

The **P**ALIMPSEST

DECEMBER 1946

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

THE PALIMPSEST, issued monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, is devoted to the dissemination of Iowa History. Supplementing the other publications of this Society, it aims to present the materials of Iowa History in a form that is attractive and a style that is popular in the best sense—to the end that the story of our Commonwealth may be more widely read and cherished.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

THE MEANING OF PALIMPSEST

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the records of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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THE PALIMPSEST

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The First State Governor

To be the first in a long line of distinguished men is in itself an honor and the opportunity to be the first Governor of the State of Iowa might well have been coveted one hundred years ago. The position was not, however, as popular as might have been expected. Many Iowans sought Federal positions, but relatively few were avowed candidates for the governorship of their own State. How Ansel Briggs came by the office and what he did as the first State Governor of Iowa has come, in this centennial year, to be a matter of much interest.

Ansel Briggs was not a renowned statesman; nor was he a shrewd politician who carefully planned, step by step, how he might gain the governorship. Indeed, he was probably more than a little surprised to find himself elected to that high office. His nomination was something of a political accident, a fortunate accident as it happened, for he was honorable and upright in his dealings

and a faithful servant of the people. If he was not the most brilliant nor the most renowned of Iowa's Governors, he was loyal, faithful, and just — a man of the common people.

Ansel Briggs was born in Vermont on February 3, 1806. He acquired a common school education and had the advantage of attending Norwich Academy for one term. As a young man he moved with his parents to Guernsey County, Ohio, near Cambridge, where the father engaged in farming. It is recorded, however, that Ansel, the oldest son, "was more interested in the stagecoaches and wagons that hauled big loads through on the old Wheeling road than he was in farming".

He soon acquired teams of his own and engaged in the overland transportation of goods and the operation of stagecoaches. The account book of William McCracken, a pioneer blacksmith of Cambridge, reveals that young Briggs was frugal and thrifty. He paid "fifty-seven and one-half cents for getting one shoe toed and two set; twenty-five cents for repair on his wagon-bed; twelve and one-half cents for a log-chain link; ten cents for getting a single-tree ironed; and twelve and one-half cents to have his harrow teeth sharpened." Meanwhile, Briggs supplied McCracken with coal at six cents a bushel, and hauled 4,266

pounds of goods from Wheeling, now in West Virginia, at the rate of seventy-five cents per hundred pounds.

Benjamin Briggs, Ansel's father, was killed in an accident while driving one of Ansel's teams with a load of salt, leaving the mother to care for a large family of children. Soon thereafter the family moved into Cambridge, where Mrs. Briggs managed to provide a livelihood for her younger children by selling bread, cakes, and pies to the townsfolk and to travelers on the old Wheeling Road.

Meanwhile Ansel Briggs, then affiliated with the Whig Party, became deputy sheriff of Guernsey County. Meanwhile, too, he gained the respect of Major James Dunlap, a former officer in the War of 1812, who encouraged him to enter politics. Under the tutelage of Major Dunlap, young Briggs ran for the office of county auditor. He lost the election, but he won the heart and hand of the major's daughter, Nancy Dunlap, whom he married in the fall of 1830.

By the middle of the decade of the thirties, Briggs had resolved to cast his lot with the pioneers of the new West. He journeyed to St. Louis, where he was much interested in the shipping and mercantile activities, but he soon ventured on to the valley of the Upper Mississippi.

There he learned of the frontier settlements at Burlington, Davenport, and Dubuque, but he chose to avoid river bottom land and, through the acquaintance and friendship of the Forbes family of Bellevue, he became interested in land above the ridge on Brush Creek in what is now Jackson County. There he located, soon to become one of the founders of the town of Andrew.

In Iowa, as in Ohio, Ansel Briggs operated stagecoach and transportation lines. He also had contracts with the government for carrying the mail to and from pioneer settlements. In this way he became familiar with conditions on the frontier, formed lasting friendships with pioneer settlers, and built for himself a clientele that was of inestimable value to him in later years. Among the men most closely associated with Briggs during these early years were Nathaniel Butterworth, Philip Barr Bradley, John Francis, and Judge John J. Dyer.

Butterworth was a stalwart pioneer who came to Iowa about the time that Briggs arrived and established a stagecoach tavern in the Brush Creek community, not far from the present site of Andrew. Briggs and Butterworth became close associates in business. There were, however, obvious points of difference. "Butterworth was fond of telling of his misfortunes while Briggs kept his

misfortunes strictly to himself. Briggs liked to swap horses. Butterworth preferred to sell his and collect the price agreed upon, to the cent."

Philip B. Bradley was a native of Connecticut, a graduate of Union College, Schenectady, New York, and at one time had been a resident of Galena, Illinois. He was a man of culture and refinement who, upon the urgent solicitation of Ansel Briggs, came at length to make his home at the flourishing little town of Andrew.

John Francis was realtor and partner of Ansel Briggs. At the time the town of Andrew was established the firm of Briggs and Francis acquired a considerable number of lots which were subsequently sold to interested parties. On one occasion Francis told a newspaper reporter in his laconic way, that when trouble was in the offing "Mr. Briggs could always be depended upon to pour oil on the troubled waters." As realtors on the frontier Briggs and Francis had many friends.

Judge John J. Dyer was at one time a resident of Andrew. Later he became a distinguished Federal judge and a resident of Dubuque. Judge Dyer, perhaps more than any one else, was responsible for the nomination and election of Ansel Briggs as the first State Governor of Iowa.

When Jackson County was first established in 1837 the town of Bellevue was designated as the

county seat. But the Bellevue War suggested unwholesome influences in that town and Ansel Briggs and Nathaniel Butterworth were active participants in a movement to transfer the county seat to the more nearly centrally located town of Andrew, where a log courthouse was erected.

Ansel Briggs had transferred his party allegiance to the Democratic Party before coming to Iowa, and he first appeared in Iowa politics in 1842 when he was nominated and elected by the Democrats as Representative from Jackson County in the Fifth Legislative Assembly of the Territory. This Assembly met for the first time at Iowa City. In the Assembly Mr. Briggs served as a member of the Committee on Enrolled Bills and was chairman of the Committee on Territorial Affairs.

In January of 1843 Representative Briggs presented to the Assembly a petition from the citizens of Jackson County asking that a charter be granted for the establishment of an academy at the town of Andrew. The petition was referred to a select committee of three, of which Briggs was chairman, and later an act was passed by the Assembly to incorporate the Jackson County Academy which was authorized to have a capital stock of not to exceed fifty thousand dollars.

After serving in the Legislative Assembly for

one session Briggs was elected sheriff of Jackson County in 1844 and served for one term — two years. He was recognized as a substantial citizen, but no one yet gave thought to his some day becoming Governor. In 1846 when the Democratic Party was seeking a candidate for the office of Governor of the proposed State of Iowa, no one seemed to be anxious to assume the leadership. The salary for the chief executive, as stipulated in the recently adopted Constitution, was “not to exceed one thousand dollars” — a rather meager salary even in those days.

George Wallace Jones and other leading Democrats of that day hoped that Judge John J. Dyer of Jackson County might be nominated and elected Governor. It was noted that at the election of August 3rd, Jackson County had ranked first among the counties of the Territory in the percentage of votes cast favoring the adoption of the Constitution of 1846, and it was agreed that it should be given the privilege of making the first nomination for Governor. It was generally believed that Judge Dyer would be the man selected, but Judge Dyer was interested in a Federal judgeship to which he was subsequently appointed, and he “positively declined” to be a candidate.

When the Democratic Convention met at Iowa City on September 24, 1846, prohibition of the

establishment of banks was one of the chief planks in the platform. At a banquet a few days before the nominating convention, Briggs had struck a responsive chord by offering the toast, "No banks but earth, and they well tilled." Judge Dyer, attending the convention as a delegate took advantage of the enthusiasm which had greeted this slogan and presented the name of his fellow townsman, Ansel Briggs. It is also recorded that the candidacy of Ansel Briggs may have been suggested to the Jackson County delegates by the *Governor Briggs*, a steamboat named for a former Governor of Massachusetts, which went up and down the Mississippi about this time. The nomination proved to be popular, although two other men were suggested — Judge Jesse Williams of Jefferson County and William Thompson of Henry County, known as "Black Bill". On the first ballot Briggs received 62 votes, Williams 32, and Thompson 31. Williams and Thompson then withdrew, and Briggs was nominated by acclamation.

The Whig candidate to oppose Briggs in the general election was Thomas McKnight of Dubuque. McKnight was a strong candidate — well qualified and widely known throughout the Territory. At this time, however, the Democratic Party controlled the political affairs in Iowa and

Briggs succeeded in obtaining 7,626 votes while McKnight had 7,379 — giving Briggs a majority of 247. And so, on December 3, 1846, Ansel Briggs was inaugurated as the first Governor of the State of Iowa.

The inauguration services were simple. A committee of two Senators and two Representatives escorted the Governor elect into the House Chamber of the Capitol where Charles Mason, Chief Justice of the Territorial Supreme Court, administered the oath of office. Governor Briggs explained that he had been notified of his election only four days earlier and had not had time to formulate a policy. His short inaugural address was read by Senator Philip B. Bradley.

Governor Briggs did not reside in Iowa City, preferring to remain in his home town, Andrew. He thought that there he could better resist the solicitations of political job seekers. Moreover, Nancy Dunlap Briggs, the Governor's wife, was in poor health, and Governor Briggs seemed to think that a river town was not a good place for an invalid. And so the Governor stopped at a tavern while attending legislative sessions at Iowa City, often riding horseback on his trips between Andrew and the capital or over the State.

Sometimes Governor Briggs was accompanied on his trips by Philip B. Bradley, influential

State Senator from Jackson County. Indeed, Bradley has been referred to as the "Thurlow Weed of Governor Briggs's political campaign and gubernatorial career". In matters of state it is said that Governor Briggs seldom made a major decision without conferring with Bradley, Butterworth, Judge Dyer, and other personal friends or political allies.

As Governor of Iowa from 1846 to 1850 Mr. Briggs proved to be a conservative, frugal, and honest chief executive. In his first biennial message he reported that on October 31, 1848 — almost two years after he had taken office — there was a balance in the State treasury of \$1,394. He reported, too, that the school laws were "exceedingly defective", and expressed regret that the wishes of the people relative to improved school legislation should have been so long frustrated. It was during Governor Briggs's administration that the State University of Iowa was founded.

Governor Briggs also gave attention to matters of internal improvement — the building of roads and bridges and the improvement of waterways. It was at this time that the citizens of Burlington, Mount Pleasant, and intervening communities became keenly interested in the building of "all-weather" roads. Railroads, then just coming into public attention, were considered too expensive

and besides there were yet no connecting roads across the Mississippi. The Iowa-Missouri boundary dispute, carried over from Territorial days, was finally settled during Governor Briggs's administration, while Iowa troops were called to participate in the Mexican War, in which a few prominent Iowans lost their lives. Among these was Frederick D. Mills who had called to order the convention which nominated Ansel Briggs.

Governor Briggs suffered personal bereavement during his administration as chief executive, for Mrs. Briggs passed away at their home in Andrew in 1848 and during the same year a little daughter also died. Governor and Mrs. Briggs were the parents of eight children, six of whom passed away in early childhood. One son, Ansel, Jr., died on May 15, 1867, at the age of twenty-five, without children. Another son, John S. Briggs, became editor of the *Idaho Herald* at Blackfoot, Idaho Territory, and was later a resident of Omaha, Nebraska. His daughter, Mrs. Nancy Briggs Robertson, is the only grandchild of Ansel Briggs having children. Ansel Briggs later married Mrs. Frances Carpenter, who died in 1859.

At the close of his term as Governor, Ansel Briggs retired from office, apparently by common agreement that one four-year term was enough. He continued to maintain his residence in Jackson

County where he engaged in commercial activities, although he was one of the founders of Florence, Nebraska, in 1856, and spent some time in Colorado in 1860, and in Montana from 1863 to 1865.

At Andrew Ansel Briggs enjoyed the companionship of old friends and lived over in pleasant retrospection the eventful days of his governorship. As the years passed he had the satisfaction of knowing that the hope he had expressed upon his retirement from the governorship — that the State which he had served as chief executive might “ever be distinguished for virtue, intelligence, and prosperity” — was being fulfilled.

In 1878 Ansel Briggs went to Omaha, Nebraska, to make his home with his son, John S. Briggs, and there he died on May 5, 1881. His remains were first interred at Omaha, but in 1909 the General Assembly of Iowa provided for their removal to Andrew and for the erection of a suitable monument in honor of Iowa's first State Governor. The monument bears an outline map of the State of Iowa and a bronze medallion portrait of the pleasant, rugged face of Ansel Briggs, the stagedriver who became Governor and left a rich heritage of honor.

JACOB A. SWISHER

Planked from Keokuk

One hundred years ago, when the citizens of Iowa were first assuming the responsibilities of statehood, highways and transportation were ever uppermost in their minds. Little did they dream of the vast improvements which were to take place in this field during the first one hundred years of the State's history.

So important did the matter of transportation appear to the early citizens of Iowa, that in the First Legislative Assembly considerable attention was given to legislation relating to this subject. On January 24, 1839, a charter was granted to the "Burlington and Iowa River Turnpike Company" providing for the construction of an improved highway over which tolls were to be charged. This was the beginning of Iowa legislation providing for toll roads.

Following Iowa's attainment of statehood in 1846, the matter of roads assumed such paramount importance that 28 of the 125 chapters of the "Acts of the First General Assembly" dealt with highway legislation. In most cases these laws merely laid out the roads without providing for their maintenance.

The first graded toll road was chartered on January 8, 1849. It was to connect Bloomington (now Muscatine) with the county seat of Benton County, via Tipton. Additional toll charges might be made for travel on planked sections. An act, approved on January 15, 1849, authorized the building of a plank road between Keokuk and Montrose, running along the Iowa shore of the Mississippi. This road was intended to facilitate the lightering of the river boats, so they might pass over the Des Moines Rapids. Before it was completed, however, it was supplanted by a railroad, one of the first built in Iowa.

The schedule of tolls provided by law for the Keokuk-Montrose road was as follows: carriage, wagon, cart, or sleigh drawn by two horses, oxen, or mules, two and a half cents per mile and one cent per mile for each additional animal attached to the vehicle; vehicle drawn by one horse, ox, or mule, two cents per mile; horse and rider, one cent per mile; each head of horses, oxen, mules, or cattle, led or driven, one cent per mile; each head of sheep, goats, or hogs, one half cent per mile; merchandise (not including furniture of immigrants), two cents per ton per mile.

Such graded and improved roads were not built from public funds, but were undertaken by private individuals or companies which hoped to make a

profit. There was much discussion of routes, costs, and charges. On February 8, 1849, the *Keokuk Register* contained a lengthy article on the subject of roads. The following rough estimate of the cost per mile had been made: lumber at \$9 per thousand feet, \$1,400; leveling and laying, \$240; engineering and superintending, \$100; contingent, ten per cent, \$178 — total per mile, \$1,958.

The editor commented that this estimate of the cost of lumber in Iowa was too low; it should have been not less than \$15 per 1000 feet and the total cost of lumber would be about \$2,112 per mile. Estimating engineering, gates, bridges, and contingencies at \$500 per mile, the total cost, according to the editor, would be about \$2,612 per mile. The profits on plank roads in the East had, however, been beyond the most sanguine expectations of the projectors.

In an article printed in the February 22, 1849, issue of the same paper, a correspondent considered the construction of a plank road to be built from Keokuk to the Raccoon Forks, along the main highlands dividing the waters of the Des Moines and Skunk rivers. Such a road was imperatively demanded; the construction of a railroad was yet a long way off and a plank road could be built to the Forks without crossing a

single stream or ravine of consequence, the natural surface of the proposed route being so gently undulating and nearly level that it need not be disturbed in the way of grading, except to elevate the track sufficiently to carry off the water. The white oak timber bordering the route was considered sufficient to build the road. This correspondent estimated the total cost per mile at \$2,000.

On February 4, 1851, the sixth plank toll road was authorized by the General Assembly. It was to be built by the "Keokuk and Des Moines Valley Plank Road Company" between the city of Keokuk in Lee County, via Charleston, to the town of Birmingham in Van Buren County, a distance of some sixty-nine miles. This road, from which branch roads were to be built to the important towns, was expected to become a great artery of commerce, heading inland from Keokuk, the "Gate City", where much river-borne traffic was compelled to disembark at the "foot of the Rapids", and thence proceed inland by stage or wagon on up the valley of the Des Moines.

This Keokuk and Des Moines Valley Plank Road Company had been organized under the general incorporation laws of the State of Iowa on December 10, 1850, anticipating by nearly sixty days the legislative approval of its activities. In 1926 the *Keokuk Citizen* reproduced from the col-

umns of the *Des Moines Valley Whig* the following account of the organization of the company:

"Their principal place of doing business is in the city of Keokuk. . . . The amount of capital stock incorporated is one hundred thousand dollars. No portion of said capital stock has yet been paid in. The conditions on which said stock is to be paid in are, that it is to be collected by the directors at their discretion by installments of not exceeding ten per cent on each share subscribed, and at periods of not less than ninety days, first giving thirty days notice in some newspaper published in the city of Keokuk."

Ver Planck Van Antwerp was chosen president of the company. On March 17, 1851, the company issued a "Notice to Lumbermen", asking for bids on more than a half million feet of lumber. This notice revealed many of the details of the construction of the road:

"Sealed proposals will be received by the President and Directors of the Keokuk and Des Moines Valley Plank Road Company at their office in the city of Keokuk, up to the 11th day of April next, for the delivery of 633,600 feet (board measure) of plank eight feet long, not less than five nor more than ten inches wide, and three inches thick; and 79,200 feet (board measure) of plank sixteen feet long, six inches wide and three inches thick, either

of White Oak, Burr Oak, Red Elm, Mulberry, Sugar Maple, Black Walnut, Norway or Yellow Pine, and to be from good sound timber, free from sap, bad knots, wind shakes, and other imperfections impairing its strength or durability, to be full on the edges and of the full thickness specified.

"The plank to be delivered in lots along the line of the road within five miles of the city of Keokuk, at such intervals as the Board shall direct."

The first call for payment on stock was issued on April 12, 1851: "The subscribers to the capital stock of this Company are hereby notified that an installment of ten dollars on each share subscribed to said stock, is required to be made to Wm. S. McGavic, Esq., treasurer of the company, at his office in the city of Keokuk, on or before the 20th day of May next."

At the same time a "Notice to Contractors" was published, asking for sealed bids on the construction of about 12,620 cubic yards of embankment at various points and four stone culverts, one at each of the points described. The contract was let to the firm of Brownell and Sprott, who had been authorized to build the plank road from Keokuk to Montrose in 1849. William Brownell of Keokuk was the senior partner.

On May 8, 1851, the editor of the *Des Moines Valley Whig* rejoiced "that 16 miles of plank road

from Keokuk to Birmingham is under contract and about half to be completed in 1851; the balance to Charleston to be completed in the spring of 1852; the whole distance to Birmingham to be completed next year." As usual these predictions proved too optimistic, but eventually the work got under way, the right-of-way was "graded and bridged", and finally, it is said, the planking was actually laid some sixteen miles north from Keokuk.

The road was constructed of stringers and planks cut from the surrounding timber. Three stringers of black walnut, six by six, were laid lengthwise and planks, "eight feet long, two inches thick [specified as 3 inch], and of whatever breadth they squared" were laid across the stringers. It appears that at first the planks were laid on loose, but later, due to warping of the boards which lay next to the wet earth, it became necessary to spike them down to the stringers with 30-penny, cut-iron spikes, which eventually pulled out or rusted off. Anyone who has known unpaved Iowa roads in the spring can imagine what happened to these stringers and the loose planks.

The route of the "Old Plank Road", reminiscently spoken of as "The Slab" by early settlers, began at 14th and Main streets (or more precisely at the alley between 14th and 15th streets), in Keokuk, veering to the north of east until it inter-

sected the present Plank Road Street, which begins at 16th and Blondeau. Then sweeping more toward the north, above the head of Price's Creek, it came out on the present route of Federal Highway 218. Thence northward it followed the general route of the present paved highway, weaving back and forth across it in places to take advantage of more favorable grades and to avoid the deep gullies at the head of Sugar Creek.

At the site of the present high school in Keokuk was the Plank Road Tavern, better known as "Farmer's House". At 16th and Blondeau was the "water-house" and tavern, popularly known as "Dutch Mary", where water might be had for the horses and beer for the drivers. This proved to be an agreeable combination. On Blondeau Street, between 16th and 17th, stood the first tollhouse and gate. A block farther on, between 17th and 18th streets, was the Rummell Tavern, also a popular place with the teamsters.

The second tollhouse was at the "Four Mile House", almost directly opposite the site of the present county home farm. Later, when the railroad took over, this was known as Mooar Station. The third tollhouse, about eight miles out, was near the present town of Summitville. Then came the Messengerville tollhouse, with Robert Pipkin as tollman, and Dickey Brown's Tavern and Feed-

post at Mount Clara, later a station on the railroad running north from Keokuk. "Nine Mile House" was located at the "Montrose Turn", not far from the present intersection of Routes 218 and 61.

The official end of the Plank Road was at the town of Charleston about one-fourth of a mile south of the old railroad station which has now been abandoned. Here was "Soller's Tavern", a ramshackle, one-story frame building, large enough to accommodate the many travelers who chose to stop there. While the road was actually graded to the twenty-mile house, about four miles beyond Charleston, it is probable that no planks were ever laid on this section.

The grade, generally about thirty feet wide, so followed the higher ground along the divide between the Des Moines and the Mississippi, that few bridges and culverts were required for the road. There was one small bridge in the city of Keokuk and another more pretentious one, known as the "High Bridge", was built across a tributary of Sugar Creek in the southwest quarter of Section 21, Montrose Township. It consisted of a high trestle several hundred feet in length, built of square-sawed timbers, and had a railed roadway wide enough for two teams to pass. Teamsters did not use the bridge much in dry weather,

but when the rains came in the fall of the year they were compelled to pull onto it to avoid the impassable mud.

Many a teamster drove regularly between Charleston and Keokuk. One trip down and back, about thirty miles, hauling mostly corn, wheat, oats, seeds, and hay to the market was considered a day's work. For their services teamsters charged at the rate of \$4.25 for a load of 30 hundred weight ($1\frac{1}{2}$ tons). Sometimes they were able to pick up a "pay-load" going back but more often they "went up" empty, since many of the stores along the route did their own teaming.

For a time this was indeed a busy highway, and during the gold rush, which was at its height about the time the plank road was finished, as many as twenty-five or thirty ox-teams in a row might be counted, loaded out for the Far West. From Charleston they followed the old Mormon Trail across the prairies of Iowa to Council Bluffs.

On June 19, 1855, the editor of the Carthage (Ill.) *Republican* wrote: "On Friday last, we crossed the river from Hamilton to Keokuk, and passed over the plank road to Boston, Charleston and Farmington on the Des Moines River, and on to Bonaparte and Bentonsport. . . . We think we saw one hundred wagons pass each way daily, coming to Keokuk loaded with grain, flour, bacon

and etc., and returning with furniture, castings, groceries and other goods."

Eventually other farm to market roads were developed and supported by public funds. These were not hard surfaced but they were patronized largely by the farmers in dry weather, making it unnecessary for them to pay toll on the plank roads. This cut the income of the Plank Road Company to the place where it could no longer maintain the road in first class condition. Loose planks and chuckholes caused much complaint. Poor road conditions lost tolls and less toll money meant poorer maintenance.

Railroads also were creeping into the territory, and it seemed to the directors that the only solution to their problem was to convert their property into a railway. They were able to secure from the General Assembly an act approved on March 18, 1858, which authorized the Keokuk and Des Moines Valley Plank Road Company "to locate, establish, construct, maintain and operate by horse or steam power, a Rail Road upon the track of the present Plank Road; and that they be further authorized to extend the track of said Railroad down Main Street, in the city of Keokuk, as far as the intersection of Main Street and Second Street in said city." The city, however, must first approve this extension of the track.

The impending war between the States discouraged this undertaking, however, and eventually the company failed. The Plank Road then fell into the hands of Harry Fulton, but it seems he could do little better, and matters gradually drifted from bad to worse. Finally, after a long legal controversy, the Plank Road came into the possession of Lee County. The board of supervisors struggled along with the problem for a few years and finally gave up in discouragement.

As the last straw, the "High Bridge" became so dilapidated that it was officially condemned and one night it was "razed to the ground by the wind". The board of supervisors then took up the planks on the road and sold them for lumber and firewood. The Plank Road, as such, came to an end, but the route is still the principal highway out of Keokuk towards the north. Plank Road Street in the city of Keokuk is a reminder of this once pretentious pioneer undertaking, now one of the local traditions handed down from the former generation which used the old Plank Road.

BEN HUR WILSON

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[Persons, places, and subjects, as well as specific items pertaining to each, are listed alphabetically. The names of contributors of articles to THE PALIMPSEST are printed in SMALL CAPITALS; the titles of articles, books, and plays and the names of boats are printed in *italics*; the titles of songs and poems are inclosed in quotation marks. Places not otherwise identified are in Iowa.]

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