it was decided to build a suspension type of bridge. A firm in Pittsburgh received the contract, and the work was soon under way.

Oaak Conway Materials.

The materials were shipped by boat from Pittsburgh to Foster's Landing, and hauled on wagons down by cordes to Falmouth. The large cables which were the chief supports were not assembled at the factory. Instead, they were shipped in rolls, and the workmen twisted strands of it together as we saw them.

There seems to be a difference of opinion as to the identity of the workmen who erected. Some of the best people who can remember back that far say the superintendent's name was Wm. H. Lash, of Jeffersonville, Ohio. Others authorities say his name was M. D. Smith. Both, however, declared nine-tenths Blacksmiths, steel workers and old carpenters were brought here Falmouth had them, as it has today, many industry business, and it was an easy matter to enlist all the available labor that was needed.

The bridge took form as it rose from the river, while of primitive design, it actually revealed a trace of artistry M. D. Smith.

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Falmouth people breathed a sigh of relief.

The Vincennes Bridge Company, through its vice-president, Mr. Fountain, furnished the Outlook with some valuable information in regard to the company. The company has been doing business for twenty-nine years, and during that period of time has completed 25,000 contracts. They are designers, fabricators and erectors of bridges and other steel structures. Their shop at Vincennes has a capacity of 1000 tons of fabricated steel per month.

Other Projects.

While the Falmouth project was under construction, the Vincennes Bridge Company had under construction several other projects in Kentucky, as follows:

One 150 ft. span, and two 125 ft. spans over Big Sandy River, Floyd county, Kentucky.

One 150 ft. span, two 50 ft. approaches and two 40 ft. approaches over North Fork of Kentucky River at Hazard, Perry county, Kentucky.

One 164 ft. truss over Tradewater River between Caldwell and Hopkins counties, Kentucky.

One 125 ft. truss over Nolin River between Hart and Grayson counties, Kentucky.

One 50 ft. span, one 80 ft. span, and one 40 ft. span in Marion county, Kentucky.

One 50 ft. span over Clark Creek, Calloway county, Kentucky.

One 151 ft. span over Barren River on the line between Allen and Barren counties, Kentucky.

The Old Wooden Bridge.

The old wooden covered bridge, which the new steel bridge supersedes, played an important part in the history of Pendleton county for more than fifty years. The old structure, one of the last of its kind, was built in 1875. The contractors were Hamon, Smith & Bowman, of Dayton, Ohio. The cost of the completed structure was $15,500, of which $1,000 was contributed by the Kentucky Central Railroad Company. The time required to complete the structure was four months. The bridge was built on an emergency, when its predecessor, the old suspension bridge, twisted away and fell into the River.

The beams and braces of the old covered bridge were of heavy timber from the virgin forests near Falmouth and owned out in a primitive saw-mill of that early day. The boards on the sides were of poplar, which grow in great abundance along Licking River years ago. The roof of the bridge, originally, was of clap-boards, or hand-hewed shingles.

The abutments and pier were of stone, and hewed were from the stems of the stone masons art. The same abutments were used for the covered bridge as those of the present bridge. Hence this piece of stone was every bit as much a part of the old covered bridge as the bridge itself.

Why Bridge Was Built of Wood.

The old covered bridge, was characteristic of the times, and of the people who built it. In those days, cement was not used extensively in bridge, and was expensive and difficult to get at any price. Hence, builders naturally turned to the forests, wherein grew timber of the finest sort, suitable for any kind of construction. The abundant supply of wood near at hand naturally was responsible for the building of many covered bridges during that period.

The reason for covering the bridge and sides of it like a barn has never been explained. Probably it was done to protect the supporting wood beams from the weather. Maybe is was the artistic effect.

One old covered bridge never knew the luxury of a coat of paint, except in patches where some ambitious signpainter would write his name, or advertising the virtues of a patent medicine, or a political slogan. The sides the gables and the roof had weathered into a soft, mouse-gray, an altogether pretty, and seeming to be in keeping with the antiquity of the bridge itself.

There was a singular sensation in crossing the old covered bridge, on noting the bridge a peculiar smell pervaded your nostrils. It was not the smell of a country farm, nor yet of a circus ring, yet reminiscent of both, with a new quality all its own.

Early Advertising Efforts.

Mangled remains of ancient posters flared from the bridge walls. Old posters were tacked to the railing, paint oil signs were everywhere. It was the beginning of advertising. It was far from in Falmouth of an another period but not to go to the country, the country, and see the advertisements. There was exposed a display of early industry in Falmouth, that

What the Cameraman Saw When Old Bridge Collapsed

The above photograph shows a scene on Second Street, a few minutes after the wooden covered bridge that spanned Licking River fell into the stream. The background shows the smoke and steam arising from the flames. A large crowd gathered at the bridge to view the ruins, and only a few of the people standing in front of the camera are shown in the picture. The picture was taken September 23, 1926, the day the bridge burned.

NEW LICKING

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which quite captivated the rustic populace. The suspension bridge, with its net and web-like trellis of cables and wires; with long, swaying stretches of cables stretching away from the towers to the center of the structure, was thought then, to be both the ultimate and most beautiful form of bridge construction.

In million the bridge was sensitive; the first time, swaying somewhat, connecting the tower-to-tower also transmitted the upright suspension cables from the tower shoulder to the overhead cables. A tall office was housed in one of the towers.

An Epidemic Breaks Out.

The building of the bridge occupied a year or more. Its expenses were concerned in a rude shack on the opposite side of the city. At one time, smallpox raged among the river, and a number of them fell victims to the disease. However, only one died, and his shocking and personal effects were thrown into the river. What a sensation in the habit of smallpox was brightly lewd!

The superintendent and his wife resided in Falmouth while the bridge was under construction, and boarded in the house of the late Joseph T. Clark, a pioneer citizen and father of our townsman, Dr. H. C. Clark.

Milk was purchased from the Clark family for the bridge crew, and the proper sums received in payments were saved by Mr. Clark until she had nearly twenty pounds of milk. He sent the money to a craftsman in Cincinnati, who molded them down and produced the metal into simple articles of silverware. These are still a treasure in many Ruddy-Kentucky opposed and ladies in possession of members of the Clark family!

The First Double.

When the bridge was completed it was received by the county and owned to the public without ceremony. Such an important event, in other seem, should have been celebrated with great glee. Dr. Brown had made much present against building a suspension type of bridge. Many people had the attitude of mind, preferred to find the river as a safety from mosquitoes. The bridge was a bridge from a state. The system of collecting tolls was basic, and many travellers passed over without paying the fee.

We have secured a copy of the Cincinnati Commercial Records, of March 17, 1853, which gives an interesting account of the opening of the bridge. It is entitled "Bridge Opening." Here is the article in quoted below:

"The town of Falmouth, on Licking River, (Ky.), and a mile from the Cincinnati, has the honor of having a suspension bridge, 1,000 feet long, and 30 feet wide, one of the curiosities of art. We have seen the bridge, and have examined it. We also have seen the workmanship of the bridge, and have examined the details of its construction, and we can say that it is unsurpassed. We give a concise account here with regard to the leading features of the bridge.

"The cables of the bridge are of the finest quality obtainable in this country.

"There are 7 cables, each of which is composed of 19 strands, 1 inch in diameter, 1,000 feet long, and 1,000 pounds of wire.

"Number of wire cables to carry the roadway, 133 feet; aggregate strength of suspension, 1,195, 4-10 tons; strength of other chains, 1,195 tons; strength of anchorage masonry, 424 perches.

"The greatest weight the tower will bear with safety, 1,195 4-10 tons; the weight of a horseman, 1,000 lbs; weight, 12, 10-100 tons.

"Number of wire necessary that may subject the bridge, 1,195; number of cables, 19; number of six horse teams, 12.

"Maximum weight of suspension, 6 5-10 tons; maximum transitory load, 12 tons; maximum load, 102 5-10 tons; maximum tension, 105 12-100 tons.

"The suspension bridge cost $40,000 to build.

"The bridge is a marvel of ingenuity, and we understand that the contractor, Mr. Brown, has made a fortune by the enchanting night of the season, so the professional prodigy that proved the foundation, foundation, which existed the balance of the river.

"Vocalists of local fame, colonade station, night revelers, rustic musicians with flute, harps and guitars, and other theme, and never failed to event their talents beneath the spell and inspiration of the river.

"It is difficult to interpret one's feelings, when he fancies he hears these melodious tones rise out in every conflagration on the cabana at of night, and hear them fall in cadence on the rippling surface of the stream.

"Those were the chorus, sweet vibrant! agree like them.
When exacerbation stands ere tell to please,
These round the powers thy cheerful influence shed:
These were the chorus, but all these charms have fled."

The Big Flood.

Events immediately following the opening of the bridge dirved to heighten the popular fear of the possible. In the spring of 1858 came the greatest flood in the recollection of the oldest inhabitant. All previous floods were exceeded by several feet. As the banks of the river for miles were lined with cultivated fields with primitive forests, much heavy driftwood came down on the rising waters. Small trees, uprooted by the roots, with limbs sticking up twenty or thirty feet in the air, floated down the stream. In this flood, the water nearly reached the floor of the bridge, and floated lodged on the trellis work and threatened its destruction.

It happened that there were two Canadian timberjacks in Falmouth at the time, and they offered to clear the bridge of drift for five dollars. If the few would seem excessive, the man explained that it was the fair rate for cutting wood profits. They said they were attempting it at the risk of their lives. The fund was raised by voluntary subscription—the donations being for 5 cents and 10 cents each, for the most part.

Several hundred spectators gathered at the river to see the sights. The men were let down with ropes from the floor of the bridge. They worked with desperate speed, from one log to another; and in a short time the bridge was cleared and the bridge was saved.

Many Amusing Anecdotes.

Old citizens in Falmouth have many amusing anecdotes concerning the suspension bridge. One of them concerns a circus elephant. The circus had given its show in Falmouth, and was pulling out for Demoralville. The equipment was taken across the bridge, and returning on the river was the usual pontoon contraption. When it was her turn to cross the bridge, he cautiously put forth his foot on the floor, before venturing forth. Assuming a mouth like his heavy hulk, the big pachyderm refused to cross, and the circus people were obliged to raise him across the pontoon, and the foot. Thus assistant turned his bridgehead the popular fear of crossing the bridge. When the elephant was gone, there was positive evidence that the bridge was sound.

In the early days, Falmouth was infested with a gang of rowdy boys. They practice were usually of a harmless sort, but some other times were wanton in mischief, especially in their cleverly planned tricks.

A False Alarm.

One night the boys secured several barrels of tar and rolled them over the count. Some of the barrels, in another game practiced a lot of wire, and stretched it across the bridge, about four inches from the floor. The strands were placed a few feet apart across the entire length of the bridge.

On a prearranged signal, the fire bell was rung, and the boys set fire to the barrels of tar. There were no street lights in those days, and naturally the light from the burning tar could be seen all over town.

The entire village was awakened by the fire alarm, and people came running from all directions. A number of families resulted in bedmakerlines, and it was necessary for them to cross the bridge to get to the fire.

First to reach the bridge was a schoolmaster, whom some was near the river, and whose presence would have excluded the ruinous aspect of loving's character. Intoxicated, when the schoolmaster reached the usual approach of the bridge he was thrown backward, and fell to the floor barrier he tripped and fell sprawling on his face. Thinking he had tripped on a loose plank in the floor he got up and was a few feet farther, when he tripped and fell again. Not knowing he felt, before he finally reached the Falmouth side, and was so dazed by the tight of the fire he was a very sight to see. His face was bruised, and his clothing torn and soiled. He was out of breath and out of sorts.

Those Loose Planks!

"What's the matter with you?" someone ventured to inquire. The school master then relation now to had tripped and fell four times on the loose planks in the bridge floor. Citizen who came after the schoolmaster had similar experiences.

The boys behind the big scheme plotted the wanton mischief under the shadow of a nearby building, and were highly elated with the success of the pranks. But they had a wrathful prophecy that went back to its text that day.

The rank of destiny had set their seal on the old bridge, and they were doomed to collect the toll. Rust had grown to such an extent that heavy wagons were permitted to cross the bridge, which shook under the weight of a man's body. It seemed the people wished the disaster that was impending. When the village awakened that fateful morning, and saw a yawning chasm where the bridge had been, there was no surprise or regret.

The fall of the bridge was due in part to the lack of proper repairs and paint, so necessary to protect the wood and iron against the corroding fog and dampness that arose from the river.

An Old Stock Certificate.

Ben H. Hitch, of Maysville, Kentucky, has one of the most interesting and uncommon connection with the suspension bridge, it is a stock certificate, issued to his father, the late Ben J. Hitch, for one hundred (100) capital stock of the Falmouth Bridge Company. The certificate reads as follows:

SHARES $25 EACH

No. 17 Two Shares

STATE OF KENTUCKY

THE FALMOUTH BRIDGE CO

This certifies that Gen. J. Hitch is entitled to two shares of the capital stock in the Falmouth Bridge Company, transferable in person or by attorney, on the books of the Company at their office in Falmouth, Ky.

Witness the seal of the company and the signature of the President and Secretary, at Falmouth, Ky. this 21st day of December, 1853.

A. Robbins, Pres't.
Thomas Hinton, Secry.

The certificate is proof on fine linen paper, which has lost its original color, and the printing is as good as the present day stock certs. The seal was cut out by hand.

The old suspension bridge was the first bridge built in this section of the country and was the first bridge built over the Licking or Ohio River. It was built twelve years before the suspension bridge that spans the Ohio at Covington and Cincinnati.

George J. Hitch was the father of Ben H. Hitch and James W. Smith, of this city. He was born in Pendleton county, Ky., in 1816, and was the first Hitch born in Pendleton county. His father, Joseph Hitch, came to Pendleton county from Maryland in 1808, and settled at the old Hitch homestead on the Licking river about six miles north of Falmouth.

George J. Hitch was Postmaster at Falmouth, Ky., and resided in his home, for eleven years and eight months, and then Hendricks, father of Gen. W. Hendricks, of Indiana, succeed, was deputy postmaster. The Civil War interrupted the business, and he went back from Cincinnati. This office was discontinued in 1854 when the old Kentucky Central Railway came.

George J. Hitch was one of Pendleton county's most prominent citizens. He was a prominent Democrat, and was a high-priced historical record. Ben H. Hitch, who is now 43 years old, is an ex-Union soldier.

The day of the suspension bridge was a day of great rejoicing and enjoyment. Only a few new remain, whose memory goes back to the day it proudly swung its graceful form across the stream. Like its successor, it was the pride of the people, and of late children.

This concludes our contribution to the bridge history of Falmouth. Our splendid new bridge is now a great triple of the old bridge, and we are using its speaking to a fitting way. It embodies the latest and best features of modern bridge-building, and the best materials that compose it will last indefinitely.

May the new bridge be dedicated to the glory and the progress of our fair city and country. May it bring consolidation, friendship, and visits of peace and friendship. May it take them back to their homes with a good feeling in their hearts for Falmouth and her people. May it take our people to the road districts on alternate nights of good will and re-opening. Falmouth and Pendleton county will always bridge the bridge in their list of blessings, and it will be a blessed to become an important factor in the progress and upbuilding of this sun county.

"Forever is a long time—
Forever strangers
Till all the stars are crumbled
And all the stars are gone!"

THE OLD BRIDGE OF SIGHS

[By T. F. TALIAFERRO]

With Apologies To J. Harry Hinton

O, the old covered bridge is a thing of the past,
Though serving the public for years, could not last;
Like all other things that have lived and died,
Must perish, or, somehow, get out of the way.

The old covered bridge stood the storms and the floods,
A popular place for the girls and young bloods,
As they stood on its wings looking down on the stream,
And hoping that time might make real their dream.

I recall when returning from Concord at night,
With the city overcast and the moon out of sight,
When I reached the old bridge and peered into the cave,
I wished I was home, or in Barney Cook's tavern.

One night an old tree, seeking shelter and rest,
Entered into the bridge, thinking it better to rest,
To have a dry floor upon which she could lie,
Than to sleep on the snow-covered common nearby.

Now, there was a youth in Falmouth, I'm told,
Had a girl on the East Side more precious than gold;
So he wended his way cross the old bridge at night,
To feast on the charms of her limpid blue eyes.

Aht well for the youth, and well for us all,
That we are not the dangers which hang like a pall,
In the way as we wander free-hearted at night,
Which the goodness of God hides away from our sight.

But now to be true, I must write on the level,
And confess that the aforesaid youth was a devil;
(Now don't become shocked, he was not what you think)
But just a pester's devil, handling lead type and ink.

In the home of the girl the bright hours sped away,
Till along toward midnight when his sidekick said, "Say!
Have you heard about Mother? She's awfully distressed.
She says that I am of a devil possessed.

"So you had better be going, and that pretty quick,
Or I'll have to come home with a horse and a stick,
Or send for the priest who on hills or on levels,
Has the God-given power to expurgate devils."

Now, young Warren Shonert (for that was his name)
When he heard all her mother, was thinking the same;
So he picked up his hat and bade her goodnight,
And started for home in a trouble plight.

When he reached the old bridge with its darkness his death,
His heart now to his throat, and he panted for breath;
Though dread he was, of the dark he was shy,
So sweat was the dude that he thought he would die.

But he turned up his courage in the point where would stick,
And made a mad rush that he might get through quick;
But somehow or other, he didn't know how,
He stumbled and fell on that blasted old row.

He jumped up and ran with the speed of a deer,
His hair standing up and and heart fluttering with fear;
And in sell you the truth, I hear it is said,
He never stopped running till he got into bed.

Now the space by the bridge was used for a dump,
And someone passing by, like a silly old gump,
Cast a cigarette stub in the rubbish below,
And what happened that day you all very well know.

Finally a shout was heard, "Helen-and-Maria!
Get out the red wagon—the bridge is on fire!"
From every direction the folks soon assembled,
And the crowd that had gathered, a sure-track resembled.

The hot flames continued to swirl and to roar,
And a myriad of firebrands shot up to the skies,
To try to subdue them was labor in vain,
Though the old covered bridge seemed in trouble with pain.

The flames are the timbers unusually fast,
And that old covered bridge was a thing of the past;
And thus we may lie and upon it depend,
That what had a beginning, will some have an end.

But now the wide chasm is bridged once again,
And needing no cover to shield from the rain;
And no tunnel of darkness the pedestrian to fright,
Nor crumpled-horn cow to rest over night.

The bridge that now stands o'er the stream that flows by,
Will be standing when over the earth we shall fly,
And not a child living in Falmouth today
Will be living when this new bridge passes away.

No more will the paddles of the ferry be heard,
As it rides o'er the waters like a web-footed bird;
But those from the East may still come to the town,
Without using the ferry or going around.

Old Pendleton county comes into her own,
They she reaps a rich harvest from that the has sown!
With congratulations! Hurrah for old Pen!
With her sweetest of women and hundred of men!

Now just one more verse that you may be wise,
On why this is headed "The Old Bridge of Sighs,"
You will see that the caption is good, I've no doubt,
For we sighed when we entered and when we came out.

The old wooden bridges that were built long ago,
All needed protection from the rain and the snow;
But now with their steel frames and floors of concrete,
They bid bold defiance to rain, snow and sleet.

Now, I hope you will pardon this long dissertation,
But it covers a field as wide as creation;
For bridges are necessary over rivers and creeks,
And for money to build them our Governor seeks.

But with bridges and school-books made free to the people,
Will make our fat bank accounts slim as a steeple;
For bridges and school-books will call for the money,
And will require extra tax on sweet clover and honey.

Now, when Governor Sampson comes down to old Pen,
To make his big speech to the ladies and men,
Just tell him you saw not if you think it is best,
And with this closing line I will give you a rest.